



The Changing Lives Mental Health Support Team

*Challenging Behaviour and Anxiety
Parent Workshop*

Hello



Overview of today's session:



1 Introduction to Changing Lives

2 Emotional regulation

3 Strategies to support emotional regulation

4 Introduction to anxiety

5 Signs of anxiety

6 How to support children with anxiety

7 How to refer into Changing Lives

Meet The Team



Rachel Zilate
Team leader



Rebecca Haynes
Supervising Practitioner



Charlotte Kennedy
EMHP



Louise Evans
EMHP



Laura Guest
Trainee EMHP



Ella Smith
Trainee EMHP



Where are we based?



We have 9 Mental Health Support Teams across Derby and Derbyshire.

We are the mental health support team based within the Swanwick area.

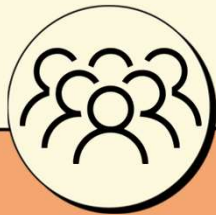
Our Centre of Excellence is Swanwick Hall School.

We work with Ripley Academy, Belper High School and all primary schools.

What do we offer?



Whole-School
Approach to
mental health



Group work
(6-8 sessions)



1:1
interventions
(6-8 sessions)



1:1 or group
work for
parents &
carers

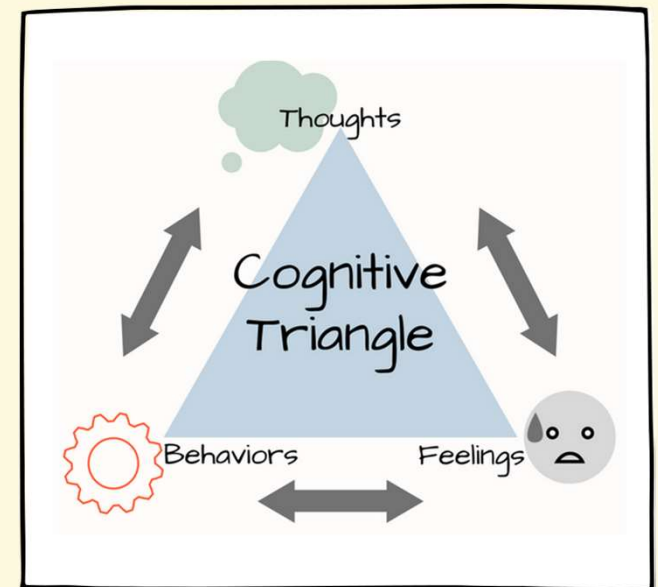


What do we offer?



We support children and young people struggling with mild to moderate mental health difficulties. We are NOT a counselling service.
We use Low-Intensity Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT)

- Low mood
- Anxiety (social anxiety/separation anxiety)
- Worry Management (general anxiety)
- Panic
- Sleep hygiene
- Simple phobias
- Challenging behaviours



