

HELPING CHILDREN WITH NIGHTMARES



BE PATIENT WHEN CHILDREN HAVE NIGHTMARES, REASSURE THEM EVERYTHING WILL BE OK

Stress and trauma can trigger nightmares- seek professional support

If your child wakes during the night with a nightmare, explain that it's a bad dream and they are safe.

Let your child know it's ok to feel scared after a nightmare, settle them back to sleep.

Try not to discuss the nightmare on the same night, leave that for the morning. You could say "lets talk about it in the morning".

You may ask your child "What do you need from me to feel less scared?". or "How can I help you right now?"

Be patient if your child talks about the nightmare in the morning. Calmly talk together about your child's nightmare to reduce its emotional power.

REDUCING THE EMOTIONAL POWER OF A NIGHTMARE

Research has shown that "Nightmare re-scripting" is providing a reduction in the frequency and distress they cause. This is wonderful news because this is something that you can try at home.

The first thing I want you to remember is that you have power over your dreams and nightmares. Its your dream you are in charge.

Choose a nightmare that you last had or one that is causing distress. Don't relive the whole thing, think about the point where you woke up. What could happen next ? What we are looking for is a new direction that this dream will take.

Whilst it may feel real to you, your imagine solution doesn't have to be nice and neat, it could be magical, fantasy, power and control, positive or totally unrelated. What ever new idea you put into your dream, it has to feel true to you on a gut level, you really believe in its powers to shift this dream. The stronger the feeling the more powerful it will be in the dream.

You get to change the script of the dream, you hold the power and the change.

And the lovely part is, if that didn't work the first night, try changing the script again. You are in control of your dreams.

Write down your solution or you may help your child to draw it. Before your child goes to sleep go through the new script with them. Try it tonight.

If you feel that you need more support with Nightmares please reach out and make an appointment via the website.

Let your imagination create power over your dreams to create peaceful sleep



**COUNSELLING
& PLAY
THERAPY**