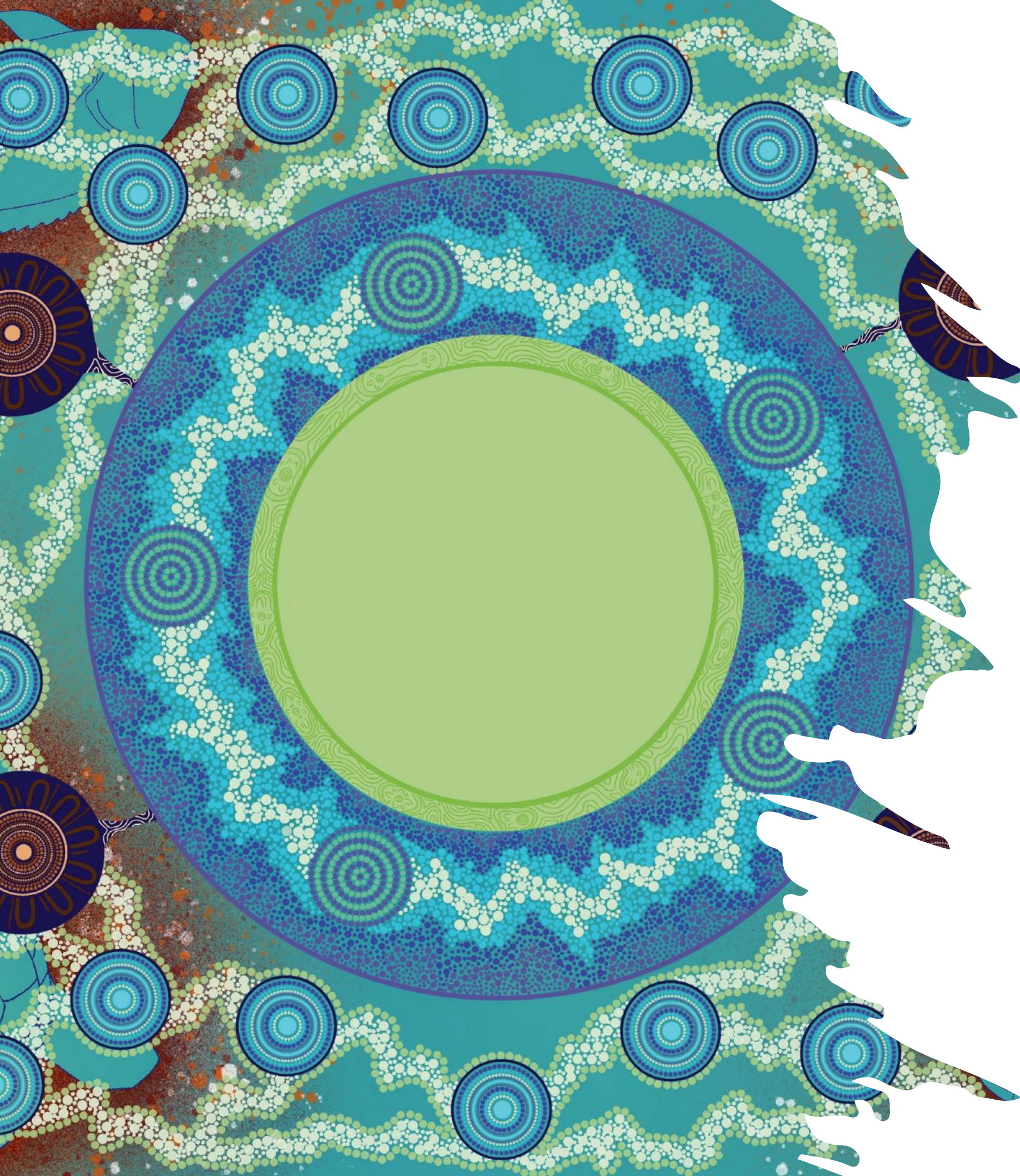





helping minds[®]
Mental Health Services & Carer Support



Raising Resilient Children



Today, we recognise all First Peoples in this place we call Australia, and other First Peoples around the world. We thank local Elders, past and present, for their wisdom and leadership; and for their continued stewardship of Boodja (country).



YOU have power!



Role models.

You are your children's **first teachers**. The biggest way you can help your child build their wellbeing is through how you manage **YOUR** own wellbeing - as children learn through what they see you do!

Children build resilience **over time** through experience. You can help your child learn skills and develop resilience by having a **warm, supportive** relationship with them.

What is Resilience?

plaining
accept failure
re sil i ence
nn. [U] qualit.
recovering the
tion after being
etc. : the

Not getting stuck in a bubble of negativity

A chance to grow & learn from challenges

The ability to adapt through tough situations

Bouncing back



Self-Compassion – REMINDER!

Self-compassion is good for you **and** good for your child.

By showing **kindness** to yourself, you're helping your child learn that it's OK to make **mistakes, forgive yourself and try to do better** next time.

This in turn helps your child develop self-compassion and to **move on** from difficult situations.



Emotions & Resilience

Why Teach Emotions?

- **Understanding** & managing emotions is important for a child's **wellbeing**.
- When things don't go well & children feel anxious, sad, disappointed, afraid or frustrated, **resilience** helps them understand that these uncomfortable emotions usually **don't last** forever.
- Recognising & naming emotions helps children **understand** them, which lays the **groundwork** for **managing** emotions in the future.



Children who can **recognise** their emotions are more likely to:

- **Bounce back** after feeling strong emotions like disappointment, frustration or excitement
- **Express emotions** by speaking calmly or in appropriate ways
- **Control** impulses
- **Behave positively** – in ways that don't hurt others, things or themselves.
- Encourages **learning, making friends & independence.**





Emotional Check-ins



Emotions

- **Validating and naming the emotion** helps children gain some regulation of their feelings and manage them when they are older.
- **Explain** that anxiety and worry is **common** and we don't need to bottle these feelings up/avoid it. *Validate* it for them but not necessarily *empower* the worry.
- **Refrain** from telling children to 'stop being silly', 'don't cry' when they feel anxious → try not to shame them/saying they 'shouldn't' be feeling something)
- It's about **releasing** the emotions/anxiety in a healthy way.

"I can see you're worried about starting school, worry is very natural, and it is OK to feel it. I also know, you can handle this"

Emotions

- Validating the emotion is not necessarily you empowering it
- **TWO** things can be **TRUE**
- For example:
- “I know you feel scared about performing at assembly, but I know you’ve got this” (validates them but also inspires a sense of confidence)

Other possible things to say:

- “It’s okay to feel anxious, it’s a normal feeling. We can **also** take a deep breath together & work through this”
- “You can feel worried, **and** still go down the slide”

“I can see you’re worried about starting school, worry is very natural, and it is OK to feel it. I also know, you can handle this”

Validating & Naming

-**Talk about the emotions** that characters in stories may be feeling, & why. *'Look at Bluey's face, she looks sad'*

