

5-4-3-2-1 Cards



Staff Resource: **5-4-3-2-1 Cards for Panic Attack Prevention**

Aims:

- To support staff and widen understanding about the 5-4-3-2-1 technique as an intervention and easy aid in the classroom for students to use.

Resources:

- [5-4-3-2-1 Cards \(total pack of 15\).](#)

Overview:

This technique will take students through their senses to help remind them of the present. This is a calming technique that can help students get through tough or stressful situations using grounding. Grounding is a technique that helps us reorient to the here and now to bring us into the present. It is a useful technique if you ever feel overwhelmed, intensely anxious or dissociated from your current environment.

Regardless of how you approach this method, the goal is for students to identify and focus elements in the world around them. As their mind begins to centre on these things, they will be less fixated on the sudden rush of anxiety.

Turn overleaf for more information on panic attacks.

Information on Panic Attacks

Panic attacks are a common symptom of anxiety disorders. A panic attack is a rapid build-up of overwhelming fear and can include several of the following symptoms:

- A pounding, irregular heartbeat
- Chest pains
- Breathing difficulties
- Difficulties
- Feeling faint
- Nausea
- A choking feeling
- Sweating
- Trembling or shaking
- A sense of imminent danger they need to escape
- Feelings of unreality and detachment
- Fear of losing control
- Fear of blacking out
- Fear that you are having a heart attack
- Fear of dying

A panic attack is an intense fight or flight response. Although a panic attack can feel all-consuming and very frightening at the time, it isn't dangerous, won't cause you physical harm and will always pass. If you suffer from panic attacks, it helps to have a plan in place to deal with them. When you first notice the signs, recognize what's happening and remind yourself that you will be fine.

Panic attacks can be triggered by a traumatic event, such as bereavement or divorce, or a stressful life change.

Hyperventilation is frequently a feature of panic attacks that is caused by breathing too quickly. Most panic attacks last for around 2 minutes but they can sometimes last for up to an hour. Many sufferers become anxious in between attacks, because they worry about when the next one is going to happen.