

Say This... Not That

SAY THIS...	NOT THAT...
Help me understand.	I understand.
I can't imagine how you feel.	I know how you feel.
I hear you.	I agree.
You seem angry. I'm here to listen so you can get your feelings out.	Just calm down.
After you work out your feelings, I believe you're going to get through this.	Just get over it.
This seems important to you.	You're making a big deal out of nothing.
This place must feel safe for everyone, including you.	You're always causing trouble here, and that's not OK.
I hear what you are saying. I'll get to the bottom of this.	It sounds like he was wrong.
You seem so frustrated. I want to hear everything you have to say. We're going to figure this out together.	Don't have an attitude with me; I'm here to help you.
You've come so far. I've really noticed your progress. We've all been proud of you because _____. You're having a tough day. I have confidence you'll get through this.	You're always causing trouble.

SOURCE: Reaching Teens: Strength-Based, Trauma-Sensitive, Resilience-Building Communication Strategies Rooted in Positive Youth Development. Editor: Kenneth R. Ginsburg, MD, MS Ed, FAAP, FSAHM; Associate editor: Zachary Brett Ramirez McClain, MD.



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A person **in crisis**

CANNOT THINK ABSTRACTLY.

When your responses are

too complex

you can unintentionally **REINFORCE SHAME**

because the youth will not be able to

grasp your points.”

~ Reaching Teens