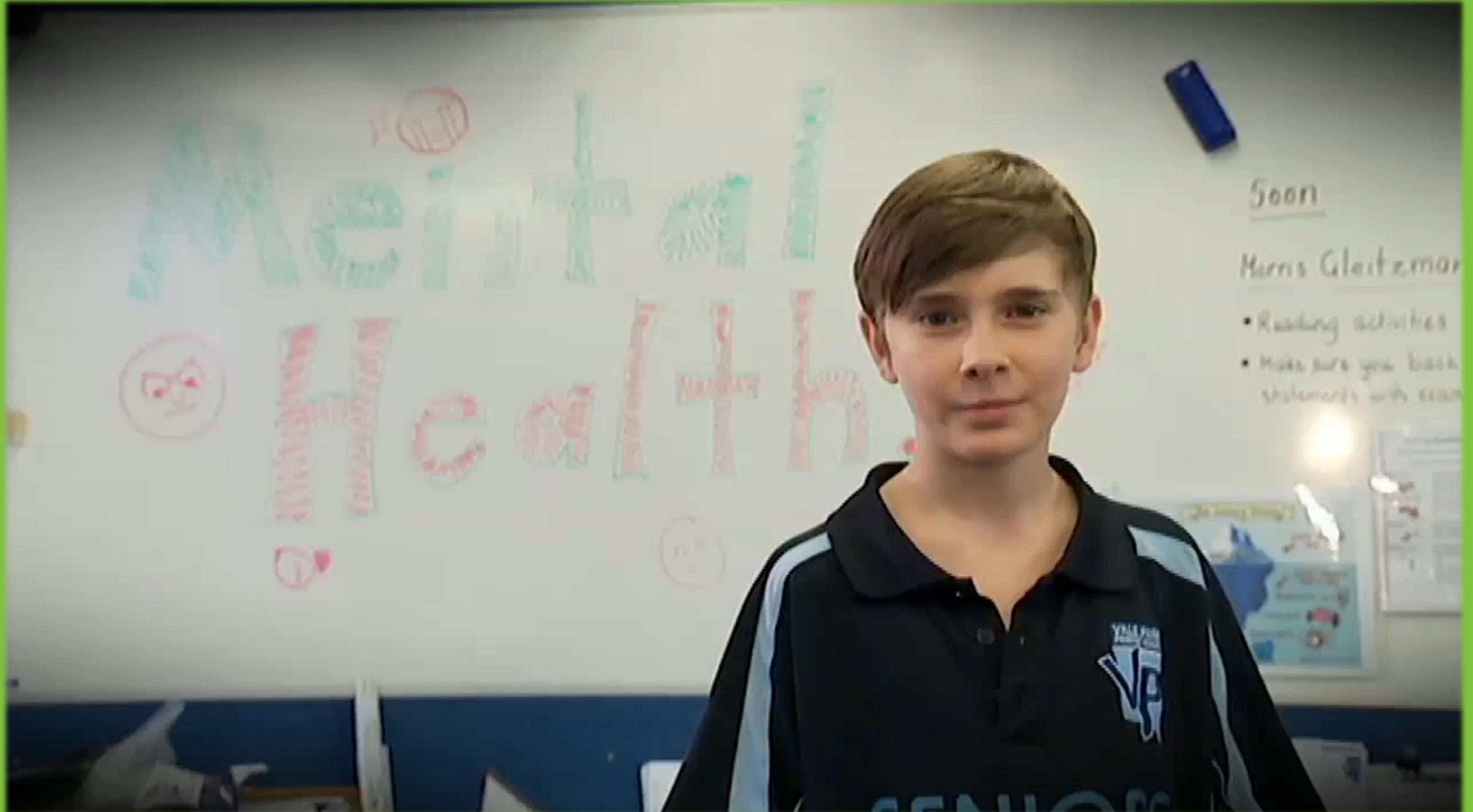
-**Help them work out their body feels** when they're experiencing emotions - *'Have you got butterflies in your tummy? That ok! That can happen when we are nervous'*.

-**Model how you recognise YOUR** emotions.

-Releasing emotions healthily by **drawing, talking to someone they trust, acting their feelings out with toys, playing music, exercise, journalling, read...**



Social and Emotional Learning



Big Emotions

When your child is **VERY** upset they might shout, hit things or behave in other heightened ways. So, you might need to help your child **calm down**.

When they're **calm**, help them understand that strong emotions are OK but **behaviour** like screaming and hitting isn't.



Managing Emotions

Help children understand **strong emotions are OK** but **undesirable behaviour is not**.

Strategies for **strong emotions**:

- Excited: **Clap your hands**
- Anxious: **Deep breaths**
- Sad: **Ask for a hug**
- Angry: **squeeze/yell in a cushion**



- Visit raisingchildren.net.au for further strategies 😊

Coping With Meltdowns

4-11 year olds

Strengthening Emotional Skills

Ideas to help strengthen your older child's ability to understand/manage emotions:

- Help your child notice early physical signs of strong emotions. *'When I was stuck in traffic yesterday, my heart was racing and I felt really hot. Does that happen to you when you're frustrated?'*
- Help your child notice early behaviour signs of strong emotions. *'You're starting to hit that keyboard a bit hard. Do you need to stop for a minute and get some fresh air?'*
- Work with your child on a list of things they could do when they notice strong emotions building up, like **going for a run, listening to loud music on their headphones, or meditating.** Try to include plenty of options so your child can choose ones that feel right in different situations.





Communication



Communication strategies with your child include:

- ✓ **Empathize** when your child struggles & invite them to share their feelings (create a safe space)
- ✓ **Validate their feelings** instead of dismissing them. Asking them “how did that make you feel?” “What’s on your mind?”
- ✓ Be a **good listener** & listen without judgment.
- ✓ Resist the urge to tell them how they should **feel, or to just minimize or ignore the emotions.**
- ✓ Let your them know you **are available** for them if they need
- ✓ This still applies to older children:
 - **TWO** things can be **TRUE**. I feel ‘X’. **AND** can also do ‘coping strategy’ to help me get through ‘the hard thing’.





**It's funny, without
riffing too much on
the shorts**



YOUR Emotions as a parent



Self regulation



Regulating your own emotional responses when responding to children's emotions (or just in general) is important, albeit tricky at times! This could be taking a deep breath, moving your body, nature time, music, removing yourself from the space if possible etc.

Any experiences you remember having to draw on regulating your own emotions? Maybe it's DAILY! Do you do anything in particular or want to try? Share 😊

