

EASE at Home (Grades K-3)

Strategies to help children cope with anxiety

Sometimes it's hard for adults to know what to say or do to ease a child's worries, especially during times of change and uncertainty. As the most important big people in their world, parents and caregivers can help children feel safer and soften the sharp edges of whatever is happening to make their worries grow.

Taking Brave Steps

What is it?

Parents and caregivers can help children understand that being brave involves taking small steps to slowly face their fears, one step at a time. Taking small steps is one of the most valuable tools to use when facing fears or overcoming a challenge.

How?

While it is common to avoid situations that cause fear and worry, when children learn about bravery and how to take small manageable steps to face their fears, they learn that they can move through their fears.

Explore with your child what it means to be brave by reading picture books or sharing stories. Ask your child questions like "How did the characters feel? When have you been scared before trying something new or hard?" Some examples include:

A Little Bit Brave

by Nicola Kinnear

Hector's Favorite Place

by Jo Rooks

Scaredy Squirrel

by Mélanie Watt

Young children can **face (or "get used to") feared situations** within the safety of the world of play, especially when they are given a sense of control, mastery and choice.

Talk with your child about a realistic goal they would like to reach. Some examples may include sleeping away from home or going on a playdate. Encourage your child to draw a picture of the goal.

Discuss together what the first small step towards reaching that goal could be, and what other steps could come next.



Reflect and share with your child all the brave steps they have taken over the years to overcome their fears, such as going to the dentist or the first day of school. Photos can provide great memories. Let your child know how proud you are of them.



everyday
anxiety
strategies for
educators

EASE at Home is a collection of classroom resources that have been adapted for parents and caregivers to help children manage anxiety and worries at home.

