

RESOURCES & ACTIVITIES
TO HELP CHILDREN MANAGE:

WORRIES

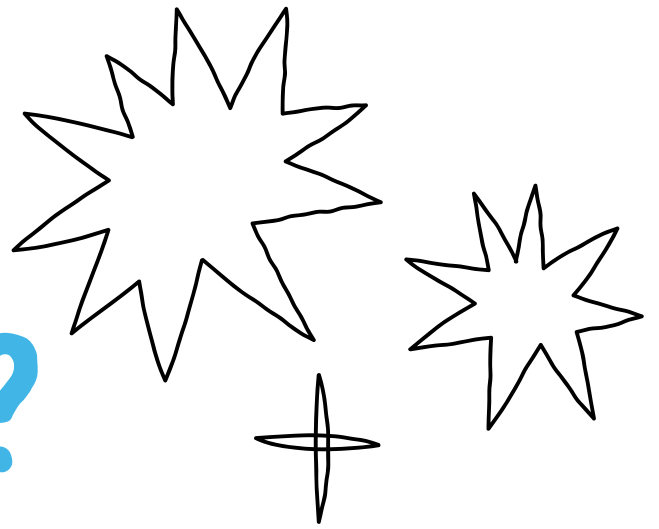


ANXIETIES

PARENT/CARER GUIDE



WHAT IS ANXIETY?



Anxiety is a normal feeling which we all feel and experience.

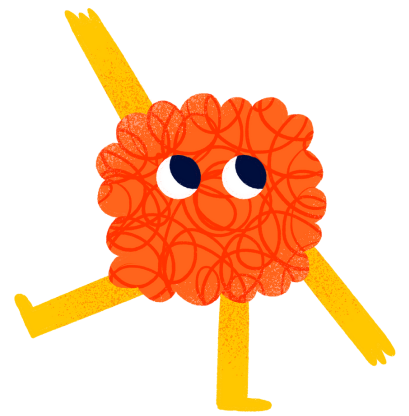
A little bit of anxiety is a good thing because it prepares our bodies for danger and helps us get things done for example revising for a big exam. If we weren't worried we wouldn't have any motivation to revise so it can be helpful.

However, too much anxiety can impact our lives, stop us from concentrating and make us worry a lot more.



If you see this arrow icon or the text is underlined, the text is hyperlinked. Right click and 'open in a new tab' to open the links.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP?



Here are a few tips that you can do to make a difference:

- Talk to your child about how they are feeling, ask them what is happening in their body and when this happens. Children sometimes don't know why they feel like this which makes it more scary and overwhelming.
- Help your child to recognise when they are feeling anxious so they can learn to tell you when they are feeling anxious and ask for help.
- Normalise anxiety so your child does not feel scared 'it is ok to feel anxious, this feeling will pass'. It might be helpful to describe the anxiety as a wave sometimes it is bigger and sometimes it is smaller. It passes through like waves.
- Keeping a worry diary or book can help children write down when they are feeling anxious. This encourages them to identify what makes them anxious.
- Positive thinking - help your child notice what they think is the worst thing that can happen and then problem solve with them so they are able to feel better and feel like they can cope.

OPEN QUESTIONS TO ASK CHILDREN WHEN THEY ARE WORRIED

Why are you feeling worried?

What is frightening you?

What do you think will happen?

What is the worst thing that might happen?

What it is about [the situation] that is making you worried?

