

Finding the calm:

helping a child through a crisis

A child in an emotional crisis can be challenging for everyone involved. Their distress can trigger intense emotions like fear and frustration, leading them to act out. This heightened emotional state makes it difficult to respond effectively. But knowing how to de-escalate the situation can help restore calm and ensure the child's safety.

10 effective de-escalation strategies:

1. **Stay calm:** Take deep breaths and stay composed. Your calmness and a soothing voice will help ease the child's anxiety.
2. **Use simple words:** Speak clearly and reassuringly. Avoid complex explanations.
3. **Validate feelings:** Acknowledge emotions without judgment. Use tools like an Emotion Wheel.
4. **Give space:** Step back to reduce the child's feeling of threat.
5. **Ensure safety:** Remove hazards and make sure the child feels safe.
6. **Avoid demands:** Offer choices to give the child control. "This or that?"
7. **Distract:** Redirect attention to a calming activity or favorite toy.
8. **Deep breathing:** Encourage deep breaths, focusing on longer exhales.
9. **Quiet time:** Allow time for the child to decompress and regain control.
10. **Be supportive:** Stay non-judgmental and let the child know you're there to help.



For more information, visit bhoptions.com or call **1-800-873-2246** for HPN BH or **1-800-280-3782** for BHO EAP. TTY users can dial **711**.

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