

Communication- Tips & Scripts

Provide clear message about school attendance

- You will eventually be required to go to school no matter how much you delay
- I've asked you already. It's time to get up for school. Its 7.30, we will be leaving in 45 minutes for school. You have 5 minutes to get dressed for school.
- Dad/ mum will do whatever we have to do in order to get you to school
- We cannot allow you to remain at home
- I know this is hard but it has to happen. You have to go to school.
- Today after school we will get you treat for attending school.

vs. Vague message about school attendance

- Get ready for school!
- Are you going to school today?
- Don't worry. There is nothing to be scared of. It will be ok.
- Why are you doing this? You're upsetting the whole family.
- If you can't get there today, it's only going to be harder tomorrow

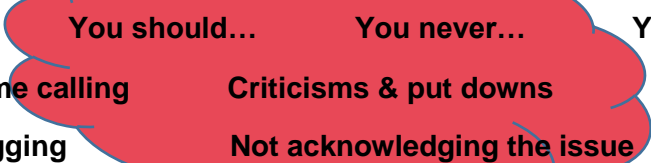
Externalising the problem

can create a space between the person and the problem and enable the young person to begin to revise their relationship with the problem.

For example:

- Your anxiety is visiting you with force this morning huh?
- What is the anxiety saying to you?
- What do you think you need to say back to your anxiety to get it to go away this morning?
- I have seen you fight back against your anxiety, what did you say to it last time?

Communication killers:



You should... **You never...** **You're always**
Name calling **Criticisms & put downs** **Threats**
Begging **Not acknowledging the issue**

Reference: Dr.L.McKay Brown- University of Melbourne; L.Dalton- Royal Children's Hospital Mental Health- Working with School Refusal- A.Dudley & S. Rollings- Monash University- Anxiety & School Refusal