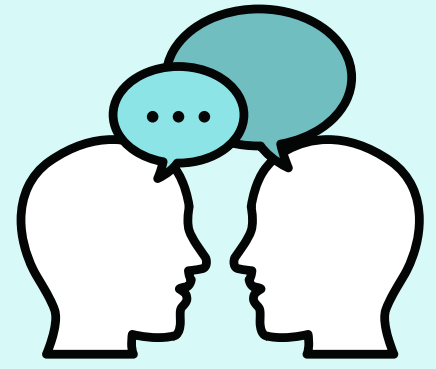


# TEACHER STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT STUDENTS EXPERIENCING OCD

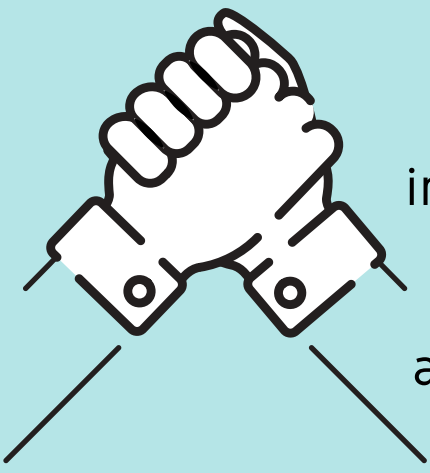
## HAVE THE CONVERSATION

OCD gains power by causing shame and guilt. Normalizing fears and feelings by asking about them can alleviate guilt and shame and help the child open up and trust you as a support.



## RESPOND WITH VALIDATION AND ACCEPTANCE

OCD is hard to talk about and convinces children that they shouldn't talk about it. It is important not to dismiss their concerns but to show empathy. This is not the same as accepting OCD fears as real. Rather, it acknowledges the very real fear and reactions based on a fear that OCD has made seem absolutely real.



## DEVELOP A PLAN

Develop a plan-collaboratively with the child's family and the child, put it in writing and ensure all staff are aware of the plan so everyone is on the page.



MAKE **CONTACT** WITH THE CHILD'S CAREGIVER TO TALK ABOUT THE BEHAVIOUR YOU ARE SEEING AT SCHOOL AND THE CONCERNS YOU HAVE. FOCUS ON HOW YOU SEE IT NEGATIVELY AFFECTING THE CHILD AND YOUR CONCERNS ABOUT THEIR WELL BEING.

HAVE THE CHILD **INVOLVED** IN THESE CONVERSATIONS TO TALK ABOUT THEIR VIEW OF HOW THE BEHAVIOUR IS IMPACTING THEM AND TO HAVE A ROLE IN DEVELOPING THE PLAN.

GET THE **PLAN** IN WRITING AND MAKE SURE IT IS ADHERED TO CONSISTENTLY. MAKE ALL SCHOOL STAFF AWARE OF IT. MAKE SURE THE CHILD HAS A COPY THAT IS ACCESSIBLE TO THEM (AT THEIR READING LEVEL, USING PICTURES ETC.)

## THINK ABOUT HOW YOU COMMUNICATE

- 1 If you want to talk to your student about concerns, do so privately to avoid guilt and embarrassment.
- 2 Language is important - avoid phrasing that may cause shame, such as "why are you doing that" or passing judgments on OCD behaviour thoughts as silly or unnecessary.
- 3 Anxiety begets anxiety - it is important to respond calmly. An anxious or emotional response will likely increase anxiety in the student. Be calm, firm, consistent and kind.