



SCHOOL REFUSAL



School refusal describes the disorder of a child who refuses to go to school on a regular basis or has problems staying in school.

*"The most important thing a parent can do is obtain a comprehensive evaluation from a mental health professional"**

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO:

- Expose children to school in small degrees, increasing exposure slowly over time. Eventually this will help them realize there is nothing to fear and that nothing bad will happen.
- Talk with your child about feelings and fears, which helps reduce them.
- Emphasize the positive aspects of going to school: being with friends, learning a favorite subject, and playing at recess.
- Arrange an informal meeting with your child's teacher away from the classroom.
 - Meet with the school guidance counselor for extra support and direction.
- Try self-help methods with your child. In addition to a therapist's recommendations, a good self-help book will provide relaxation techniques. Be open to new ideas so that your child is, too.
- Encourage hobbies and interests. Fun is relaxation, and hobbies are good distractions that help build self-confidence.
- Help your child establish a support system. A variety of people should be in your child's life—other children as well as family members or teachers who are willing to talk with your child should the occasion arise.

Learn about your child's anxiety disorder and treatment options. Find out more about children's anxiety disorders. Visit: www.adaa.org

* Former ADAA board member. Dr. Daniel Pine, NIH