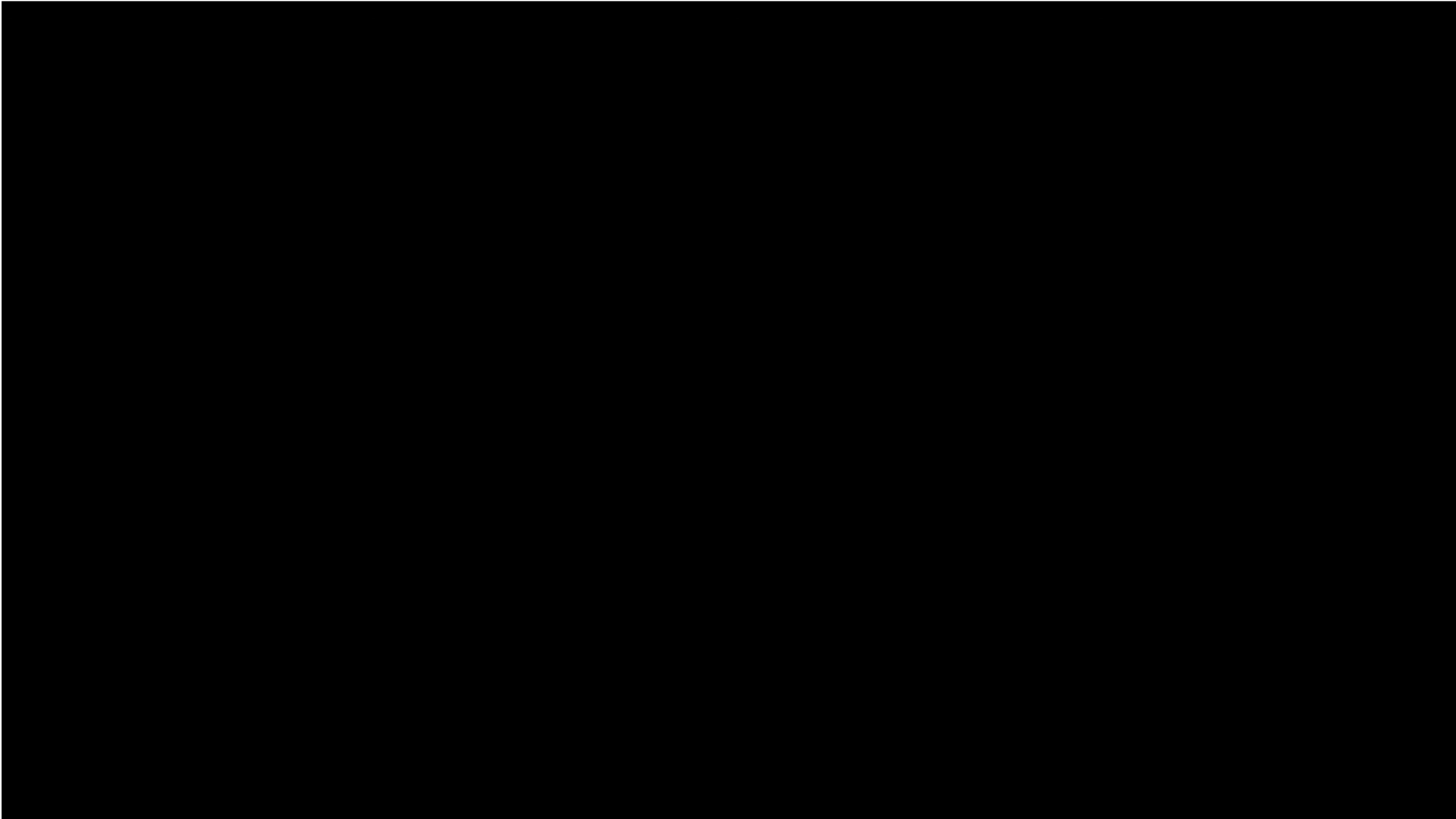
Empathy & Firmness



Respond with **empathy + firmness** when responding to behaviours.

This means keeping your own emotions in check & being **empathetic**/validating theirs, BUT telling the child the **behaviour** you would like to see & the **consequences** involved – **Boundaries!**





Avoid Overprotection



Aim to **avoid over-protection and rescuing.**

As **caregivers** it's natural to want to protect the child from feeling anxious or afraid – but allowing them to **avoid** what makes them anxious is **unhelpful** in the long run. While it can feel good in the short term, avoidance keeps anxiety **alive.**

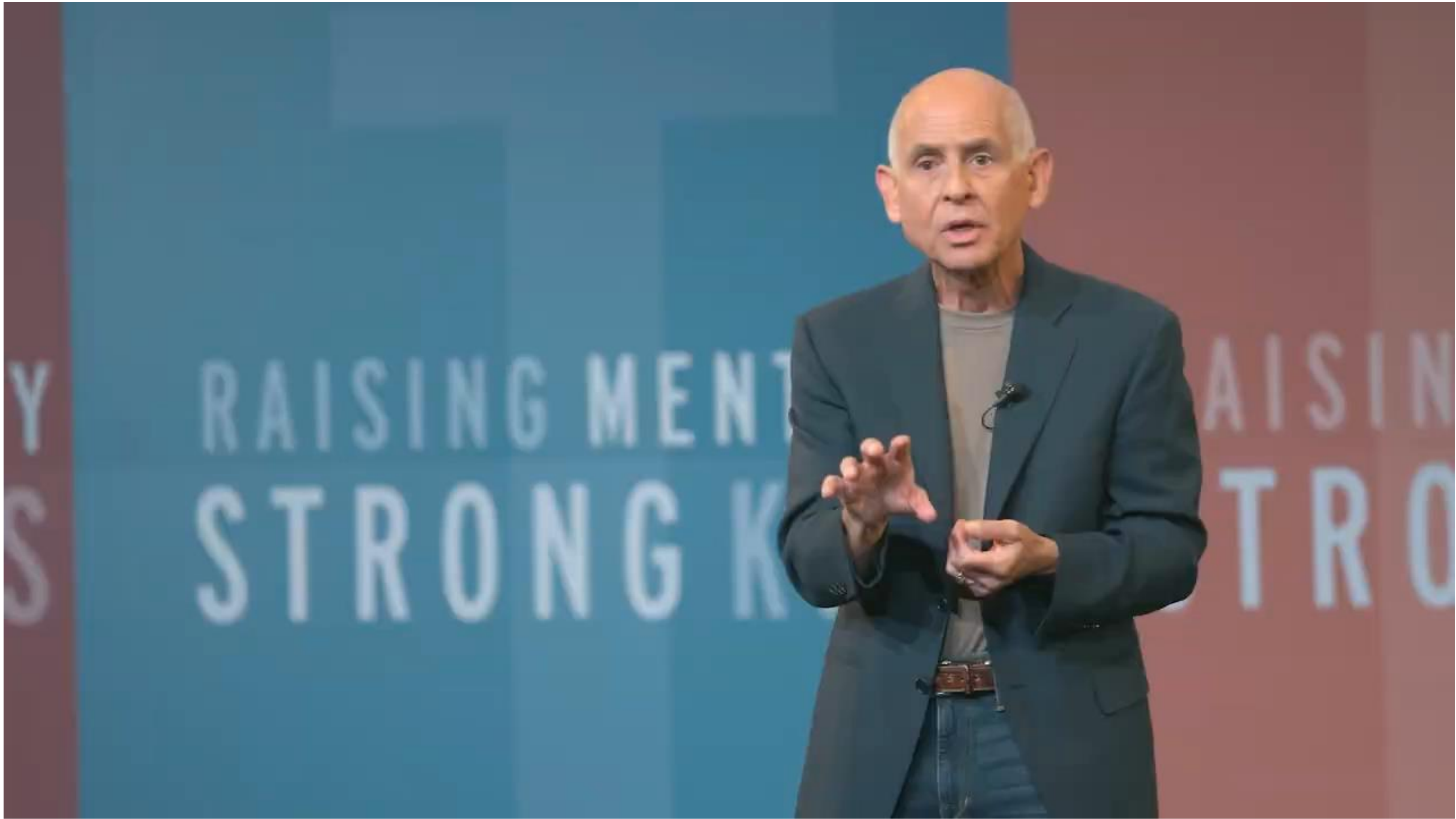
If adults are not firm and allow children to easily avoid what provokes their anxiety, the anxiety can remain, and perhaps increase the next time they need to confront it.

Encourage independence

When we **overprotect/rescue/do many things** for children, we can send them **unhelpful** messages such as:

- You can't cope with this on your own
- The situation is dangerous
- Always avoid hard things
- That when they are anxious, they will always receive lots of comfort & protection.





