

OCD?

a guide for young children



come and meet

jolly and **GRUMP**

as they explain what obsessive-compulsive Disorder is

Do you worry? a lot!

Everybody worries about things in their life: friends, family, school etc. But for some people, these worries become so big that they upset them and make them do things they don't want to do.

These worries can take up so much time that we don't have the time to do the things we like doing, such as playing with friends and going out with our families. The worries in our head can also make us do certain actions to make us feel better, but the worries keep on coming back and upsetting us.

There is a name for this and it's **oCD** (or **Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder** if you want to use the long name!).

meet
jolly and **GRUMP**



jolly is normally happy but **GRUMP**
bothers him quite a lot

What is OCD?

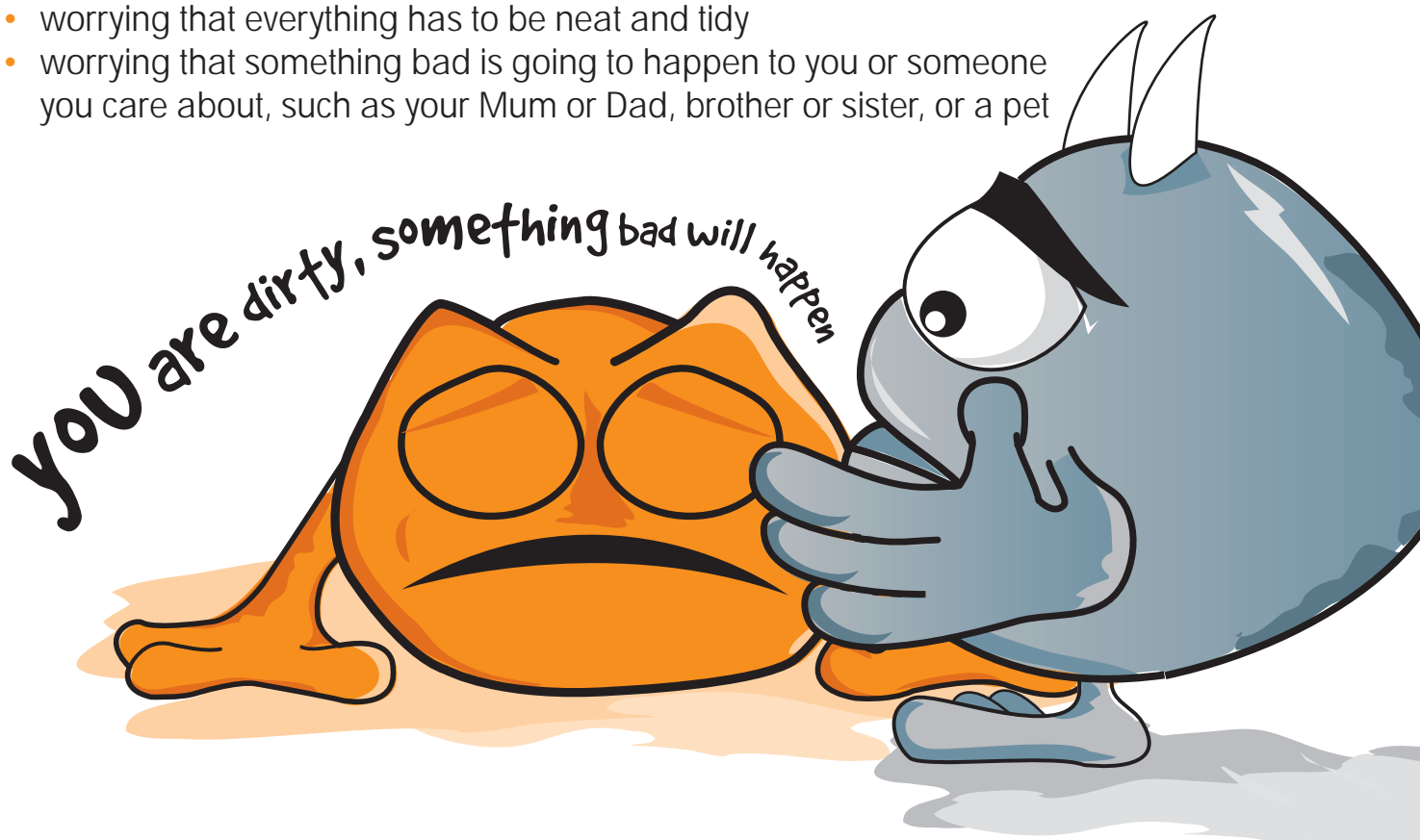
Everybody worries sometimes, but OCD can make people worry a lot more than normal. OCD is like a big bully that pushes you around and makes you unhappy. OCD can make people feel really bad. Some people with OCD feel worried, some people feel sad and some people just feel that things are not right.

