



Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance

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A child or young person who is experiencing a significant barrier to education and is unable to attend school, due to intense emotional distress such as anxiety, low mood or phobias.

EBSNA is a **symptom** not a **diagnosis**

Four Functions of Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA)

Avoiding Negative Emotion

This is when a child does not attend to avoid the uncomfortable feelings brought on by attending school, such as feelings of anxiety or low mood. Often children who are avoiding general school-related stress cannot say what specific things causes them to feel stressed about school. Therefore this function might be identified more, but not solely, in younger children

Situation Avoidance

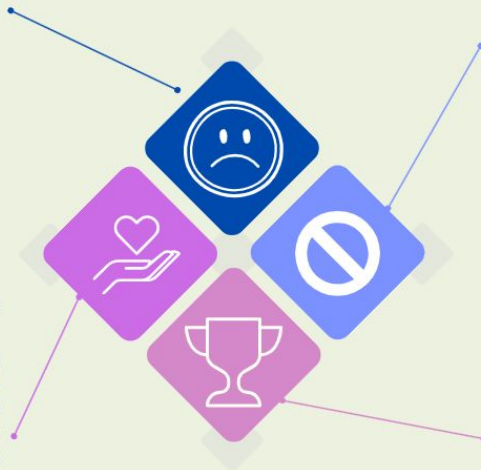
This is where the child is avoiding particular situations that they find stressful. Examples include to school work or certain lessons that they find difficult, assessments, particular peers or adults, working in a group, assemblies, or lessons which involve an element of performance like PE or drama. It could be one situation or a combination of many.

Relationship Seeking

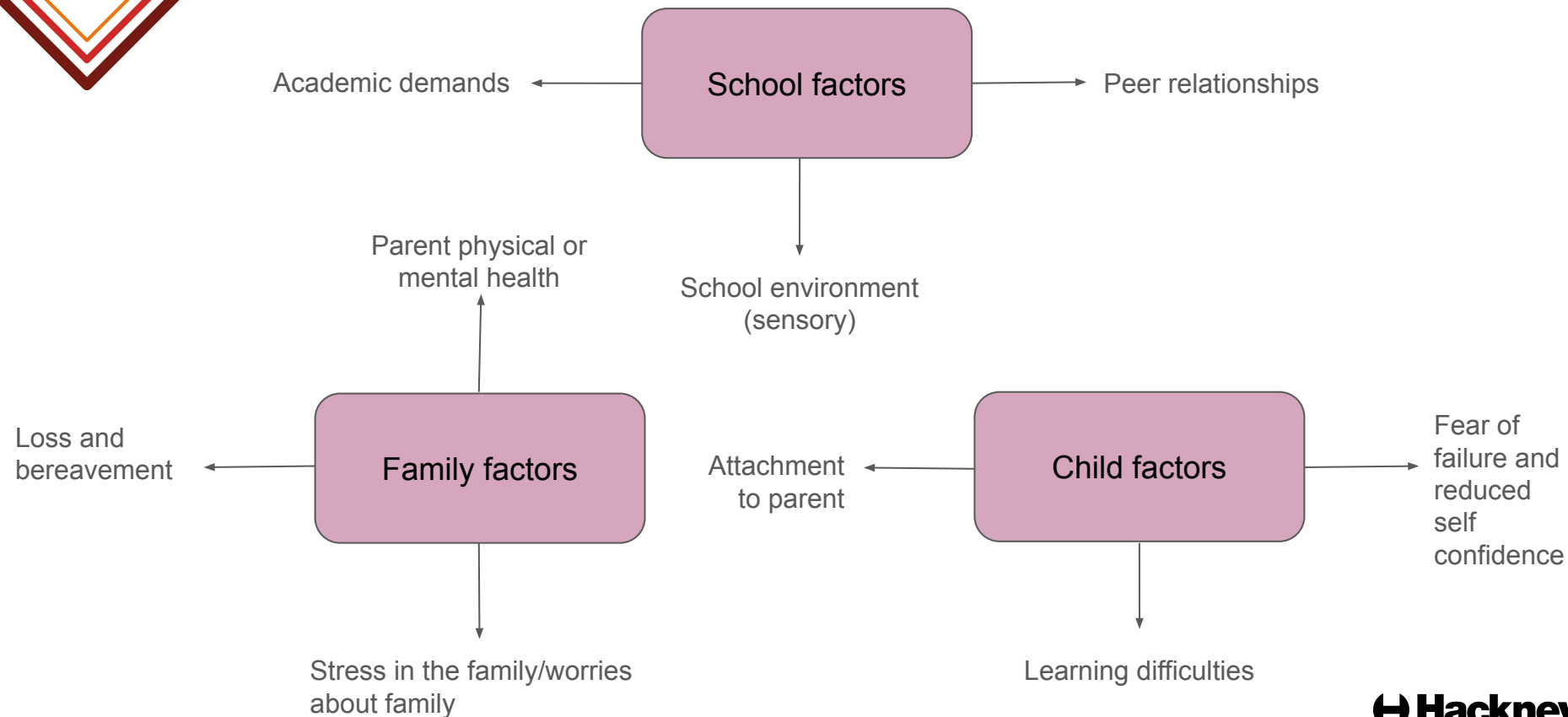
Children may also avoid school to reduce feelings of anxiety associated with being apart from their parents/carers or other family members. These children may not be particularly worried about school-related situations, but are seeking ways to spend more time with family members at home. Children in this group may include those with high levels of separation anxiety or those who are concerned about the wellbeing of a parent at home.

