



## Understanding Barriers to Reaching Out for Support



Seeking help is not a sign of weakness. Rather, it is a **sign of resilience and courage** that promotes **better recovery**. This not only includes seeking professional help but also reaching out to parents, trusted adults (e.g. teachers, school counsellors), and friends.

At times, your child may not feel comfortable seeking help or sharing their feelings with you due to the following reasons:



1 They feel embarrassed or worried that others may judge them.



3 They think that nothing or no one can help.



2 They have had previous bad experiences when they tried seeking help.



4 They do not realise the seriousness of their problems.

If you sense that your child may be hiding their feelings, trust your gut and initiate a conversation to better understand your child's specific reasons for not sharing what they are feeling. This will enable you to understand their concerns and better support them.

Let your child know that you are concerned and want to help. Sit in a relaxed position and maintain eye contact.

I've noticed you seem <sad/distant/not your usual self>. What's making it difficult for you to share about what's on your mind?



If your child shares anything about harming themselves or being harmed, seek your child's agreement to share this information with a professional so that you can better support your child.

Let your child know that you can work through options to seek help together. You can offer to make an appointment and accompany your child, if they are open to it.

Talking to other people may feel uncomfortable or scary, but your safety is important to us. What do you think about talking to a professional about this? I will be with you every step of the way.

