



By



MUSLIM MIND  
COLLABORATIVE

# MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING TOOLKIT FOR PARENTS

Supported by



The  
Reflection  
project

## INTRODUCTION

This toolkit is designed to help parents support their children's mental health and wellbeing, with a focus on managing stress and anxiety. It includes faith and culture-sensitive tips and strategies, along with a summary of the Value Every Mind programme being implemented in schools.

### Summary of the Value Every Mind Programme

To celebrate Muslim Aid's 40th anniversary, we have partnered with the Muslim Mind Collaborative to deliver the Value Every Mind Programme. Supported by The Reflection Project and Association of Muslim Schools, we aim to support students, parents and school staff in Muslim schools. Here's an overview of what we are doing in schools:

- **Workshops and Assemblies:** Educating students about mental wellbeing, sharing coping mechanisms around stress and anxiety in a way that respects their faith and cultural backgrounds.
- **Creative Activities:** Engaging students in creative writing, drawing, colouring and mindfulness exercises inspired by Islamic art and patterns to help them manage their emotions.
- **Championing wellbeing:** This programme offers holistic support providing toolkits and resources to promote well-being.
- **Parental Involvement:** Encouraging parents to participate in workshops and support their children at home with the techniques learned.



“

Allah is sufficient for me. There is no God worthy of worship except Him. In Him I put my trust. And He is the Lord of the Mighty Throne  
*The Holy Qur'an*  
*Surah At-Tawbah 9:129.*

”

### Understanding Mental Health and Wellbeing

- **Mental Health:** Refers to our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act.
- **Wellbeing:** Involves creating a supportive environment where children feel safe, respected, and valued.

### What is Stress and Anxiety?

**Stress:** A response to an external trigger, such as a work deadline or a fight with a loved one. Stress is usually short-term and can be a positive motivator. Once the stressor is removed, stress levels usually go down.

**Anxiety:** A persistent feeling of apprehension or dread that can occur even when there's no obvious threat. Anxiety can linger and bubble to the surface at any time, even when there isn't a clear cause.

**Physical symptoms:** increased heart rate, rapid breathing, sweating, and feeling nervous or on edge.

## MANAGING SYMPTOMS: FAITH AND CULTURALLY SENSITIVE TIPS

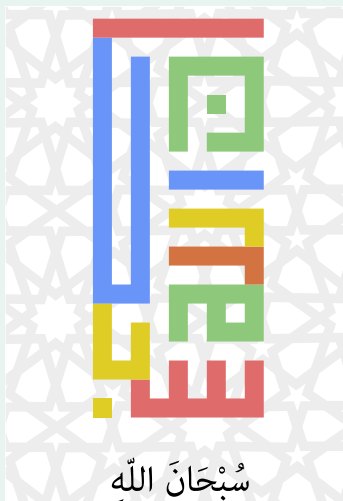
### 1 Prayer and Spiritual Practices:

**Daily Prayers (Salah):** Performing the five daily prayers can help instil a sense of peace and routine.

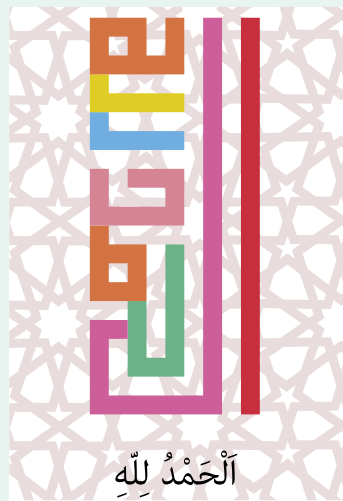
**Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah):** Reciting phrases like "SubhanAllah," "Alhamdulillah," and "Allahu Akbar" can provide comfort and reduce anxiety. Dhikr using a tasbeeh can be additionally helpful as it provides a sensory focus which can help disrupt anxious thoughts.



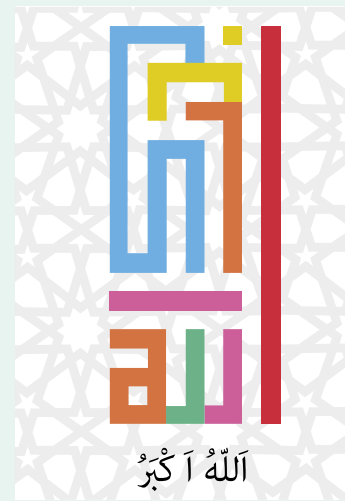
**Qur'an Recitation:** Reading or listening to the Qur'an can be soothing and helps in seeking spiritual comfort. Visualising the Arabic words as you recite or listen can provide an additional sensory focus to help interrupt anxious thoughts.



Subhan Allah  
GLORY BE TO GOD



Alhamdulillah  
PRAISE TO GOD



Allahu Akbar  
ALLAH IS THE GREATEST

### 3 Mindfulness and Relaxation:

**Journaling:** Encourage your child to write about their thoughts and feelings to help manage stress. They could include surahs which they find helpful e.g. "Allah is sufficient for me. There is no God worthy of worship except Him. In Him I put my trust. And He is the Lord of the Mighty Throne'" The Holy Qur'an Surah At-Tawbah 9:129.



