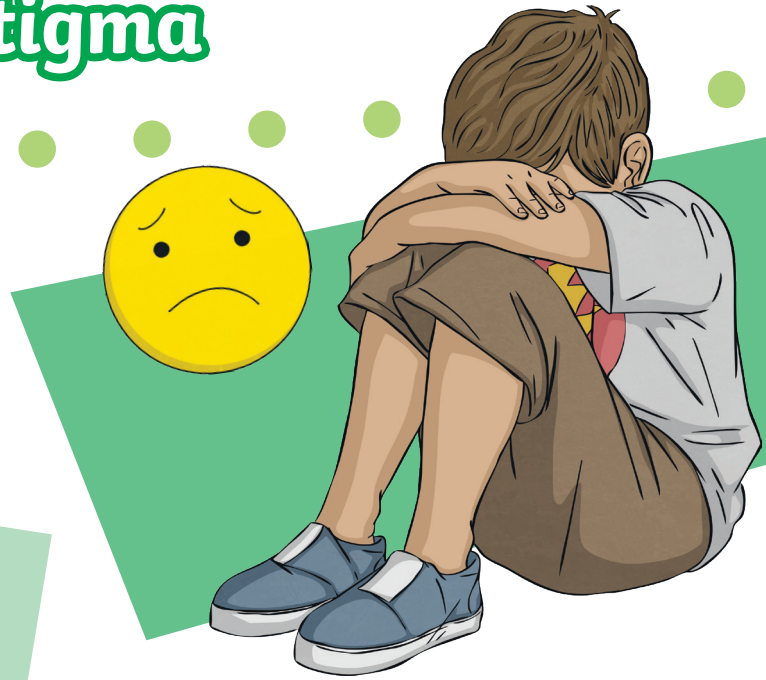
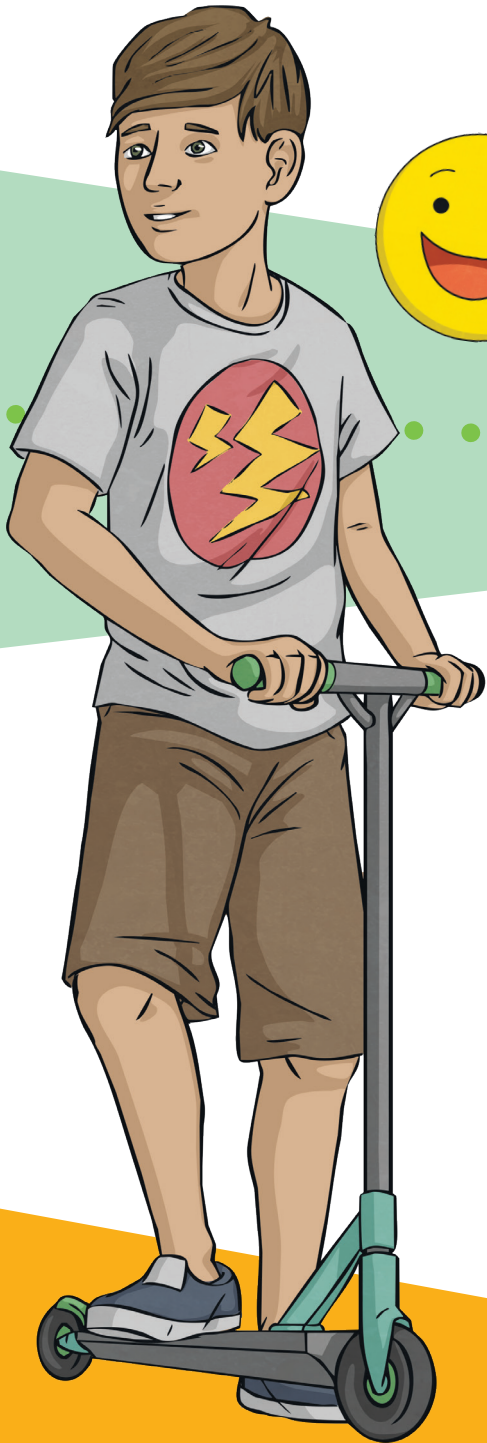


# Let's Talk About Mental Health Stigma

## Disclaimer

We hope you find the information on our website and resources useful. This resource is provided for informational and educational purposes only. It is intended to offer general information and should never be taken as professional advice on mental health. As information on mental health is complex and is a developing area, we do not warrant that the information provided is correct. You and your students should not rely on the material included within this resource and we do not accept any responsibility if you or your students do. As mental health is complex, you should undertake proper and relevant training before teaching on mental health. These resources are intended to support you once you have received such training. It is up to you to contact a suitably qualified health professional if you are concerned about your mental health and it is up to you to advise your students to contact a suitably qualified health professional if they are concerned about their mental health. When using this resource, you are responsible for the safety of those involved with using this resource, including staff and students. It is up to you to follow your school or organisation's safeguarding policies and procedures should your use of this resource raise anything covered by the policies or procedures.

# Let's Talk About Mental Health Stigma



Mental health can be a topic that is not talked about for many different reasons. People regularly talk about physical illness, such as breaking a bone, feeling sick or having headaches. However, people are less likely to talk about their mental health. People can feel confused, angry, upset or embarrassed by mental health. The best way to overcome these feelings is to find out more about mental health issues and to talk about them with others.