Emotional Dysregulation

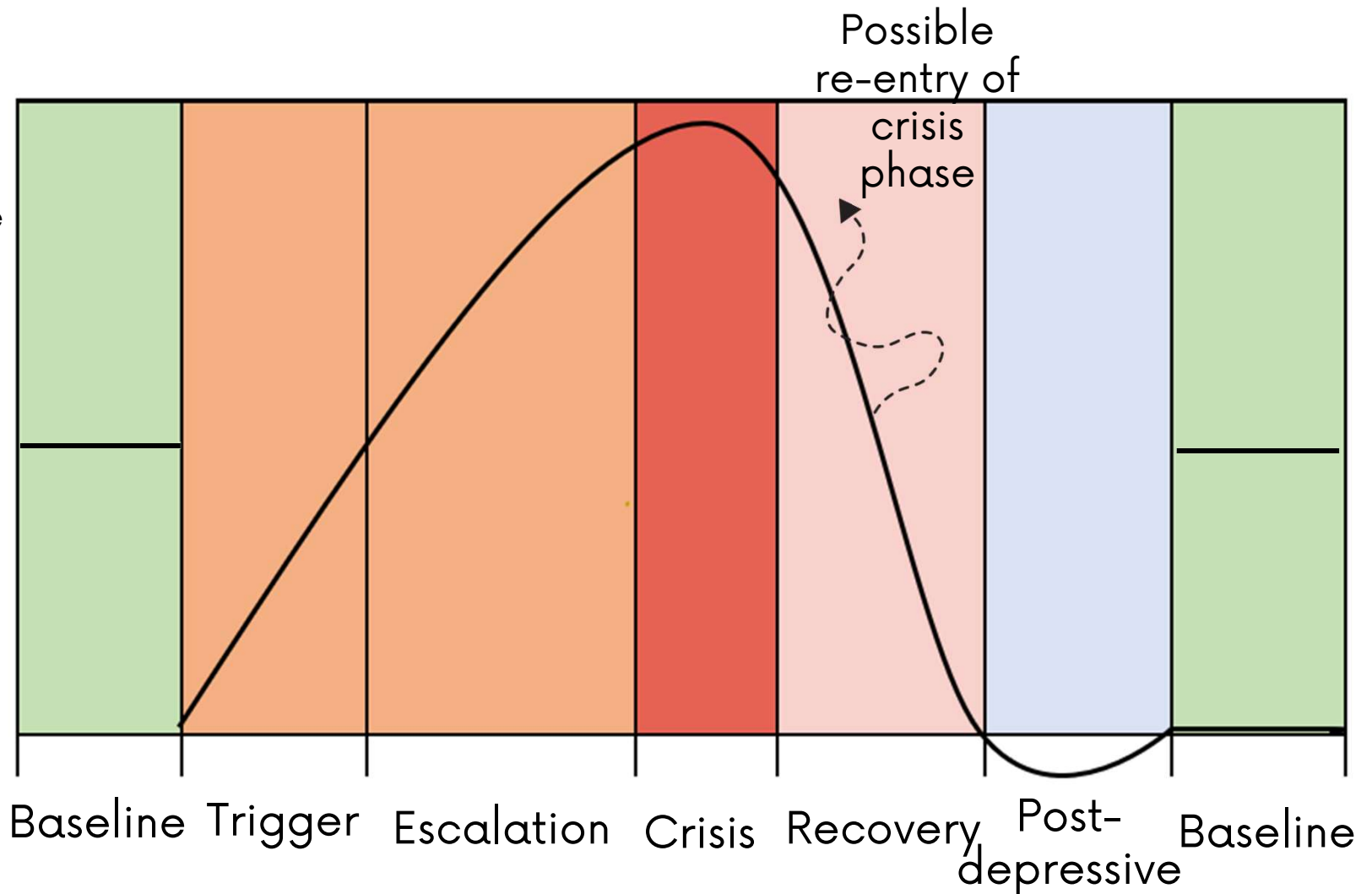
Reflection

What are the main signs that your child may be struggling?

The Emotional Arousal Cycle

Some children may have a higher baseline:

- Younger children
- Children with ASD or other LD
- Those who have experienced stressful life events
- More sensitive children



What does your child's stress arousal cycle look like?