Encourage Independence



→ Try to not do **EVERYTHING** for them. Help them know they can do things **THEMSELVES**. It's about a **balance** of doing things for them & for themselves.

→ Give **opportunities to step outside comfort zone** - if they don't have this opportunity to realise it's not always as bad as they imagined, the anxiety can linger. **Helps them feel more capable when OLDER.**

→ Encourage your child to **set themselves a TASK – break it down into small steps to make it less scary.** *It could be things like ordering their own meal, climb the tree, carrying their own bag, feed pets, brush own teeth, packing their own lunch etc.*

→ **Is there a time you have encouraged INDEPENDENCE or had your child do something for themselves? How can you incorporate this more?**

Reassurance



Too much unspecified reassurance can be **unhelpful**. Sometimes caregivers can think providing lots of reassurance will lower the child's anxiety. **However**, this can lead to the child asking more questions and seeking **MORE** reassurance.



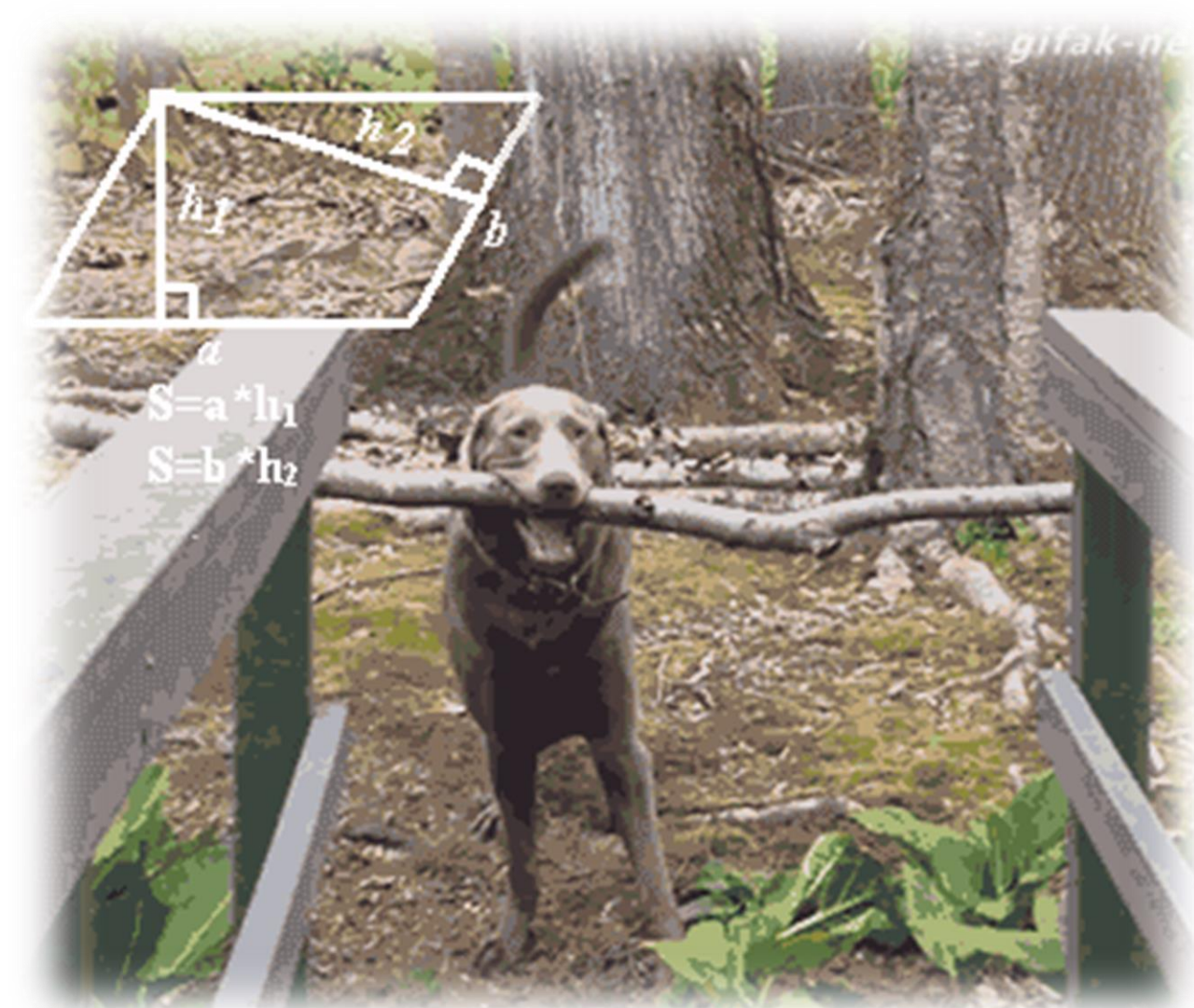
Ask **open-ended** questions instead like *“What can you do to find out about that?”* → Building the skill of being able to answer the question themselves, and not always relying on reassurance.

Problem-Solving

Involve pre-teens in **problem-solving** and **negotiating** difficult situations.

If they come to you for reassurance or a solution to a problem:

- ✓ Ask **open and curious questions**. Ask for **THEIR ideas or solutions** to a problem first **BEFORE** you give your 2 cents e.g. “What do you think you might do about that?”
- ✓ This also builds up their own **confidence & self belief**
- ✓ Let them deal with the **consequences** of not sorting something out for themselves (*rather than constantly expecting you to do it for them*), so they can **learn responsibility**. Of course this is contextual, but things like if they forget to bring a jumper, don't do their homework etc.
- ✓ This can **empower** them to deal with challenging circumstances.
- ✓ Show affection. **Tell them you love them** & reinforce that you are there for them in the process.



Reduce attention to undesirable behaviour

Gradually **reduce** the amount of attention given to **undesirable behavior**. For example – limiting the attention (or over-protecting/rescuing) given to **complaining, whining and reassurance** seeking. **Balance** of the levels of validation/empathy/reassurance given.

This doesn't mean turn away if they're doing something dangerous of course!



Reward desired behaviour



- Reinforce **desired behaviour**.
- **Acknowledge** and **praise** their efforts and progress.
- Age-appropriate specific praise: **what exactly did they do that was pleasing?** *‘Hey, well done on going to training even though you knew Jayden wasn’t going today.’ instead of, ‘You were so brave!’*
- By making your praises **specific**, it reinforces the skills your child is practicing.

***hint* Child can replicate behaviour from the praise!**



Reward desired behaviour

It's about offering frequent praise & positivity for **desired behavior shown** (rather than constantly putting attention on the behavior you don't like to see)

hint Child can replicate behaviour from the praise!

Smallest steps and success keeps them **motivated**.

When you acknowledge things that are going well, it can also create a sense of **bonding with you and your child** 😊

Embrace Imperfection

- ✓ Let your child know we are all **human & we all make mistakes**
- ✓ It's important they **HEAR** you say it's okay to make mistakes, that challenges are opportunities to learn & **you love them for who they are and not what they do.**
- ✓ It's about trying your best. NOT **PERFECTION.**
- ✓ Being **kind to** yourself! Even if you do 'fail' it's still a stepping stone **towards success.**

PERFECTION

FIRST
ATTEMPT
IN
LEARNING

Embrace
TRYING!

