

Transitioning to Secondary School - Support for Parents



CAMHS
Mental Health
Support Team (MHST)

NHS
Oxford Health
NHS Foundation Trust

response

Helping Your Child to Express Their Feelings

As parents, we want to protect our children from negative and upsetting emotions. Consequently, they may not always know how to deal with these emotions or learn from them. Accepting and naming feelings helps communication and the ability to recognise our own emotional state.

Children who can recognise their own emotional state are less likely to reach the behavioural boiling point where these strong emotions are communicated through unwanted behaviours, rather than words.

It allows children to show their emotion to others and not mask them. The most powerful way to support anyone is through listening. We all want to be listened to and understood.

A useful method to ensure good listening is: Labelling, Reflecting and Normalizing. This is done by **labelling** what you see (you seem/ look/ sound), **reflecting** on what has been said by utilising repetition, and **normalising** the feeling they are expressing. This will help them to accept the emotion and encourage them to share more.

Label	Adult "You look/sound/seem sad" Child "No one talked to me"
Reflect	Adult "You are sad because no one talked to you"
Normalise	Adult "I think I would feel sad too"

If you do not receive a response after utilising this listening method, that is okay; the conversation does not need to continue. The most important part is to ensure that you do not take this emotion away from them by asking a lot of questions.

Building Resilience

Being independent involves making our own choices; even as adults, we don't always make the right choice. Allowing our children to make choices helps them to build resilience.

The only way to build resilience is by allowing you child to experience a variety of situations, some of which may be painful. This pain allows them to remember and recognise the choices they have made thereby promoting skills to aid them in effectively and independently problem-solve in the future.

This does not mean you are no longer needed; you are still their safety net.

If we do not let our children make independent choices and learn from the consequences, we may be denying them the right to become an independent adult

**It is important to let your child learn from their own decisions
Responsibility is ABSORBED, not taught**

Asking Questions

Reassuring your child is a natural response, we naturally want to take away their pain and fix their problems. Your child needs to be able to feel that they can deal with their fears on their own.

If they ask for reassurance, you need to have an alternative response ready. For example, asking questions: "What do you think?", "How could you handle that?", "What could you do to cope with that?".

This will help children to think for themselves and remain in control when finding their own solutions.

Who Are We?

The Mental Health Support Team work in schools across Oxford City, Banbury and Bicester to support children and young people experiencing mild-moderate mental health issues.

Useful Links & Resources

A range of wellbeing and mental health videos can be found on the Response website, as well as a link to our podcast series: <https://www.response.org.uk/mental-health-support-team-podcasts-videos/>

For further help and guidance, we would advise the following resources:

- www.youngminds.org
- www.andyresearchclinic.com
- www.minded.org.uk
- www.anxietyuk.org.uk
- www.mind.org.uk
- www.barnados.org.uk
- <https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/camhs>
- <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxietydepression/pages/improve-mental-wellbeing.aspx>

