

Work together with the people who care about you to figure out what helps and what makes it worse.

Keep in contact with your friends as much as possible.

Take a chance! Once you're at school, it might not seem as bad.

Think about a time when you were worried and you dealt with it. What did you do then? What helped you or what could have helped?

Take little steps towards a good routine.

Celebrate every single success, you deserve it.

Be kind to yourself, change takes time.

I'm feeling anxious right now, what can I do?

Try calm breathing... take a slow breath in through your nose for about 4 seconds... hold it for 1 or 2 seconds... let it out through your mouth for about 4 seconds.

Try picturing... close your eyes, take slow deep breaths in and out, think of your favourite place, focus on the place and picture yourself there. What can you see? What can you smell? What can you feel?

Try releasing energy... find a safe place and find some paper you can rip up, stomp on the ground, or scream into a pillow.

We are all different, find what works for you. Speak to an adult in your school if none of these work, they will help you find something that does.

Scan for more support.



Do you worry about going to or being at school?



**Emotionally Based School
Avoidance: Guidance for Children
and Young People**



 **Cambridgeshire
County Council**

Educational Psychologists EBSA Group 2023

This leaflet is designed to help children and young people understand what might be going on for them and get support if they want to.

What is Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)?

EBSA is a type of anxiety which is specifically about school.

Anxiety is a normal feeling everyone experiences sometimes, but it can become a problem if it stops us doing what we want or need to do.



It might be different for you but some people describe it like this:

I feel physically sick when I wake up for school in the morning.

I don't understand why it scares me so much.

I just can't go to school, I can't do it.

I want to be in school but it's just too much.

I'm worried about what will happen if I go to school.



You are not alone.
Scan the QR code to see more.

Why am I feeling this way?

Tick the ones that make sense for you:

- ☐ The work is too hard.
- ☐ I need to stay at home.
- ☐ I'm too different to other people.
- ☐ Something might happen at school.
- ☐ Something might happen at home.
- ☐ I don't want to see a specific person.
- ☐ There's something else.
- ☐ None of these feel right for me.



It can be really hard to understand our feelings sometimes. All we can do is try to trust the people who care about us to help us through.

How can I change things?

Sometimes staying at home feels easier, when actually it makes it more difficult to go back to school in the end.

Talk to somebody. This could be any adult you trust, at school or at home. If starting that conversation feels tricky, you could just give them this leaflet.

Keep going even when things feel difficult.

Scan here to watch a video.



Even though it might feel like it sometimes, school is not your enemy.

