



Department of
Children's Services

Communicating for Conflict Resolution

Facilitator Guide

TN Department of Children's Services | CHDE3112 | Ver. 23.2



Curriculum Information

- Training Credit: 3.5 hours
- Trainers should give participants one 15-minute break during the training.
- This curriculum was developed by the State of Tennessee Office of Training and Professional Development.
- Staff may receive T4T credit for this course by:
 - Attending the course T4T offering -- OR --
 - Attending an offering of the course taught by another trainer & debriefing with that trainer.

This curriculum was developed by the Tennessee Department of Children's Services with federal funds. It is available to use in part or in whole free of charge. Suggested citation:

OTPD. (2022). Communicating for Conflict Resolution. Tennessee Department of Children's Services.

Learning Objectives

- Participants will be able to define conflict and its potential impact on relationships.
- Participants will be knowledgeable of different conflict positions in conflict resolution.
- Participants will understand the importance and role of communication in the prevention and/or resolution of conflict.
- Participants will examine “triggers” and “de-escalation” strategies for intervening in the traumatic response and supporting trauma impacted children/youth.

Materials Checklist

Materials needed for this curriculum

- PowerPoint
- Policy:
 - Policy 14.12 Removal: Safety and Permanency Considerations
 - Policy 31.18 Safety Planning for High-Risk Behaviors in Children and Youth in DCS Custody
 - Policy 19.11 and 19.12 Use of Physical Restraint and Seclusion and Behavior Management
 - Child Abuse Prevention Standard of Practice
 - Protocol for Accessing a Transitional House
- Forms:
 - Child/Youth Safety Plan (CS-1044)
 - Child Daily Log for Transitional Houses (CS-4227)
- Resources:
 - Johnson and Johnson Five Conflict Positions
 - Sitter Tip Sheet
 - Behavior Support Techniques

Annotated Agenda

Agenda Item	Time	Learning Objectives	Activities
Unit 1: Welcome	15 min		
Lesson 1.1 Welcome	15 min		
Unit 2: Conflict and Our Response	70 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants will be able to define conflict and its potential impact on relationships. • Participants will be knowledgeable of different conflict positions in conflict resolution. 	
Lesson 2.1: What is Conflict?	20 min		
Lesson 2.2: Conflict Positions	25 min		Debrief ACTIVITY: Johnson and Johnson Five Conflict Positions-How I Act in a Conflict?
Lesson 2.3: It Starts with You?	25 min		
Unit 3: Communicating for Conflict Resolution	100 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants will understand the importance and role of communication in the 	

		<p>prevention and/or resolution of conflict.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants will examine “triggers” and “de-escalation” strategies for intervening in the traumatic response and supporting trauma impacted children/youth. 	
Lesson 3.1: Before Behavior Escalates	15 min		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice: Breathing Technique: 4-7-8
Lesson 3.2: During Escalation of Behavior	40 min		
Lesson 3.3: Sitting with Youth	20 min		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Abuse Prevention Standards of Practice Sitter Tip Sheet
Lesson 3.4: Behavior Support and What to do	15 min		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavior Support Techniques Practice: “What if” Scenarios
Lesson 3.5: After Escalation of Behavior	10 min		
Unit 4: Wrap Up	10 min		
Lesson 4.1 Wrap-up	10 min		

Unit 1: Welcome

Unit Time: 15 minutes

Supporting Materials:

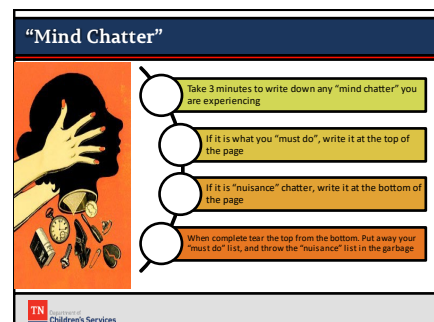
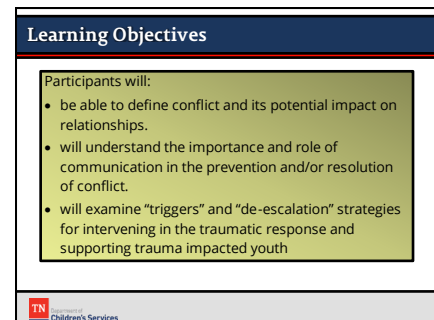
- Communicating for Conflict Resolution PowerPoint