Baseline

- Chats about cars
- Seeks affection
- Plays calmly with peers
- Smiley

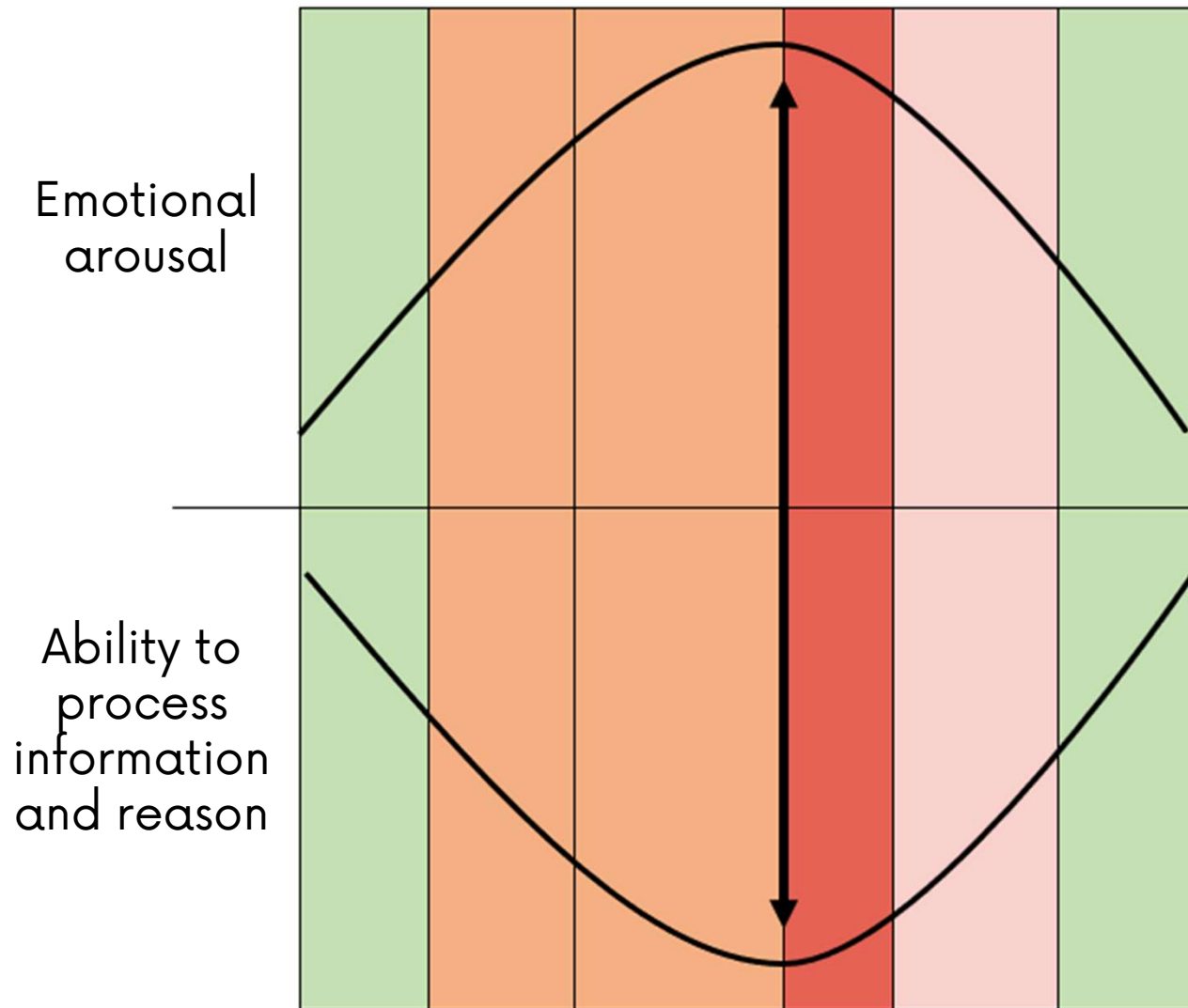
Escalation

- Becomes tearful
- Puts their hood up
- Refuses to do work
- Argues with friends

Crisis

- Leaves the classroom
- Hides
- Shouts
- Hits others

What does stress do to our thinking?



During the crisis phase, emotional arousal is at its highest and the ability to think clearly and reason is at its lowest

All Behaviour is Communication



How can we
support children
with emotional
regulation?

The 3 R's

1

Regulate

Firstly we need to help the child to regulate and calm their fight/flight/freeze response

2

Relate

We then need to relate and connect with the child through an attuned, empathetic and sensitive relationship

3

Reason

We can then support the child to reflect and learn from the situation



Regulate

- Check in with yourself first? Are you regulated?
- Focus on soothing
- Support the child to feel calm, safe and loved
- Avoid giving consequences
- Provide a safe space/ remove others if possible
- Provide a source of comfort (toy, blanket)
- Utilise sensory tools
- Practice breathing exercises
- Reduce speech and demands

"It's ok, just breathe slowly. I'll help you. I'm here."

Relate

- Speak in calm, short sentences
- Use a calm tone of voice
- Connect with your child
- Get down to their level
- Make eye contact if they are comfortable with this
- Empathise and validate so the child feels heard and understood

Label it

**"I can see that you're feeling scared...
I wonder if you are feeling angry..
I know you're feeling sad,
you wanted to play longer."**

**"That's really hard for you.
That must have hurt.
It's so hard when we really
want to do something but
can't"**

Empathise

Reason

Set clear limits

- When child is calm, talk things through
- This might be better the next day
- Discuss what happened and how better to respond next time
- Gently set boundaries whilst accepting feelings
- Reflect and problem solve
- This could take the form of role play, using social stories or comic strip conversations

“Let’s think of what we could do differently, what about if you...?”

“I know that you thought I was ignoring you but hitting can hurt me. We need to be gentle with our hands”.

Problem solve



Green

Preventing the build up of stress or emotional arousal in the first place

Use praise

Make time for play

Teach relaxation

Roleplay tricky situations

Emotional coaching

Amber

For when stress or anger is starting to build

Reduce demands

Distract & redirect

Simply language

Remove triggers

Plan for tricky events



Red

For when stress has reached a peak or 'crisis'

Stay available

Calm tone of voice

Change your language

Do not reason/challenge

Make the environment safe



BREAK



Overview of anxiety

What is anxiety?



Anxiety is worrying that something bad will happen.

It becomes a problem when it interferes with their everyday life.

