

School anxiety can be very stressful for parents and children alike.

This four-part creative workshop will focus on different aspects of school anxiety, giving children the tools and coping skills to manage their anxiety in and around the school environment.

We include interactive games that promote social engagement and exchange. Each child/teen is given the opportunity to share their stories and experiences, to be heard and to listen to others.

We use creative materials to explore complex feelings and emotions attached to school anxiety. We also include sensory stimulation, promoting relaxation, mindfulness and self-awareness.

At the end of the 4 weeks each child/teen will walk away with their own personal toolkit of coping strategies and internal resources to empower them.

The **'Cool at School'** programme aims to be a fun, interesting and supportive experience for children and to help them:

- Discuss the challenges and positives for them in school
- Improve their social skills
- Learn new coping strategies
- Strengthen self-esteem and explore identity
- Prepare for challenges ahead

Format of the workshops:

The same group of children attend four 1.5 hour workshops spaced out over a few weeks. Parents join the group for the final 15mins of each session to receive an overview and an information pack giving an insight into what has been covered. Parents are most welcome to be present at the start of each session to make sure the child is happy and settled. Some children may need the parent's presence for a longer period.

Facilitated by:

The workshops are facilitated by Barnardos Post Adoption Children team. Our team are trained in a variety of disciplines such as psychotherapy, play therapy, art therapy and social work and have specific training and experience in the specific needs of adopted children and teenagers.

Session by Session

Week 1: Introduction to the group, setting ground rules and getting to know one another. Decoration of 'individual toolbox' that each child adds to each week based on content of workshop.

Week 2: Exploring anxiety using Dan Siegal's 'Brain House' concept. Strategies used for regulation and calming anxiety are introduced and there will be a focus on developing practical social skills. Children will be presented with choices as to how challenging / intrusive questions might be answered.

Week 3: Reflection on school, using music and movement. Feelings are discussed using creativity, with the aim to normalise the range of feelings that children may have about school. The child's developing individual sense of identity is explored.

Week 4: Summary along with a reflection on the content of the workshops. All children are invited to take home their toolboxes.

Outcomes:

For the children/teens to gain a deeper understanding of where their anxiety is coming from and learn some tools that should help. For them to learn that they are the experts in how it feels to be in school- the fun bits and the hard bits!

Cost: €100 per child including art materials. Each programme is limited to 8 children.

Detail of our next 'Cool at School' workshops will be posted online www.barnardos/adoption.



Contact us at adoption@barnardos.ie for more information



Barnardos Post Adoption Service

Cool at School

Helping children to manage school worries

Barnardos Post Adoption Service- four part workshop for adopted children (aged 11-13 years)

