



My child refuses to go to school, what can I do?



Getting to school can be a frenzy at times, but what about if your child outright refuses to go, brings the house down in the process or skips back out the gate the moment they get there?

Finding the cause

There may be a number of reasons for school refusal. Teenage years can be difficult to navigate, juggling friendships, relationships, study (and choosing what to study), exam pressure and not to mention the day to day changes of the adolescent brain.

Be on their side

Having someone on your side can go a long way. By talking to your child about the problem, you're showing them you care and want to help find a solution. It's not always easy and it can feel like you're being shut out sometimes, but letting them know you're there means they can turn to you when they are ready to open up.

The school can help

If they are struggling with school work, their study load or another classroom issue, you can talk to the school about what in-school adjustments they may be able to make.

And if your child refuses to go to school?

If you and your child's school have tried everything and your child still refuses to go to school, it might be time to call a Regional Youth Engagement Service (RYES). RYES work with disengaged young people using individualised support and plans to reconnect them with an education, training or employment pathway. This fact sheet provides contact details for each local RYES.

Finding a way back

Some young people may find it difficult to ask for help, especially if their efforts are not achieving the results they expect. You can talk to your child's school about available options to catch up on missed topics or to go over curriculum if needed. Learning pathways can be flexible to suit the needs of each young person, there may be other subjects or modes of learning to help your child get back on track.

Queensland State Schools are committed to providing equal access to quality learning for all students. Check out more on the department's Inclusive education policy for a list of the things you could ask about.

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