

RESPONSES

Flight Strategy

Once you have determined the child's most frequently used safety strategy, you can use this list to select responses that will help the child find safety in other ways, bearing in mind the child's emotional needs and the boundaries of your relationship.

- Keep the child physically close.
- Help the child practice grounding activities such as deep breathing, doing a body scan, or anchoring.
- Provide easy, familiar tasks where the child will find success. Provide helpful feedback throughout the task.
- Co-create a code word that the child can use when feeling triggered. When you hear the word, stop what you are doing, move closer to the child and remind them that they are safe.
- Work with the child to name trusted adults and work out ways for them to be in touch with a trusted adult when needed.
- Do stretching activities such as calisthenics, hanging from monkey bars, or participating in tug of war.
- Provide crunchy snacks such as fruit, chips, or nuts and teach them to savour the associated aroma, tastes, and sensations.
- Anticipate what might prove challenging for the child and talk it through in advance.
- Set up predictable routines and try to stick with them. Discuss plans in advance.
- If the child is struggling in group scenarios, do reminders with the whole group without singling out the child.
- Provide movement breaks where the child can do things like go for a walk, complete an errand, or wiggle their fingers and toes.
- Choose a small object that feels meaningful to the child that they can carry with them to touch when they feel anxious.
- Prepare and practice kind, compassionate phrases that the child can repeat to themselves when triggered. (e.g. "This is tough right now, but you'll get through this okay.")