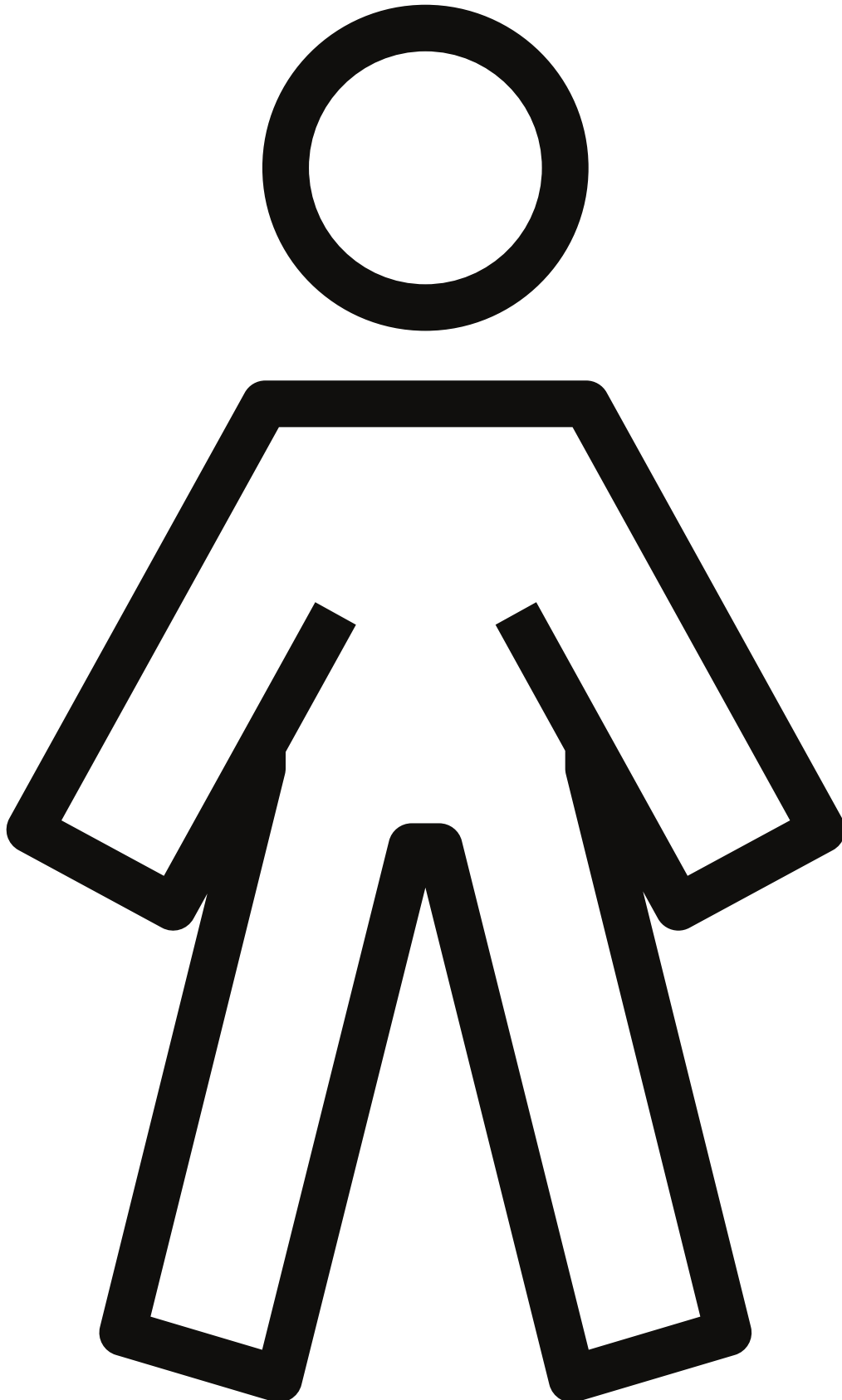
The better the question, the better the answer.

Your responses:

- Be curious
- Help your child **feel** understood
- Help your child **feel** normal
- Make suggestions
- Check you have understood
- Keep it rewarding (and fun, if applicable)

WHAT HAPPENS TO OUR BODIES WHEN WE FEEL ANXIOUS?

Think of a time when you felt anxious or worried.
Which parts of your body felt different or uncomfortable?
Draw a circle on those parts on the picture below.

