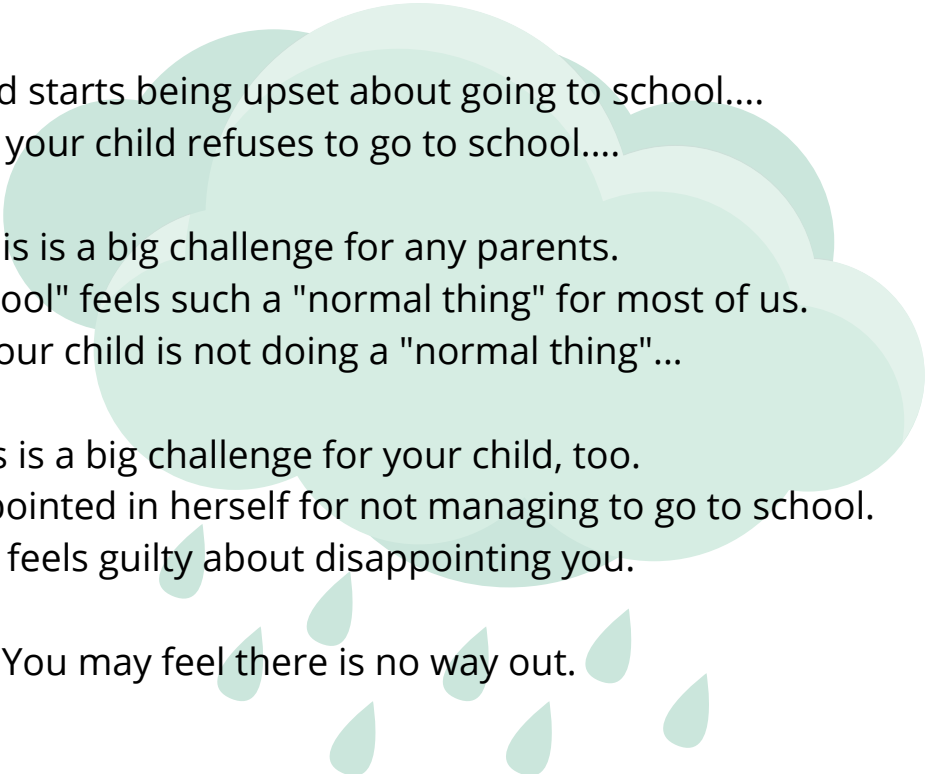


# **WHAT PARENTS CAN DO WHEN YOUR CHILD DOESN'T WANT TO GO TO SCHOOL DUE TO ANXIETY**

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If your child starts being upset about going to school....  
or your child refuses to go to school....

This is a big challenge for any parents.  
"Going to school" feels such a "normal thing" for most of us.  
And your child is not doing a "normal thing"...

This is a big challenge for your child, too.  
She\* feels disappointed in herself for not managing to go to school.  
She feels guilty about disappointing you.

You may feel there is no way out.

I wonder if we could take this as an opportunity  
for both parents and children to grow.  
Let's start this journey.  
I will support you.

When your child can trust herself and feel  
"I can handle this"  
her behavior will change.



We, parents, can help children to make this change  
by changing our thoughts and behaviours.

Let's bring our courage and flexibility  
and start making changes in our parenting.

You will be surprised how much your child will change.

\*I use "she/her" to refer to the child with anxiety in this e-book  
but the child can, of course, be a boy.

\*\*This e-book summarizes what you can start doing now as a parent.  
You are responsible to get support from professionals and the school  
for you and your child as required.

There are various reasons why children refuse to go to school.

This e-book has been written for parents whose child refuses to go to school due to anxiety.

If the reason for school refusal is clearly

- Bullying
- Poor relationship with the child's teacher

attending to the exact problem could solve the child's anxiety.

Therefore talking and checking with the child's teacher is one of the most important things to do first.

If there is a concern that your child may have ADHD, dyslexia, or other condition, your child needs support specific to that condition.

However, whatever the reason for school refusal, you following the suggestions in this e-book will help consolidate your relationship with your child and help both of you to grow.  
There is nothing for you to lose.

