



## Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA)

### WELCOME!

Hello and welcome to our school ELSA page!

We are pleased to be able to share information with parents about Emotional Literacy Support on the school website. On this page we aim to post ideas and helpful advice on how you can help your child; for example in areas such as empathy, self-esteem or perhaps to pick up some tips about calming techniques. Parents and carers will be able to find out about recommended books which may be useful and links to other websites for some self-help at home.



### What is ELSA?

There will always be children and young people in schools facing life challenges that detract from their ability to engage with learning. Some will require greater support to increase their emotional literacy than others. ELSA is an initiative developed and supported by educational psychologists. It recognises that children learn better and are happier in school if their emotional needs are also addressed.

We are lucky enough to have an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant at Flintham Primary. Miss Pykett has been trained by Educational Psychologists and is regularly supervised by the local education authority to plan and deliver programmes of support to pupils who are experiencing temporary or longer term additional emotional needs. The majority of ELSA work is delivered on an individual basis, but sometimes small group work is more appropriate, especially in the areas of social and friendship skills. Sessions are fun, we use a range of activities such as: games, role-play with puppets or arts and craft. ELSA sessions take place in our very own 'ELSA room' which provides a calm, safe space for the child to feel supported and nurtured.

#### **In ELSA we aim to provide support for a wide range of emotional needs:**

Recognising emotions  
Self-esteem  
Social skills  
Friendship skills  
Anger management  
Loss and bereavement

### How does ELSA work?

Children are usually referred for ELSA support by their class teacher, teaching assistants or on occasion the SENCo. Every half term we meet with all staff involved with the child, to discuss the referral forms and to identify and prioritise which children require a weekly programme for the next 6-8 weeks. With the programme aims in mind we then plan support sessions to facilitate the pupil in developing new skills and coping strategies that allow them to manage social and emotional demands more effectively.

### Supporting - not fixing

Remember, ELSAs are not there to fix children's problems. What we can do is provide emotional support.

We aim to establish a warm, respectful relationship with a pupil and to provide a reflective space where they are able to share honestly their thoughts and feelings.

It needs to be appreciated that change cannot necessarily be achieved rapidly and is dependent upon the context and complexity of the presenting issues. For children with complex or long-term needs it is unrealistic to expect ELSA intervention to resolve all their difficulties, however support will be designed to target specific aspects of a child's need. Training and development of ELSAs is an ongoing process and wisdom is required to recognise when issues are beyond the level of expertise that could reasonably be expected of an ELSA. The Educational Psychologist that works with our school would be able to offer advice on suitability or nature of ELSA involvement in complex cases.

## **\*\*\* Parents Self-Help section! \*\*\***

Here we can sign-post you to some of the different websites online which offer help and advice to parents.

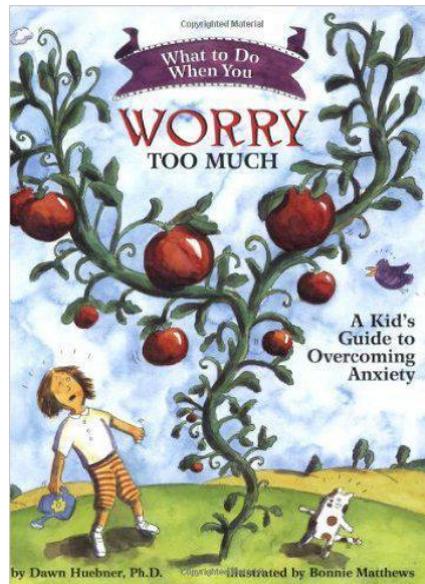
### **Do you have an anxious child?**

Follow the link below for some useful guidance on helping your child overcome anxieties:

<http://blogs.psychcentral.com/stress-better/2016/03/49-phrases-to-calm-an-anxious-child/>



\*\*\*\* Recommended self-help anxiety book! \*\*\*\*



*What to Do When You Worry Too Much* (A kids guide to overcoming anxiety) by Dawn Huebner is an interactive self-help book designed to guide 6-12 year olds and their parents through the cognitive-behavioral techniques most often used in the treatment of generalised anxiety. Engaging, encouraging, and easy to follow, this book educates, motivates, and empowers children to work towards change. We have used this book at school and have found it a very useful tool.

