



What to Say to Children When They are Anxious

- 'You're safe. I'm here and I'm not going anywhere.'
- 'Do whatever you need to do. Even if it's nothing.'
- 'Let's go for a walk and see if we can find your strong breaths.'
- 'Your brain is thinking that it needs to protect you. Breathe – I'll do it with you. It will let your brain know that you've got this, and that you're okay. It just needs to know that you're safe and then it will settle down.'
- 'I know how I feel when I feel anxious or worried about things, but I'd really like to understand what your worry feels like for you. Can you teach me?'

'You don't have to do this by yourself. Is there something I can do to help you feel less alone? Is it best if I say something? Nothing? Hold your hand? Touch your back? Give you space?'

- 'If you saw someone going through what you go through, what would you say to comfort them?'
- 'What if you could do anything in the world when you feel like this to feel better? Anything at all – doesn't matter how crazy it is. What would it be?'
- 'I'm here to listen to you if you like to talk about it? There's absolutely nothing you can say that would be the wrong thing.'
- 'I love you – all of you, and everything you do.'
- 'Brains change. They're pretty amazing like that. You won't always feel like this. Every time you breathe through your anxious feeling, you're helping to change and strengthen your brain. You're doing something pretty amazing and the more you do it, the better you'll get.'