**Nature Time:** Spend time outdoors in natural settings to relax and refresh the mind. While outside, encourage your child to notice the temperature of the air on their skin and as they breathe, the colours and sounds around them, as sensory focus can help interrupt stressful thoughts."

**Breathing Exercises:** Teach your child deep breathing techniques to manage stress. These can be combined with dhikr and sensory techniques.

#### Deep calm



- Breathe in for **4** seconds
- Hold for **7** seconds
- Breathe out for **8** seconds
- Repeat **4** times

#### Slow breaths



- Breathe in slowly as you count **1 2 3 4**
- Breathe out slowly as you count **4 3 2 1**
- Repeat **4** times

#### Square breathing



- Breathe in as you count **1 2 3 4**
- Hold as you count **1 2 3 4**
- Breathe out as you count **1 2 3 4**
- Hold as you count **1 2 3 4**
- Keep your counting even and trace your finger along the edges of a box of tissues or a dice if that helps you to focus
- Repeat **3** times

## 2 Healthy Lifestyle:

**Balanced Diet:** Ensure your child eats nutritious foods and stays hydrated.

**Exercise:** Encourage regular physical activity to boost mental and physical health.

**Sleep:** Ensure your child gets enough rest. Try to maintain a good sleep cycle, including a dark, quiet environment, no screens for an hour before sleep, phone out of reach and a regular sleep schedule.



## 4 Social Support:

**Family and Friends:** Encourage open communication with trusted family members or friends about feelings.

**Community Activities:** Engage in community events or volunteer activities to stay connected.

**Youth Groups:** Join Islamic youth groups or activities to find support and companionship.

## 5 Seeking Help:

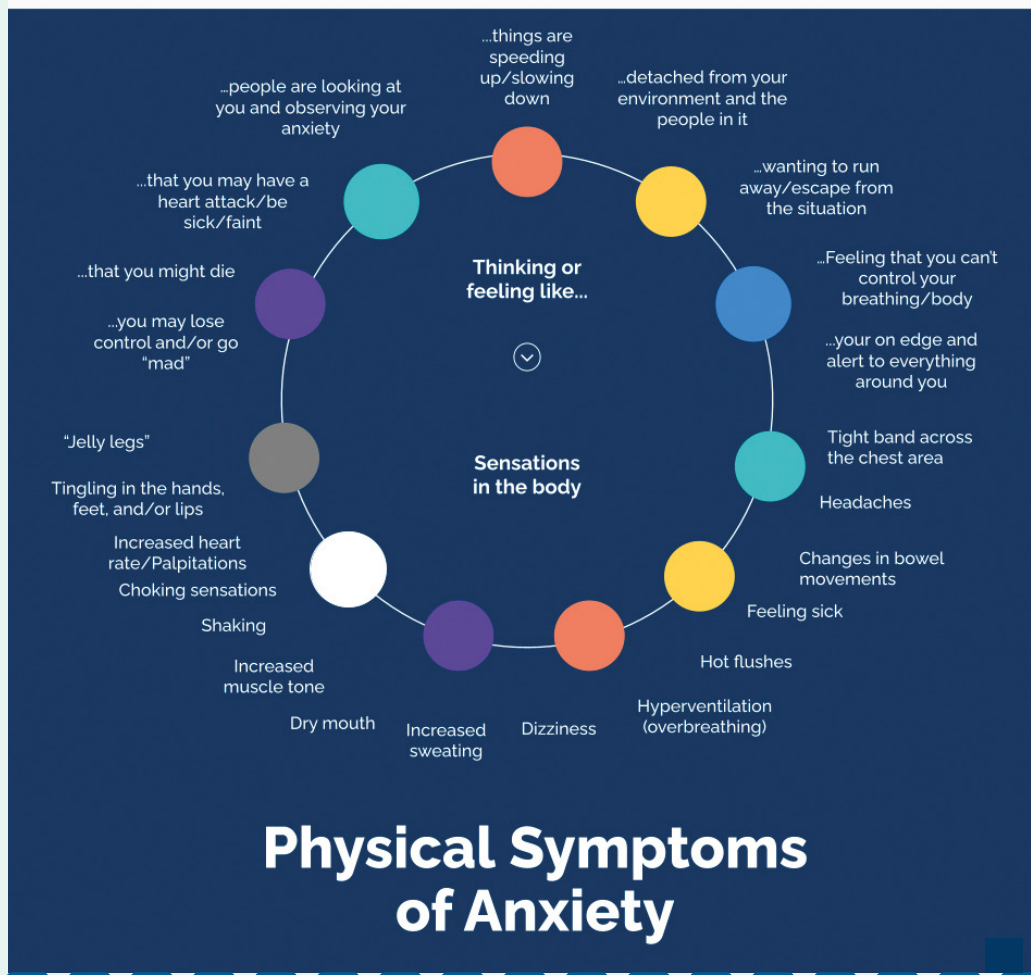
**Counsellors and Teachers:** Encourage your child to speak to school counsellors or trusted teachers if they need help.