### Self esteem

Is your child having problems with self esteem? Try following this link which gives some useful advice to parents:

<http://www.familylives.org.uk/advice/primary/health-and-development/helping-your-child-build-self-esteem/>

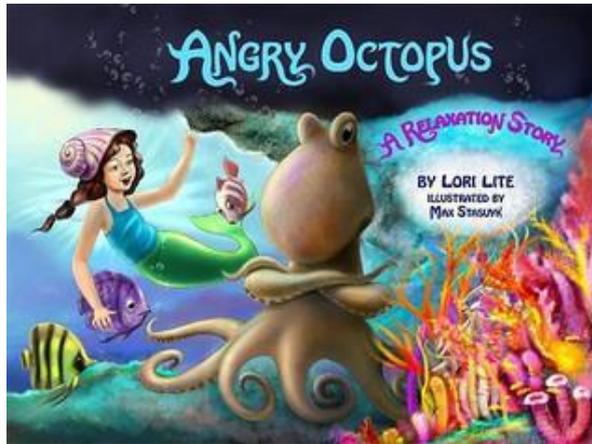


## Parental advice on anger management

Help with those 'hot feelings' - some tips and information for parents/guardians about managing anger in children:

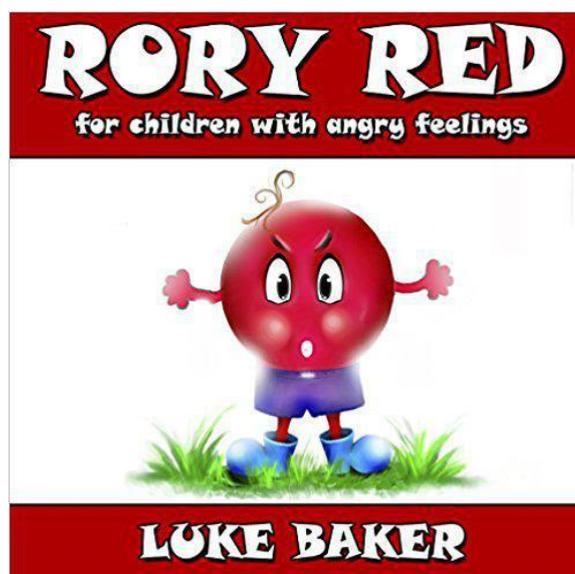
<http://www.scholastic.com/parents/resources/article/praise-discipline/anger-management-children>

\*\*\*\*\***Recommended book!**\*\*\*\*\*



An anger management story for children written by Lori Lite. Children relate to the angry octopus in this story as the sea child shows him how to take a deep breath, calm down, and manage his anger. Children love to unwind and relax with this fun exercise known as progressive muscular relaxation. This effective stress and anger management technique focuses awareness on various muscle groups and breath to create a complete resting of the mind and body. This is a great little story to help children understand that they are in control of their emotions. It focuses on the ownership of feelings and emotions and taking command of the situation. We use this book in ELSA sessions and is fun and very effective!

**\*\*\*NEW BOOK!!\*\*\***



This book uses CBT at its core to help younger children understand their angry feelings and make the necessary changes to regulate their emotions. The book was written by Luke Baker, a former ELSA! The book is about The Red family and their youngest member Rory. Rory Red is very angry all of the time. He wants to change but is told by

both parents that 'It is just who you are.' Rory wants to change and one day meets a new friend Yasmine Yellow. Yasmine shows him the way and helps him to understand how he can change.

The book leads the child through the different stages of anger such as triggers: 'someone being mean to him', 'when he can't go out to play because it is raining', 'when he isn't allowed his dessert'. It takes the child through the physical effects of anger such as breathing heavier, his heart beating harder and faster. It also looks at Rory's thoughts such as: 'hit them!' 'break something!' 'say bad words!'. Yasmine helps him by suggesting different calming techniques to help him cope with his anger. Delightful, simple illustrations that children will love. The language is simple and easy to understand. This book would be perfect for EYFS and KS1, (possibly even Lower KS2).