

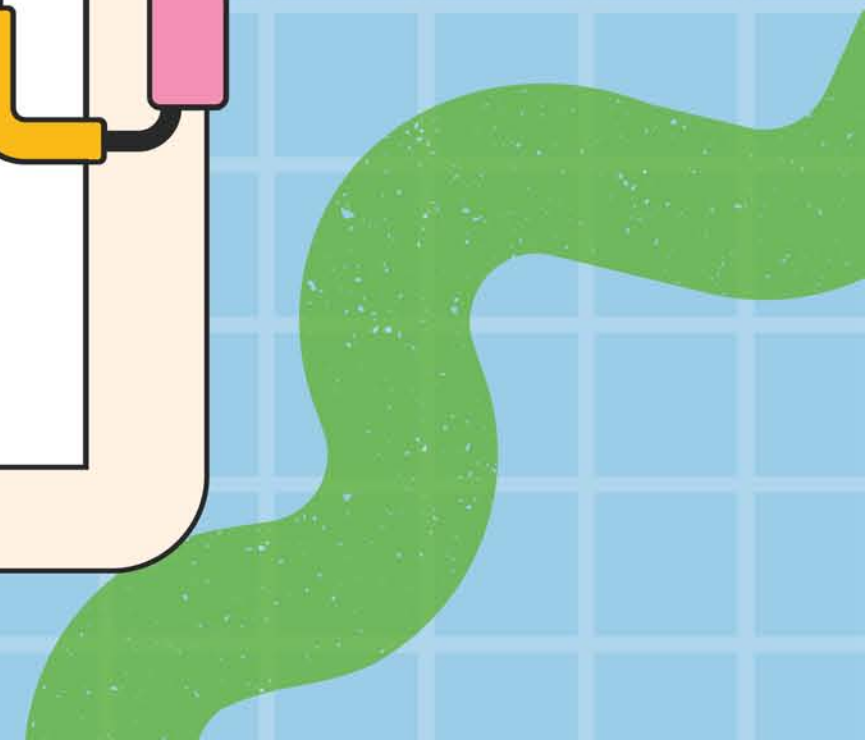
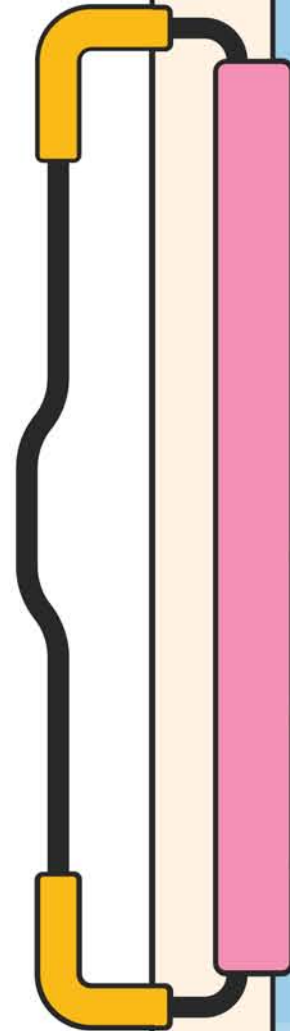
HELPING YOUR CHILD COPE WITH TEST ANXIETY

Trish Symons, LISW-S
Mental Health Liaison



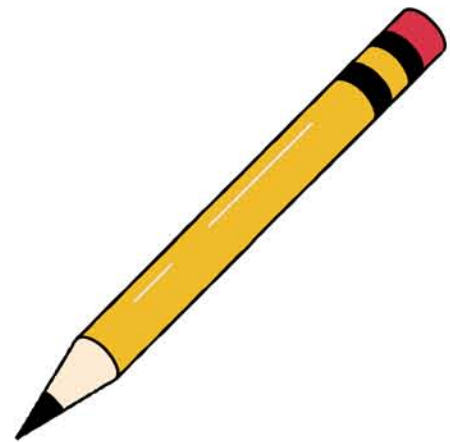
WHAT IS TEST ANXIETY?

Test anxiety is a combination of physical symptoms and emotional reactions that interfere with your ability to perform well on tests. Many students experience varying levels of test anxiety for a number of different reasons.