*Failure is a
stepping stone
towards
success. We
can improve
and find new
ways – use grit
& persistence.*

TRY → FAIL → LEARN



Have you embraced the idea of failure (and how it can be a GOOD thing) with your child before? Or helped them change their perspective on a seemingly negative situation?

SUCCESS!

ACTIVITY FOR KIDS

- Think of something you **can do** now that you **never used to be able to do** (skill, sport, talent etc).
- How many times did it take you to “fail,” before you reached success?
- This reminds them that they CAN get through a challenge



Positive Affirmations

Positive Affirmations are words you can think or say to yourself to boost how you feel. They are a great way to build **RESILIENCE!**

- “I am....” *confident, capable, proud, unique, amazing etc.*
- “I will always do my best”
- “I love being me”
- “I can...”
- “This is challenging but.....”
- “I believe....”
- “When I make mistakes I will....”



For anxious children

Express positive, but realistic, expectations

Don't promise a child that what they fear won't happen e.g. that you know they won't fail the test. Express **confidence** that they'll be able to **manage** whatever happens.

When we promise kids that their fear won't happen, we're giving them a **false sense of certainty**, which is not only potentially untrue, it can feed the anxiety. Instead, we want to send the message that they can **handle the situation**, no matter what happens.



‘Even if’ Statements



- For when your child is anxious. ‘Even if’ statements acknowledge the worry, but they also incorporate **problem solving & planning ahead**.

Formula → Even if that bad thing happens, I can cope with it like this

- **Even if I mess up, I can take a deep breath & keep going**
- **Even if I don’t know all the answers in the test, I can answer the ones I do know first**
- **Even if I don’t know how to play lacrosse, I CAN learn & just try my best**

Accept that **fears** could come true, but we can **WORK THROUGH** them & face them. We can be empowered to **take action** to **plan** on how we can cope. You could help your kids **generate some** examples of these **statements/role play** the situations beforehand.



Role Modelling

Children learn about **resilience** from **watching** how you **respond** to tough times and setbacks.

When your child sees you **try again, let anger go, or think positively** in difficult situations, they learn that they can do the same.

Talk about **your mistakes**.

Demonstrate how **you use coping skills/taking part in things that bring you joy** to manage stress or get through difficult times.

This also means **setting your own personal boundaries and seeking help**.

For Example:

Model healthy ways of YOU

modelling anxiety “I am feeling a bit worried about X, so I am going to take some slow breaths to calm down”.

Self-Care

- Put on your **own oxygen** mask first
- **Regulate** your own emotional responses when responding to children's emotions
- It's crucial you **care for yourself** (again this is also part of role modelling. If they see you not caring for yourself, that's the behaviour they are being modelled!)
- Could relate to **physical, social, mental or emotional strategies**
- Teach your child the importance of self-care and find ways to do **healthy activities together**
- *Remind yourself of your coping strategies & prioritise them amongst parenting 😊*



Relationships & Resilience

Relationships are the foundation of your child's resilience.

Strong relationships with you & their other caregivers helps your child feel **loved, safe & secure.**

This sense of safety & security gives your child the **confidence** to explore their world & to recover from any **setbacks** they experience.

This connection gives your child a sense of **belonging** & the feeling that they're **valued.** These feelings then help to build your child's **resilience** 😊





- ✓ Children **learn resilience** through experience. Each time your child overcomes a problem, it builds their confidence in their ability to **handle the next challenge**.
- ✓ Be **encouraging**. Let the child know you appreciate how hard they are working and remind them the more they tolerate anxiety, the more it can **diminish**.
- ✓ Remember to be **present, firm & empathetic/kind** as a parent. The words **'I'm here'** do wonders.
- ✓ Part of being resilient is also **asking for help** – if you feel like you or your child needs some extra support there are support services available 😊

Lifestyle factors



Lifestyle factors



Move (lots!)



Good sleeping habits



Eating fresh fruit, vegetables & wholegrains



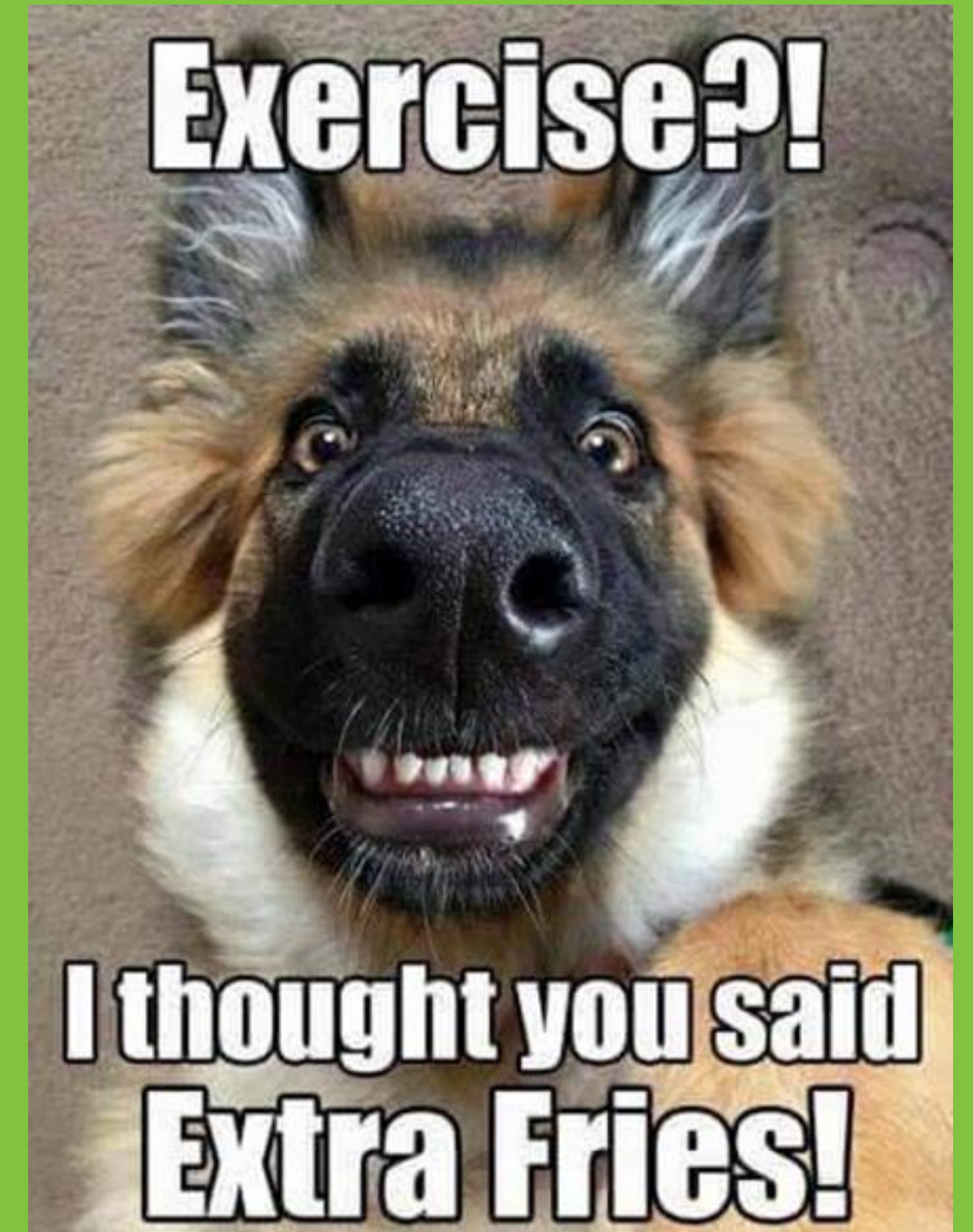
Strong social connection

Why move more?

