

# Helping Children with Fears



Children of all ages have fears. Naturally, their fears are different at different ages. Often they come when children are learning new things quickly and getting more independent. Most children grow out of these fears, but at the time they are very real.

Changes can throw children off balance and create new fears. They need your support and reassurance that some parts of life are stable and secure.

Reestablishing routines will help children manage their fears.

## Helping your Child Manage Fears:

1. **Establish predictable routines.** Knowing patterns in daily life helps children feel secure.
2. **Respect your child's fears.** Don't laugh or say the fear isn't real.
3. **Talk about feeling scared.** It is important for children to name and talk about their feelings.
4. **Use play to talk about fears.** Dolls, stories, and art can help children talk about being afraid.
5. **Help child learn about the things he/she is afraid of.** Knowing how things work and what to expect can make things less scary.
6. **Recognize courage.** Notice your child trying something even when he or she is afraid.

### Common Age-Related Fears:

**Infants/Toddlers:**  
loud noises, separation, and strangers

**Preschoolers:**  
animals (especially dogs), the dark, ghosts, and monsters

**School-Age:**  
spiders, snakes, failure, rejection, the news, TV shows, blood, injury, illness, being home alone, and death

### More Resources:

[www.talaris.org/spotlight\\_emocoaching\\_steps.htm](http://www.talaris.org/spotlight_emocoaching_steps.htm)