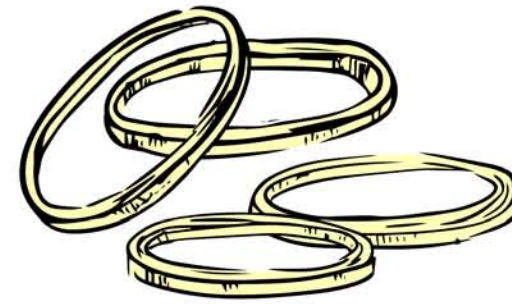


WHO'S LIKELY TO HAVE TEST ANXIETY?

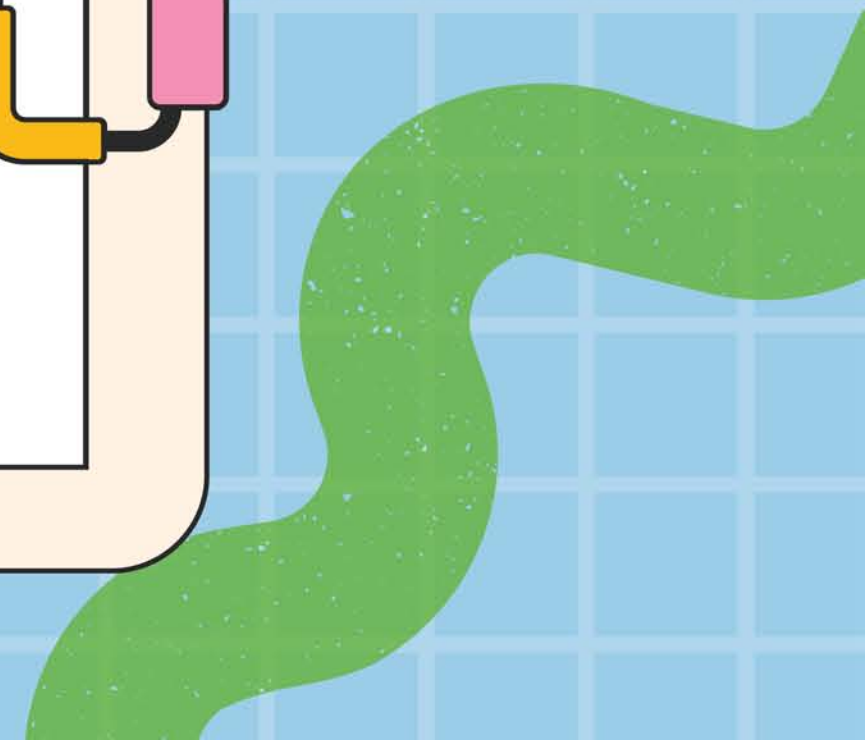
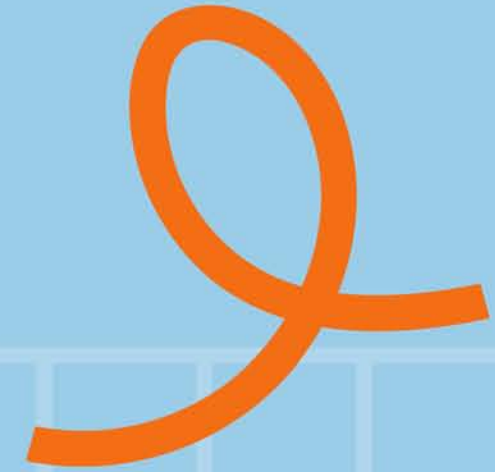
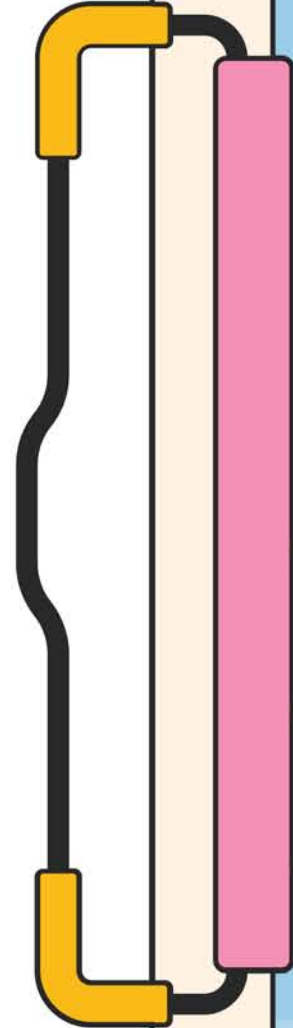
Pencils



