

# Worry Box



## Making a worry box:

Any box will do and an old shoe box and lid is ideal. Cover the box and lid with wrapping paper, so that the lid can still be removed to empty the box, and make a slot in it so that the young person can post letters into it. Encourage the young person to help make and decorate the box. Leave it in a convenient place for the young person to access it.

## Introducing the worry box:

Discuss the worry box with the young person and explain that it is their own special place to put their worries every night, and that you will look after the worries for them. In order to try and encourage a sense of control over their worries, let them help you choose a place in your room, not theirs, where you can keep the box safe for them. Make sure that they do not keep it in their room, which is their safe space.

Young people who worry a lot during the day can be encouraged to write down or draw any worries that they have and post it in the box.

## Using the worry box:

Once a day when you have enough time to explore it, open the box and review the worries. Some young people will want to write notes as a worry comes up, but for others it may work better to wait until 'worry box time' and take time to talk about their worries from the day. Encourage the young person to talk about the worry, how they are feeling and help to empower them by discussing what they can do and strategies to cope with their worry. Keep the worries in the box for you to 'look after' for them, so that they can have a night that is worry free.

The process of writing down worries helps the young person to have a clearer idea of what they are worried about. It makes it easier for the young person to talk about their worries later, and helps to give their anxiety a more manageable form. Talking through what has been placed in the box on a regular basis helps the young person to know that they will have a chance to talk about their worries, which then often free them up from thinking about them constantly because they know they will be discussed. The worry box also helps young people to name what is bothering them and makes the process of sharing initial worries a lot easier. Over time, the young person may begin to learn better ways to manage his or her worries and to recognise that not all worries are overwhelming. It is useful to end your discussion with visualising a nice, safe and relaxing place that they can imagine themselves in and use all five senses to imagine what it would be like to be there.

Ideas taken from, <http://www.kindlekids.org.uk/anxiety-in-children/>