

TIPS: WORRIES AND SEPARATION ANXIETY

Small item to keep

This helps with when a child is anxious about being away from you e.g when at school. Have a little item each (like a button or a fabric heart). Explain to them that whenever you look at it you will think of them during the day, and they can do the same, and this way you will stay connected throughout the day.

'Things I can do' post-its

Ask them to write down their worries on post-it notes, and then stick them on a piece of paper with a line dividing 'things I can do something about' and 'things I can't do something about'. This shows them what they do have control over, and what they can do - or if the worries are for someone else to have responsibility for.

Reassurance jar

Have a couple of sheets of coloured tissue paper, one colour that they like, and one they are less keen on. For every time you are apart and they are worried, when you get home safely they can put a little ball of the colour they like in the jar. If something goes wrong or you are really late, then they can put the other colour in. The jar should then be mostly full of the colour of paper from the positive experiences.

Worry time

Try having a daily 15 minute 'worry time' where they write down the things they are worried about and think if there is anything they can do to help or make a plan. Once the time is up, do something fun and to try not to worry outside of this time.

Self-esteem box

Fill a jar / box with notes about times when they have succeeded at things, then look through this together when they have calmed down to boost their confidence and self-esteem.

Reassuring note

Give them a note from you to carry with them with reassuring words to calm them down when they get anxious.

Breathing control

Encourage them to breathe out for 5 seconds and in for 3 when are feeling overwhelmed.

