



Care Nurture Grow

How to talk to your daughter about anxiety

Supportive conversation starters for teen and preteen girls

Created by Caitlin Newcomb Ginwala, LMFT, PMH-C



Many girls become very skilled at hiding anxiety. They may appear high-achieving, responsible, or “fine” on the outside while quietly struggling internally with overwhelm, perfectionism, or self-pressure.

Conversation Starters

Ways to gently encourage open communication

- “You’ve seemed overwhelmed lately, I wanted to check in.”
- “What do you wish people understood about how you’ve been feeling?”
- “What’s been feeling hardest lately?”
- “Do you feel pressure to keep everything together?”
- “What helps you feel supported when you’re anxious?”
- “You don’t have to figure this out alone.”

Supportive Phrases

Before jumping to resolution, respond with purpose

- “That sounds really hard.”
- “I’m glad you told me this.”
- “Your feelings make sense.”
- “You don’t have to hide this from me.”
- “You don’t need to be perfect to be worthy.”
- “You don’t have to have everything figured out.”
- “I’m here with you.”

You don’t have to say everything perfectly. Feeling emotionally safe with you is what matters most.

Sometimes the girls who seem the most “put together” are carrying the most internal pressure.

Try to Avoid

Invalidating the experience

- “You’re overthinking.”
- “It’s not a big deal.”
- “You’re fine, just relax.”
- “I had it a lot worse than you.”
- “You have nothing to worry about.”

What Helps Most

- Listen more than you fix
- Validate emotions before offering advice or asking questions
- Stay calm and emotionally present
- Create connection without pressure to share more

Support Connection

Some girls feel more comfortable opening up during side-by-side moments, like car rides or walks, rather than during direct face-to-face conversations.

Additional therapy support
carenurturegrow.com