Lesson 1.1: Welcome

Lesson Time: 15 minutes

Key Teaching Points / Instructions

- **REVIEW** the Learning Objectives:
 - Participants will be able to define conflict and its potential impact on relationships.
 - Participants will be knowledgeable of different conflict positions in conflict resolution.
 - Participants will understand the importance and role of communication in the prevention and/or resolution of conflict.
 - Participants will examine “triggers” and “de-escalation” strategies for intervening in the traumatic response and supporting trauma impacted children/youth.
- **SHARE** Let’s do an icebreaker: When we start a new activity, we are often distracted by something on our mind. It may be something that happened today, something imminent, something we must remember to do, or other important personal matters. Our minds tend to chatter about this and distract us.



- This activity controls this "mindchatter" and focuses our attention.
- Take about 3 minutes to write down any "mindchatter" you are experiencing at present. If it includes anything you must do, write it at the top of the page. If it is "nuisance" chatter, write it at the bottom of the page.
- When it is complete, tear the top ("must do") from the bottom ("nuisance") Put away the "must do" list in your belongings safely, and the "nuisance" section you can throw in the trash.
- **NOW**, you should have a clearer, more relaxed mind to start the training, and focus on this important topic.

Unit 2: Conflict and Our Response

Unit Time: 70 minutes

Learning Objectives:

- Participants will be able to define conflict and its potential impact on relationships.
- Participants will be knowledgeable of different conflict positions in conflict resolution.

Supporting Materials:

- Communicating for Conflict Resolution PowerPoint
- Resource: Johnson and Johnson Five Conflict Positions

Lesson 2.1: What is Conflict?

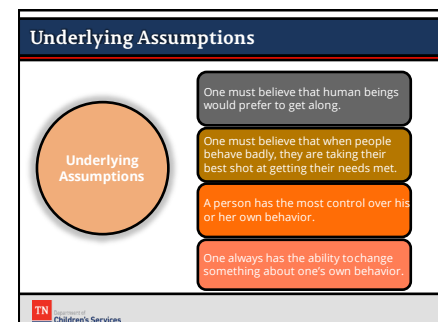
Lesson Time: 20 minutes

Key Teaching Points / Instructions

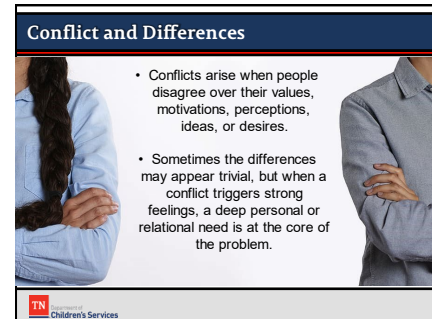
- **SHARE** Conflict is a normal, and even healthy, part of relationships. After all, two people can't be expected to agree on everything at all times. Since relationship conflicts are inevitable, learning to deal with them in a healthy way is crucial. When conflict is mismanaged, it can harm the relationship. But when handled in a respectful and positive way, conflict provides an opportunity for growth, ultimately strengthening the bond between two people. By learning the skills, you need for successful conflict resolution, you can keep your personal and professional relationships strong and growing.



- **SHARE** In order to do this work, we must accept the following underlying assumptions about conflict including:
 - One must believe that human beings would prefer to get along.
 - One must believe that when people behave poorly, they are attempting to get their needs met.
 - A person has the most control over his or her own behavior.
 - One always has the ability to change something about one's own behavior.
- **ASK** Who has ever had a conflict? Everyone, if being honest, should answer yes to this question. **MAKE** the following points with the group:
 - Conflict is a part of life. We cannot choose not to have conflict in our lives.
 - However, we can choose to handle conflict in productive ways rather than reactively or by avoiding it all together (which is NOT a good way to handle conflict!).

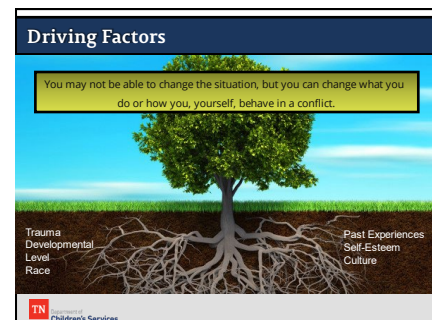


- **STATE** Conflict arises from differences. It occurs whenever people disagree over their values, motivations, perceptions, ideas, or desires. Sometimes these differences look trivial, but when a conflict triggers strong feelings, a deep personal and relational need is at the core of the problem, i.e., a need to feel safe and secure, a need to feel respected and valued, or a need for greater closeness and intimacy.



