**Functional Assessment & School Refusal Behaviours**

School Refusal behaviours are often related to anxiety, worries and uncomfortable feelings about school. The avoidance of situations at school may provide short term relief. Unfortunately, avoidance can also lead to long term anxiety growth. 

Student –other students/peers.

Student gains **access** to something.

Student **avoids** or gets away from something.

Stimulation or something sensory.

Proximity or attention to others.

Tangible item, activity or event.

Adult – teacher, parent or other.

Student reaction to challenging interaction.

The School Refusal Assessment Scale, SRAS, (Kearney, 2002) is a useful self-reporting questionnaire completed by the child and parent (independently of each other) to identify the function of School Refusal behaviours.

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| **Children generally refuse to go to school for one or more of the following reasons:**   1. To **avoid school-related stimuli** or situations that cause general distress such as anxiety, depression or physiological symptoms (e.g. teacher, test) 2. To **escape uncomfortable** peer interactions and/or performance situations (e.g. issues with peers, sports days, academic performance or oral presentations) 3. To **receive attention** from significant others outside of school (e.g. family member) 4. To **pursue tangible reinforcement** outside of school (e.g. screen time, play)   Source: Kearney (2002) |

**References**

Kearney, C. (2002). Identifying the Function of School Refusal Behavior: A Revision of the School Refusal Assessment Scale. *Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioral Assessment, 24*(4), 235-245.doi:10.1023/A:1020774932043

Kearney, C., & Silverman, W. K. (1993). Measuring the Function of School Refusal Behavior: The School Refusal Assessment Scale. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, 22*(1), 85-96. doi:10.1207/s15374424jccp2201\_9