

Coping Mechanisms

- Children with conduct disorders are often labelled as 'naughty,' and it is often this label that can lead to the behaviours of the child with conduct disorder to become more prominent. But there are things that you can do to help:
- As difficult as it may seem at times, try, and pay more attention to the positive behaviours that your child displays, rather than the negative ones. A child with conduct disorder often only receives attention for the negative behaviours, and therefore acknowledging the positive behaviours can benefit all involved. Set clear boundaries – let your child know that there are some behaviours that will not be tolerated under any circumstance
- Set clear rules and implement them at all times. Your child needs consistency with regards to their behaviours, and having clear rules can help with this
- Recognise their strengths – pay close attention to the things that they are good at and compliment them regularly. Let them know that there are things that they do well, and reinforce those compliments freely
- Encourage exercise. Exercise releases endorphins and gives something to focus on. Try suggesting things such as:
 - Going for walks
 - Going jogging
 - Taking exercise classes
 - Taking part in sports

Conduct Disorder

Coping Mechanisms



The Lotus Mental Health

www.thelotusmentalhealth.org

What is Conduct Disorder?

Conduct disorders are behavioural and emotional issues that often begin in childhood. Those with conduct disorders struggle to follow rules and behave in ways that are referred to as socially unacceptable.

Their behaviours are destructive, deceitful, aggressive and they often impact on the feelings of others, due to lack of consideration for others. Children with conduct disorder tend to be labelled as 'naughty', which usually isn't the case. Their behaviours are a direct result of their mental health disorder, and they often wrongly believe that other people are behaving negatively towards them.

What can you do?

Living with a child with conduct disorder can be extremely exhausting for the entire family. Parents of children with conduct disorder are often filled with their own anxieties about how their child will act in any and all situations, and regularly describe their home life as walking on eggshells.

There are things that you can do to help both your child and the wider family, and having coping mechanisms in place can be hugely beneficial for all involved.

Coping Mechanisms

If your child(ren) are feeling anxious, there are things that you can encourage your child to do that can help them. They are:

- Nobody should go through difficult times alone, and this is something that your child needs to learn to understand, because of this, it is important for your child to learn how to open up to people about how they are feeling. A parent, carer, brother, sister, grandparent, auntie, uncle, cousin, a trusted friend, a counsellor – it doesn't matter who, as long as your child feels comfortable talking to someone who they trust, about how they are feeling.
- Encourage your child to get the thoughts that are in their head – out. An effective way that they can do this by keeping a diary. Simply writing down how they are feeling can be really useful. Not only will that work because it helps them put a place for their negative thoughts, but it can also be used as a point of reference for any particular anxiety triggers that they didn't realise they had.
- Writing a letter – this might seem a bit daft, but if they can write letters to themselves, particularly after particular difficult anxiety attacks, they can use the letters to read back and see themselves, through their own words, that they have overcome anxiety attacks in the past, and therefore they know that they are capable of overcoming them.