

# WHAT TO SAY



Trauma- Informed Language for Teachers  
[www.mindingyourmind.org](http://www.mindingyourmind.org)

## ASK

Ask students how they feel, and help them connect that emotion with a physical sensation.

“What emotion are you feeling right now? Where do you feel that emotion in your body?”

## CONNECT

Talk to students about what’s going on at home.

“Is there anything going on at home you’d like to talk about?” OR “How are things going at home?”

## CHECK IN

If something traumatic happens in the news, check in with students about how they’re doing.

“How did you feel when you heard about [The News]?” OR “I saw [The News], what do you think about it?”

## VALIDATE

Recognize positive behaviors and improvements

“Wow, I noticed that you were able to stay seated during the entire lesson. I’m really proud of you!”

## EMPATHIZE

Be empathetic if a student discloses something to you.

“Thank you so much for sharing that with me. It was very brave of you. I think it might help for you to talk to our school counselor/social worker. Would you be interested in doing that?”

## DON'T SHAME

Don’t shame a student for misbehavior. Check in with them in private.

“Sometimes when we’re feeling angry or sad or scared about something else, we lose our temper or get upset at other people. Is there anything you’re upset or worried about right now?”