

# Summary of How Anxiety Works

It is possible to sum up the way anxiety works, and can be managed, using a single formula.

$$\text{Anxiety} = \frac{\text{Awfulness of consequences} \times \text{Probability of consequences}}{\text{How well we feel we can cope with these consequences}}$$

Young people who avoid school generally believe something very awful will happen either in school or while they are at school: so they have a high **Aw** score. They believe that these awful things are very likely to happen: so they have a high **P**. They also think they will be totally unable to cope: and so they have a low **C**. This leads to a very high score for the amount of fear felt, that we call **Anxiety**.

It is by working on each of these aspects that anxiety can be reduced. The rest of this booklet highlights how a child or young person, parents/carers, school staff and other professionals can play their part in working in partnership to reduce anxiety and increase confidence.

