SUPPORTING THE RELUCTANT CHILD TO COME INTO SCHOOL

Advice for parents



WHY IS MY CHILD UNWILLING TO GO TO SCHOOL?

It's common for young children to feel anxious about school. They might:

- Miss home
- Changes to home circumstances
- Struggle with friendships or the classroom environment.
- Feeling overwhelmed

Understanding their feelings is the first step to helping them feel more positive about school.

Tips to Support Your Child

Listen and Acknowledge Their Feelings

- Encourage your child to share what's bothering them.
- Reassure them that their feelings are normal and okay.
- Avoid dismissing their worries with phrases like "Don't be silly."

Establish a Calm Morning Routine

- Plan mornings to be predictable and stress-free.
- Get clothes and bags ready the night before.
- Allow time for breakfast and any calming activities.

Build a Positive View of School

- Talk about the fun activities and friends they'll see.
- Share your own positive school memories or exciting projects their school is doing.
- Arrange play-dates with classmates to strengthen friendships.



Practice Gradual Separation

- If they struggle with saying goodbye, practice short separations at home or on outings.
- Use a goodbye ritual, like a hug or a special handshake, to ease transitions.

Work with the School

- Share your concerns with your child's teacher.

Create Incentives and Rewards

- Use a reward chart to celebrate small successes, like getting dressed or walking into the classroom.
- Offer praise and celebrate achievements, no matter how small.

Prepare for the Day Ahead

- Talk about what to expect each day in a simple, positive way.
- Let your child know who will be collecting them from school

Be Calm and Consistent

- Keep a firm but compassionate approach.
- Avoid letting your child stay home unless they're unwell, as this reinforces avoidance.
- Encourage them to have confidence in their ability to cope.



Helpful Phrases to Use:

"It's okay to feel nervous. I know you can do this."

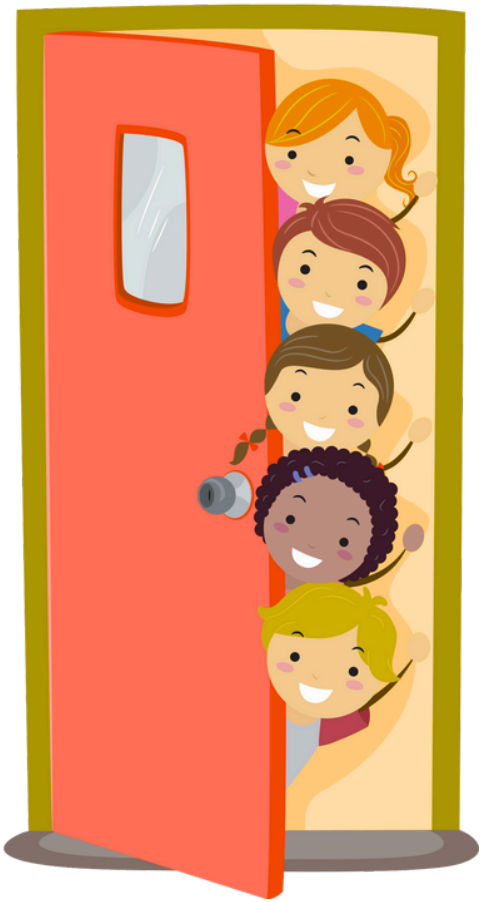
"I'll be back to pick you up after school—let's plan something fun for later!"

"What do you think might help you feel better at school?"



For further support:

www.solihullapproachparenting.com



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