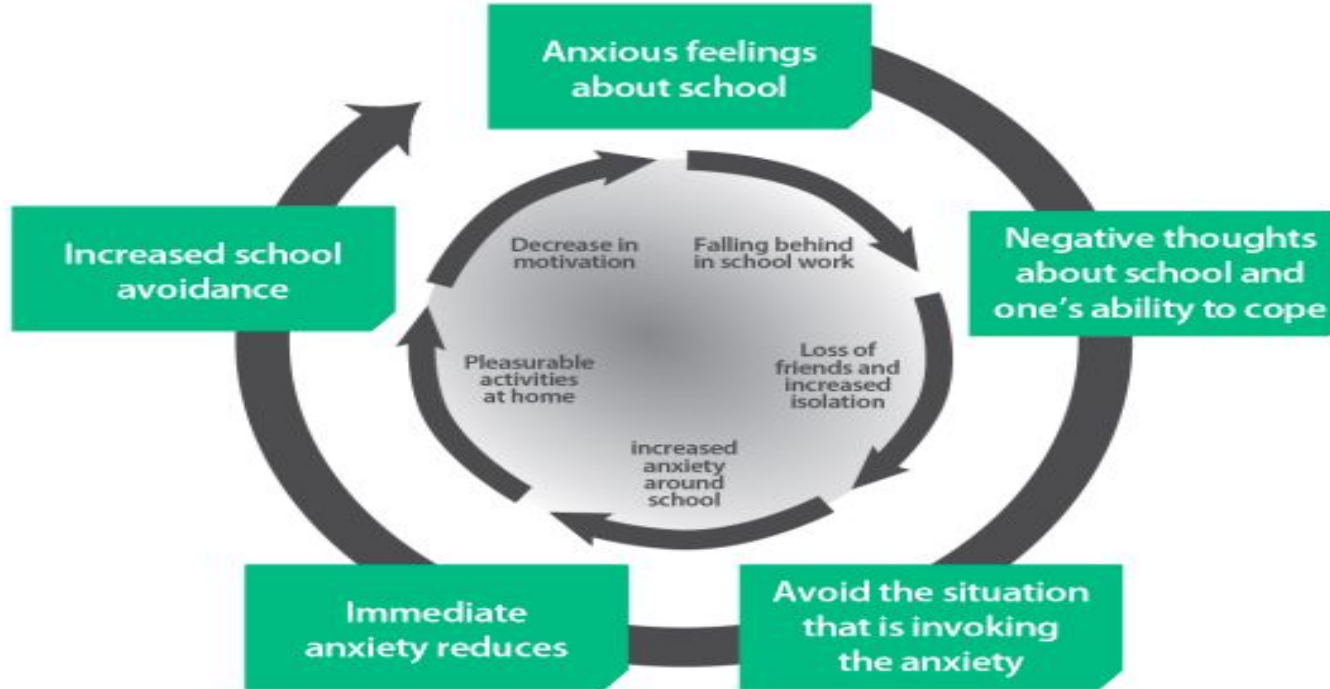
Tangible Reward

Some children may seek to spend time out of school doing stimulating activities or things that meet their needs better than being in school. For some, being out of school may be more enjoyable or motivating than being in school. For others, there may be emotional needs being better met outside of school – this includes the group who are very socially vulnerable and at risk of exploitation if they are seeking things like a sense of belonging or group membership in the community.



Risk factors





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Resilience

Feelings of safety
and belonging

Building
motivation

Experiencing
success

Building
confidence

Positive
relationships with
peers and staff

Talking to your child

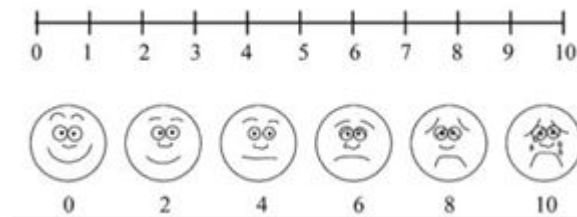
Tools:

Scaling

Push/Pull Factors

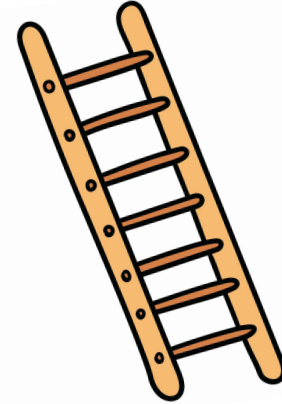
Card sorting - School Wellbeing Cards

<https://www.schoolwellbeingcards.co.uk/>



What might help?

- Gradual exposure
- Working in partnership with school
- Sensory profile





Further support

EPS Parent Advice Line -

<https://www.hackneylocaloffer.co.uk/kb5/hackney/localoffer/service.page?id=xAjcg1YWf18>

West Sussex guidance on EBSNA - <https://schools.westsussex.gov.uk/Page/10483>



How was today's session?

