

Reflective Listening for Anxious Children.

Sometimes, if children are feeling overwhelmed, they will struggle to process what is going on in their head. This can lead to extremist thinking and lots of big emotions.

This is especially common for children who are more anxious and on 'high alert' in everyday situations.

To help children process their feelings we can use reflective listening. This is a conversation technique used to allow children time to manage their thoughts in their own way. This can be used regularly day-to-day especially at times of difficulty.

Aims:

To help the child feel understood without overly using reassurance.

To manage the child's expectations of what will happen.

To gain a deeper understanding of their perspective to help in the future.



Skills:

Use open-ended questions. *Can you tell me what you think will happen if...*

Request Clarification. *So, am I right in thinking that...*

Be attentive and warm with a neutral perspective.

Summarize and paraphrase what they have said to help reflect.

Reflect and model feelings. *That would make me feel sad too..*

Don't try to give too many answers or solve problems, this is for the child to do themselves.

What do you think could help now?

Questions to think about:

What does your child need to learn from this experience?

How would you feel in their position?

Are extreme outcomes likely to happen?

