

The STOPP Skill

Are they feeling anxious? Upset? Stressed?
Reacting without thinking clearly?

Teach the STOPP skill to reduce their anxiety and promote mindful thinking.



Stop
Take A Breath
Observe
Pull back, gain Perspective
Practice what works

The STOPP skill is simple and takes around 1 minute to practice. This can be practiced:

- When they wake up
- Before they eat
- When they start to feel stressed/tense
- Before going to sleep

By taking the time to 'STOPP', they will begin to focus on their emotions, thoughts and body, grounding themselves to the present moment **without judgement!**

Useful Information

Websites

- Bucksfamilyinfo.org/autismtoolbox
- Therapistaid.com
- Getselfhelp.co.uk
- Youngminds.org.uk
- Kooth.com
- Autism.org.uk
- Mind.org.uk

Apps

- *MindShift*
- *Virtual Hope Box*
- *Anti-Stress*
- *WorryBreath*
- *Headspace*
- *Calm*
- *Stop, Breathe & Think*

Contact Numbers

- *CAMHS Single Point of Access (SPA)*
01865 901 951
- *24/7 Mental Health Helpline (For crisis)*
01865 904 998
- *Samaritans*
116 123
- *Childline*
0800 1111



Oxford Health 
NHS Foundation Trust

Believe in children
 **Barnardo's**

Guide for when schools re-open:

Tips for parents on supporting their child's



Graded Exposure

Are they worried about starting a new school?
Thinking of school pressures causing anxiety?
Nervous for crowds of students again?

Graded exposure is the technique to use. This evidence based method gradually exposes them to fearful situations, allowing their body and mind to regain control of the anxiety at each step.

So, how does it work?



1. Identify the feared situation
2. Break down the gap between where they are now and the fear into small, manageable steps
3. Rate anxiety (0-100%) for each step and rank order of lowest to highest
4. Start with Step 1 and tackle it consistently (approx. 4 times a week) until the anxiety has reduced by half
5. Move up to the next step and repeat process until their once feared situation is now controllable

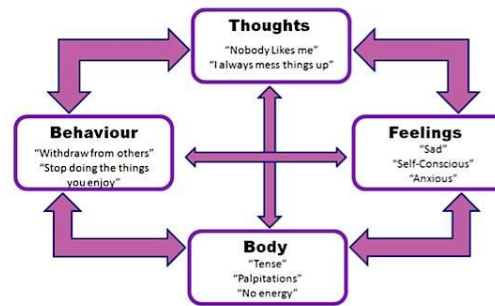
Tip: Use a ladder format to layout the steps

Ideas to help with school anxiety-based ladders:

- Use Google maps to follow the route to their school and find shortcuts

- Recognise specific landmarks to help
- Countdown calendar for starting school

Anxiety around schools re-opening is likely to be fuelled by **uncertainty**. This will affect their **Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviours** in a negative way.



Therefore, it is important to focus on what they can control, rather than what they can't!

So, what do they have control of?

- Routine
- Using coping skills (STOPP, Mindfulness)
- Behaviour (eg. How to react to situations)

Routine

Getting back into a timely routine will **aid** their mental health, **reduce** stress levels and **improve** emotional resilience.

- Healthy sleeping pattern (7-8 hours)

- Up and ready as if school were open
- Walk the school route in the morning

Short temper? Stressed beyond belief? Anxiety taking over their body and mind?

It's time to integrate 15-minutes of Mindfulness into a daily routine!

Mindfulness is the ability to be aware of one's own thoughts, feelings and the world around them in the present moment **without judgment**.

Mindful activities to try out:

- Focus on the 5 senses (See, Hear, Smell, Touch, Taste)
- Deep breathing (See below)
- Meditation with calming music

Box Breathing

Try this deep breathing technique using any square or rectangular shape and feel the benefits!

