



# THE WORRY JAR

By Dr. Kate Aubrey

A **Worry Jar** is a place for your child to put their worries so that they do not need to keep thinking about them. The worry jar is one of Dr. Aubrey's favourite techniques for helping children feel in control of their worries and to help limit worry time.

## \* CREATE THE WORRY JAR

1. Find a glass, plastic jar, or a box and have your child decorate it with markers, stickers, ribbon, or other materials. Make sure your child names the jar (e.g., Sam's Worry Jar).
2. Once the jar is completed, cut up strips of paper and encourage your child to write a worry on each strip of paper. Your child should be encouraged to write down as many worries as possible.

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WORRY IS LIKE A ROCKING CHAIR. IT GIVES  
YOU SOMETHING TO DO, BUT GETS YOU  
NOWHERE.

## \* SCHEDULE WORRY TIME

1. Worry time is a set time of day when your child has permission and is encouraged to worry as much as he or she wants. When worry time is over, there should be no more worrying.
2. Choose **10 to 15 minutes** a day after school but not right before bed to be worry time. Write the time on the jar.
3. Once worry time starts, your child can open the jar, look inside, and worry all she or he wants! Your child can choose to review all the worries or focus on one or two each day.
4. Once worry time is over, get your child to put the jar away, somewhere out of sight.
5. If a worry appears at another time, your child can write it down and save it for worry time. That is, remind your child that it is not the right time to worry.

## \* DESTROY WORRIES

1. About once a month, your child should take all of his or her worries out of the jar, review them, and then destroy them.
2. Come up with creative ways to get rid of the worries. For example, your child can cut them up, freeze them in water and then smash them, throw them in the garbage, or put them in a fireplace. This process should be fun and represent success at over-coming worries. Make a big deal out of this, get the whole family involved!