



**Fear is  
natural when**

It occurs in specific situations.

Over time, its intensity decreases.

It does not limit daily functioning.

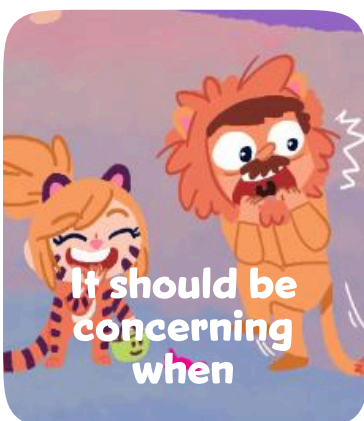
The child can be calmed down.

It occurs in typical situations.

It is appropriate to the circumstances.

It motivates caution.

It passes when the situation ends.



**It should be  
concerning  
when**

It is very intense and long-lasting

It significantly limits daily activities

It causes strong physical reactions

It does not subside despite support

It appears without a clear reason

It affects the child's sleep and appetite

It leads to social isolation

It triggers panic attacks



## Your Imagination is Running Away With You. A Guide to the World of Children's Fears

"I'm scared!" - these words are often heard by parents of preschool and early school-age children. It's natural for fears and anxieties to arise during such an intense period of exploring the world.



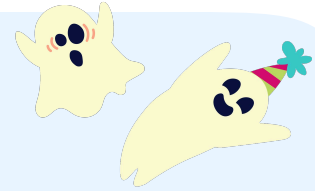
Children of all ages experience different kinds of fears. Understanding the map of children's fears will help you better understand and support your child at every stage of development.

**Ages 3-5.** During this period, children are most often afraid of the dark, loud noises, and separation from their parents. Fear manifests as crying, clinging to a caregiver, or refusing to be alone. These fears are related to the intense development of imagination and the initial stage of independence.

**Ages 6-7.** More complex fears emerge: fear of monsters, ghosts, or burglars. A child may have trouble falling asleep and ask many questions about safety. This is a time when awareness of real threats develops, but it is still difficult to distinguish them from imagined ones.

**Ages 8-9.** Social and school-related fears dominate: fear of peer judgment, failure in school, or public speaking. Children may report stomachaches, reluctance to go to school, or avoid certain social situations.

# How to Wisely Support a Child in Overcoming Fear



Remember that every child experiences fear at their own pace and in their own way. Some children withdraw, while others react with strong emotions or excessive bravery. When a little one is terrified of bath time, avoid saying "there's nothing to be afraid of" - instead, suggest: "Maybe we can start with playing with a little less water? I'll be here with you the whole time." This approach builds trust and shows the child that fear is not something bad, but rather a signal that can be better understood.



## 1 Safe Haven

Create a stable, predictable environment for your child through established rituals and routines. Together, organize the space so that they feel safe in it - this could be a special corner in their room. Rituals, like checking the closet before bedtime or singing a lullaby, foster a sense of control.

## 2 Little explorer

Support your child in gradually facing what scares them by breaking the challenge into smaller steps. Celebrate every success, no matter how small, and let your child decide the pace of confronting their fears. This could involve approaching a dog together or spending moments in a dark room.

## 3 Evening courage review

Create an evening ritual of discussing the day's events, focusing on moments when your child managed to cope with fear. Write down or draw these small victories in a special courage journal. Celebrate every success, even something as simple as falling asleep independently.

## 4 Talking to Fear

Create a space for open conversation about fear. Encourage your child to express their worries through words, drawings, or play. You can work together to create a character for fear - give it a name and draw it. This personification helps the child better understand their emotions.

## 5 Power box

Together, create a special box containing items that give your child courage and confidence. These can be tangible items like a teddy bear or a flashlight, but also symbolic ones like a "superhero cape." Regularly add new items to the box.

## 6 Morning preparation

Start the day with a calm discussion about upcoming events and challenges. Together, prepare a "courage kit" - it could be a favorite toy or a special talisman. Discuss strategies for dealing with difficult situations. This gives the child a sense of control.

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## When nothing works...

- Stay calm - your anxiety can amplify your child's fear.
- Don't force - pressure often deepens fear.
- Look for patterns - note when fear arises and what triggers it.
- Consider consulting a specialist if fear significantly limits daily functioning.

Remember, the journey from fear to courage is like climbing a mountain - sometimes we move forward, sometimes we step back, but each step teaches us something. Your role as a parent is not to remove all fears, but to be a guide that helps your child discover their own strength in facing them.

