

# Marsden State High School



Worry is a part of life.

## What is Worry...

- Worry is a normal human process. From an evolutionary perspective worry kept our ancestors alive. If we had a bad experience, ate food that made us sick, or went to a place where there was danger worry kept us from repeating these behaviours.
- Today we do not have the same worries as our ancestors, we have food, shelter, doctors and services readily available to keep us safe.
- Unfortunately, our 'old brain' still acts like it did many years ago, and it tries to find the biggest perceived threat to us in the present and tries to work out the best-case scenarios to prevent this threat.
- When we focus our attention on our worry and worry about how much we are worrying this can cause a 'worry spiral' (CCI, 2018).
- Worrying is not dangerous, it cannot hurt us, but too much attention on worry is not helpful.
- Excessive worrying does not mean your teen has an anxiety disorder; worry is a part of life.

## What Worry may look like-



### Behaviours-

- Constant rumination of thoughts and repeatedly worrying about the same things.
- Getting distressed or worrying about worrying.
- Believing that the constant worry cycle is something that they cannot control, stop doing, or help.
- Being concerned after looking on the internet, watching the news, or hearing some bad news about others.
- Thinking they may have anxiety because they worry a lot.

### Do's

- Reassure your teen that adversity is normal. Life is full of speedbumps and worry helps us to figure out what we should do next.
- Help your teen find the positive aspects of the situations they are facing, sometimes a hard lesson opens a new door, or facilitates personal growth.

### Try not to-

- Get angry with your teen, even if you are frustrated-walk away.
- Telling your teen to stop worrying will probably not help their situation, distraction and non-excessive reassurance is best.
- Try not to get into the habit of reassuring your teen excessively, as this is positive reinforcement for their worry.
- Try not to focus on your teens worries or encourage your teen to focus on their worries for too long. This kind of attention is unhelpful, and distraction is a much better strategy.



## Strategies to Help-



- Accepting that worry is a normal part of everyone's life...
- Teach kids that worrying is actually a good problem solving and decision-making strategy.
- Discourage your teen from using the internet to find the answers to their issue.
- Avoid Dr Google, this strategy can cause more worry than necessary sometimes.
- Discourage negative thoughts around their worry, such as the belief that they cannot control their worry, and that worry is bad.
- If your teen asks, 'what if?' a lot, this can trigger a 'worry spiral' (CCI, 2018). Encourage your teen to worry when things actually happen, not before.
- Use language such as worry, nervousness and concern to avoid overuse of the word anxiety, which can lead to teens worrying they may have an anxiety disorder.

## Services-

GP Mental Health Care Plan- Up to 20 free visits psychologist visits.  
Headspace- GP and Psychologists.  
Wesley Mission-  
<https://www.wmq.org.au/therapy-respite-and-wellness/psychology>  
Kids Helpline- 1800 55 1800

## Resources-

### Centre for Clinical Interventions

<https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself/Worry-and-Rumination>

## References-

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