



# Information for Children - Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)



Everyone can feel worried or anxious about going to school sometimes, but some children feel so upset that they don't want to go to school at all.

This is called Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA).

Different things can worry us about going to school...

It may be the schoolwork that worries us

Something about the building that worries us

Your relationship with other pupils or teachers

Maybe you don't want to leave your parents at home

Some children will be so worried about going to school, they may want to stay at home where they feel comfortable and safe. Often, these worries will arise again in the evening and the following mornings and so they would stay at home the following days as well.

This will probably make them feel better, or less anxious to begin with. Over time, the more they stay away from school, other concerns will arise such as worrying about the work they are missing, fear of seeing teachers and friends again and feeling out of it. This then makes it more difficult to return. This is why it is so important to talk to someone at school or at home about our feelings.

## If you feel this way

It is important that you talk to someone; this can be one of your parents or carers, an adult at school or a family member or friend.

Think of the following questions to help you start talking about your thoughts about school;

What are the three things you like most about school?

What are the three things you dislike most about school?

Or if you can't talk about it, maybe you could draw a picture of what you're worried about

# EMOJIS CHECKLIST

Look at the emojis below, circle any emoji that matches how you feel to help start a conversation with an adult.

<p>I'm worried about coming to school in the morning</p> 	<p>I wish I had more friends at school</p> 	<p>I worry about my parents at home</p> 	<p>I worry about my schoolwork</p> 
<p>I don't like it when it's noisy</p> 	<p>No one understands how I feel</p> 	<p>I have many friends</p> 	<p>I'd rather be at home than at school</p> 
<p>I'm worried something bad will happen</p> 	<p>I have one best friend</p> 	<p>I don't like change in routine</p> 	<p>I enjoy learning new things</p> 
<p>I want people to like me</p> 	<p>I need a lot of help with my learning</p> 	<p>I feel that the teacher does not understand me</p> 	<p>I am worried about break time</p> 
<p>I don't understand what the teacher is saying</p> 	<p>I want to go to school</p> 	<p>I can do things if I try really hard</p> 	<p>I learn things quickly</p> 
<p>Going back after holidays is difficult</p> 	<p>Busy corridors scare me</p> 	<p>I worry less after I get to school</p> 	<p>I don't like it when staff changes</p> 

Here are some things you can do to help you relax or to distract you when worries arise. Talk to the adults at home or at school about these.

### Box Breathing - also known as four corner breathing



### Five senses technique

Also known as the '5,4,3,2,1' technique.

- Look around you and name five things you can see.
- Focus on your body and recognize four things you can feel.
- Listen for three sounds you hear around you.
- Name two things you can smell.
- Name one thing you can taste.

### Keep active and exercise:

You can try:

- Star jumps,
- Running in the garden,
- Play games such as football or netball
- Gymnastics



### 'Write and rip' -

Write your worries or negative thoughts on a piece of paper, tear it up into small pieces and throw it away.





# Useful Apps

## Smiling Mind



Smiling Mind offers hundreds of mindfulness activities for all ages. In addition to breathing meditations, the app has sensory exercises, like listening to music.

## Three Good Things: A Happiness Journal

This app can help you build mindfulness based on a simple idea: If you write down three good things that happen to you each day, you will feel happier. You can set a reminder to write each day, and you can look over past journal entries.

## Breathe, Think, Do With Sesame

This app teaches kids the "Breathe, Think, Do" method. You help an animated monster facing a frustrating situation to calm down by taking long, deep breaths. Afterwards, they help the monster think of a solution and do it.



Super Stretch Yoga HD can help you learn the importance of relaxation and breathing. The app teaches you how to do 12 different yoga poses. Each pose is introduced with short animations, a live video with a child doing the pose, and an explanation.

Childline is an organization specifically for children and young people. You can check their website for more information or you can call and speak to an adult who will listen to you.

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

Freephone helpline 0800111