



TRAINING NETWORK

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD WITH SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

School avoidance is when a child feels unable to go to school due to overwhelming worry, fear or anxiety.

It is not about truancy or laziness – it is a sign that your child needs support.

With understanding and the right approach, things can get better.



WHAT IS SCHOOL AVOIDANCE?

It is when a child experiences intense distress about attending school or stays off school regularly because of this distress.

It can be linked to:

- ✓ Anxiety or overwhelm
- ✓ Bullying or friendship difficulties
- ✓ Worries about learning or exams
- ✓ Changes in routine or transition
- ✓ Sensory sensitivities
- ✓ Low confidence or self-esteem
- ✓ Other mental health needs



REMEMBER: Your child is not choosing to avoid school. They are choosing to avoid feeling overwhelmed. Empathy and support can help them feel safe enough to try again.



SIGNS YOUR CHILD MAY BE EXPERIENCING SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

- ✓ Frequent tummy aches, headaches or feeling sick before school
- ✓ Crying, panic or distress about school
- ✓ Difficulty getting ready or leaving home
- ✓ Asking to stay home or refusing to go
- ✓ Low mood, irritability or tearfulness
- ✓ Trouble sleeping, especially on school nights
- ✓ Withdrawing from friends or activities
- ✓ Drop in attendance or arriving late often
- ✓ Talking about feeling overwhelmed or unsafe at school



REMEMBER: Early support can prevent avoidance from becoming a long-term pattern.

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT YOUR CHILD



LISTEN WITHOUT JUDGEMENT

Let your child talk about how they feel. Show empathy and let them know their feelings are valid.



STAY CALM AND REASSURING

Your calm helps your child feel safe. Reassure them you will get through it together.



CREATE A GRADUAL PLAN

Small steps can help build confidence. Work together on a plan that feels manageable.



WORK TOGETHER WITH SCHOOL

Keep open, honest communication. Ask for support and reasonable adjustments.



FOCUS ON STRENGTHS

Praise small steps and progress. Build confidence through their strengths and interests.



LOOK AFTER YOURSELF TOO

Supporting your child can be tough. Make time for self-care and seek support if you need it.



WHEN TO SEEK EXTRA HELP

- ✓ School avoidance is impacting daily life
- ✓ Your child's anxiety or distress is increasing
- ✓ You feel overwhelmed or unsure what to do
- ✓ There are concerns about low mood or self-harm

**You don't have to do this alone.
Help is available.**



We're Here to Help

HH Training Network offers assessments, resources and ongoing support for children and families.



Email: g@hhtrainingnetwork.com



Website: hhtrainingnetwork.com



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