- **POINT OUT** Conflict above the surface is much easier to deal with. It is more difficult to determine the roots of conflict that lie beneath the surface. Often, we only see the behavior related to the conflict.

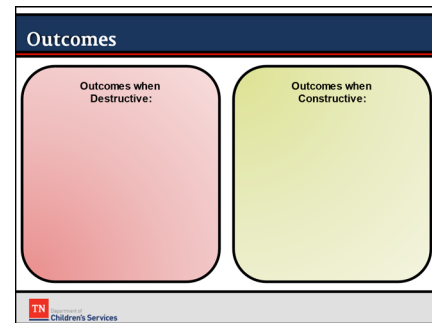
- **EXPLAIN** Many factors (trauma, developmental level, race, past experiences, self-esteem, culture, etc.) can affect both the root of the conflict and the potential for escalation. It is important to identify as many of these factors as possible when deciding upon your initial action. You cannot change or control how other people act in a conflict, and in many instances, you cannot change the situation itself; but what you can change is what you do or how you, yourself, behave in a conflict.



- **HAVE** participants to think about a situation in the past where they were involved in a conflict with someone else (e.g., a family member, a coworker, a young person).
 - Without being specific about the conflict itself, **ASK** what some of the outcomes were when handled in a destructive way and record responses on

a Flipchart or whiteboard. Possible responses may include:

- Tension
- Unresolved problems
- Stress
- Low productivity
- Anxiety/Resentment

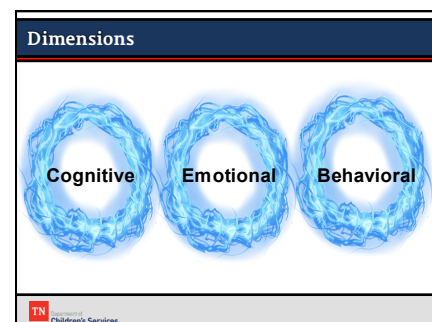


- **ASK** how the conflict was handled in a constructive way. **ASK** What were some of the outcomes? Allow annotation on the slide. Possible responses may include:

- Relaxation
- Openness
- Trust built or confirmed
- Empowerment
- Problem solving occurred
- Sense of achievement

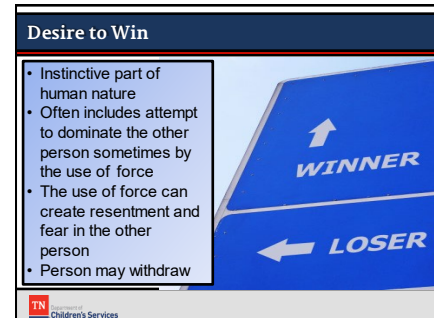
- **NORMALIZE** We've all had experience with conflict and can agree handling conflict constructively is beneficial for everyone.

- **SHARE** Conflict can be viewed as occurring along cognitive (what someone perceives), emotional (how someone feels), and behavioral (the action someone takes) dimensions. Bernard Mayer, an expert in the dynamics of conflict resolution, contends that if at least one person believes the



conflict exists, that person engages you in that conflict process whether or not you perceive the same situation.

- **STATE** Too often in conflict situations between people, the parties think in terms of a competition where there is a winner and a loser. The problem with thinking about conflict in this way is that it promotes win-lose behavior.

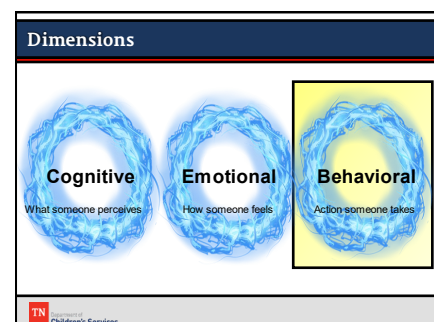


- **EXPLAIN** The desire to win is an instinctive part of human nature. In a conflict situation, this desire to win often includes an attempt to dominate the other person sometimes through the use of force. The use of force can create resentment and fear in others. Conversely, when a person feels that they are not likely to win, they may try to avoid the conflict by withdrawing.

