

Managing Risk in the Moment: What to Say When You Want to Say "Be Careful"

"What is your next move?"

"Do you feel safe there?"

"Take your time."

"What's your plan?"

"Does that branch/rock feel strong and stable?"

"I'm here if you need me."

"Do you feel secure/balanced?"

"Do you need more space?"

"Please find a safe spot for your stick while you're running."

"I've noticed that there are lots of friends playing here. What are some of the things we need to watch out for with so many kids around?"

"I've noticed that there are a lot of things to trip on here."

"Should we move to a more open area?"

"Sticks need space. Please back up from your friend. She's holding a big stick!"

Look around you. Do you have enough space to do that cartwheel/somersault?"

"Before you throw that, what do you need to look for?"

"That log looks really heavy! Can you manage it?"

"Make sure everyone is still having a good time."

"Ask her if she's ok if you squirt/splash her with water."

"Ask him if he's still having fun."

"Did you like that? Make sure you tell her if you didn't like that."

"If you need to run, stop at the first tree!"

"Let's check this tunnel to make sure it is safe to hide in."

What to Say to Kids Instead of "Be Careful!"

Help Your Child Foster Awareness by Saying:

- **Notice how...** these rocks are slippery, that branch is strong...
- **Do you see...** the poison ivy, your friends nearby?
- **Try moving...** your feet carefully, your quickly, strongly.
- **Try using your...** hands, feet, arms, legs.
- **Can you hear...** the rushing water, the singing birds, the wind?
- **Do you feel...** stable on that rock, the heat from the fire?
- **Are you feeling...** scared, excited, tired, safe?

Help Your Child Problem Solve by Saying:

- **What's your plan...** if you climb that boulder, cross that log?
- **What can you use...** to get across, for your adventure?
- **Where will you...** put that rock, climb that tree, dig that hole?
- **How will you....** get down, go up, get across?
- **Who will...** be with you, go with you, help you if?

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