

# REASONS NOT TO GO TO SCHOOL

## Reasons to stay home

- To avoid school related stress - noise, transitions, busy classrooms
- To avoid social situations or activities - break/lunchtimes, group/pair work, specific teachers, exams, social interactions
- Prefer to do own activities - gaming, iPad, be in room, TV, toys
- To get attention from their family
- Worrying about parent/carerer
- Feeling safer at home
- Flexibility at home
- Fun activities
- Quieter
- Time with parent/carerer

Try to identify the reasons your child does not want to go to school. What do they solve? What do they get from being at home?

## Reasons not to go to school

- The learning is too hard
- Friendship issues
- Bullying
- Teacher dislike
- Lesson dislike
- Too noisy
- Feeling overwhelmed
- School uniform too uncomfortable
- Travelling to and from school
- Homework
- High expectations

## Reasons not to stay home

- Parents/carerer at work so cant stay home
- Parent/carerer encouragement to go to school
- Wanting to do other activities outside of home

## Reasons to go to school

- A good transition process when going into school
- Good peer relationships
- Feeling like they belong
- Feeling safe at school
- Enjoying certain lessons
- Seeing friends

Then you can start thinking about how to overcome these issues

## Ways parents can influence their child

- Letting their child know they are worrying about how they will cope at school
- Poor relationship with school
- Worrying about Covid
- Not feeling heard by school
- An unsupportive school



# COPING WITH SCHOOL PLAN

What makes me want to stay at home?

What things at school stop me from wanting to go?

What can I do to make going to school easier?

What would help me get through the school day?

Who can help me get through the school day?

What helps me when I'm feeling overwhelmed?

What are the early warning signs I'm not coping?

What do I need other people to do when I'm struggling?

What should I do if I feel I am not coping at home?

What should I do if I feel I am not coping at school?



**Re: Minds**

A parent-led organisation supporting families whose children have Autism, ADHD and/or mental health needs

# HELPING YOUR CHILD COPE WITH ANXIETY AND SCHOOL REFUSAL

## CURIOUS

Ask questions. Use a PACE approach - be **P**layful in asking, **A**ccept what they tell you without judgement, be **C**urious about what they are saying, show **E**mpathy and understanding even if you disagree.

## CARING

Help them to know they aren't alone, be an active listener. Acknowledge their struggles. Help them to feel you are with them when they go to school - give them something of yours to look after or use. Plan something to do after school together.

## COLLABORATION

Link with school and any other services involved to reinforce what you are doing and get them to support your child as well.

## CONTROL

Help them to understand that school isn't optional, it's like work for adults and there are consequences if they do not go. Make this a clear boundary, but help them to see that you want to work together to make it better.

## COPING

Help them to understand that anxiety is normal. Create a bank of resources that work for them to use when they are feeling anxious. This could be a sensory box, colouring sheets, playlist - or whatever helps to calm them.

## COACHING

Help them to recognise that anxious feelings are normal for everyone, but you have to find a way of managing them. Anxiety doesn't go away, but it does pass if you have the right tools to deal with it.

Pick any one of these and start working on it, get your child to work on one and school to try another one.

It will take time, there are no quick fixes when it comes to anxiety, but don't give up!



# HELPING YOUR CHILD COPE WITH ANXIETY AND SCHOOL REFUSAL

**CURIIOUS** - what questions are you going to ask?

**CARING** - how will you show them you care about what they are feeling?

**COLLABORATION** - who are you going to work with to do this?

**CONTROL** - what can you help them to control at home? e.g. getting uniform ready in advance, having a plan if they are struggling.

**COPING** - what resources can you get for them to help with their anxiety?

**COACHING** - how are you going to help them when they are anxious? what will you say and do?