Rubberbands



Pipe Cleaners





SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF TEST ANXIETY




- Shortness of breath
- headache
- Stomach aches
- Sweating
- Rapid heartbeat
- Feeling too ill to go to school
- Avoiding school
- Low test performance
- Low motivation
- Negative self-talk








STRATEGIES FOR PARENTS



The goal isn't to eliminate anxiety, but to help a child manage it.

None of us wants to see a child unhappy, but the best way to help kids overcome anxiety isn't to try to remove stressors that trigger it. It's to help them learn to tolerate their anxiety and function as well as they can, even when they're anxious.

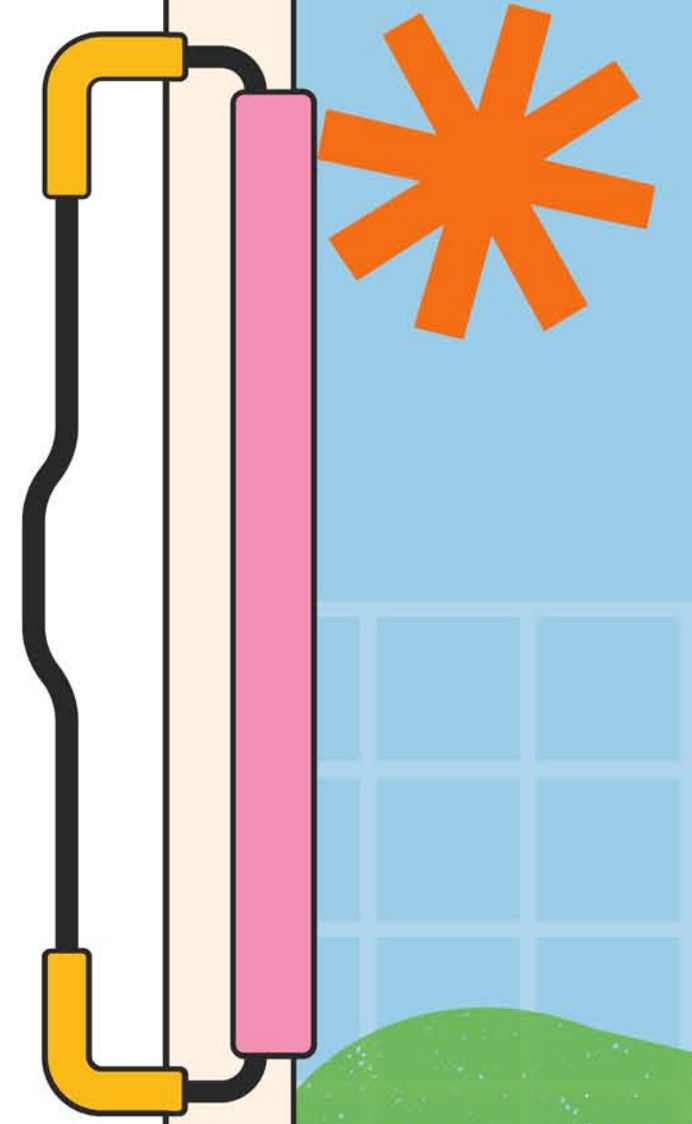


STRATEGIES FOR PARENTS

You can't promise that they won't fail a test, but you can express confidence that it will be okay, they will be able to manage it.

