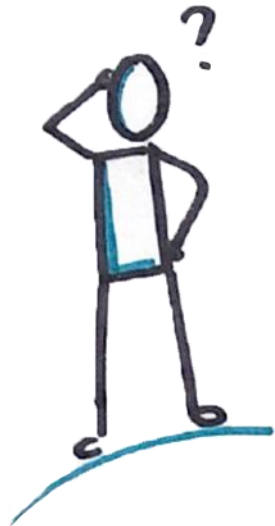


Everyone feels worried or anxious at times. This is part of everyday life, and a little anxiety can be helpful. It can help keep you safe from harm or help you focus in difficult times.



But if the feelings are too strong or are there too often, they can become a problem, getting in the way of you doing things you need, or want to do.

Many children and young people worry about school. This is normal.

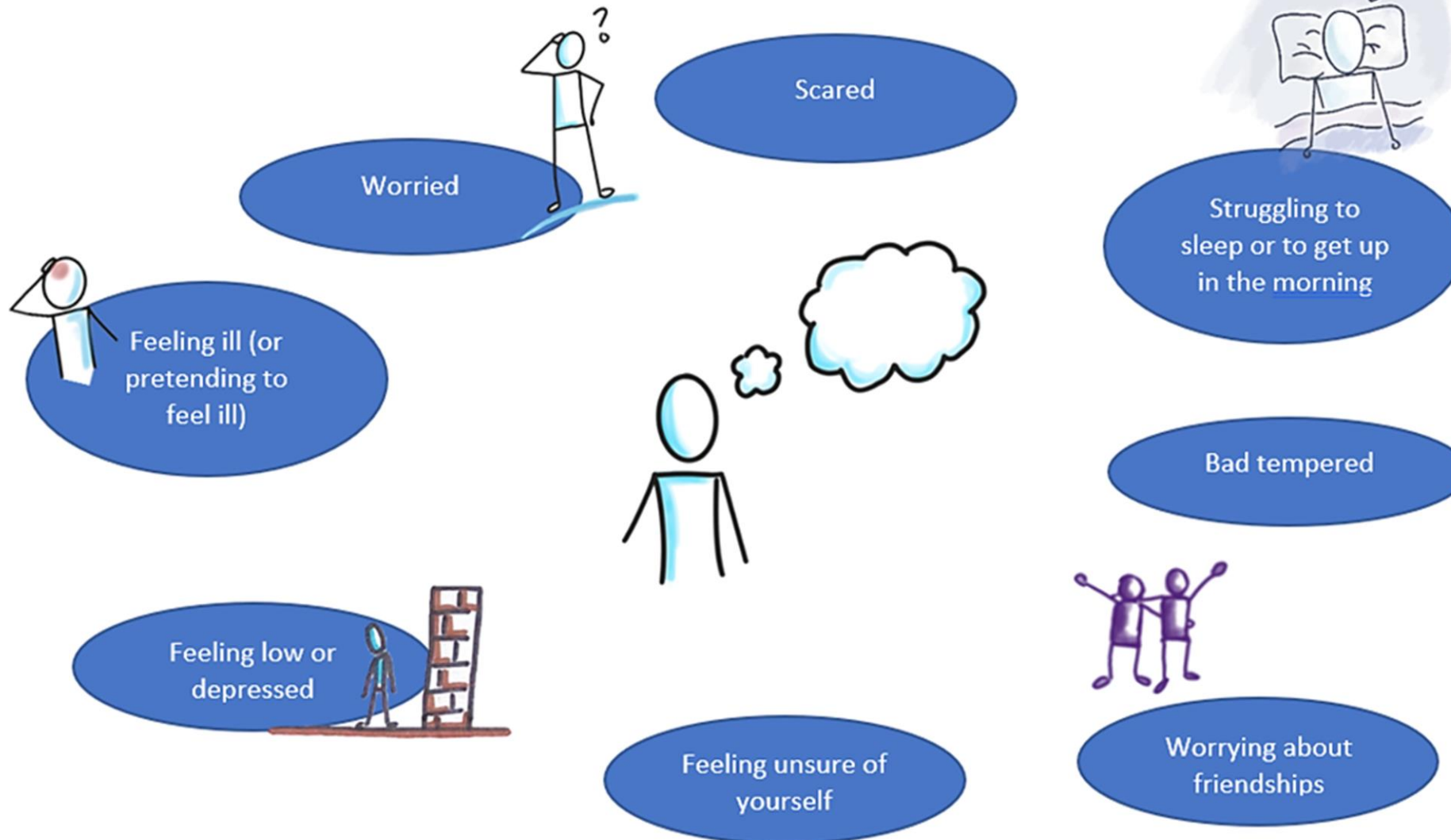
Anxieties are part of life and learning to deal with them are part of growing up.