obsessions

OCD has two parts to it – the first part is called “**obsessions**”, which is another word for your worrying thoughts. That’s because the worrying thoughts just keep on going around in your head and don’t leave you alone, no matter how hard you try to ignore them.

The worries can be about lots of different things, such as:

- worrying that your hands are not clean
- worrying about germs
- worrying that you might hurt someone you love
- worrying that something bad might happen to you
- thinking that you have to count up to a certain number
- worrying that certain numbers are lucky or unlucky
- worrying that everything has to be neat and tidy
- worrying that something bad is going to happen to you or someone you care about, such as your Mum or Dad, brother or sister, or a pet



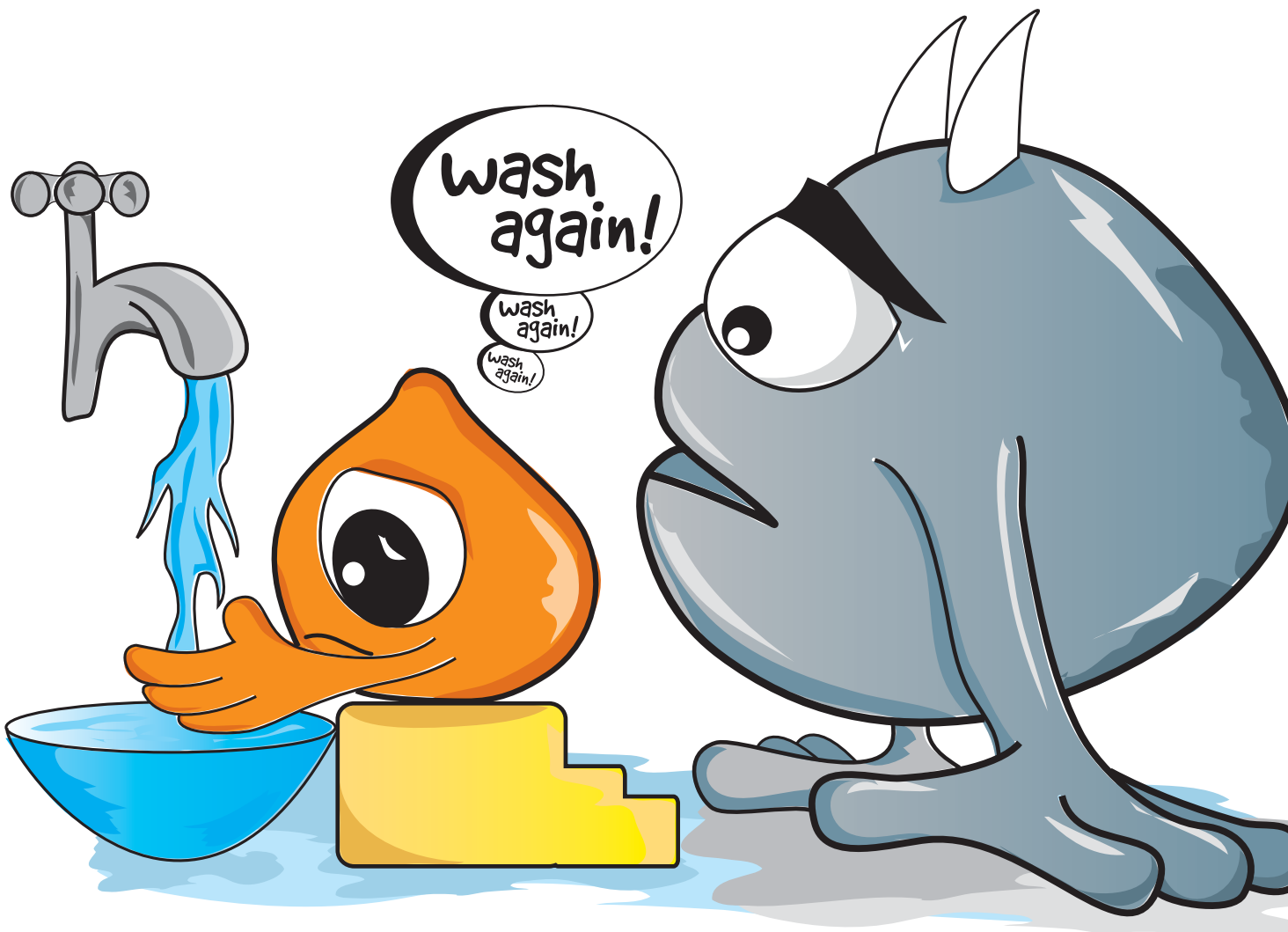
Don't worry though, these nasty horrible, thoughts are just that, **Just A Thought**
don't let OCD win!

