

Time for Change! 🤪

Change affects us all – and even when it exciting and new – moving house, starting a new job - change is not easy. Dealing with change can be scary, especially for children - and even more so if the change is one they didn't want; perhaps parents are separating or they have lost a beloved relative or pet. Perhaps your child is finding it difficult to settle into their new school or class, or maybe their friendship group has changed and they are confused about loyalties.

Whenever we try to deal with anxiety of any kind it is important to recognise the things we *can* change and those we *can't*. There is absolutely no point in stressing over something we have no influence over. For example, we can't change the behaviour of others..... but we *can* change the way we respond to that person's behaviour. It is also important to know where to go for help or support; some things are just too big to handle by ourselves, or are simply better shared with someone over a coffee.

Try these tips for when times get tough:

- ❖ Try to remember a time when you faced a difficult challenge before – and got through it. You can do this!
- ❖ Focus on the solution rather than the problem. What can you change?
- ❖ Identify the things you *can* control – and get on with them. That might mean removing yourself from a situation that is harmful. Set goals, plan your actions, make 'to do' lists and feel the stress begin to lift as you tick them off.
- ❖ Identify the things you *can't* control and accept them. You will adjust. It may be uncomfortable at first, but see it as an opportunity to learn and grow. We don't develop by staying in our comfort zone.
- ❖ Make time for *you*. The problem won't disappear by worrying about it so 'shut it away' for an hour while you go for a walk or go to the gym. A little gentle exercise boosts our feel good factor. Or try mindfulness and relaxation techniques.
- ❖ Find the right support. Stress can be overwhelming. Try to talk to friends or family: they won't always have solutions but just talking something through can help. Consider professional advice from voluntary organisations, they can often point you in the right direction.