

When Your Child Is Worried

Remember: worry feels real to your child even when the danger isn't. Avoiding every fear brings relief today, but it can help the fear grow tomorrow.

What to do

- 1 **Listen and believe the feeling.** You don't have to agree with the worry to respect how big it feels.
- 2 **Give the worry a name.** "That sounds like your worry brain talking." It helps kids see the worry as separate from who they are.
- 3 **Breathe together.** "Smell the flower, blow out the candle." Three slow rounds, side by side.
- 4 **Take one small brave step.** Break the scary thing into a smaller piece they can try with you nearby.
- 5 **Praise the courage, not the result.** "You were scared and you tried anyway. That's brave."

Try saying

- "That feels really scary. I believe you."
- "You can feel scared and still do brave things."
- "What's one small step we could try?"

Instead of

- "There's nothing to be scared of."
- Answering the same reassurance question over and over
- Letting them skip everything that feels hard

For me to notice

My child's worry usually shows up as... (tummy aches, clinginess, bedtime questions, "what if...")

One small brave step we can practice this week:

When to reach out: if worry keeps your child from school, sleep, friends, or activities they used to enjoy, a counselor can help, and anxiety in kids responds very well to support.

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God."

ISAIAH 41:10