Compulsions

“Compulsions”, are actions that OCD makes us think we need to do. We might do them because we want to stop worrying or to feel safer.

These actions can also be lots of different types:

- washing your hands lots of times or in a certain way
- counting or saying things in your head
- asking the same question over and over again
- avoiding certain numbers when counting
- tidying your room lots of times, even though it already looks nice and tidy
- avoiding using scissors or knives
- checking lights switches lots of times
- checking the door is locked



OCD can make you feel like you are being bullied when you're at school, at home, out with your family, trying to go to sleep or any time.

try to resist your compulsions!

How OCD can make you feel

It is mean and nasty, and will try to upset you whenever it can. It might stop you from going out to birthday parties because it tells you that something bad will happen if you go, or it might make you do badly at school because you are so worried about counting to a certain number or washing your hands again.

OCD can make you feel anxious and frightened, which means that you might get butterflies in your tummy or feel sick. Sometimes it can make you want to run away and hide or cry. OCD makes some people very sad and upset and even embarrassed; you might feel that no-one understands how you feel.



sometimes you can't see anything but the ocd

Why do I have OCD?

No-one really knows why some people get OCD and others don't. OCD is a medical problem (like asthma or diabetes) and is definitely not your fault.

OCD does NOT mean that:

- you have been naughty
- your Mum and Dad are cross with you
- you are mad
- you are crazy
- you are weak

OCD is very common, it is thought that 1 in 100 people will have OCD, so if you imagine that there are 100 other children at your school, then at least 1 more will have OCD just like you.



What should you do?

