

Rather than trying to solve all their worries, our job as parents is to help them learn to problem solve and here's how:

Prediction – What do you think will happen?

Experiment – Make a plan, problem-solve and give it a go!

Review – Did their prediction become true? Did they cope better than expected? Do you need to take a step back and plan a less challenging experiment first?

WHAT OTHER CHILDREN HAVE SAID:

- ★ Try not to worry so much
- ★ Stay in touch with friends
- ★ It is not as difficult to make friends because there is always going to be at least one person like you
- ★ Don't get worried about being lost, ask a friend or teacher to guide you

TOP TIPS

Practice the journey to school

Look out for social media groups linked to the school/year group to meet up with other new starters

Try on uniform, shoes, PE kit and bags

Take comfort from the fact that school staff have been meeting and to make decisions for a smooth transfer

Secondary school do this every year and have systems in place to introduce moving round classes, homework expectations and rules gradually

We have two ears and one mouth– when asked, young people say the best way to support them is to listen rather than advise/lecture! – 'Do you want advice or do you want me to listen?'

FOR MORE IDEAS



Resources and activities to help children manage fears and worries.



Dorset HealthCare
University
NHS Foundation Trust

Moving up!

PARENT/CARER GUIDE

TOP TIPS FOR A SMOOTH MOVE TO SECONDARY SCHOOL



Dorset
Mental
Health
Support
Team in
Schools

Take a look at our social media channels for more ideas, tips and free mental health resources.



@DORSETMHST



Dorset
Mental
Health
Support
Team in
Schools

HOW DOES YOUR CHILD FEEL ABOUT GOING TO SECONDARY SCHOOL?

Young people can feel all of these emotions in one day, before and even after starting secondary school. It is ok to feel lots of emotions, for example, feeling excited to meet new people and learn new things and sad to leave old friends and teachers behind. There is no right or wrong feeling. They may feel like they are on a bit of an emotional rollercoaster and this is ok.

Change can mean feeling lots of different emotions

ROLLERCOASTER OF EMOTIONS



WHAT YOU MIGHT SEE

All behaviour is a way of communicating feelings. Think of behaviour like an iceberg.




FEARS, WORRY AND ANXIETY INVOLVE:

- An expectation that something bad is going to happen.
- Physical responses to this (e.g. 'butterflies' in the tummy, fast breathing or heart rate)
- Things we do to keep away from things we fear or try to stay safe when we have to confront them (e.g. avoiding eye contact in frightening social situations)

WAYS TO SUPPORT:

- In helping a child overcome their anxieties, the child needs learn what it is that is really worrying them, that things may not turn out as they fear.
- Even if things don't go well, they can cope or do something about them.
- By facing fears, we learn new skills that help us overcome the worries and build resilience.
- Rather than trying to solve all their worries, our job as parents is to help them learn to problem solve.

Get curious to find out why or what is worrying them 

THINGS PARENTS SAY

Reassurance reduces new learning

It is ok, Mummy is here.

Don't worry I am sure your class mates won't laugh if you put your hand up.

It will be fine don't worry.

INSTEAD TRY

Reassurance prompts new learning

Go on, have a go, you have done it before and it went well.

I really think you can do it. I was proud when you asked a question in class.

I think you should see how it goes. I feel confident you can do it but if it does not go well we have an idea of what to work on next.

OPEN QUESTIONS TO ASK CHILDREN WHEN THEY ARE WORRIED

Why are you feeling worried?

What is frightening you?

What do you think will happen?

What is the worst thing that might happen?

What it is about [the situation] that is making you worried?

The better the question, the better the answer.