Children who worry could have built-up tension in their body. Movement can help them burn off **excess energy** and feel **calmer** in their body.

Children who have high rates of physical activity:

- Can have lower rates of **anxiety** and **depression**
- Better **attention** and **concentration**
- Can be more **motivated** to achieve



Moving more

- No more than **2 hours** of screen time per day
- At least **60 minutes** of moderate to vigorous exercise a day
- Active role models (yourself!)
- Keep the **focus on fun!**



Social Connection

- Developing, maintaining & also modelling **positive connections** is crucial, as it influences a child's ability to adapt to life's stressors
- Being exposed to a **wide range** of interest and/or opportunities.
- Encourage **play dates, sporting/music clubs, playing with YOU** or other group settings
- **We aren't resilient on our own. Letting kids know you are behind them and will support them.**



Mindfulness



Why regular mindfulness?

- Higher levels of **attention & focus**.
- Increases **resilience**.
- Better **emotional management** skills.



Regular mindfulness

- **Role modelling** mindful behaviours:
 - Active listening
 - Being present & not multi-tasking
 - Being in nature
 - Meditation & breathing exercises



Mindfulness Skills/Toolkit

Anxiety often involves uncomfortable physiological sensations; **relaxation skills** can help. Remind them of these strategies when they feel worried etc.

- **Exploring nature**
- **Sensory/Visual activities**
- **Progressive muscle relaxation**
- **Silent reading**
- **Slow breathing**
- **Meditation**



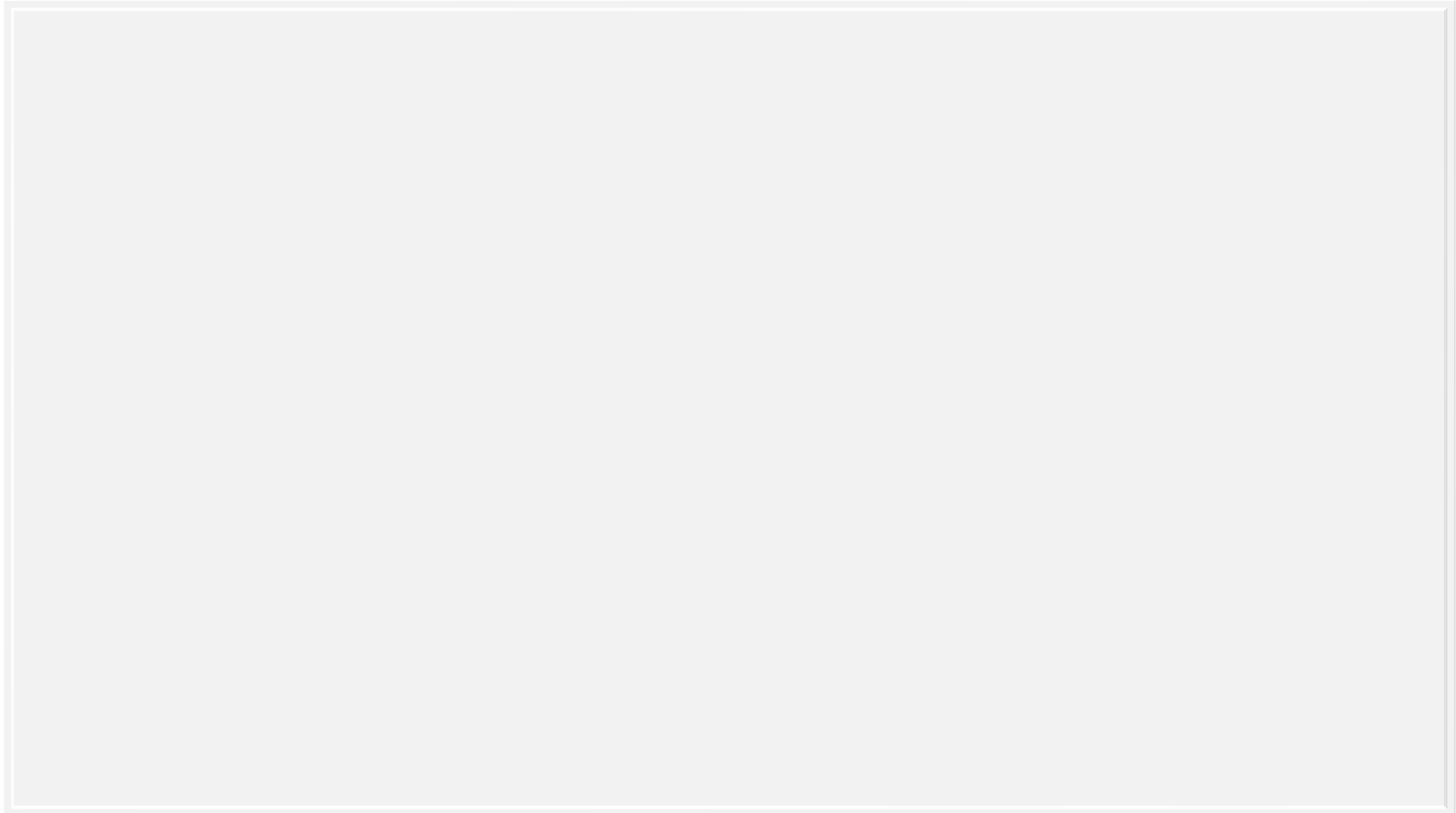
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MINDFUL LOOKING