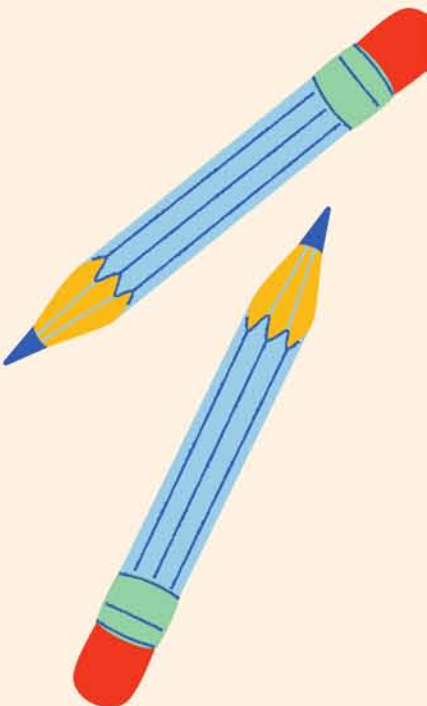
Validate their feelings, but understand that validation doesn't always mean agreement.

Encourage your child to talk about their feelings, but try not to ask leading questions such as "Are you anxious about the big test?"



THINGS I CAN CONTROL...

- How I speak to myself on test day
- If I study or practice
- When I go to bed the night before a test
- My breathing
- My effort





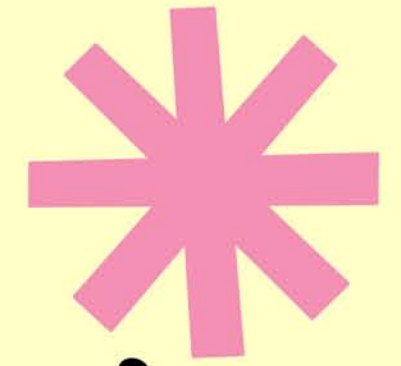
THINGS I "DO NOT" CONTROL...

- What questions are on the test
- Other student's pace or progress
- How the room feels, smells or sounds
- When the test is scheduled