But sometimes our feelings can make us not want to go to school. If you have strong feelings of anxiety or worry about attending school, you may be experiencing what we call Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA).

Emotionally Based
EBSA
School Avoidance

When you think about school are you...?



You are not on your own.

Listen to other young people talking about what their anxiety feels like, and what helps them.

[KeepCool: Anxiety - YouTube](#)

There may be things at school which make you feel anxious or worried.....



Don't think the teachers will listen to people like me

Bullying



Being on the fringes - not visible to others



Changing school



Unhappy with my appearance



Find it hard to make friends or keep friends

Not understanding or coping with the schoolwork



School is too noisy and busy



Not good at sports



Worried about getting changed for PE and games

Stressed about exams

Under pressure to achieve target grades



There may also be some things out of school which can make you feel this way...



Death of somebody important to you

Parents arguing or splitting up

A parent who is ill



Members of your family feeling worried, depressed or sad

Death or loss of a pet

Birth of a new brother or sister

New people moving into your home



Difficulties getting to school



Parents not understanding your feelings

Anything else....

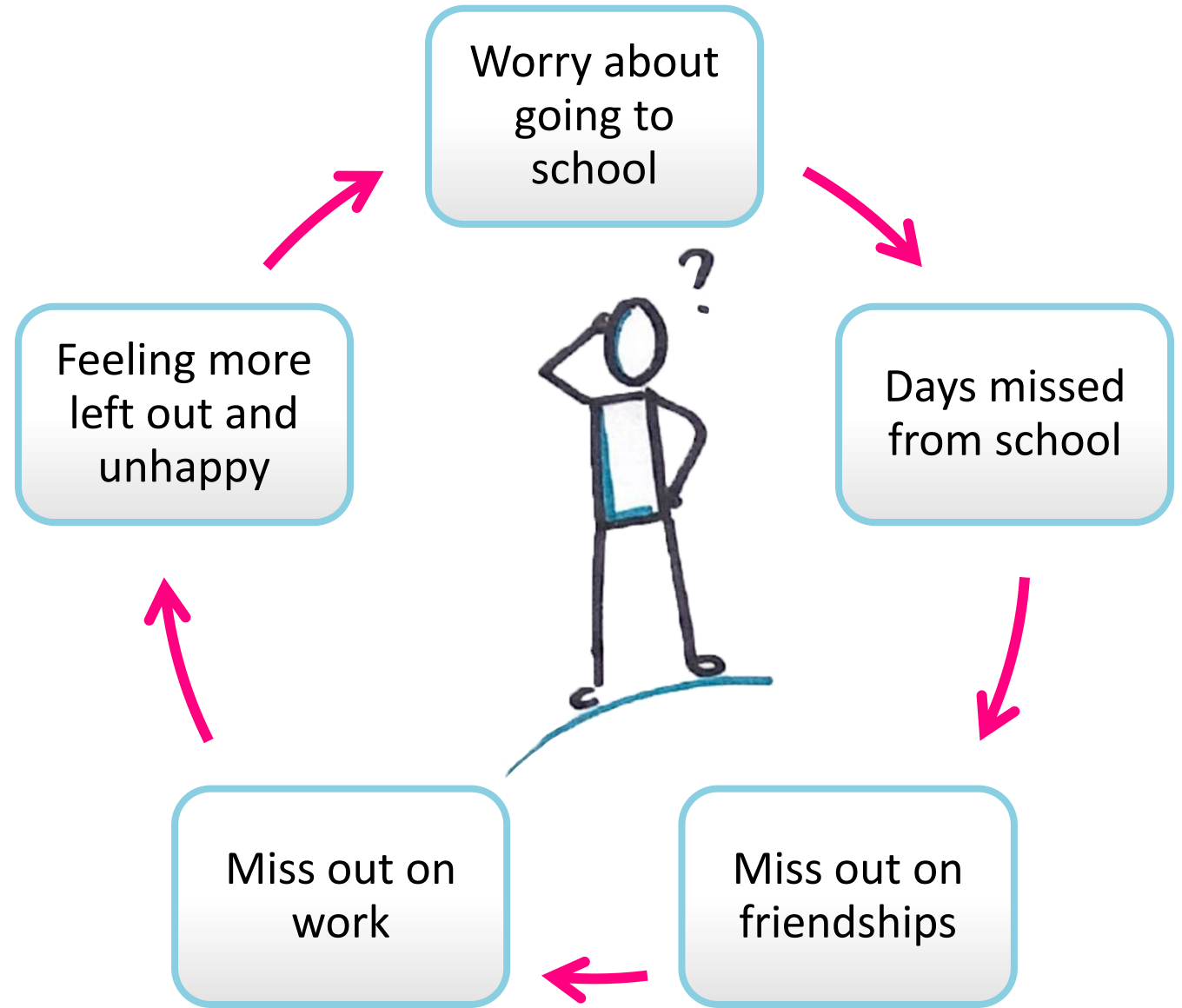
What happens when I don't attend school?

