



Calming Techniques for Parents

The Cool Parent

When you feel yourself losing your "cool" with your children, try some of these ideas.

Stress Meter:

Keep an eye on your stress level and when it starts to go up, take action! Taking care of yourself isn't selfish - it's smart.

STOP:

Take a moment to get your emotions under control. You can't parent the way you want to when you're out of control. You can go back to parenting when you've calmed down.

Cool Down Coach:

Find an understanding friend or family member who can listen and help you get yourself under control.

Anger Busters:

Leave the room, take a walk, talk with a friend, clean the house, garden, listen to music - the goal is to find an activity that helps you release anger and frustration. Angry feelings can generate a lot of adrenaline that needs to be released before you try to parent.

The "No" Zone:

As soon as you say "no" to your child, the battle is on. Avoid giving an instant answer if what you really need is time to consider the request. Try: "It sounds like you really want to ____ (example: spend the night at Sally's). I'll have to think about it and let you know." If the answer is "no," then say so up front.

"I Hate You!":

It's normal for children to say things they don't mean when they're angry. Although you may feel hurt, don't respond in anger. Acknowledge their feelings: "You must be really angry with me right now." Later, coach your child: "Instead of saying you hate me, you can say you're really angry with me."

"Not Again!":

Always getting angry about the same stuff? Maybe it's time to set some new limits, rules or expectations: "Dirty clothes belong in the clothes basket. From now on, your clothes will only get washed if you put them in the basket." Feel like a meanie? Not at all! You're helping your child realize the consequences of not cooperating, and giving him/her the choice to cooperate.

For more information call the Family Help Line: 800.932.4673

This tip is brought to you by Parent Trust for Washington Children.
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