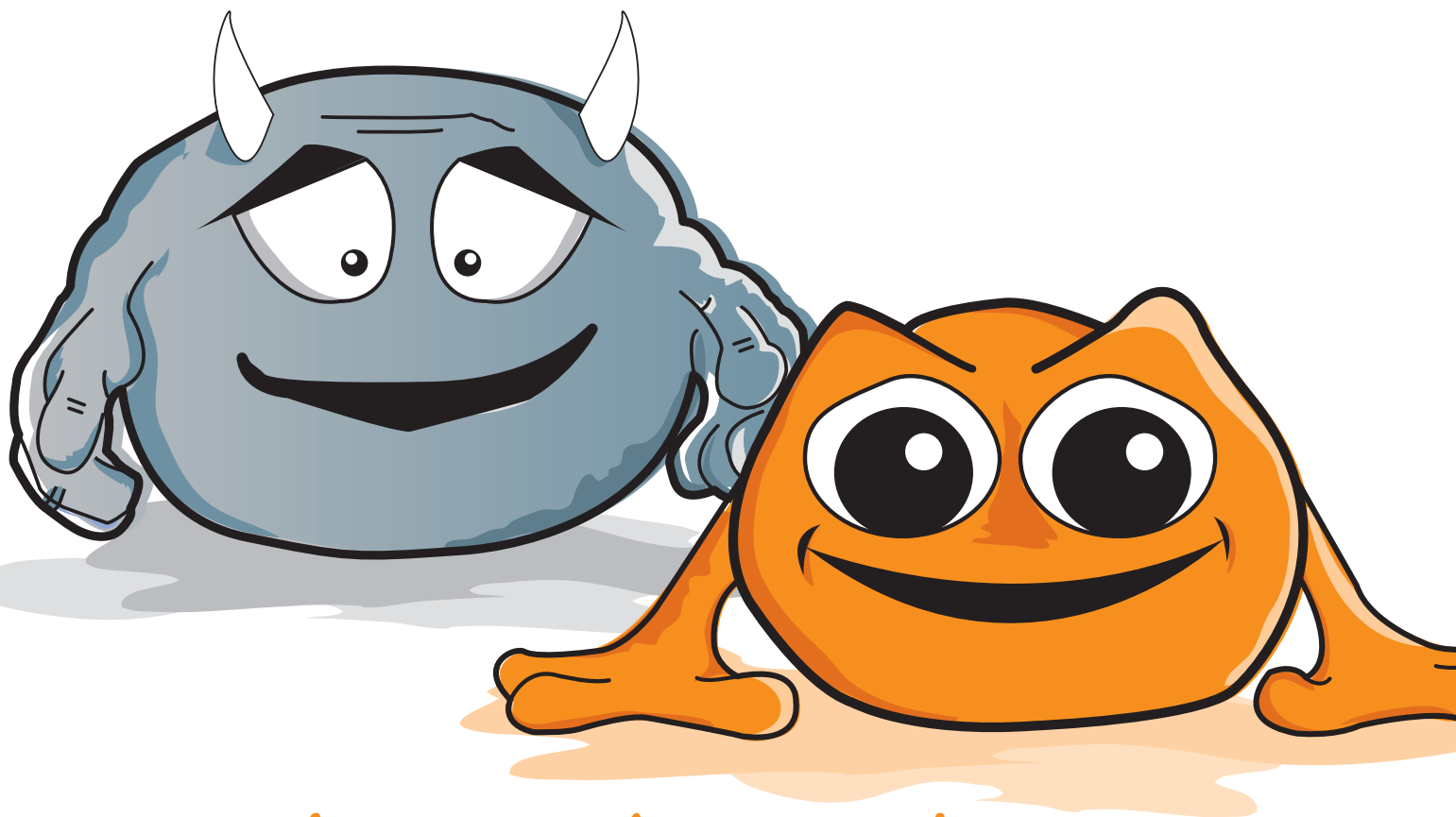
Remember, OCD means you simply have a medical illness like asthma or diabetes. If you have worries like these, then you need to remember that you are not the only one who feels like this, in fact they think that 1 in 100 children will have OCD and the really good news is that there are lots of people out there who can help you. It might feel scary telling someone about the worries you have, but it's really important to let someone know how you're feeling so that they can help you.

The people you could talk to include:

- your Mum or Dad
- a grandparent
- a big brother or sister
- your teacher at school
- your school nurse

What will happen when you tell someone?

