

WHEN YOUR CHILD IS AFRAID

It seems that some children aren't afraid of anything while others are afraid of everything. It's easy to get impatient with a child who seems excessively timid. Children face a world that is full of uncertainties and frightening things, both imaginary and real.

It's important to validate every experience your child has with fear, even if you don't share those fears. Encourage your child to talk about his or her fears, if he or she wants to talk.

The best way to affirm and acknowledge your child's fears is simply to reflect back the feeling messages your child gives you.

Instead of saying:

- "That's nothing to be scared of!"
- "What are you making such a big deal for?"
- "Don't be such a baby!"
- "Act your age!"
- "Grow up!"
- "Don't be such a scaredy-cat!"
- "I'll give you something to cry about!"
- "Stop crying."
- "There's nothing to be afraid of."

Try saying:

- "That's really scary!"
- "I'm glad you can tell me what scares you."
- "That can feel scary sometimes."
- "Everybody gets scared."
- "It's okay to be scared."
- "I get scared too sometimes."

Often all children need is to know that someone bigger who loves them understands and respects their fears. This can give them the courage to face their fears and eventually overcome them.

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