Let's start and be consistent and see what happens to your child and yourself.



I would like you to remind yourself of this ...

"I would like my child to just go to school normally"

Most of us, parents, think this way

and think about how we can MAKE our children go to school.

We need to remember what is most important now. (Please refer to "suggestion no.1".)

We also need to remember what we can control and what we can't.

We can only control ourselves.

Even ourselves, we may not be able to control 100%.

Everything other than us is out of our control.

Even our own children.

you

your child

out of your  
control



However, even if we cannot control our children, we could influence our children.

How our children are today has been influenced deeply by how we have been interacting with them and behaving in front of them.

If that has not been helpful for them, we can change so that we can give a different influence on them.



Let's see what you can start doing now!



# 1. Clarify and share the goal with people involved

Firstly it is important that you and other adults have a clear understanding of what the goal is. And everybody works toward it.

So, what is the purpose of your reading this e-book?  
Is it **"for my child to go back to school"**?



Let's think about this on a bit deeper level.

I wonder if the real purpose and what we aim for is  
**"for your child to be a person who is confident enough to know that she can handle any challenge"**.

I believe when your child becomes that person, she will go to school or make another choice that makes her grow.

For this, your child needs to really feel that

- **you listen to her, understand her and love her**
- **you will be on her side whatever happens**
- **she is connected to you and other family members**

When your child can feel that, then she will learn

- **her existence is significant**
- **her value as a person is not affected by anything**
- **she does not need to change to please others**
- **she is capable of making a choice and is accountable for the choice**

What we face now is a great opportunity for your child to become the person I mentioned above.

Everything has two sides.

Whether you think "I wish this did not happen to my child" or "This is a great opportunity for me and my child to grow", **It is up to you.**

## 2. Parents make sure they care for themselves

Your child needs your support imminently.

However, it is like what they say in an emergency on the airplane;  
put your oxygen mask first before assisting your child.

You are responsible for looking after yourself to go through this journey without burnout.

What do you like to do to fill your heart?  
Listening to music? Going for a walk? Talking with your friend?  
Running? Watching your favorite drama?  
Meditation or mindfulness exercise?

You need to secure time to do something just for yourself, even 5 minutes at a time.

You may feel guilty about your child's current situation and blame yourself.

Please remember to be compassionate for yourself.  
You have done the best you could do.

The most important thing is not the past. It is **now** and **the future**.

If you are reading this e-book, you have the courage and flexibility to change what you do, which is so awesome.

Let's be a role model for your child and

- be responsible for your self-care
- be courageous and flexible to make a change

You have a big influence on your child.

Your child will learn from who you are and what you do.



### 3. Have one-on-one time daily with your child

Let's have one-on-one time with your child every day. Keep it short, like 10 minutes, so that you can continue daily in your busy life.

Ask your child what she wants to do and spend time doing that.

There is no need to make this long.

Depending on what your child wants to do, you may want to spend a longer time.

However, to take this time consistently every day, you keep the time short and agree to make it longer as an exception, rather than the duration becoming inconsistent.

Make the rule simple so that you can continue this.

1. One-on-one time with your child
2. Do what the child wants to do with you
3. For 10 minutes, daily

If you have more than one child, have one-on-one time with each of them.

Name this session with your child, so that for both of you, it becomes a special time your child looks forward to.





## 4. Show your child that you are on her/his side

"Of course, the parent is on the child's side"

"My child knows that I am on her side"

You may think this way.



And probably you are right.

Still, I wonder if you can try this; **tell your child that "I am on your side whatever happens".**



"It sounds corny"

"It is a bit embarrassing"

You may feel this way.

It is up to you if you say it or not.

However, nobody will lose anything or get hurt by you saying this.

(If you feel great resistance saying this, something in your unconscious may be resisting it. To work on this through coaching could be beneficial for you.)

If you declare you are on your child's side, you behave that way.

You naturally make an effort to keep your integrity.

You don't yell at or ignore your child if you are on your child's side, do you?

Please tell your child every day that you are on her side.

