

# HOW TO USE WORRY DOLLS AND WORRY EATERS

**Worry dolls** can be a really good way to assist children to express and share their fears and anxieties. **Worry dolls** can be used anytime. They can be particularly useful at times like bedtime, as it is often at night time that children start to worry, and feel overwhelmed (just like adults).

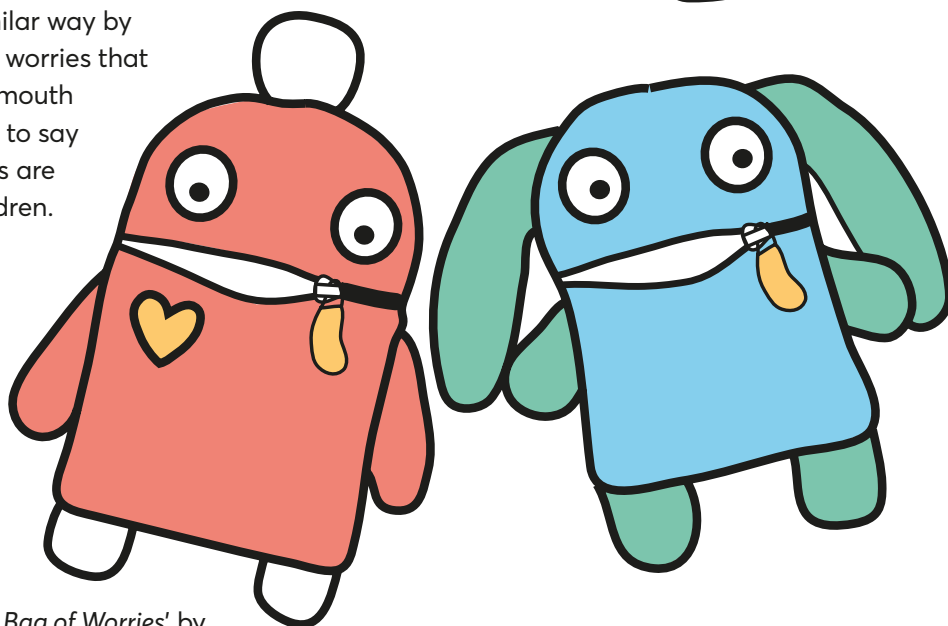
Each little bag holds 5 or 6 tiny dolls. Explain to your child that each doll is there to tell a worry to, and it is the doll's job to look after that worry.

Talk with your child about the worries they would like to share with the doll. Together, you can discuss and explore that worry, so that you are helping the child to talk it through. Then, if the child wants to, he or she can whisper or speak their worry to the doll and put it back in the bag. If he or she has several worries, they can use different dolls to each hold a new worry.

Explain that the doll will hold on to their worries for them, so that the child can do something else (e.g. sleep, play, do school work), as they do not have to think about the worry for a while.

When they need to they can get the dolls back out and share their worries again.

You can use a '**Worry Eater**' in a similar way by writing down or drawing pictures of worries that the **Worry Eater** will zip away in its mouth and hold for you. It is still important to say these worries out loud so that adults are aware of what is worrying their children.



There's a useful book called '*A Huge Bag of Worries*' by Virginia Ironside that can open up conversations with children about what happens if you carry too many worries around.

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