



RESPONSES

Fight 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.

- The child needs to feel valued. Work with them to find an appropriate role to play where they can find success and worth.
- Find tasks that they can complete independently. Break tasks into smaller pieces. Provide helpful feedback and encouragement.
- The child will be easily triggered. Help the child notice the signs when this is happening. Collaborate on a safety plan that they can execute when triggered. (e.g. finding a trusted adult, going to safe place for calming)
- Discuss situations and environments that feel too triggering and see if you find alternatives. (e.g. If fighting happens at school recess, what alternatives can be found?)
- Support the child socially. Help them find a low-risk social situation and provide coaching on scenarios that arise with peers.
- Predictability is important. Set a regular routine and try to stick with it. Alert the child to any upcoming changes in the routine. No surprises.
- Find safe ways to expend excess energy while in quiet settings. (e.g. Try chewing gum or eating chewy snacks like granola bars or berries.)
- Encourage freedom of movement through activities such as hanging, swinging, or climbing.
- Try not to single the child out in front of others. If you need to intercede regarding their behaviour or celebrate an achievement, speak with them privately.
- The child will feel easily shamed. Connect and show empathy before giving consequences for behaviour.
- If the child is acting in an unsafe way in a group setting, help peers learn how to maintain their own safety and avoid escalating the situation.
- Find a mutual interest that you can pursue together.
- Teach the child calming techniques. (e.g. deep breathing, meditation, martial arts)