And behave following your words.

## 5. Do not threaten or force your child to go to school

When our children refused to go to school, out of frustration, we tend to say something like, at some stage of a child's school refusal.;

" Why can't you just go to school? Everybody else is going ok."

"You won't come with us on our family trip if you don't go to school!"

Let's take a deep breath a couple of times.  
Acknowledge and accommodate your emotions. Bring your self-compassion.  
And please remind yourself - "I am doing the best I can do"

At the moment your child is feeling that attending school is like walking into a jungle alone where many scary wild animals are and she is feeling helpless.

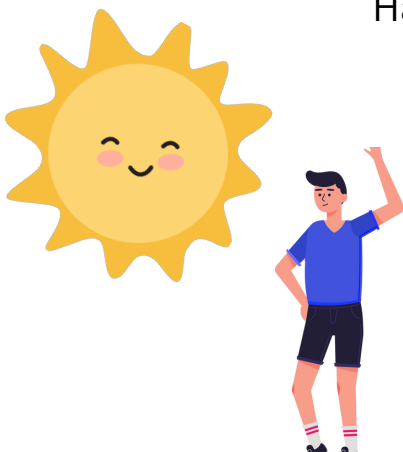
If the parents become scarier than wild animals 😊 and force the child to go to school, she has no safe place and loses trust in her parents.

"Are you suggesting I let her do what she wants to do and let her stay at home?"

First, probably she does not want "not to go to school".  
It is her strategy to keep herself safe at this stage.

Secondly, you will start doing something to influence your child. If your child still reluctantly goes to school, you can keep encouraging and supporting her not to miss school.

Have you read Aesop's fable "the wind and the sun"?  
It is your choice to be the sun or the wind.



## 6. Listen to your child with curiosity and no judgment

When you talk with your child, who talks longer, you or your child?

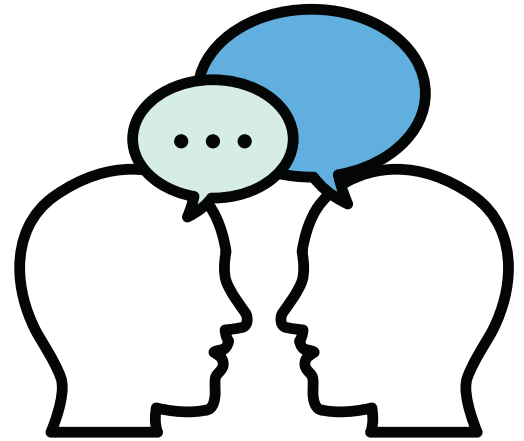
If we would like good communication with our children, we parents hardly need to talk.

Let's listen to our children with

- curiosity
- no judgment

Let's listen to them to find out

- what she wants me to hear
- what she wants me to understand
- what she is thinking and feeling
- what is important for her



If your child shares her challenge with you, you do not need to provide a solution.

If you desperately want to give advice to your child 😊, ask her if she wants it or not.

Most of the time, your child just would like to be heard.  
She is not looking for your advice.

No need to feel shocked or offended if your child says  
"I don't need your advice. No, thank you!"

Let's celebrate your child's independence!

## This is the start...

This is the last page of this e-book but your journey has just started.

When my teenage daughter was much younger, I was parenting following my parent's parenting style, although It was not my intention.

I realized one day that I was following my big ego and trying to control my daughter to be the one I would like as my father did.

I chose to parent in a different way, as I felt so stuck.

After that, I studied counseling and life coaching which helped me to understand the functional way to parent the next generation.

I still let my big ego drive me sometimes and often regret what I have just said : )

We don't need to be perfect parents. And it is impossible.

We just need flexibility, and courage to take action.

When your child grows up, would it be great that she says "My parents were awesome. I would like to be a parent like them."

It is not too late to start now.

Noriko Noda Medical & Coaching offers sessions for parents using counseling and coaching modalities.

Coaching sessions for your child are also available.

If you are interested, feel free to book a 30-minute free session with me. I would love to support you.

[Book a free session](#)