**Mental Health Resources:** Utilise resources available in your community that are specifically designed to support mental health.

## TIPS FOR PARENTS

### Notice Symptoms of Stress & Anxiety:

## Psychological Symptoms of Anxiety



## Physical Symptoms of Anxiety

Resource provided by: [inspired minds](http://inspiredminds.org.uk) [inspiredminds.org.uk](http://inspiredminds.org.uk)

### **Create a Supportive Environment:**

- Foster open communication and listen to your child's concerns with empathy and without judgement.
- Make time for family activities and encourage your child to engage in hobbies and interests.

### **Promote Healthy Habits:**

- Ensure your child maintains a balanced diet, gets regular exercise, and has a proper sleep schedule.
- Encourage mindfulness practices and relaxation techniques.
- Encourage creative and expressive outlets such as writing, drawing, and movement.

### **Be Involved in Your Child's Education:**

- Communicate regularly with your child's teachers and school staff to stay updated on their progress.

### **Seek Professional Help When Needed:**

- Don't hesitate to seek professional counselling or support if your child shows signs of prolonged stress or anxiety.
- Utilise available community resources and mental health services.

***Supporting your child's mental health and wellbeing is crucial for their overall development and happiness. By implementing these tips and strategies, you can create a nurturing and supportive home environment that promotes your child's mental health. Remember, your involvement and support are essential for your child's well-being. Take care of yourself as well, as your health and happiness are vital for creating a positive and nurturing atmosphere at home.***



## Useful links



**The Reflection Project** provides safe, professional mental health support to Muslim-heritage children and families, guiding them through the healing process. By collaborating with local communities, consulting with mainstream services, and offering comprehensive training for therapists, they ensure faith and culturally sensitive 1:1 therapy. Their expert therapists create a safe space for children to express their faith identity freely while navigating life's challenges. [Visit website](#)



**Approachable Parenting (AP)** is a non-profit organisation dedicated to empowering families through tailored parenting programs and services. Their mission is to help parents cultivate positive family dynamics and increase their confidence and self-esteem. AP offers a range of services, including parenting courses, marriage education, family counseling, and one-on-one mentoring, all designed to support parents from pregnancy through their child's adolescence. [Visit website](#)



The **Value Every Mind Schools Project** by the Muslim Mind Collaborative aims to improve mental health support for Muslim children and young people in schools. The project provides a comprehensive toolkit to help schools enhance faith literacy and cultural sensitivity. This includes resources to tackle Islamophobia, stereotypes, and unconscious bias, and to promote understanding of the lived experiences of young Muslims. The goal is to destigmatise mental health issues and create a more inclusive and supportive environment for Muslim students. [Visit website](#)

**maslaha Maslaha** is an organisation dedicated to addressing inequalities faced by Muslim communities in various areas such as education, gender, criminal justice, health, and media representation. You can view their material about anti racism in curriculum and conversations around Palestine - [Visit website](#)



**MIND UK:** They have a dedicated section on their website for working with Muslim communities, including resources like <https://www.suffolkmind.org.uk/product/the-quran-emotional-health/>



### **Muslim Counsellor and Psychotherapist Network**

● **Website:** [mcapn.co.uk](http://mcapn.co.uk)

Directory of Muslim counsellors and psychotherapists.

The MCAPN operates as an independent network, providing resources to the public, alongside services and resources to its members.



### **Inspired Minds**

● **Website:** [inspiredminds.org.uk](http://inspiredminds.org.uk)

18+ only. A faith based, grassroots mental health charity located in London providing professional, nonjudgemental, confidential support to those affected by mental health challenges. Team includes Counsellors and CBT therapists.



### **Muslim Community Helpline**

● **Website:** [muslimcommunityhelpline.org.uk](http://muslimcommunityhelpline.org.uk)

**Phone:** 0208 908 6715 OR 0208 904 8193

Free, confidential, non-judgemental listening and emotional support service.

**Service hours:** Monday to Thursday: 10 am to 1 pm. Fridays 10am-4 pm

● **Languages:** Arabic, Monday mornings. Mon-Thur, Asian languages (Urdu, Punjabi, Gujrati) & English. Fridays, English. NEW: Arabic on Mondays, 10-1.



### **The Muslim Lived Experience Network**

● **Website:** [mlxn.org.uk](http://mlxn.org.uk)

A small group of NHS Mental Health Lived Experience Practitioners based in London.

We offer free peer support for Muslims. We promote mental health literacy through workshops and training. We challenge harmful practices in mainstream mental health services and champion safe, therapeutic and culturally appropriate healthcare for Muslims and non-Muslims alike.



### **Muslim Youth Helpline**

● **Website:** [myh.org.uk](http://myh.org.uk)

A free, non-judgemental confidential helpline for Muslim youth providing emotional support by phone, live chat, WhatsApp or email.