BODY SCAN MEDITATION



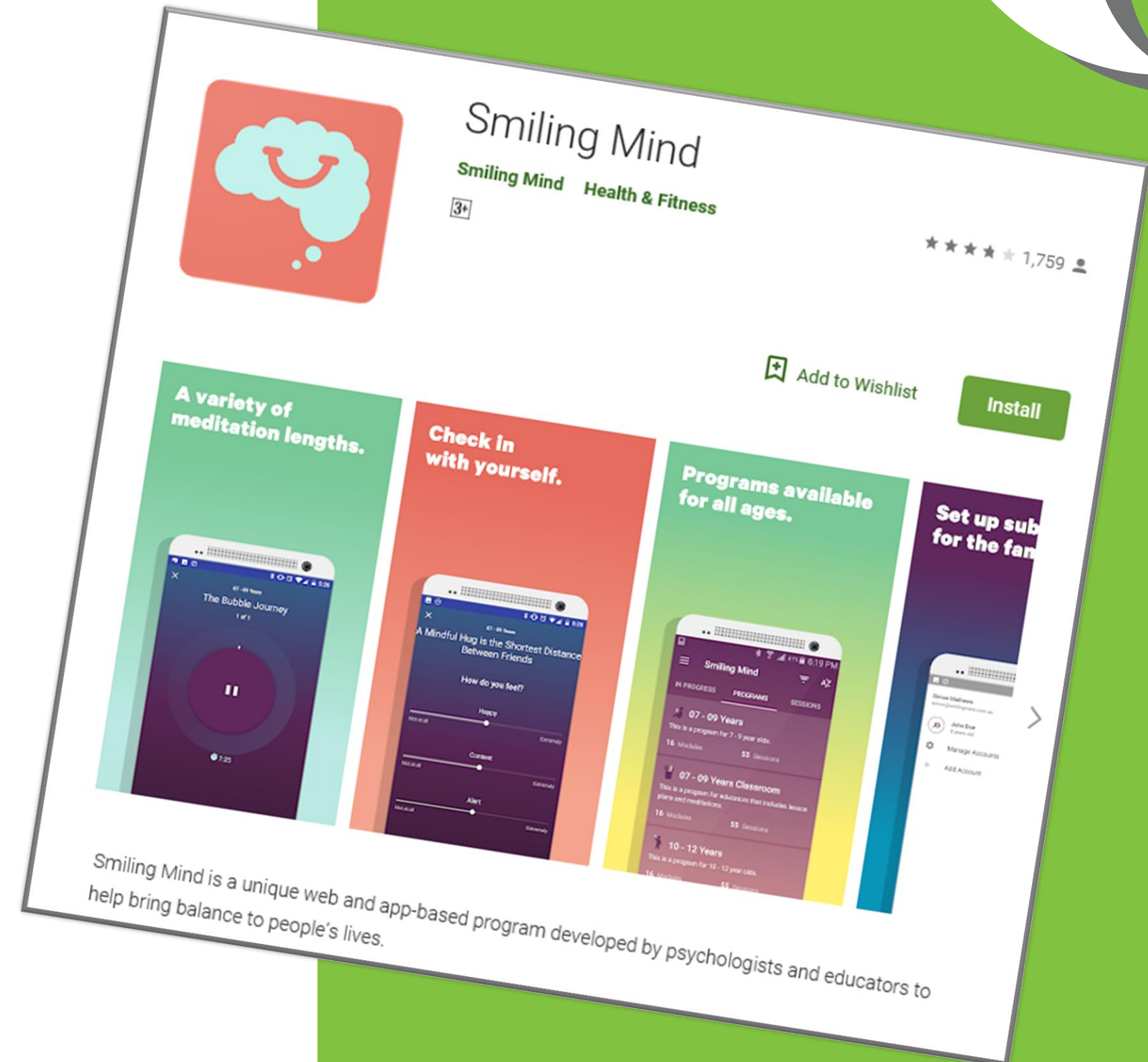
Deep breathing using your hand.





Age-appropriate mindfulness apps

- **Smiling Mind** – offers guidance on their website on how you can make your home a mindful one
- ReachOut's **Breathe2Relax**
- **Bedtime Explorer's** podcast

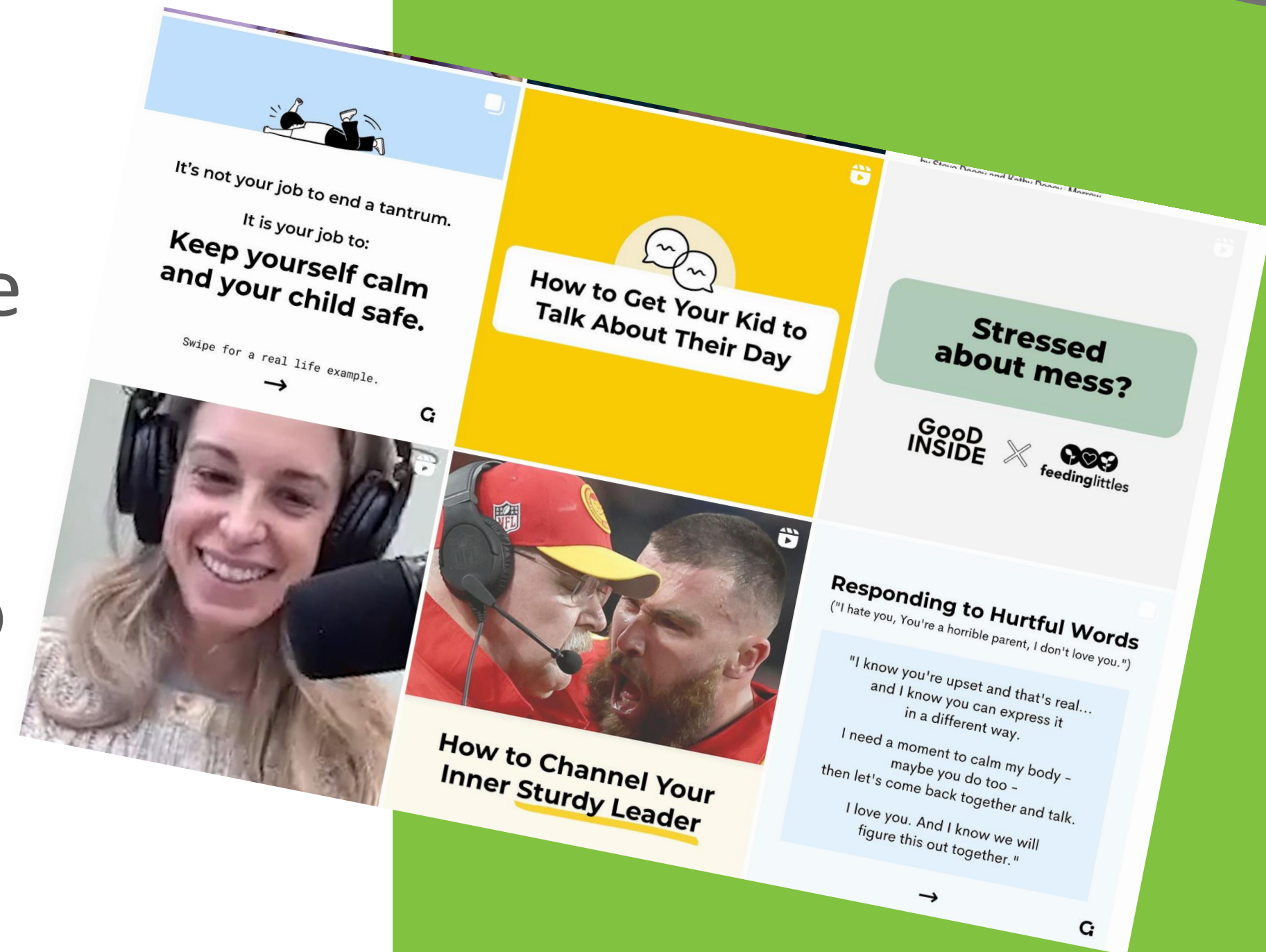


How do I know if a child needs professional help?

- ✓ **Interference:** When anxiety significantly interferes in daily activities
- ✓ **Age appropriateness:** When the anxiety is not age-appropriate
- ✓ **Distress:** Experiencing a high level of negative stress
- ✓ **Length of time:** Several weeks to 6 months

Some resources 😊

- Maggie Dent: Books & website
- Dr Daniel Amen: Raising Mentally Strong Kids book and his recent podcast on Jay Shetty.
- Jess 'Nurtured First' Instagram page
- Nick & Billy 'popcultureparenting' Instagram page & podcast
- Dr Becky Kennedy: Child Psych who has digestible info on Instagram, Youtube and podcast
- Raisingchildren.net.au



Where do I get help?



Ngala Parenting Line:
9368 9368

7 days, 8am to 8pm.
Free telephone support
Parents / Carers of 0 – 18 years



Ngala Parenting Services



Supporting people like you in WA

At Ngala we have a range of community and residential services across Western Australia which support local communities.