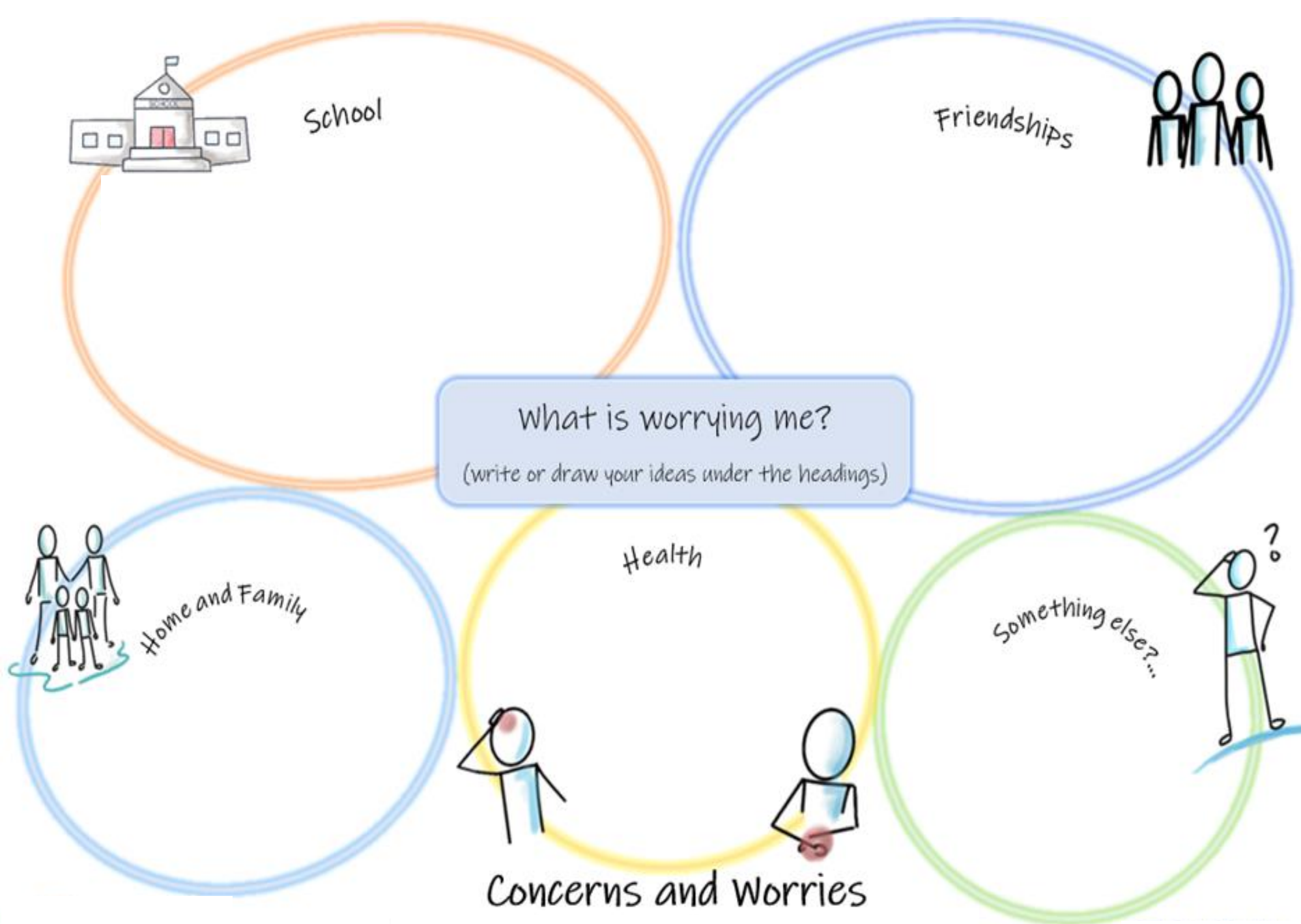
It is very important to try to overcome these difficulties as soon as possible. Sometimes you might feel that missing school and staying at home is the best thing to do as it makes you feel better.

