

Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD)

Case Study :

Name – Hannah

Sex – Female

Age – 12 years

Hannah's story as told by her mother.

"Our daughter Hannah came home on day two of secondary school and announced with steely determination, 'I don't like that school and I'm not going back'.

No amount of talking, comforting or ignoring could jog her out of her own feeling of impending doom. I don't know anyone else who has a child who has suddenly entered the world of mental health issues. Or at least. I may do, but you can bet I don't know who they are. The initial approaches to the school were met with robust rebuttals that Hannah was just having teething problems and that there wasn't a problem.

Hannah was demonstrating increasingly erratic behaviour at home and also on the journey to and from school as reported to me by my other daughter. We invited Hannah's friends round but would have to cancel as she refused to let anyone into her room. One evening, my sister dropped in unexpectedly while Hannah was having a complete tantrum about homework and was horrified at the scene that beset here. I knew it was time to up the ante. This is when we really struggled.

At this stage Hannah was just about holding it together at school but home family life was reduced to a hotbed of tears, closed doors (her siblings kept well away) and sobs. We took Hannah to see a GP multiple times, one GP told Hannah she must simply pull herself together and 'stop being silly' – I took a deep breath and declared that I would not leave the surgery until the GP could produce some kind of plan. She reluctantly agreed to do a referral to CAMHS (the NHS child and adolescent mental health services).

By the time we met the specialist, Hannah was unable to keep herself composed and sobbed as she answered the questions, gradually explaining that she was worried all of the time and had racing thoughts which didn't stop, she felt terrified of making mistakes on homework and it consumed her feelings all day and felt that she was always on the verge of tears. Hannah said that she also felt sick most of the time.

We were advised to remove Hannah from the environment that was clearly having a detrimental effect on her mental health, to look for a different school and consider a course of CBT.

We were lucky to get Hannah into a new school, one which was closer to home and all she needed to do was turn up each day, no homework. Hannah completed a 12-week course of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy CBT and is working hard on maintaining her state of mind. I just wish someone had listened to us sooner."

Case Study – Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD) adapted from : Acred, C., (2015), *Anxiety and Stress*, Cambridge: Independence. (pp14 – 16)