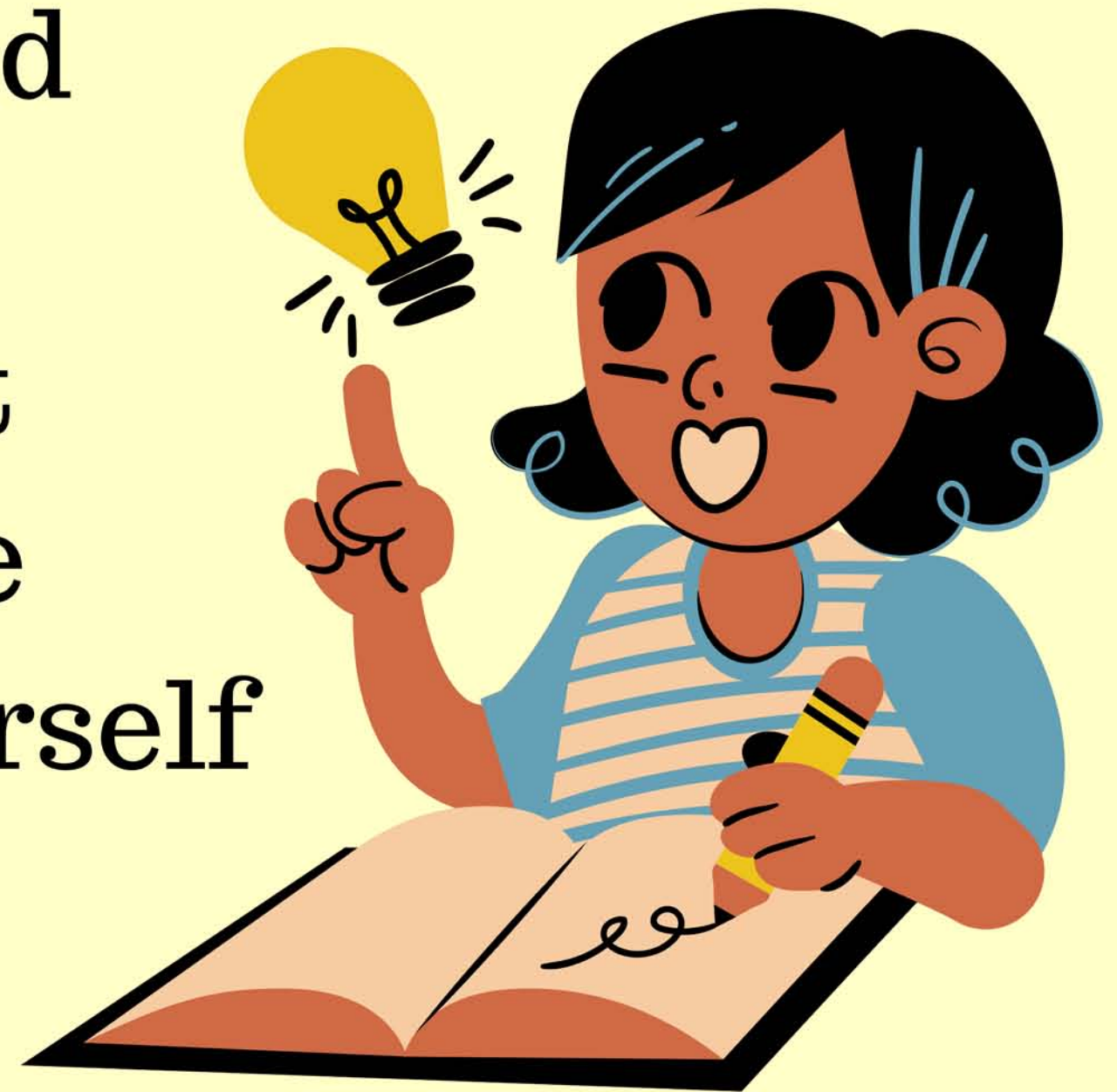
**BEFORE
THE TEST....**



MAKE A PLAN!



- Get organized before bed
- Get enough sleep
- Eat a healthy breakfast
- Arrive to school on time
- Speak positively to yourself



