

PRINTABLE GUIDE

What to Say in the Hard Moments

Montessori language for big feelings. Calm, honest words you can reach for when your child is melting down and you are out of ideas.

Before the words, the posture

Get low. Soften your voice. Slow down. A regulated adult is the tool. Your child borrows your calm before they can find their own. You are not trying to stop the feeling. You are helping them move through it.

When they are overwhelmed

Say: "You are having a hard time. I am right here."

Instead of: "You're fine, stop crying."

Say: "It is okay to feel this. I will stay with you until it passes."

Instead of: "There's nothing to be upset about."

When they are angry

Say: "You can be angry. You cannot hurt. Let's find what your body needs."

Instead of: "Don't you dare hit."

Say: "You really wanted that. It is hard to stop."

Instead of: "Stop overreacting."

When they will not transition

Say: "It is almost time. Would you like to walk or hop to the door?"

Instead of: "We're leaving right now, let's go."

Say: "You can finish this one, then we put it away together."

Instead of: "If you don't come now, no screen time."

After the storm

Say: "That was big. You got through it. I am proud of how hard you tried."

Wait until they are calm to talk about what happened. The lesson lands after the feeling has passed, never during it.

Keep this on the fridge

You will not get it right every time. Repair is part of the work. "I raised my voice earlier. I'm sorry. Let's try again" teaches more than getting it perfect ever could.