



School Avoidance

Tips for Parents

<https://www.sd44.ca/sites/SEI/Pages/default.aspx#/=>



BUILD A PREDICTABLE MORNING ROUTINE

- ✓ Have a consistent wake- up time (and bedtime).
- ✓ Connect and snuggle first.
- ✓ Use a visual chart - list of what has to be done.
- ✓ Talk about the day ahead and what to expect.
- ✓ Leave plenty of time to get to school.

HELPFUL RESPONSES

- ✓ Validate their fears: "I can see that this is hard for you."
- ✓ Avoid repeating the same reassuring statement.
- ✓ Encourage bravery.
- ✓ Choose a comfort object together to symbolize that you are connected.
- ✓ **Practice Positive Self-Talk**
 - "I can do hard things."
 - "I am not in danger."
 - "I am safe at school."

MAKE IT A QUICK GOODBYE

- ✓ *Never sneak away, always say goodbye.*
- ✓ Offer a very brief hug, very few words.
- ✓ Act confident – your child can do this – they will pick up on your anxiety.
- ✓ At the end of the day, don't be late!

If at home, 9a.m.-3.p.m. is...

- ✓ a time to learn.
- ✓ a time to avoid screens.
- ✓ Remember – boredom at home may stimulate the desire to go to school.

Parents are responsible....

- ✓ for bringing their calm and regulated child into the building.

Great book to read to your child: **The Invisible String Backpack** by Patrice Karst

Great book for you to read: **Helping Your Child Overcome Separation Anxiety or School Refusal** by A. Eisen, L. Engler, J. Sparrow