- **EMPHASIZE** Staff working with children and youth should watch for signs of potential dominating behavior or withdrawal behavior. Instead of being seen as a win-lose competition, conflict can be seen as an opportunity to build healthier and more respectful relationships through understanding the perspectives of others.

- **SHARE** When you think about the conflicts that arise with and between you and the children/youth, we must identify these three dimensions: Cognitive (what someone perceives), Emotional (how someone feels), and Behavioral (the action someone takes) as being present.

- **EXPLAIN** The “action” dimension of conflict is usually the most obvious since it often manifests itself in destructive or sometimes violent behavior. The purpose of this behavior or action is to get one’s needs met using whatever means possible.



- **EMPHASIZE** We want to minimize behaviors and understand how others are feeling and how they perceive a situation.
- **STATE** Conflict provides an opportunity to strengthen the bond between two people. Whether you're experiencing conflict at home, work, or other environments, learning skills can help you resolve differences in a healthy way and build stronger, more rewarding relationships.
- **TRANSITION** Let's start by looking at conflict positions and our personal responses to conflict.

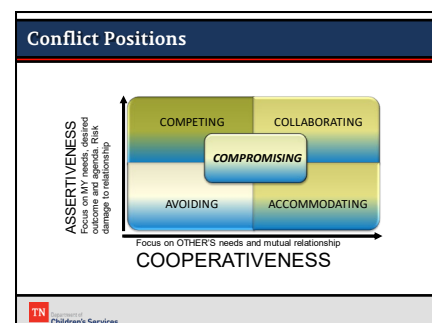
Lesson 2.2: Conflict Positions

Lesson Time: 25 minutes

Key Teaching Points / Instructions

- **SHARE** Kenneth Thomas and Ralph Kilmann conducted some of the first research in conflict management and developed the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) as a way to help people understand how their personal responses to conflict impact the behavior and dynamics of those around them.

- **EXPLAIN** Understanding your own conflict style is important especially when you are in the position where you are helping children/youth identify and understand their preferred conflict style



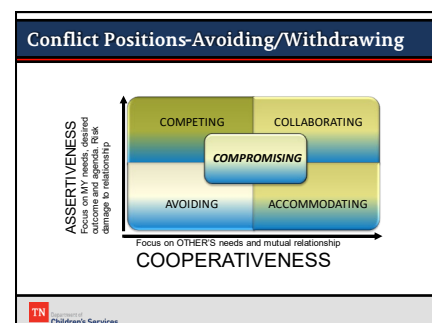
- **EXPLAIN** How to Interpret the Five Conflict

Positions. Johnson and Johnson research outlines five conflict positions plotted along an assertiveness and a cooperativeness scale. There are two basic dimensions of Conflict Behavior:

- **Assertiveness:** The degree to which you try to satisfy your own concerns during a conflict. This is related to how you might try to meet your needs or receive support for your ideas.

- Cooperativeness: The degree to which you try to satisfy the other individuals' concerns. It is related to how you might try to help the other individual meet his or her needs or how you can be receptive to the other individuals' ideas.
- **TRAINER NOTE:** use the pointer to show where each of the conflict positions are represented on the graphic while sharing the talking points for each conflict position. Additionally, do not reveal the information slides until after participants have answered the benefit and issues/pitfall questions after each conflict position is discussed.

- Avoiding/Withdrawing (**low assertiveness; low cooperativeness**) Avoiding is the position where we are the most unassertive and the most uncooperative. Here, we attempt to satisfy neither our own concerns nor the concerns of the other party. In other words, our position is “not to take a position,” and the result is a stalemate where frustration and anger can build. Yet avoiding a conflict can be useful, particularly in situations where we feel the conflict is trivial or where we know we have no chance of satisfying our concerns.




- **ASK** what are the benefits of using this conflict style and allow participants to respond. **ASK** what issues/pitfalls may arise from using this style.
- If we avoid discussing the conflict at all, both parties may remain clueless about the real underlying issues and concerns, only to be dealing with them in the future.

- **SHOW** slide and discuss any information not already discussed.
- **STATE** Other experts in conflict resolution use animal analogies to describe the five conflict positions and the Turtle symbolizes “avoiding/withdrawing.”