However, the more time you spend out of school the more you miss out on lessons and the learning gets harder. You also miss out on seeing friends which means keeping friendships becomes more difficult.



It is important to let an adult know if you are worried about anything in school or home and get the help to make it better rather than let things get worse and get stuck.





What can I do if I feel this way?

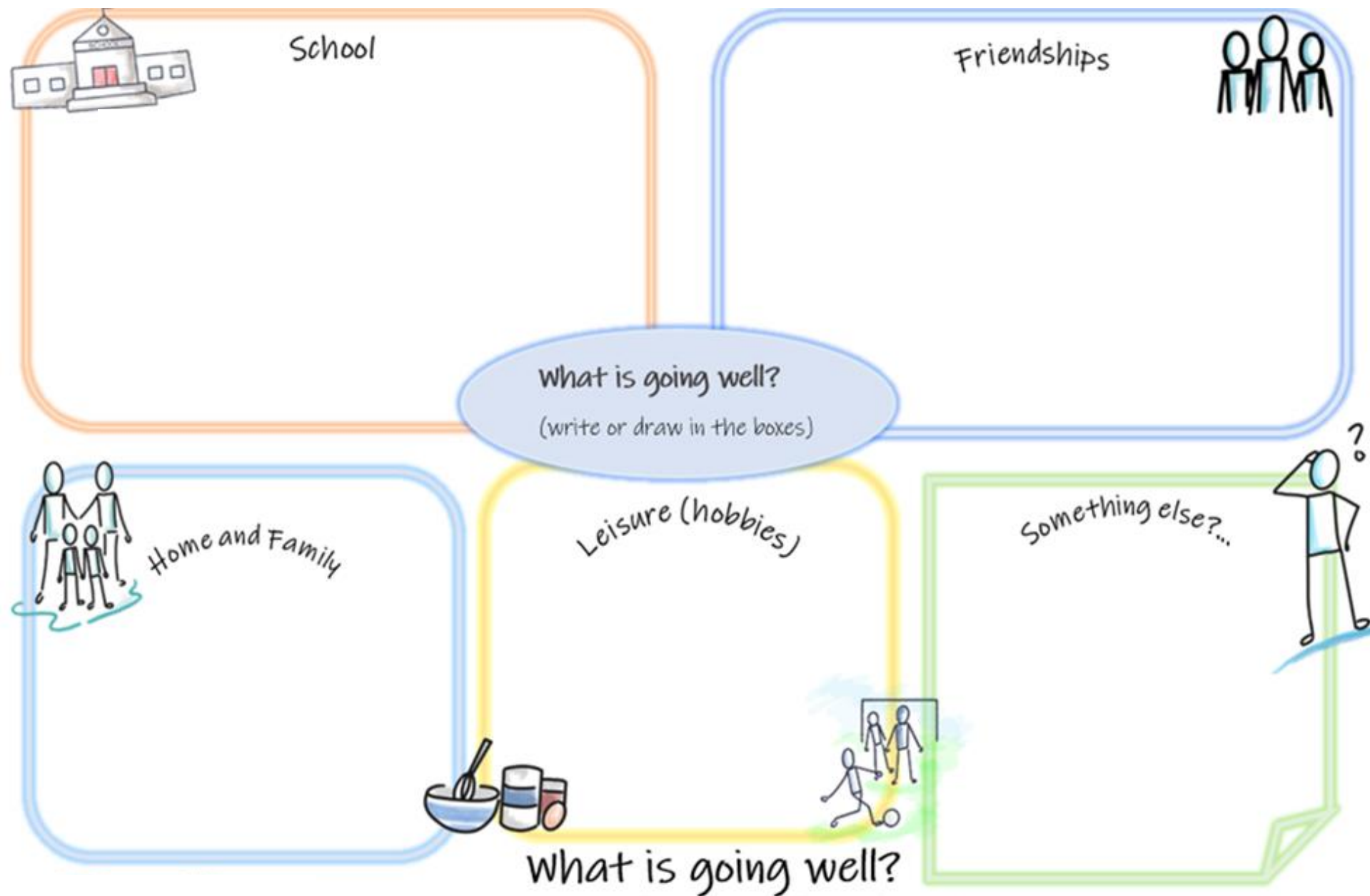
Most importantly, talk to someone. This could be your parents, an adult at school, a family member or a friend.