Services range from private consultations to access to our Parenting Line which is available for all parenting queries 7 days a week from 8am to 8pm.

Ngala's services have been developed to provide support for all parents and carers with children from conception to adulthood.



Ngala Residential Parenting Service

Learn to overcome your early parenting



Ngala Parenting Line

Talk about your parenting concerns with a



Geraldton Family and Youth Support Service

Help young people aged 11 to 18 years to

HelpingMinds



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It all starts with a conversation

Are you concerned about

[Call Us Now](#)

(08) 9427 7100

Monday to Friday

8.30 am – 4.30 pm (AWST)

helpingminds.org.au

Free support to the family and friends of people living with mental health challenges

Counselling for 8 years and above

Workshops, Events and Support Groups

Advocacy for your rights

Support from peers

Education and Training in Schools and the Community

Kids Helpline



Kids 5-12 Teens 13-17 Young Adults 18-25 Parents About Privacy Donate Feedback Schools



Get Help!

1800 55 1800



 **1800 55 1800**
Anytime. Any Reason.



Kids
aged 5 to 12

Enter!



Teens
aged 13 to 17

Enter!



Young Adults
aged 18 to 25

Enter!



Parents
and Carers

Enter!



Schools
and Teachers

Enter!

1800 551 800

kidshelpline.org.au

Support helpline

Free qualified counselling service for young people aged **5 to 25 years**

Call or WebChat
24 hours 7 days a week

headspace



headspace

Find a centre Emergency assistance Donate now Login or create account

Explore topics Our services Online & phone support For professionals & educators About us Get involved Search the site...

Hi. What can we help you with today?

I'm a young person
and I'm looking for information
about mental ill-health

Go

get support

1800 650 890 (7 days: 9am – 12:30am AEST)

headspace.org.au

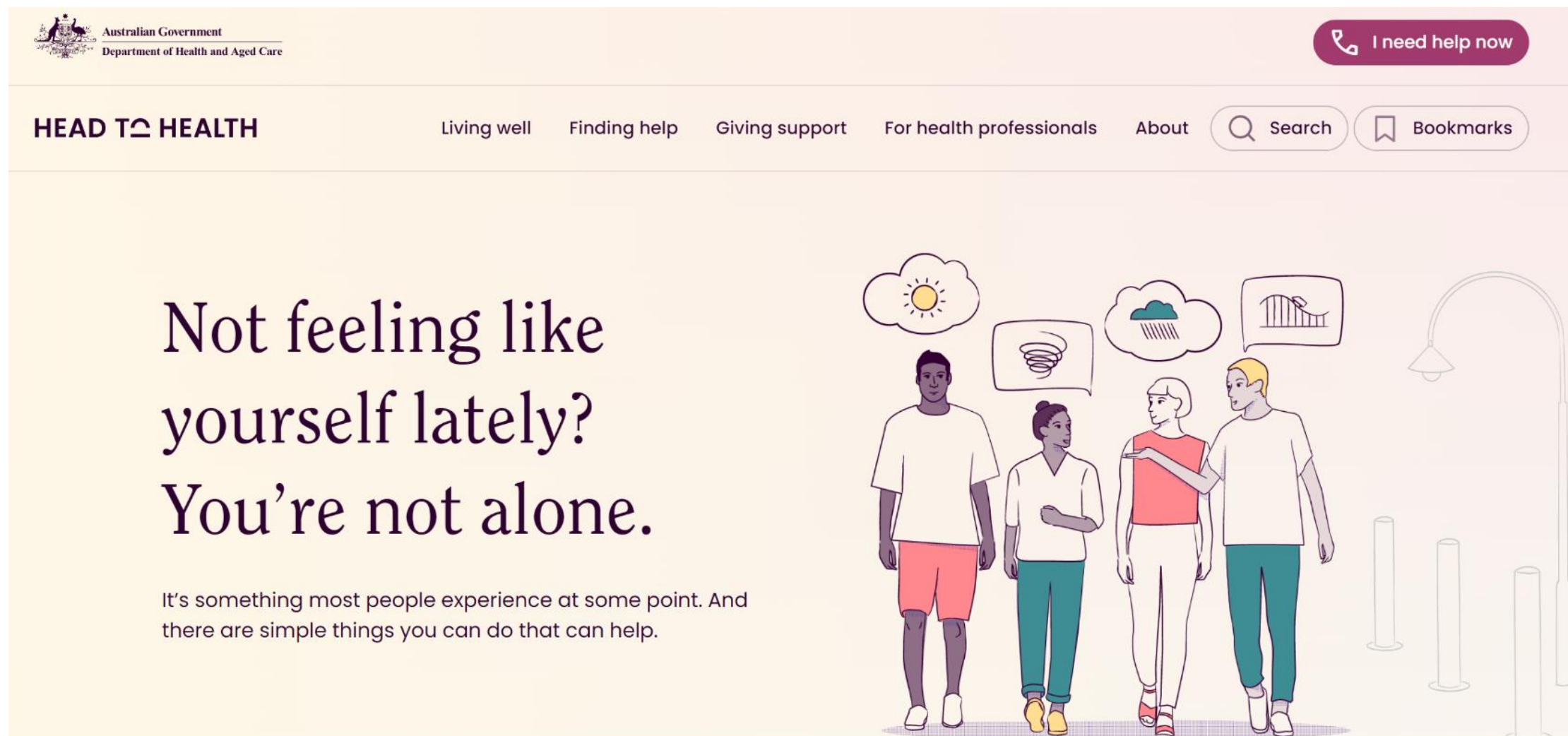
Support for young people aged 12 to 25 years, and their families

Telephone and web chat available

Local headspace centres

Work & Study Support

Head to Health



1800 595 212

8.30am to 5pm weekdays

Head to Health helps all Australians access the mental health and wellbeing services that are right for them.

It makes it easier to navigate and choose the most suitable care options, whether that's face-to-face, via phone, or online.

You can also access translation/interpreting services

Head to Health connects you to mental health support



Beyond Blue



Search



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Need support?

Get support ▾

Learn about mental health ▾

Maintain wellbeing ▾

Get involved ▾

Login

We're here for you

Your mental health is important. Some days are better than others and we all need a helping hand from time to time.

Wherever you are in your mental health journey, we'll be here to help.

[Find mental health support today](#)



Flood information and support

Flooding continues to affect people across Australia, with communities in the Kimberley heavily impacted. [Flood information and support is available.](#)

1300 224 636

beyondblue.org.au

Support helpline

Free online and telephone support for anyone feeling anxious or depressed

24 hours 7 days a week

You can also access translation/interpreting services

Lifeline



If life in danger call
Triple Zero 000

Call 13 11 14 >
24/7 Crisis Support

Text us >
Online

Chat with us >
Online

Get help ▾ Real experiences ▾ Get involved ▾ Resources ▾ About ▾



Want to talk
about it?



We're here for you

Call 13 11 14

Chat with us

Text us

13 11 14

lifelinewa.org.au

Support helpline

Support for anyone in a crisis situation

Call **24 hours 7 days a week**

OR Text or Chat online

You can also access
translation/interpreting services

Thanks for
participating!
Reminder
to...





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Mental Health Services & Carer Support



helpingminds.org.au



(08) 9427 7100

