

Taking Action: How to Respond

If you are struggling with EBSA, you need to work with the adults in your life to tackle it:



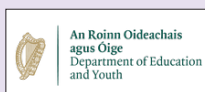
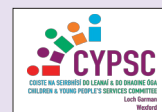
1. **Talk to Someone:** Tell your family or a teacher as soon as you notice signs and ask them to set up a meeting with relevant school staff.
2. **Be Open:** Share anything at home, school or any other situation that is worrying you or a cause of upset for you.
3. **Acknowledge Your Feelings:** Your feelings are real and should be respected.



4. **Make a Plan:** Work with adults to identify what makes school hard (push factors) and what makes staying home appealing (pull factors).
5. **Address Maintenance Factors:** These are things that make EBSA worse, like extra attention at home, negative attitudes towards school, too much technology, or sleeping late.
6. **Keep Your Routine:** Stick to your school routine, even if you miss days.

Lots of young people can experience EBSA at some point and go on to overcome these challenges, supported by their family and school.

For more information visit:
[https://www.wexfordcypsc.ie/sites/default/files/content/ebsa/EBSA-Resource-Pack-Section-5-Information-for-Young-People-\(p36-43\).pdf](https://www.wexfordcypsc.ie/sites/default/files/content/ebsa/EBSA-Resource-Pack-Section-5-Information-for-Young-People-(p36-43).pdf)



Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)

Information for Young People



CO. WEXFORD EBSA GUIDANCE GROUP

EBSA: Understanding Emotionally Based School Avoidance

What is EBSA?

EBSA means having serious difficulty going to school because of strong emotions. This emotional struggle is real and can lead to you missing school regularly or for long periods.

It can have many causes, and each person's situation is different.

Signs That School Avoidance is Starting

If you're finding it tough to go to school, you might start noticing these signs in yourself:

- Trouble sleeping or feeling tired a lot.
- Mood changes, worry, or negativity about school.
- Feeling more self-conscious than normal.
- Avoiding school events or outings.
- Frequent minor illnesses (like headaches or tummy aches)
- Loss of appetite.
- Personality changes.
- Separation anxiety, tearfulness, or irritability.
- Issues with friends

Your Strengths: Risk and Resilience Factors



Everyone has personal strengths, called **Resilience Factors**, that help you cope with tough situations. These strengths come from you, your home, and your school.

When the challenges (**Risk Factors**) become bigger than your strengths, EBSA can take hold. The key is to focus on strengthening your resilience to reduce the impact of EBSA. This is a team effort involving you, your family, and the school.

Examples of Resilience Factors:

- Knowing how to manage your emotions (emotion regulation strategies).
- A willingness to work with others (like your parents or teachers) to find solutions.
- Feeling connected to and being able to talk to trusted adults.
- Having a hobby or activity that you enjoy.
- You and your family valuing education.
- Identifying things that you like about school or could make school better.

The EBSA Cycle

The EBSA Cycle describes how staying home may feel better in the short-term, but makes returning to school harder. Breaking this cycle is key to overcoming EBSA.