You could try writing down the things you are worried about and ordering them from most worrying to least worrying.

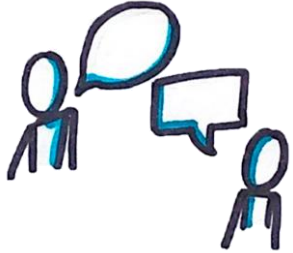
Or you could write / draw the things that are going on for you right now using this sheet or design your own using these headings.

[EBSA resources](#)

It is also helpful to think about things that are working well for you at the moment.
We can build on strengths, supports or any positive experiences to help with the things that are really hard.



What can your school do to help you?



Find an adult at school you trust and talk to them.

They should listen and believe you.

They can work with you and your parents to help find out what things are worrying you and what you and they can do to help you.

Things they could do include:



Help with schoolwork or friendships

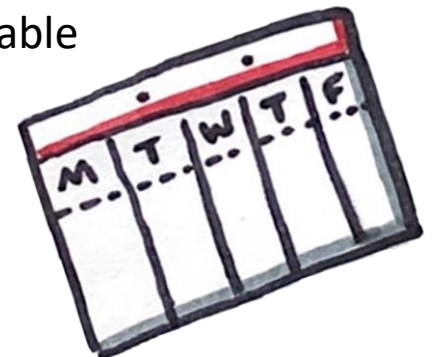


Provide a safe space for you to go to



Key person to talk to

Alter your timetable



Actions and next steps could be written up into a [support plan](#) so that you, your parents or carers and school know what actions have been agreed to support you.

A Person-Centred Plan:



What is important to me...

What people like and admire about me...

When I am upset I...

Others say that when I am upset, I...

To help me feel better at school, I can...

Others can help me feel better at school by...

My family can support me to attend school by...

Places in school I can go to feel safe and supported...

At school, these things can make me feel upset:

My Key People are:



Changes to attendance, timetable etc.

Until my return to school plan includes the following changes to my attendance:

(Identify any changes to days or times they come in)

My Support Plan

What?	When?	Who?	Where?

Changes to my timetable include:

(Identify any changes needed)

Any other changes include:

(Identify any changes to routines; break, lunch, changes between lessons etc. to classroom expectations; not expected to read aloud, work in pairs etc. and homework)

Other people who have access to the plan are:

This plan will be reviewed regularly so that it remains helpful. Review date:

My signature:

School support

person's signature:

Parent signature:

What can I do to get back to school?

If your worries are so great that you are not attending school it is important that you work with your school and your parents to help you get back to attending school as soon as possible.

