Mental Health

Kids and Anxiety



crosspoint

Understanding Anxiety in Kids

Kids in kindergarten through 5th grade often experience worry as part of normal development. New routines, friendships, school pressures, and big feelings can feel overwhelming. Anxiety becomes more concerning when it interferes with daily life, sleep, or relationships. Parents are encouraged to seek guidance from a qualified healthcare or mentalhealth professional if concerns persist or worsen.

Children need reassurance that emotions are not "bad." They are signals that help us understand what's happening inside. Scripture consistently shows God meeting His people in their fear with comfort, presence, and peace.

BIBLICAL TRUTHS KIDS CAN HOLD ONTO

These passages are memorable anchors when worry and anxiety take over.

"When I am afraid, I put my trust in You." — Psalm 56:3 NIV
A short, repeatable verse for young children learning to name fear and turn to God.

"Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you."
— 1 Peter 5:7 NIV
God invites us to bring our worries to Him because He cares deeply for us.

"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." — Isaiah 41:10 NIV
God's presence is our source of strength.

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."
— Philippians 4:6–7 NIV
Prayer becomes a calming practice that leads to God's peace.

"The LORD is my shepherd." — Psalm 23
A picture-rich passage that helps us imagine God guiding, protecting, and comforting us.

HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT YOUR KID EMOTIONALLY

These practices help kids feel safe, understood, and grounded.

- **Name the feeling —** "It sounds like you're feeling worried about school."
  Naming emotions reduces fear and builds emotional vocabulary.
- **Normalize the experience —** "Lots of kids feel this way sometimes."
  Kids need to know they're not alone or "wrong" for feeling anxious.
- **Create predictable routines —** Consistency helps reduce anxiety triggers.
- **Use calming tools —** Deep breaths, grounding exercises, or a quiet space.
- **Model healthy coping —** Children learn emotional regulation by watching adults.
- **Pray together —** Short, simple prayers help kids connect their feelings to God's care.

FAITH-BASED PRACTICES FOR CALMING ANXIETY

These are simple, developmentally appropriate ways to help kids connect Scripture with emotional regulation.

- **Breath Prayer**
  Inhale: "God is with me."
  Exhale: "I am safe."

- **Scripture Repetition**
  Choose one verse (Psalm 56:3 works well) and repeat it slowly during moments of worry.

- **"Cast Your Cares" Activity**
  Write worries on small pieces of paper and place them in a "God jar" as a symbol of giving them to Him.

- **Gratitude Moments**
  Naming three things they're thankful for helps shift focus and calm the mind.

- **Comfort Objects with Meaning**
  A small cross, verse card, or note in a backpack can remind them of God's presence.

WHEN TO SEEK ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Reach out to a pediatrician, counselor, or mentalhealth professional if you notice:

- Anxiety that lasts for weeks or interferes with school, sleep, or friendships
- Physical symptoms like stomachaches or headaches connected to worry
- Avoidance of activities your kids normally enjoy
- Intense fear that doesn't improve with reassurance
- Professional support can be an important part of caring for a kid's whole well-being.

A Prayer for Families

"Lord, thank You for being near to us when we feel afraid. Help our child feel Your peace, Your presence, and Your love. Give us wisdom as parents to guide them with patience, gentleness, and hope. Guard their hearts and minds, and remind them that they are never alone. In Jesus name, Amen."