THE INNER GARDEN

What to Say When Your Child Is Anxious: A simple guide for real-life moments

Start with Connection

When children are anxious, they need to feel safe before they can problem-solve.

- I'm really glad you told me
- That sounds really hard
- I can see this is bothering you
- You're not alone with this

When They Feel Overwhelmed

- Let's take this one step at a time
- We don't have to figure everything out right now
- I'm right here with you

When Worries Take Over

- What part of this feels the hardest
- What are you most worried might happen
- What might help you feel even a little better

When It's About Friends or Social Situations

- That sounds really hurtful
- Friendships can be complicated sometimes
- Do you want help figuring this out, or do you want me to listen

When They Want to Avoid Something

- I can see this feels really big for you
- What feels hardest about it
- Let's make a plan together

Support the Body Too

Sometimes the body needs support before emotions settle:

- Want to go for a walk together
- Let's get a snack or some water
- Moving our bodies can sometimes help

Use These Sparingly

Even with good intentions, these can feel dismissive:

- You're fine
- There's nothing to worry about
- Just calm down
- Other kids have it worse
- Stop thinking about it

A Simple Reminder

You don't need perfect words.
If your child feels:

- heard
- accepted
- not judged

they are already better able to cope.

One Small Tip

Pause before responding.
Stay curious.
Lead with connection first.