

### What Worries Us?

- ghosts
- bumble bees
- spiders
- dragonflies
- thunder and lightning
- dragons
- monsters
- wind
- sharks
- snakes
- tigers
- crocodiles
- new people and places

**Worry dolls** come from the Central American country of Guatemala. They are made from tiny pieces of wood and scraps of cloth and thread. Long ago, the children of Guatemala made these dolls, and when they went to bed at night, they would tell a worry to each one before placing them under their pillows and going to sleep. In this way, they would wake up in the morning feeling much less troubled.



To this day, children in Guatemala trust their dolls to take away their worries as they sleep, and this custom has now spread around the world.

### What Can We Do If We Have a Worry?

- Tell your mum or your dad or your teacher
- Tell your sister, brother, grandma, grandad
- Go away
- Catch it in a cup or shoot it (spiders)
- Phone a friend
- Cuddle the worry doll

# WORRY DOLLS



"To take all your worries away. She talks to us. I put a dress on her and two eyes. Then I do a mouth and I do a tie." - Ally



"My worry doll all good now. He's wearing a jacket. I cuddle him. He makes me feel better." - Joshua



"I made a dress for my worry doll. I cuddle it when I'm worried. It makes me feel happy." - Koru



"There's a pink layer and I wrapped a white layer. I drew a face and this is her spring hair." - Indie



"I did an Elsa one." - Loiusa



"You hold up the string so it can stand up. He's going in the worry box." - Nixon



"That's the belly button. It's a boy 'cause some boys have long hair. That's his clothes." - Joel



"I put lots of clothes on it. I took it home and cuddled it. It makes me feel good." - Jacob



"I like it because it has a button and a face and some clothes. It makes me feel good when I put it under my pillow. I tell it I am worried about thunder, ghosters and lightning." - Dominic



"It has buttons and it has arms and it has long hair and I'm going to play with it so it can be my puppet. I'm going to show my mum and my dad and my brother." - Aspen



"I like it, it for my mummy. I just play with it by myself, worry games. I scared of spiders, shh secrets and dragons." - Amy



"I like it because it's got like Anna hair. I play with it. She helps me getting rid of my worries, like a monster coming in our house." - Zya



"I put this layer on first and then the button. She would go across the street and then will find some treasure." - Maddy



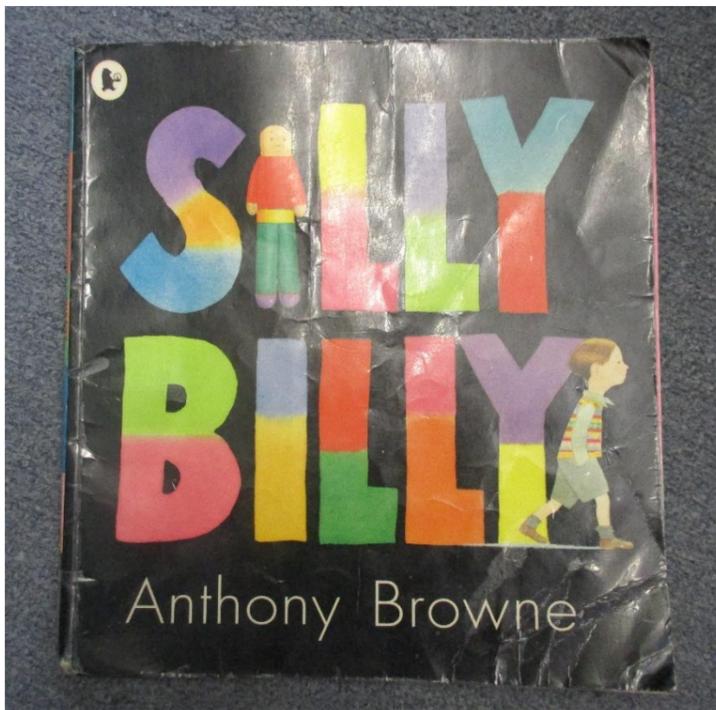
"That for my mummy. I take and show my mummy it. I like to play with it." - Hollie



"It's dry. Those are legs and some cuddly blankets." - April



"It's for the birthday children. I take it home to play. It's wearing a jacket and a cape and two buttons." - Isabella



Billy has many worries and needs to find a way to make them disappear. His grandma shares her secret about how she overcomes her worries. Once Billy discovers grandma's secret, he finds he never worries again.

Having read this story at mat time, Eva and the children became intrigued at how worry dolls were used to support Billy and discussed what we did when we had a worry. After much debating, it was decided that if each child made their own worry doll, then they too would have someone that they could share their worries with at any time of the day.

As a team, the teachers and children discussed what resources would be needed to make these dolls, where would we have them in the room for children to access and how we can support each other with our worries.



"She's a babysitter. She babysits people and then after she babysits she has a break. I wrapped around some material and then I wrapped it around some pipe cleaner, then I put a button in the middle. Then I put some glue on the top for some hair, pink hair. When I feel sad, mad or worried I can cuddle it or play with it and then once I played with her I put her away in my worry box." - Lucia S



"I made her out of string. Take her home and make more things for the worry dolls. More hair with paper and some bows with paper." - Iris



"I cuddle my worry doll in bed. I play with it with my toys. I feel happy with it. When it is summer we going to the beach. I tell it my worries so they go away." - Kiani

### A follow-up...

In mid-2017 we hosted a group of educators from America, who were intrigued with our worry dolls project. Connie Turner, an early childhood principal from Americano De Guatemala, a school in San Francisco, was delighted to see her culture being investigated half way around the world. Connie gifted Magic Garden some artefacts from her Guatemalan culture which were received by us with delight. This has reignited interest in reading *Silly Billy* and children sharing their worries with each other.

