

# 10 PROVEN STRATEGIES FOR HELPING AN ANXIOUS CHILD



1

## QUIET HUGS

Help your child feel safe by reassuring them that you are there and willing to help. Words can sometimes exacerbate anxiety, so sitting quietly with lots of hugs and empathizing can often work better.

2

## SEE YOUR CALM PLACE



Remember a time you were happy, calm and peaceful. See it in your mind with as much detail as possible. Always use the same calm place to enhance the effect.

3

## 5X5 GROUNDING

See 5 things, hear 4 things, touch 3 things, smell 2 things and taste 1 thing.



## 30 JUMPING JACKS

Anxiety often causes shallow breathing. Having the child do an exercise forces deep breaths that can reset the anxious feelings.

5

## BLOW BUBBLES

Research has shown that 10 deep breaths resets the autonomic nervous system and helps to calm the amygdala. Blowing bubbles is a great way to get a child to blow deep breaths. Party blowers or straw and balled up paper offer other ways to do the same.



6

## DRAW YOUR ANXIETY

Draw a picture of what you are worried about.



## REMEMBER PAST SUCCESS

Remind the child to think about the last time they overcame their anxiety. Remind them that they can do this, even though it can be hard.

8

## PROBLEM SOLVE THE FEAR

Help the child talk through what solutions could be used if their fear were to come to fruition. Knowing they can handle the worst can help calm the fear.



## DESTROY THE WORRY

Have the child write their anxiety on a piece of paper and then tear it up and throw it away.

## PET A FURRY FRIEND

Research has shown that petting an animal reduces the heart rate and calms the body. Sitting for 10 or 15 minutes petting a furry friend is a wonderful way to relieve anxiety and bring some smiles to a child.