Things you can do to help include:

- Take part in the planning of how you will go back to school.
- Work with your parents and teachers to think of things that will help you.
- Think about a time that you did cope with a worry. What did you do then?
- Keep in contact with your friends and what is happening at school.
- Catch up on some of the work that you may have missed before you go back.
- Take little steps to get back into the routine – don't expect that everything will get back to normal or will be okay immediately.
- Take that chance! Once you are at school, it may not seem as bad.
- Acknowledge the steps you have taken and celebrate the small successes.



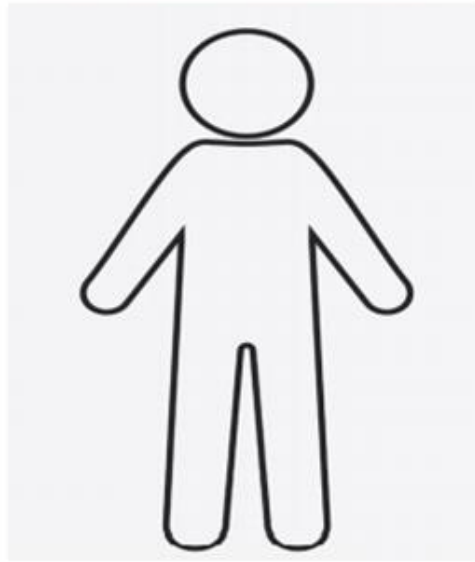
Muscle aches
or head-aches

Dry throat
or mouth

Your muscles
tense

Poor digestion,
stomach
aches, bowel
problems

Scared



Shortness of breath

Thoughts
racing, difficulty
sleeping

Skin goes pale

Your heart
beats faster

Feeling tired,
little energy

When you are feeling worried:

Your whole body reacts.

Take a moment to notice how your
body feels

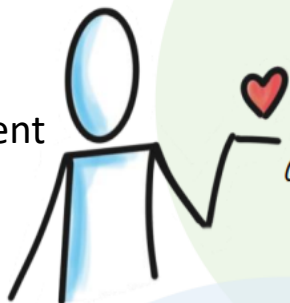
There are many different strategies you can use to help you feel calmer when you are worried, anxious or stressed. You may need to experiment to find out what works for you.

5 TIPS FOR FAMILIES

Ways to Self-Regulate for Children & Young People

Mindfulness

Practising mindful activities have been shown to help us feel calmer, find focus, accept kindness and to let go of worries.



[Click here](#)
For a YouTube Mindful Moment exercise

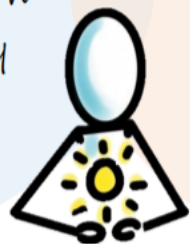
Physical Health

Being active, eating a nutritious diet and getting good sleep helps us to have more energy and feel more in control to manage big feelings.



Breathing

Controlling our breathing can have a positive impact on how the rest of our body feels.



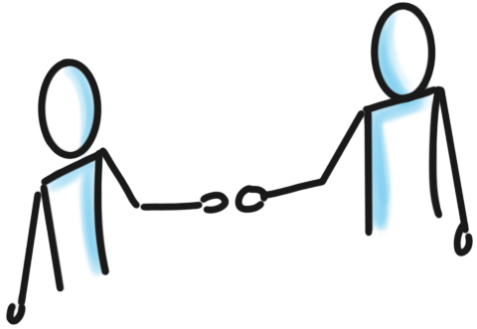
Grounding

Take five minutes in the day to notice: what we can see, hear, smell, touch and taste.



The Outdoors

Spend time outside every day. Use the grounding techniques to connect ourselves with nature.



Useful resources

- Kooth online emotional wellbeing service for 11-25s - www.kooth.com
- [ChatHealth School Nursing Text Service](#): 07507 555536 - Helps 11-19 year olds with all kinds of confidential health concerns.
- The Source for young people (13-25) offers information and advice about various topics - www.thesource.me.uk
- Young Minds Charity – www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/find-help
- On My Mind: Anna Freud Youth Wellbeing Directory - www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind
- Childline - www.childline.org.uk



These resources have been produced in partnership with education settings, families and colleagues across Suffolk.

For further information and resources please see the Suffolk County Council webpages:

www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/wellbeing-for-education-return

www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/pts

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