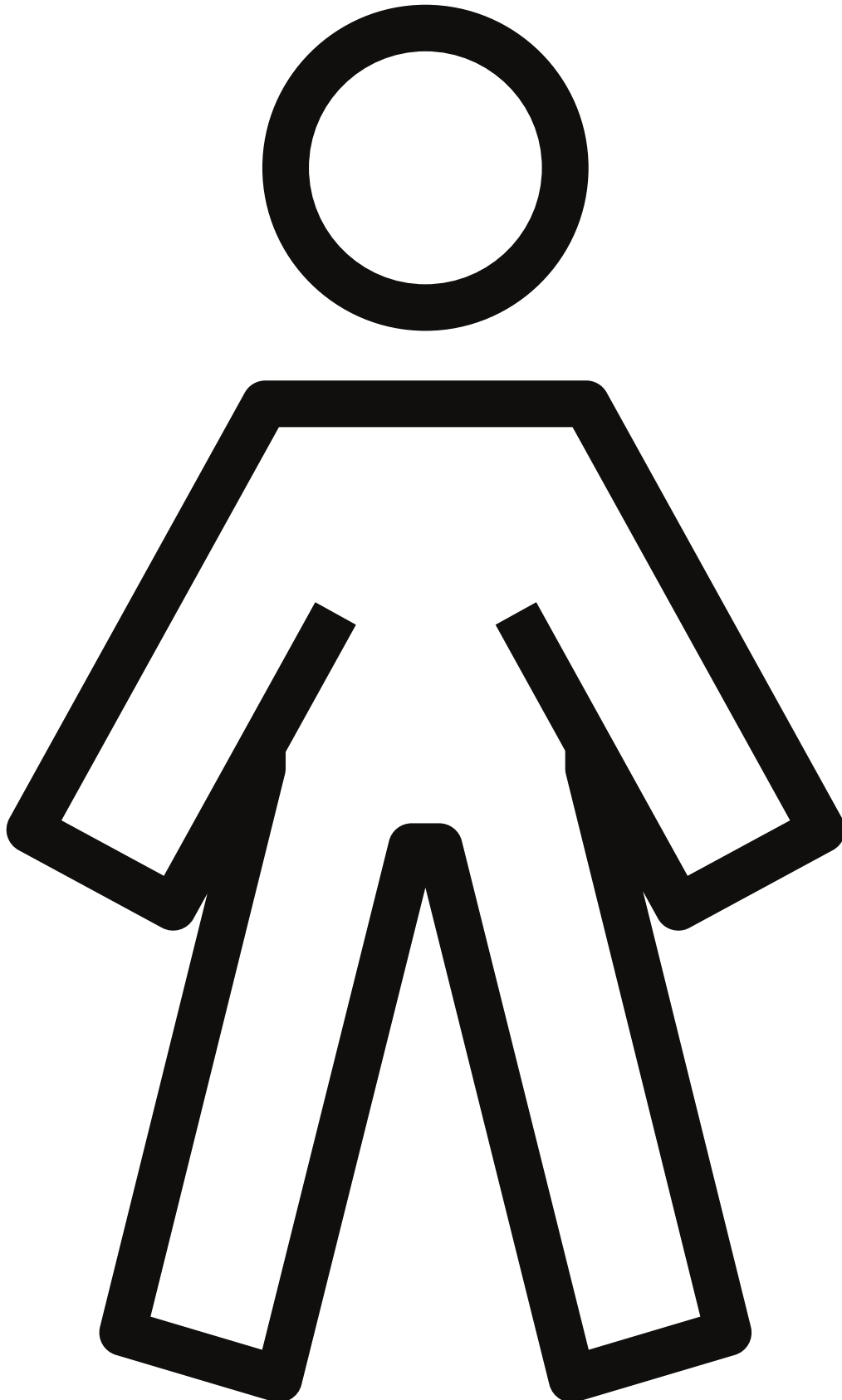


WHAT HAPPENS TO OUR BODIES WHEN WE ARE RELAXED?

Think of a time when you felt relaxed - where were you? What were you doing?

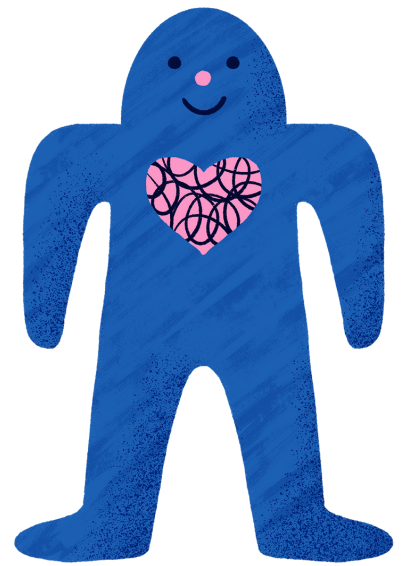
Which parts of your body felt different or comfortable?

Colour those parts on the picture below.



STRUCTURE AND PREDICTABILITY REDUCES ANXIETY

Structure and routines are super important as they can help families feel more organised which will hopefully help manage stress and anxiety. It's good to break down tasks into manageable chunks. Following a routine at bed time can help children to settle.



Dinner time 

Play time 

Bath time 

Reading, cuddles, quiet time in bed to settle




Kiss good night 


Lights off 



WORRY MONSTER

The idea behind the Worry Eater/Monster is that children write down or draw a picture of what's upsetting them and put it into the toy's mouth, which is then zipped shut - banishing their worries. The Worry Monster teddies are available to buy online, however you could also make your own Monster Box at home!