**Anxiety is an overestimation of threat
and an underestimation of our ability to
cope.**

The Fight, Flight, Freeze response



FIGHT

Yelling, Screaming,
Using Mean Words

Hitting, Kicking, Biting,
Throwing, Punching

Blaming, Deflecting
Responsibility, Defensive

Demanding,
Controlling

"Oppositional",
"Defiant", "Noncompliant"

Moving Towards What
Feels Threatening

Irritable, Angry,
Furious, Offended
Aggressive

FLIGHT

Wanting to Escape,
Running Away

Unfocused, Hard
to Pay Attention

Fidgeting, Restlessness,
Hyperactive

Preoccupied, Busy with
Everything But the Thing

Procrastinating, Avoidant,
Ignores the Situation

Moving Away From What
Feel Threatening

Anxious, Panicked
Scared, Worried,
Overwhelmed

FREEZE

Shutting Down,
Mind Goes Blank

Urge to Hide,
Isolates Self

Verbally Unresponsive,
Says, "I don't know" a lot

Difficulty with
Completing Tasks

Zoned Out,
Daydreaming

Unable to Move,
Feeling Stuck

Depressed, Numb,
Bored/Apathetic,
Helpless

The cycle of anxiety

Reflection

Think about a time your child has struggled

What have you observed about their thoughts, feelings, physical sensations and behaviours?

TRIGGER: Going to school in the morning

THOUGHTS:

"What if I get told off"
"What if people laugh"
"The teacher might shout"

BEHAVIOURS:

Starts crying
Refuses to get dressed
Hits out

FEELINGS:

Scared
Worried

PHYSICAL SENSATIONS:

Racing heart
Butterflies

How to break the cycle of anxiety

Behaviours

When we avoid or leave a situation...

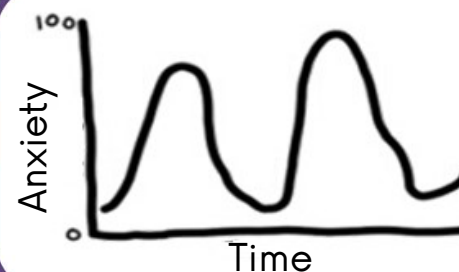
We feel better in the short term

But our brain & body learns to fear the situation

So, when we come across a similar situation our anxiety will be even worse

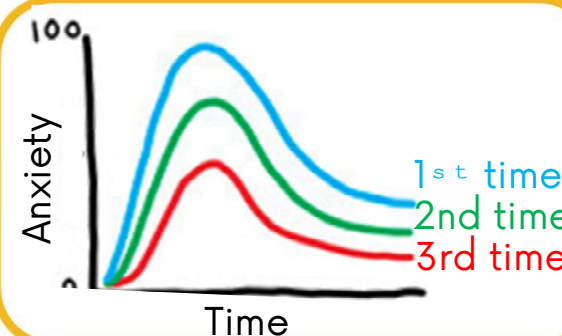
What happens if I keep avoiding situations that cause anxiety?

But if we face our fears & stay until our anxiety is halved...



Then we teach our brain & body that nothing bad will happen

The longer we stay/the more times we do it, the less anxious we will be



Responding to anxiety

Isla is going to find it difficult moving from primary school to secondary.
It's such a big school, you think she will struggle to make friends.

Frequently asks if the child is worried

"Are you worried?
Who will you play with?"

Solving problems that haven't happened

"If you don't make friends, I will talk to your teacher..."

Keeps giving reassurance

"It's okay, there's nothing to worry about"



Giving reassurance

Reassurance can....

be addictive

prevent
independence

not help in the
long term

hinder problem-
solving skills

Instead of saying...

"It's okay, you will make friends. It will all be okay don't worry"



"I know you can do this, you're really brave, lets give it a go"



How to help a child with avoidance



- Reflect - "Remember when you were scared to try ___, but then you loved it?"
- Explore - Use open questions to explore their worries with them
- Model - "I sometimes feel worried about things, when I feel worried I...."
- Empathise - "I can see you're worried about this, it must be really tricky for you..."
- Motivate and highlight the positives "You could make lots of new friends"
- Break things down - Ask them to join in for 2 minutes then the next time 5 minutes
- Encourage - "You're really brave, I know you can do this!"
- Reward - Small rewards for giving things a go



Changing negative thoughts



Negative thought



Positive thought

What if I'm rubbish at it?

Reframing

What if you are really good?

I won't make friends

Encouragement

How do you know if you don't try, let's give it a go

What if I hurt myself?

Modelling

I remember when I...

TRIGGER: Going to school in the morning

THOUGHTS:

"I put my hand up"
"Nobody laughed"
"I didn't get told off"

BEHAVIOURS:

Parent encourages
them to give it a go
Cries a little but is
able to go to school

FEELINGS:

Less worried
Determined

PHYSICAL SENSATIONS:

A few butterflies



Making a referral to Changing Lives

Referral
submitted &
discussed

Parent
screening call

6-8 session
intervention

Possible
session with
child

Discharge



THANK
YOU

