

Family Feelings & Calm Cards

Six gentle conversation and calming prompts for children and caregivers. Best used with an adult who can adapt the words to the child's age, needs, and comfort.

How to use

Invite, do not force. Children may answer by speaking, drawing, pointing, or passing. A child does not need to calm down quickly to be heard or supported.

Ask: "Would you like to pick a card together?"

For education and self-reflection only. Not a substitute for individualized mental health care. Adapt activities to your needs.

01 · Name the feeling

Invite your child to pick a feeling word: happy, frustrated, worried, excited, sad, or something else. Ask, "What would you call it?" There is no wrong answer.

Child + caregiver reflection

My feeling is...

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02 · Find a body clue

Ask, "Where do you notice that feeling in your body?" A child might point to their tummy, face, hands, chest, or nowhere at all. Avoid guessing for them.

Child + caregiver reflection

My body clue is...

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03 · Five things nearby

Together, name five things you can see. If five feels like too many, name one. You can make it playful by looking for a favorite color or shape.

Child + caregiver reflection

One thing I can see is...

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04 · Make a calm choice

Offer two or three options: drink water, stretch, sit close to someone safe, draw, or take quiet time. The child chooses, when possible.

Child + caregiver reflection

Something that might help is...

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05 · Ask for support

Practice words for asking for help: "Can you stay with me?" "I need a break." "Can we talk later?" Let the child choose language that feels natural.

Child + caregiver reflection

I can ask for help by saying...

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06 • Check in together

Later, ask, "What helped a little?" and "What should we try next time?" Reflect the child's answer without grading their emotion or response.

Child + caregiver reflection

Next time, I want to try...

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