[Worry Monster: Free Print Resource](#) 

[Design a Worry Monster](#) 

Or create your own monster worry box using old tissue boxes, and feed the monster all your worries!



WORRY JAR



Whenever you feel stressed or worried, write your worries on a piece of paper and place it inside your worry jar. Pick a time during the week to discuss your worries with a parent, carer or teacher.

You will need:

An empty, clean jar

Materials to decorate your jar such as stickers, tissue paper, paint, ribbons, pom-poms, etc (optional).

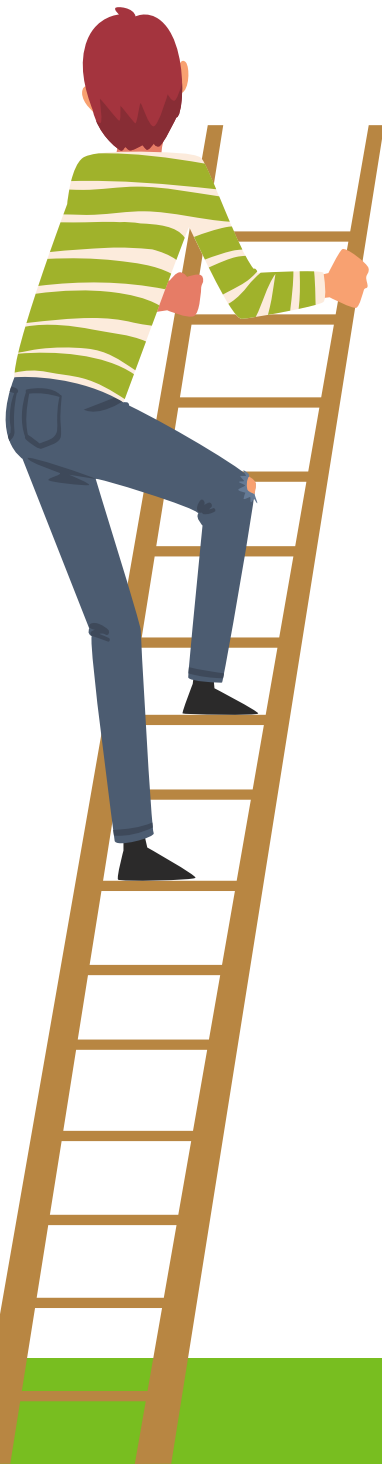
Small pieces of paper to write your worries on.

Instructions

1. Take your empty jar and decorate it with anything you like. Make it bright and colourful! You could use stickers, tissue paper, pom-poms or ribbons. You could even paint it! (optional)
2. You can label your jar 'My Worry Jar'
3. Pick a day every week or month to discuss your worries with a parent, carer or teacher.
4. If you are no longer worried about something that you've put in the jar, you can take that worry out of your jar and treat yourself for being super brave!

WORRY LADDER

Pick a situation that you commonly avoid due to anxiety and uncomfortable feelings. Write it down below next to point 5 at the top of your ladder. Think of other smaller steps you can take to expose yourself to the fear you listed at the top of your ladder. Rate each step with the intensity of anxiety it would cause you to complete. Remember, you want each step to cause some level of anxiety. Once you decide to work on your ladder, you can start on the bottom and move up, or you can randomly pick any step and practice over and over.



SITUATIONS

ANXIETY (0-10)

| | |
|----|--|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |

BREATHING EXERCISES



Youtube links:

[Balloon Breaths](#)

[4-7-8 Breathing Exercise](#)

[Rainbow Breath](#)

[Box Breathing](#)

[Square Breathing](#)

[5 Finger Breathing](#)

[Belly Breathe with Elmo](#)

[Diaphragm Breathing](#)


[Body Scan Meditation](#)



MUSCLE RELAXATION



Progressive Muscle Relaxation is a classic meditation that teaches you how to relax your muscles using a two-step process. First, you tense particular muscle groups in your body. Then, you release the tension and notice how your muscles feel.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation 

SCRIPTS

Guided meditation helps your child develop mindfulness and the ability to calm and relax their body and mind at will. Meditation has many benefits for kids, and these scripts are a wonderful tool to help them develop a lifelong appreciation for the power of mindfulness.

