



# Mastering Stressful Moments Part 2

## From Meltdowns to Mastery: Helping Children Navigate Stressful Moments

### Course Objectives:

- Identify a strategy to help children master stressful moments, build self-regulation skills and soothe and calm



**You can take steps *before* stressful moments occur to help children learn to master them**

#### ✔ Avoid stress buildup

- Scan: How are the children? Are any of them feeling stress hormone?
- Identify what helps calm them down and do that in regular intervals

**\*Look for clues and then incorporate something soothing and calming to match**



- ✔ **Teach children how to reduce tension**
- ✔ **Teach goals and standards: What does shining look like for them?**

What is  
"On the road?"

What is hitting the  
"Rumble Strips?"

What behaviors are  
"In the Ditch?"

- ✔ **Be clear about the "why"**
- ✔ **Make a plan for stressful times of day**
  - Identify your most stressful time of day
  - Try different things and observe/document: "What is working?" "What is not working?"
  - Design a routine, incorporate strategies. Observe the results. Adjust, as needed.



### Video analysis



Which strategies, routines, or processes have you or could you put in place? What might help lower stress during this time?



## During Stressful Moments



**Stop:** Hit the pause button.

**Take:** Breathe a quick deep breath.

**Observe:** Attune to the child's body and describe what you notice.

**Proceed:** Label - Prompt - Praise

- Show empathy and caring
- Infuse calm
- Identify what the child may need to calm
- Match your response to the child
- Notice if your reaction is working. If not, try another response.

### \*Label and validate feelings, scaffolding as the child grows

#### Young Toddlers

Follow the infant's cues, providing sensitive and responsive care

#### Older Toddlers

Label feelings, making sure to use gestures and enhanced expressions

#### Preschoolers

Label feelings and encourage expression of feelings words

#### Other Children

Inquire about feelings. Ask what the child they might do to help themselves

### Label Feelings - Validate - Empathize - Clarify - Describe

1 y/o starts to wiggle around at circle time



3 y/o says "I want that candy."



6 y/o says "That's not fair!"



### \*What response would be most useful?

#### Child reacts by:



#### Striking out

Hits/bites/pushes  
Throws/lashes out  
Refuses  
Runs around room  
Yells at you



#### Shutting Down

Wants to be held, then lets go  
Can't do something  
Walks away  
Pushes you away  
Covers ears/close eyes



#### Gathering In

Clings  
Pulls on you  
Requests help  
Complains/whines  
Experiences anxiety

#### Adult can best help the child by:

Give the child a hug  
Help them get moving  
Validate the child's feelings  
Turn on music to dance  
Provide repetitive motion  
Put on kids yoga video  
Be silent yet presence  
Give the child something to squeeze  
Ring a chime for all to listen to  
Blow bubbles  
Reduce noise  
Pause your activity  
Touch with gentle massage of back  
Have all "listen for silence"  
Step back and give space  
Have push hands on the wall  
Dim the lights  
Pat on the back  
Listen with acknowledgement



What can you do to help children soothe and calm rising emotions?

