

## "YOU'RE FINE!"

Can make your child feel unheard and invalidated.

THEY THINK: "MOMMY SAYS I'M FINE BUT I'M NOT..."

Situation: Your child falls off their bike and scrapes their knee.

When you say, "You are okay.":

Your child thinks:

*"BUT I AM NOT OKAY! MY BODY IS IN PAIN, DOESN'T THAT MATTER?"*

Your real message to your child:

*"I DON'T BELIEVE IT HURTS, I WANT YOU TO STOP CRYING."*

Instead, acknowledge your child's feelings and offer support:

*"I BELIEVE THAT IT REALLY HURTS. WOULD YOU LIKE A HUG?"*

Situation: Your child is upset about having a friend ignore them in class.

When you say, "It's not a big deal.":

Your child thinks:

*"BUT I FEEL LOST AND UNWORTHY. I FEEL I WILL NEVER HAVE ANY FRIENDS. ISN'T THIS FEELING VALID?"*

Your real message to your child:

*"IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT YOU'RE FEELING, JUST MOVE ON."*

Instead, reflect their feelings and offer validation:

*"I KNOW HOW HARD IT IS TO FEEL REJECTED. I'M HERE FOR YOU."*

Situation: Your child is panicking about an upcoming test.

When you say, "You'll be fine...":

Your child thinks:

*"BUT WILL I STILL BE LOVED AND ACCEPTED BY YOU IF I FAIL?"*

Your real message to your child:

*"YOU'RE OVERREACTING, IT'S NOT A BIG DEAL. YOUR FEARS ARE NOT VALID."*

Instead, allow space for the fears to be discussed and shared:

*"YOU'RE CONCERNED WITH WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF YOU FAIL. LET'S TALK ABOUT IT."*

In all situations when your child needs emotional support:

1. Paraphrase your child's emotion back to them offering validation of their experience.
2. Let them know you are safe for them to be vulnerable with.

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★★★★★

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- V. Ramos



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★★★★★

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- Heather C.

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