When you tell someone about your worries, they will help you to get help. You need a special kind of help to get better from OCD, so your Mum or Dad will take you to see a doctor and he/she will explain to you about OCD. The doctor might make a regular time to see you and help you with your OCD, or they might ask another special OCD doctor to help you because they know more about OCD.



With help you can beat OCD!

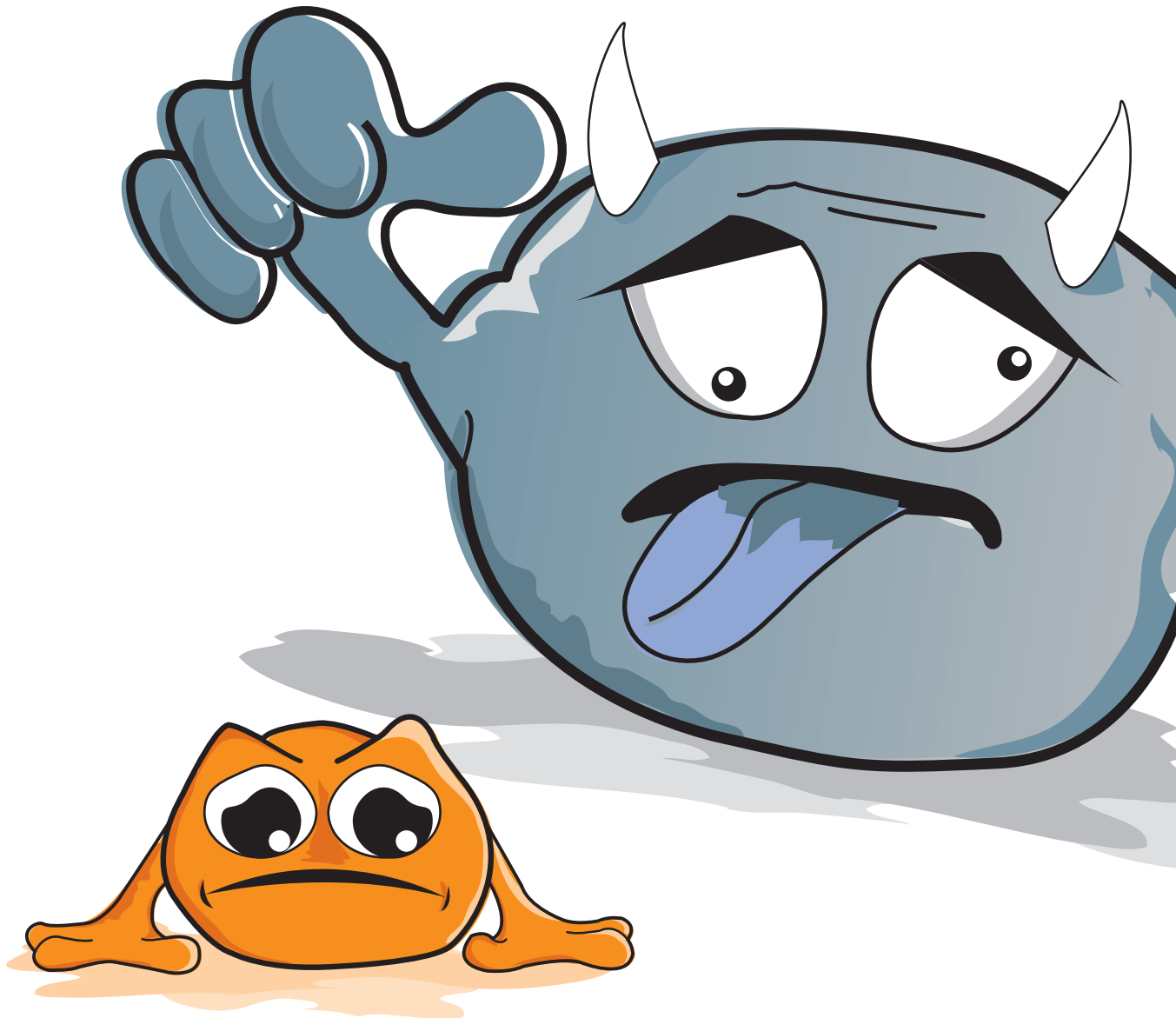
What will happen when I see the Dr?

