

# Helping your child share their views using the three houses tool

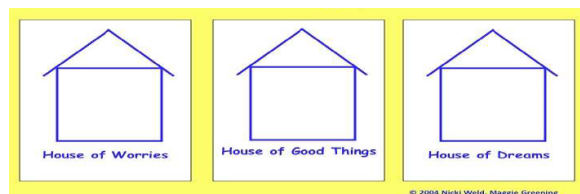
The Three Houses tool is a simple way to help your child share what they think and feel about their lives. You can use it to help them talk about home, school or both.

## What you need to do

You'll need three pieces of paper and some pens. Ask your child to draw an outline of three houses on separate pieces of paper.

Label the different houses as:

1. **House of worries** – the things that are worrying them
2. **House of good things** – the things they like in their lives
3. **House of dreams** – how they would like things to be if all their worries were solved



Ask your child where they would like to start – with the house of worries or the house of good things? Lots of children choose good things first as it's an easier way to start!

Your child can draw pictures or use words to show you what the good things in their life are, or you can write down what they say. If they're drawing pictures you can guide them by asking what the picture is and then help to label it or write down what it means.

If you're writing things down for your child always use their exact words and ideas. It's a good idea to read everything back to them before you finish each house. This gives you a

chance to dig a bit further into issues. When they have finished talking about the first house, move onto the next one and then finish with the house of dreams.

When you've done all three houses, stick them together and ask your child to draw a path from the house of worries to the house of dreams. Then ask them how far they are along that path. That will help to give you an all-round idea of how they feel about themselves and their life.

Ask your child if you can share the houses with other people and tell them who that will be. Tell your child what the information will be used for and what will happen next.

## Tips

If your child is likely to draw rather than write, you might need bigger pieces of paper.

If your child is getting stuck, try asking questions as prompts, such as what was good about school today or what things do you like to do at school?

When you're exploring things that your child feels positive about, it often gives you a way to talk about what is not so good, and what they're worried about. Always check whether what they've said should go in their house of worries. For example, if your child says, "I wish I wasn't being bullied" you could ask "It sounds like you're worried about being bullied, should we put that in your house of worries?"

It might take your child a while to say what they are most worried about. So, before you finish, it's always a good idea to ask if there is anything they want to add to any of the houses.

Reviewed July 2023  
Due for review July 2025

## Your notes