

# 5 STEPS TO HELP YOUNG KIDS SHARE THEIR BIG FEELINGS



## 1. GETTING STARTED

Choose a relaxed time to talk, such as during a bike ride or while playing a card game at home.

Put your phone away, so they have your full attention.



## 2. ACKNOWLEDGE THE REALITY

Saying "Don't worry, everything will be fine" might invalidate how they're feeling. Instead try:

*"I know things are really different and that can feel weird and scary."*

*"I'm sad, too."*

*"It's hard right now, I know that"*

## 3. RELATE TO THE TOPIC THEY CARE ABOUT

Let them know that you understand how they feel by saying:

- *"I know you miss netball. I really miss my friends at my yoga class. They're great mates and the class makes me feel good."*
- *"I understand that you miss your school. It's such a big part of what you do every day. I miss walking to school with you."*
- *"I feel sad and even angry sometimes because we can't go out as much as we normally do. It's frustrating to be at home so much."*

## 4. REFOCUS ON THE POSITIVES



Once you've shown that you've noticed the negative feelings, don't dwell on them. Instead try the below phrases to reangle the conversation:

- *"Was it nice talking to Grandma on the phone? I know it made her really happy. What else was good about today?"*
- *"I'm really looking forward to watching you play netball when the season starts up again. Have you talked to your coach or team mates about any new skills you might learn?"*
- *"I'm glad we can talk about how we feel when we're sad, just like we talk about when we're happy. Let's focus on what makes us happy, like watching a funny movie or going for a bike ride. Should we do that now?"*

## 5. REACH OUT FOR HELP

There are places to go if you need help as a parent. You'll find worksheets, videos and articles at **Calm Kid Central**, plus access to **child psychologists** who will answer your questions within 48 hours. Eligible HCF members\* can use this support service for free.

Find out more at [hcf.com.au/calmkids](https://www.hcf.com.au/calmkids)

\*You must have had hospital or extras cover for 12 months, excludes Accident Only cover and Overseas Visitors Health Cover.

