

Starting School

combating 'first-day' nerves

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Homeopathy is a natural and safe system of medicine. It aims to stimulate the body's own healing forces to bring it to a state of balance, and by doing so optimises overall health and wellbeing. Homeopathic remedies can be effective in treating emotional upsets, fears, behavioural problems and anxieties and can be given safely to children to help with some of these challenges. The remedies are easy to administer, taste pleasant and can be purchased from most health food stores.

Starting school is such a landmark in our children's lives and can be a time that we look back and wonder where the five years went to. Dealing with anxieties around starting school can make one think of the children, but it can also be mothers who find it hard to send their little ones off to school.

I remember the first day that each of my boys started school very clearly and so does my youngest son! To his horror his mother wouldn't stop crying and he practically ran to the classroom, without so much as a backward glance. Hopefully his new friends didn't know who he belonged to and he could get away with pretending to be an orphan for the morning.

However, for many children starting school can be a time of being very unsure or overly worried. It is great as a parent if you can be their 'rock', staying very calm and reassuring – unlike the example of the sniffling mother that I managed to be! If possible, build a relationship with your child's teacher before your child starts school and communicate any fears or worries your child may have.

“His mother wouldn't stop crying and he practically ran to the classroom”



Listed below are some remedies that can be really helpful in dealing with some anxieties, however if the emotional stress is quite significant it is a good idea to see your homeopath where an individualised remedy can be found for your child.

Helpful remedies for anxiety

Ignatia

The child will be very expressive with their emotions, which can change quickly from laughter to tears, or joy to sorrow. It is a good homesickness remedy and great to have on hand for those times when the child is overly tearful and emotional. I have used it very successfully for some children who were going away on their first class camp and were absolutely beside themselves with tears at being away from home – all before the bus had even left the school gates!

The child may sigh a lot and cannot tolerate even the slightest of reprimands. It is also a remedy to be given in the first stages of grief – for example the family pet passing away.

Phosphorus

For the carefree extroverted child, who can't wait to get to school to be part of all the excitement and people, but who can then become quite flighty and exhausted. They are fidgety children, who can't sit still, who make friends easily and also can be quite fearful and easily frightened.

They have a strong desire for company and can be quite clingy (to anyone) especially during a thunderstorm.

There may be a ravenous appetite but with emaciation and excessive thirst.

Pulsatilla

For the sensitive, affectionate child, who is very soft and likes to stay close to mum or dad. The child may demand excessive attention all the time, but in a clingy and

mild way. They like to be carried or to be close physically to their mother or father. They are mild, yielding children who can even get jealous of their parent showing attention to someone else. Their physical complaints are often better when outside in the open air.

Lycopodium

The Lycopodium child talks it up and is full of bravado! The child may come across as being very big, bold and brave on the outside, but is very unsure about him/herself on the inside. They may have an aversion to undertaking anything new and have a lack of confidence in their own abilities. The child won't like standing up in front of the class to speak, but can be very intellectually capable. They like to win and can sometimes be quite dominating towards children they perceive to be weaker; however, they can also be prone to being dominated by people they feel inferior to.



Some children can start school very confidently and then after some time lose their confidence and not want to go to school. Friends can say mean things, friendships or teachers may change and then the child starts to struggle whereas before they were quite content and happy. Try to get to the bottom of what is going on for the child and once again talk to their teacher. If the symptom picture fits any of the remedies above, then give the remedy a try. If you find that the selected homeopathic remedy does not work as anticipated, you may need a specialist homeopathic prescription. Chronic conditions should always be treated in conjunction with your homeopath.

Team tactics

I often remind my boys that I am **on their team** – it is a team approach to sort things through and who better to be on your team than the people who have known you all your life, and who love and believe in you. It can even be a good idea to make up a **Team Chart** and put it on the fridge, listing all the people who your child can count on for support and guidance in times of need. If we build on this team approach in the early years, it can put us in good stead for the teenage years, where we will need to remind them (often) that we are still on their team and looking out for them, even if at times it means saying no. 🍷

Tania Laing is a qualified homeopath and a parent of three delightful boys. Also known as 'The Children's Homeopath', Tania is passionate about families and working with children to help them shine and grow into great adults. She has clinics in both Grey Lynn and Remuera and you can contact her for an appointment on 09 579 3055 or visit her website at www.thechildrenshomeopath.co.nz or www.taniaiaing.co.nz