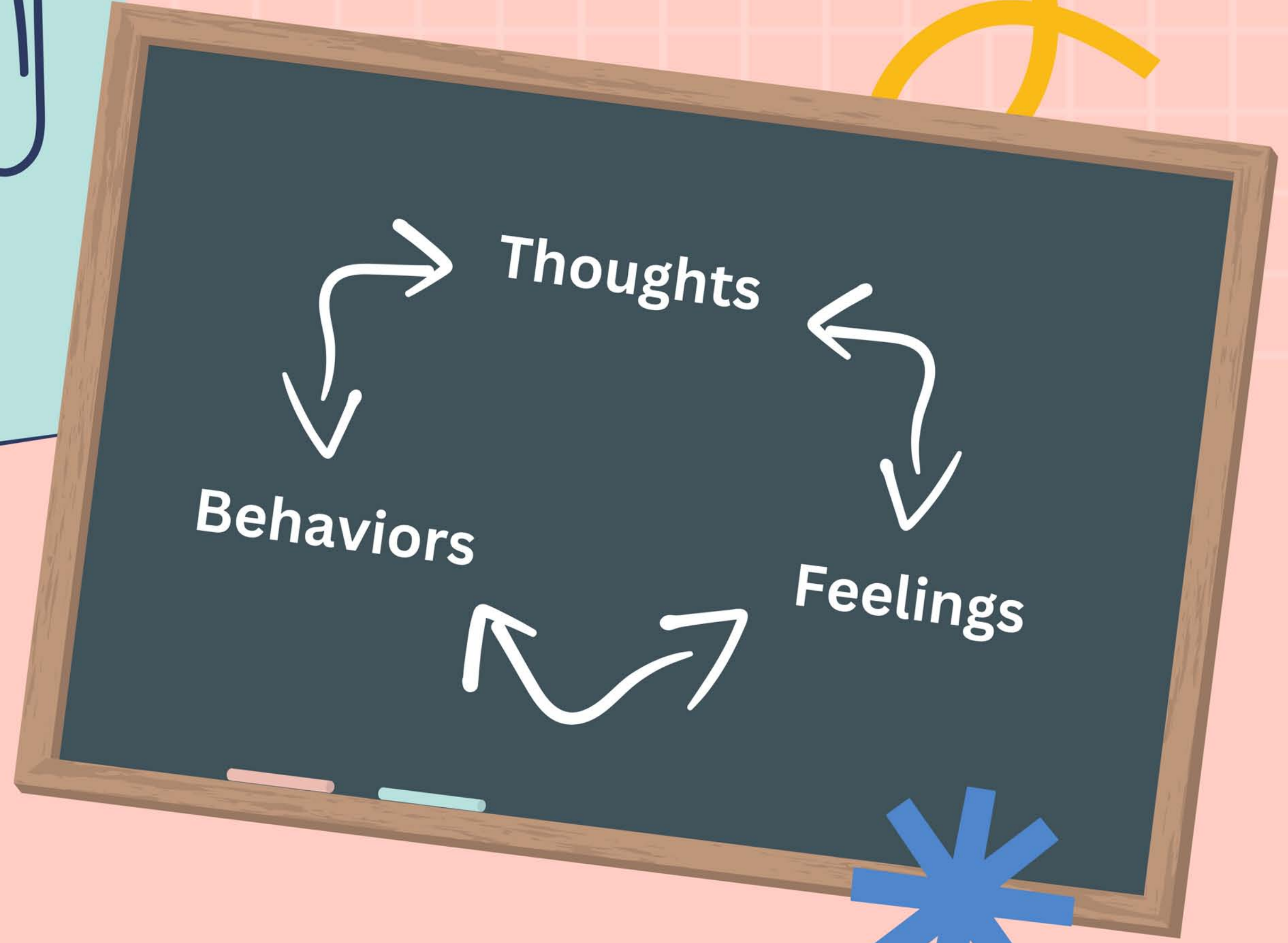


CREATE A POSITIVE HOME ENVIRONMENT

- Avoid criticism or sarcasm when your child doesn't perform well
- Avoid comparing your child to their siblings or peers
- Set a positive tone before and after school
- Don't say "Don't worry!" before a test, instead talk about feelings
- Emphasize effort as well as performance

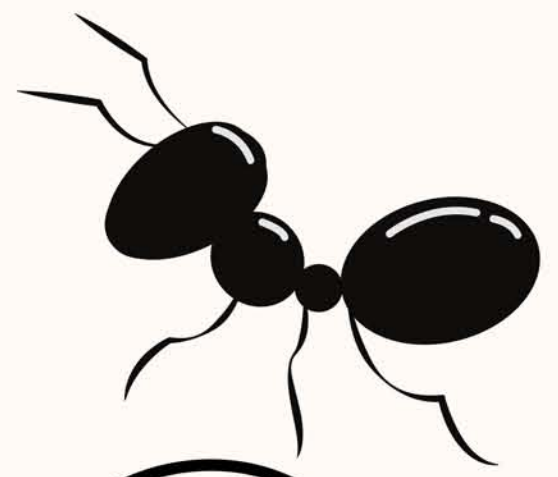


**ENCOURAGE
POSITIVE
SELF-TALK**





SQUISH THE ANTS (ASSUMPTIONS NOT TRUE!)



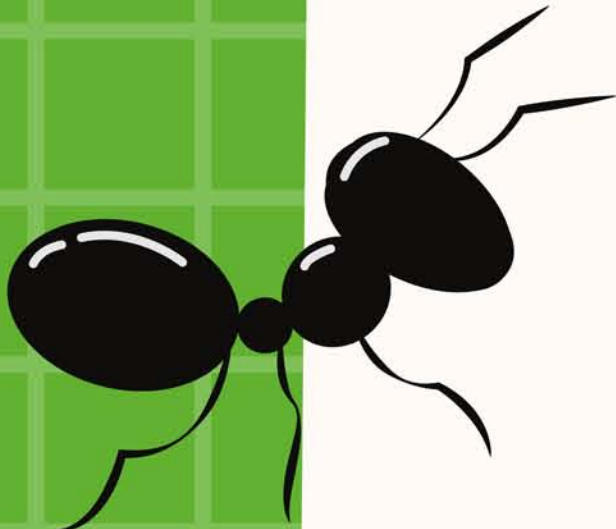
Is this thought helpful?

What evidence is there?

Is this fact or opinion?

What advice would I give a friend?

COME UP WITH MORE REALISTIC AND OPTIMISTIC THOUGHTS!





CALMING SELF-TALK

I'm nervous, but I can
handle it.

I am good at a lot of things.

I know this information.

