

helping an anxious child get ready for school

It's unlikely to be a quick fix! But there are definitely things you can do to ease the anxiety. Here's some long-term actions to take!

1. **Acknowledge their anxiety**, try not to tell them there's nothing to worry about. Tell them you will work it through together.
2. **Teach them about anxiety** and what is actually happening inside their minds. We all worry! It's normal to have some extent of worry from time to time.
3. **Communicate with school** and your child's teacher.
4. **Try to work out the root cause**. Is there something at school that bothers them? Do they find it overwhelming to transition from the safety of home/you? Do they find it difficult not quite knowing what's coming during their day?
5. **Make Action Plans together**. Having a plan makes us feel calmer. That's true for kids too!

Day to day actions

1. **Be organised** in the mornings so you're not rushing.
2. **Take time to connect**. Even just a few minutes when your child first wake up can make a huge difference to their emotional start to the day.
3. **Use calming strategies**. Work out what works best for your child. For some it might be breathing techniques to calm the heart rate down, for others it might need to be something physical that exerts that excess energy that the anxiety has created.
4. **Use distraction** to stop their minds running away with what if's. Encouraging children to pay attention to their surroundings and tap into their senses can really help ground them.
5. **Consider using essential oils** and diffuse around the home.
6. Turn negative thoughts around by talking about the positive things about being in school.
7. **Talk about the most likely outcomes** if they can articulate a specific worry.
8. **Use Positive Affirmations** like 'I am brave', or 'I can do tricky things'.