Guided Relaxation - Scripts 


GUIDED MEDITATION


10 minute meditation for kids 


BOOKS



Audio Books

The Very Hungry Worry Monsters 

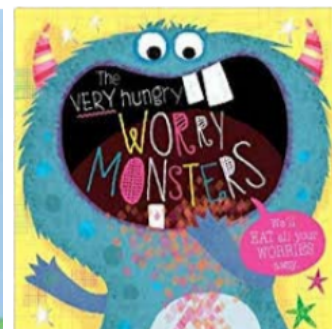
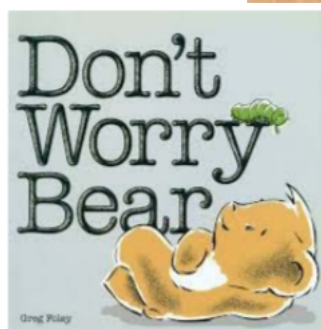
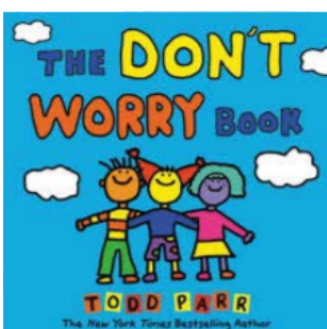
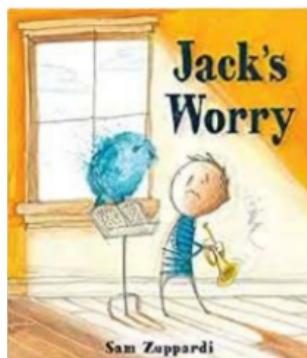
Ruby Finds a Worry 

The Huge Bag of Worries 

Jack's Worry 

The Don't Worry Book 

Don't Worry Bear 



APPS



Breathing Bubbles is an app that helps kids practice releasing worries and focusing on good feelings by allowing kids to select the emotion they are feeling and how strongly they are feeling it. Kids can choose to handle their emotion by releasing a worry or receiving a joy as Manny the Manatee walks them through deep breathing and visualization.



Stop, Breathe & Think Kids offers children a fun and easy way to identify and process their emotions. From counting breaths to friendly wishes or frog jumps, each activity brings fun rewards to keep them engaged.



Smiling Mind is designed to help people with pressure, stress and challenges of daily life. This app has a fantastic section Mindfulness in the classroom and is suited for kids aged 7-18.



Breathe, Think, Do with Sesame is intended for parents and caregivers to use with their young children (aged 2-5) to help teach skills such as problem-solving, self-control, planning and task persistence.



DreamyKid meditation app offers meditation, guided visualisation and affirmations curated just for children and teens. It uses proven techniques that teach your kids methods to guide them towards a happier life through mindfulness.

FURTHER SUPPORT

ANNA FREUD

- The Anna Freud Centre is a world leading mental health charity for children, young people and their families.

CONNECTION

- Dorset's 24/7 helpline that anyone, of any age, can call for advice/support. 0800 652 0190.

LISTENING EAR

- 1-1 telephone appointments with a family support adviser for parents/carers looking for a listening ear, reassurance and practical and emotional support.

PLACE2BE

- Parenting advice from child mental health experts.

RELATE

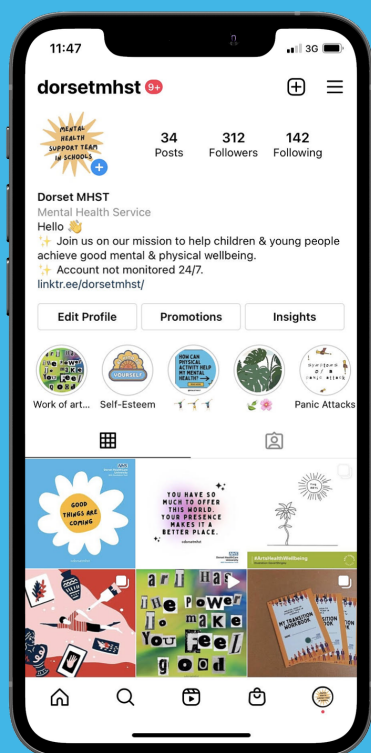
- If you're having problems in your family life, there are lots of ways Relate can help you. They can offer parenting tips, advice, as well as family or individual counselling.

YOUNG MINDS

- Mental health support and resources for young people and their families.

Mental Health Support Team in Schools focus our work on the health and wellbeing of children and young people.

You can look out our social media channels for ideas, tips and activities to keep you busy and feeling good. Please keep in touch with us and send us your comments, pictures, photos and ideas either by emailing dhc.MHSTDorset@nhs.net or by direct messaging us through Instagram, Facebook or Twitter.



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