This activity will help you to talk about mental health with others and will hopefully reduce the stigma around it. Stigma means something to be ashamed or embarrassed about, or that something is a disgrace. Mental health should not be a stigma. It is common and at some point in most people's lives, they or someone they know will be affected by it.

Please read the story below and then answer the questions. Discuss the answers as a group. You may need to spend some time researching the answers or talking to the adult with you.

You are in the park with your friends and see some people from your class. They are in the park with their parents/carers. You go over to talk to them and start playing where the group of parents/carers are sat.

As you are playing, you overhear them talking about a girl in the year above you. They say that she is struggling and she is having lots of time out of class. One of the parents says that she thinks it is unfair because she is taking up too much of the teacher's time. Another parent says that she thinks it is all attention-seeking behaviour and she needs to sort herself out. You hear the word 'anxiety' and wonder what it means.

You know the girl that they are talking about. You have seen that she has her lunch with a close friend in one of the classrooms, as she gets upset in the dinner hall when it is noisy and busy. She also goes to see the mentor or counsellor in school during lesson time and gets to make exciting things instead of doing her lessons. Some of the children pick on her and do not play with her. They call her names when the teachers are not around.

As you listen to the parents/carers chatting, you begin to wonder what anxiety is and why people treat her differently. You decide to ask your parents when you get home.

What is anxiety?

---

---

---

---

Why do you think people treat the girl differently?

---

---

---

---



Do you think she is different to other people?

---

---

---

---

Do you think she needs support from other people? Perhaps from friends or adults in school, etc.?

---

---

---

---

Do you think the girl would be upset to know people had been talking about her and saying it wasn't fair that she took a lot of the teacher's time up and was 'attention-seeking'?

---

---

---

---

Is there anything the other children could do in school when they see the girl?

---

---

---

---

Do you think it is important to understand mental health and how it can make people behave?

---

---

---

---

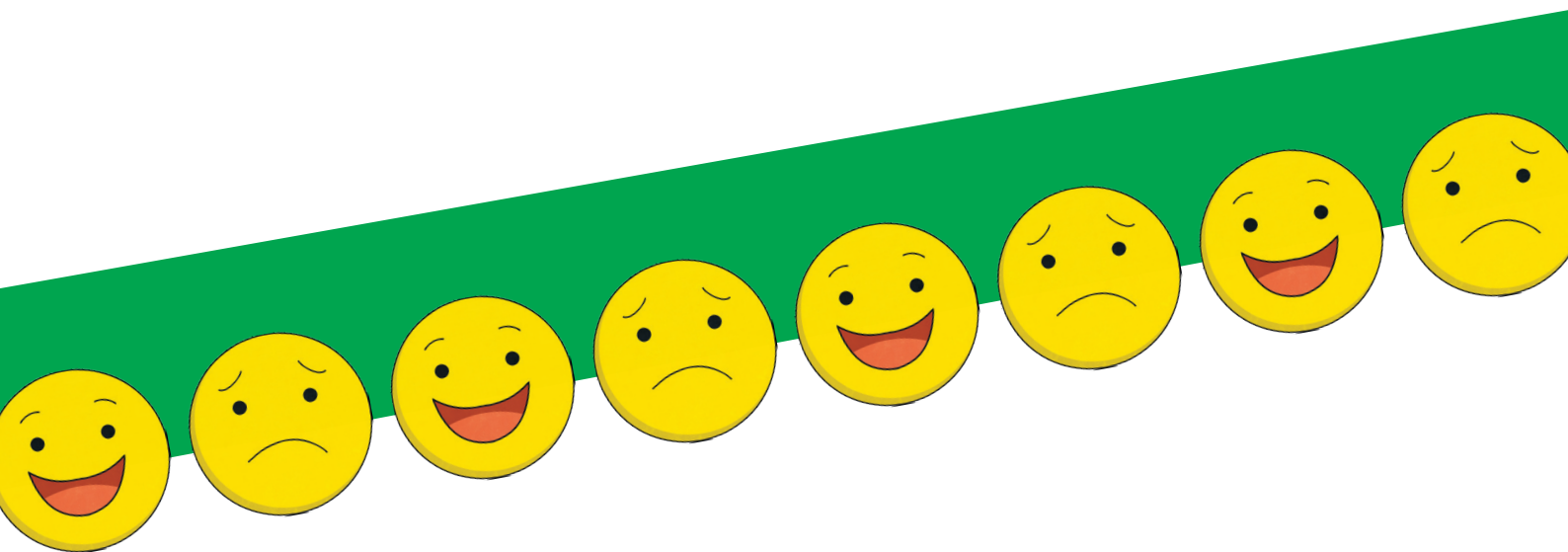
If you do not understand what anxiety is and how it can affect people, do you think it is OK to ask an adult?

---

---

---

---



Do you think the other children might feel scared when the girl acts differently and becomes upset or angry? If yes, what might make the children feel better?

---

---

---

---

Do you think the parents/carers are being supportive or are they saying anxiety is a weakness and she should just sort it out herself?

---

---

---

---

What other questions do you have about mental health?

---

---

---

---