The doctor will talk to you about your worries and ask you about how you feel. Don't worry – it is not a test and there are no right or wrong answers; they just want to understand so that they can help you.

It's really important that you remember that the OCD is not really you; it's a bully trying to upset you. Your doctor might ask you to come up with a name for your OCD or to draw a picture of what he/she looks like.

There are lots of names you might choose:

- Grump
- Worry
- Bully
- Billy Bully
- Idiot OCD
- Or anything else you think is a good name for it!



Special training

The doctor will probably also talk with your Mum or Dad so that they can help you as well. It can be hard for Mums and Dads to know how to help you, so they need to get some help from the doctor too. You will be given special OCD training by the doctor to help you get better, this is called CBT (the big name for it is Cognitive Behaviour Therapy).

You will probably meet with the doctor once a week to start with, and they will help you to face up to your worries. The doctor will never make you do something you don't want to, as they will understand how scary OCD can be. If you are finding fighting your OCD very difficult then the doctor might give you some medicine to help the anxiety become less. This medicine is to give you a little extra help, just like you might use an inhaler if you have asthma.

Will I always have these worries?

After you have got some help from your doctor (and your Mum and Dad) you should find that your worries start to become smaller and don't upset you as much. They might go away completely or they might just become so little that you can ignore them. It's a good idea to get help as soon as you can, because then you can start to beat the OCD bully much quicker, which will help you feel much more happy, just like...



Here are a few important things to remember...

- You're not the only kid who will have these kind of scary thoughts and feelings.
- OCD is a big bully
- You can get help to stop thinking and feeling the way you do.
- You are really not going crazy or mad!
- OCD means you have a medical illness like asthma or diabetes.
- Don't be afraid or embarrassed to tell someone
- You can beat OCD