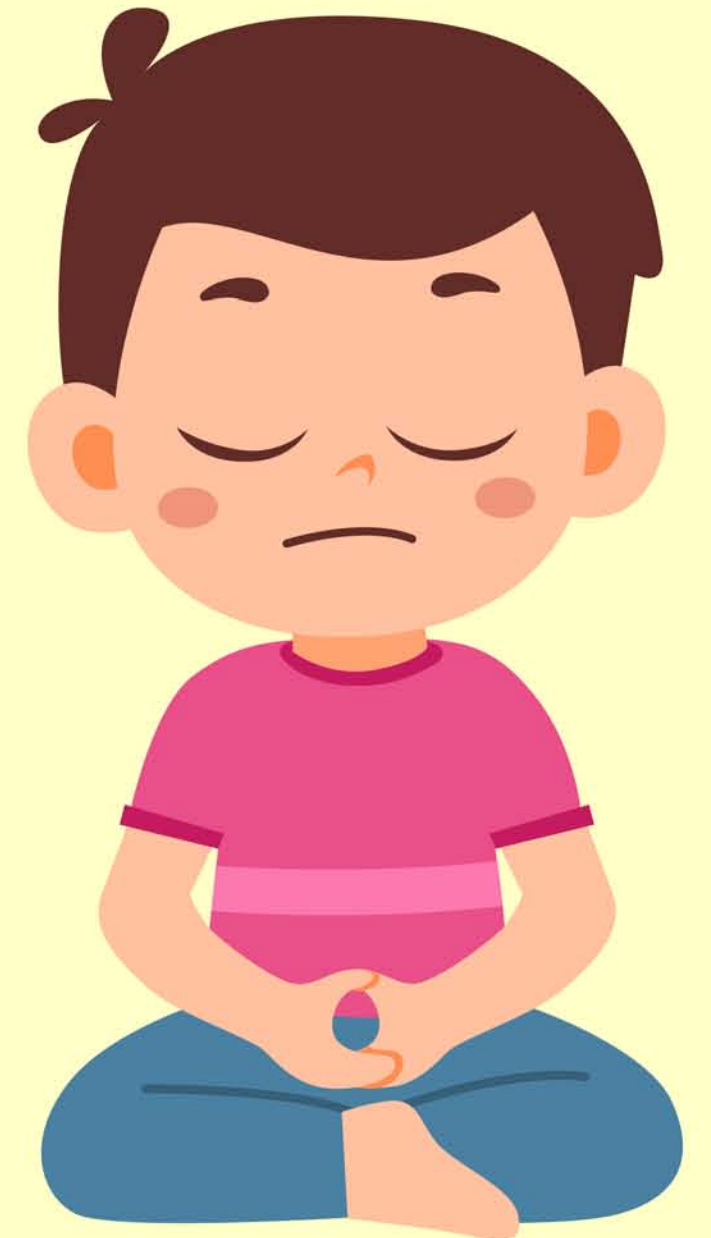
I feel good most of the time.

This feeling won't last forever.



RELAXATION STRATEGIES

- Deep Breathing - (Bubble Breathing)
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- Visual Imagery
- Worry Jar



STOP, DROP, AND ROLL

- **STOP** Test
 - Put your pencil down
 - Hands on the table
 - Focus on the coolness of the desk rather than the "fire" of anxiety
- **DROP** your head forward
- **ROLL** head around slowly while taking deep breaths



54321 GROUNDING TECHNIQUE



5 things that you can see



4 things that you can touch



3 things that you can hear



2 things that you can smell



1 emotion you can feel



WHEN SHOULD I SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP?

- Severe decline in academic performance
- Begins to affect other areas that require new learning
- Self-esteem worsens
- School refusal

TRISH SYMONS, LISW-S MENTAL HEALTH LIAISON

SCHEDULE:

GRANGER ELEMENTARY: MONDAY AND THURSDAY

SHARON ELEMENTARY: TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY

HINCKLEY ELEMENTARY: FRIDAY

TELEPHONE: 330-239-1901 EXT. 211

EMAIL: PSYMONS@HIGHLANDSCHOOLS.ORG

Scan here to take
a parent interest
survey!

