

A photograph of a person walking on a beach at sunset. The person is silhouetted against the bright, low sun, which creates a strong lens flare and illuminates the wet sand and shallow water. The person is carrying a bag and is walking away from the viewer towards the horizon. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds.

Are you worried about going to school?

A leaflet for pupils
print.unit@westsussex.gov.uk

When you think about going to school are you:

- Worried?
- Scared?
- Bad tempered?
- Feeling ill or faking illness?
- Feeling unsure of yourself?
- Struggling to sleep?
- Feeling depressed?
- Worrying about friendships?

You are not on your own! Many people feel this way from time to time because of things that happen in their lives, at home, school or elsewhere. Sometimes these feelings may make you feel unconfident about going to school.

Some of the things that make young people feel this way are:

- Problems with friendships
- Changing school
- Bullying
- Feeling too different to other people
- Worried about your appearance
- Pressure to achieve good grades
- Anxious about exams and tests
- Not understanding or coping with school work
- Worried about changing for P.E. or games
- Not being good at sports
- Not getting on with some teachers
- Don't like the noise and bustle in school
- There may be other reasons too

Some people are also worried about things at home. These may include:

- Death of a parent, close family member or relative
- Parents splitting up
- Parent seriously ill
- Members of your family feeling worried, depressed or sad
- Death or loss of a pet
- The birth of a new brother or sister
- New people moving into the family home
- Difficulties in getting to school
- Parents not understanding your feelings
- Parents reacting to your feelings in the wrong way

Do any of these apply to you?

People are there to help. The sooner you talk to them, the sooner people can help you to feel happier about going to school.

Who can help?

- Your form tutor, head of year or head of house.
Or you could choose any adult within the school that you feel comfortable talking to. He/she can talk to you and discuss ways to cope with these feelings. They may also offer you support from other people outside the school such as;
- The school nurse
- The Educational Psychologist
- The Education Welfare Officer, who can act as a link between you and the school. You can also speak to the Education Welfare Officer direct. To do this ring education on 0845 0751007, who will be able to put you in touch with your Education Welfare Officer.

Sometimes it can be helpful to talk about your feelings with someone who is outside the situation. The following advice services may be useful:

● www.youth2youth.co.uk This site is run by other young people from the age of 16-21. These young people have been trained in listening skills. Once on the site you can email your problem and they will respond within 7 days. There is also a chat room and a telephone helpline open Monday and Thursday evenings between 6.30 pm and 9.30 pm. Helpline no. 020 8896 3675. They can also phone you back.

● Childline is a free 24 hour helpline for children and young people, who can ring about any problem, at any time. The lines can be busy at times, but hold on as your call will be answered. Your call will be confidential – which means they won't tell anyone about your call, unless you want them too or you are in danger. Tel: Freephone 0800 1111.

● Get Connected. This is a helpline service that can put you in touch with the best people to help with your particular problems. Tel: Freephone 0808 808 4994 or e-mail: help@getconnected.org.uk.