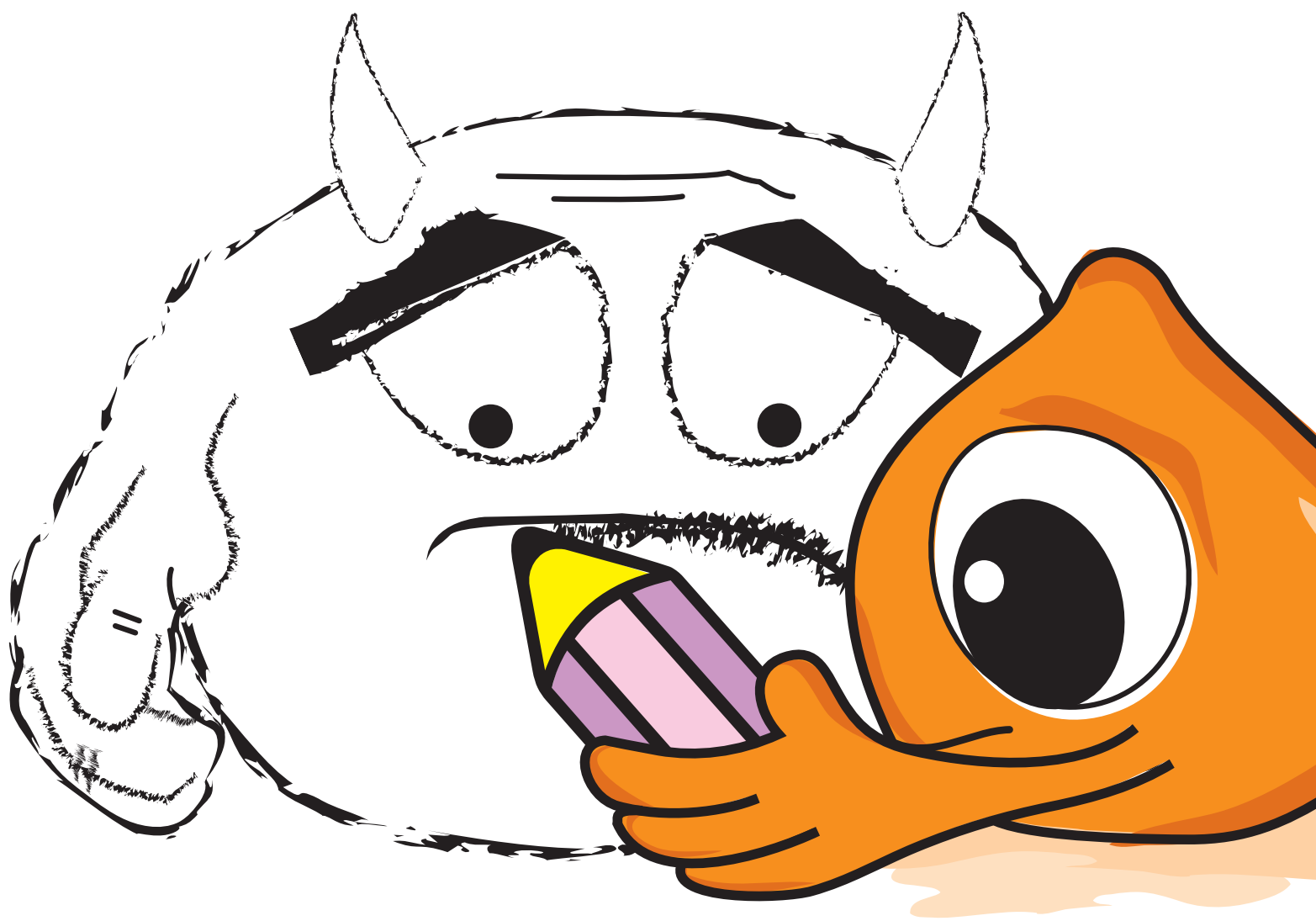
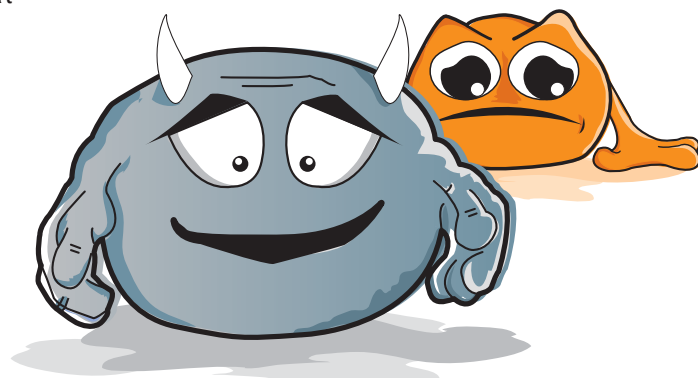
Visit the www.ocdkids.org website for more information about OCD, including your pictures of what you think OCD is and OCD games.



Competition

We would like you to create an awareness poster which shows what OCD might look like or what it might be like to have OCD.

Winners will receive a fantastic prize and have their poster shown on the front of the website. All entries need to be sent to the OCD-UK.



other booklets available from **OCD-UK**



Also available from OCD-UK upon request OCD youth guide, OCD for parents'

About **OCD-UK**

OCD-UK is the leading national charity, independently working with and for people with Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD). we aim to bring the facts about OCD to the public and to support those who suffer from this often debilitating anxiety disorder.

OCD-UK aims to improve awareness of the condition both amongst the general public and within the medical community, with the long term aim of campaigning to ensure that every sufferer receives the quality of treatment they deserve. We also want to facilitate a safe environment for people affected by OCD to communicate with each other and provide mutual understanding and support.

You can find out more about OCD-UK and details of how you can get involved and help at www.ocduk.org



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