



# BEDTIME IDEAS FOR ANXIOUS CHILDREN



# BEDTIME IDEAS

## MAKE A DREAM CATCHER WITH YOUR CHILD

**A dream catcher is a type of mobile made by Native Americans of the Great Plains.**

A dream catcher is a handmade object based on a hoop with a woven web of sinew strands in it that has feathers, beads and crystals attached. It is hung in the tipi or lodge. Dream catchers are often used to keep children from having nightmares and are intended to gradually dry out and fall apart as the child gets older. The belief is that the air is filled with dreams. These dreams are full of meaning and may be either good or bad. There are different versions of the dream catcher legend and how it works, which you can share with your child. Some say that good dreams pass through the hole in the centre of the web while bad dreams are caught in the web. The good dreams will flow down the feathers to the person while the bad dreams dissolve in the day light. Another version says that only good dreams can filter through the net. Yet another says that good dreams are caught in the web while bad dreams flow away through the hole in the centre.



## MIX UP A BOTTLE OF MONSTER SPRAY

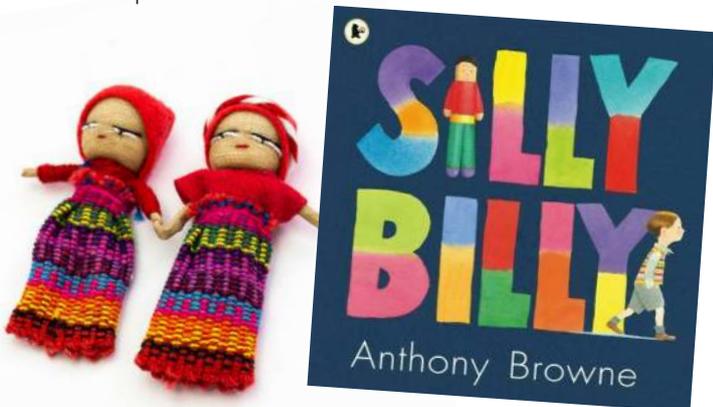
It's an easy and effective way to help young children conquer their night-time fears and insecurities. Involve your child in the process of decorating your monster spray bottle and mixing up the spray. When they participate in making their monster-banishing remedy, they'll be excited to try it out, and may even look forward to bedtime tonight! Fill the bottle with water, and have your child assist you in adding the fragrance (the essential oils e.g. lavender) then give it a shake, and you're all set! • At bedtime tonight, let your child spray his or her bedroom before bedtime, paying special attention to any possible "points of entry" like closets, windowsills, doorways and under the bed • Place the bottle on your child's bedside table, or somewhere near-by where he can reach if he's scared in the night. **Hopefully, with a bottle of monster spray close at hand, bedtime monsters will soon be a thing of the past for your family.**





# WORRY DOLLS

The idea of a worry doll is to help a person get rid of their worries before falling asleep. Worry dolls are popular with children. The child feeling any kind of mild anxiety holds a doll and tells the doll about one thing that is troubling them. The troubling matter is transferred to the doll. The doll may be placed under the pillow or in a special box. Then the child can sleep tight knowing the doll has taken care of the concern and will make it disappear. If a child has more than one fear, more dolls are needed as each doll deals with one fear. The intent of using the worry dolls is to help the child deal with their troubles by stating them out loud and by showing they are willing to let go of their worries before going to sleep.



Read the story "Silly Billy" by Anthony Browne and make some worry dolls like in the story.

## SOOTHING RITUALS RATHER THAN TECHNOLOGY

At bedtime, develop a soothing ritual rather than allowing TV or other screens. The light from devices such as tablets and mobile phones has a higher concentration of blue light than natural light. Blue light negatively affects the levels of the sleep inducing hormone (melatonin) more than any other light.

Have your child read a calming book or do relaxation exercises ([CLICK HERE](#))

Try a helpful exercise called The Four Doors. Before your child goes to bed, have your child imagine four doors. Behind each one is something fun, like a party, a family holiday, a favourite celebrity, or even a chocolate factory. S/he can choose which of the four doors to "enter" and think about what's inside – what sights, sounds, smells they can experience.



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