Avoiding/Withdrawing

An avoiding style is used when:

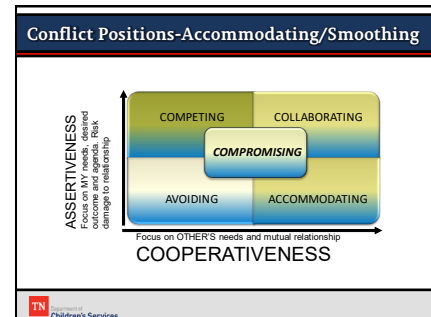
- Other more important issues are pressing
- When there is not a chance of satisfying individual concerns
- The potential damage of the conflict outweighs the benefits
- Reduce tension to regain perspective and composure
- When others can resolve the conflict more effectively



The turtle symbolizes "withdrawing"

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- Accommodating/Smoothing (**low assertiveness; high cooperativeness**) In taking an Accommodating position during a conflict, we are making an attempt to satisfy concerns – only they are the concerns of the other party. When we accommodate the other party, we’re being highly cooperative, but unassertive. However, “smoothing over” a dispute can subjugate our own needs, and, in the end, make us feel powerless and frustrated. That action can inadvertently intensify the situation, upping the ante. Still, there are times when we may choose to accommodate the other party for a larger purpose – to maintain harmony and stability in our organizations, for example.




- **ASK** what are the benefits of using this conflict style and allow participants to respond. **ASK** what issues/pitfalls may arise from using this style.
- If we accommodate, the relationship may proceed smoothly, but we may build up frustrations that our needs are going unmet.
- **SHOW** slide and discuss any information not already discussed.

Accommodating/Smoothing

The accommodating style is used when:

- Allow a better position to be heard when you realize you are wrong.
- The issue is more important to the other person
- Build social credits for later issues
- When continued competition would only damage your cause

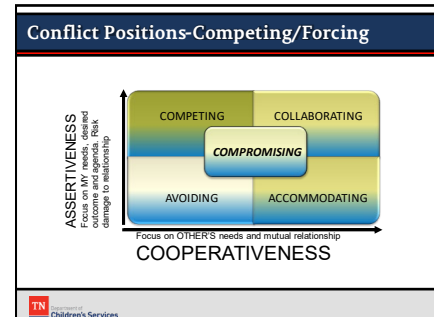


The teddy bear symbolizes "smoothing"

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- **STATE** Other experts in conflict resolution use animal analogies to describe the five conflict positions and the Teddy Bear symbolizes “accommodating/soothing.”

- Competing/Forcing (**high assertiveness; low cooperativeness**) Competing is the direct opposite of Accommodating. When we compete, we’re attempting to satisfy our concerns while showing little interest in the needs of the other party. In fact, we’re operating at the point of extreme uncooperativeness and high assertiveness. No wonder we clash with others. This classic conflict situation can make it appear to the warring parties that there is no solution in sight. Yet, while competing would seem to be a poor choice, it can be viable. There’s not time, for instance, to address the other party’s concerns in an emergency or when we are enforcing rules.



- **ASK** what are the benefits of using this conflict style and allow participants to respond. **ASK** what issues/pitfalls may arise from using this style.
- If we use a competing style, we might force the others to accept 'our' solution, but this acceptance may be accompanied by fear and resentment.
- **SHOW** slide and discuss any information not already discussed.

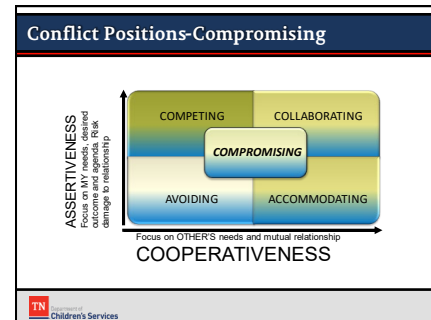
The slide is titled "Competing/Forcing". It contains the text "A competing style is used when:" followed by a bulleted list:

- Decisive action is vital
- Unpopular decisions need implementation
- Disciplinary issues
- Top-down organizational decisions

 To the right of the list is a small image of a shark. Below the image is the caption "The shark symbolizes 'forcing'". The TN Department of Children's Services logo is in the bottom left corner.

- **STATE** Other experts in conflict resolution use animal analogies to describe the five conflict positions and the Shark symbolizes “competing/forcing.”
- Compromising/Compromising (**Moderate assertiveness & cooperativeness**)
Many of us think of Compromising as a natural conflict resolution technique.

And indeed, it can be partially effective in that way. As the position midway between Competing and Accommodating, Compromising means we give up half of our concerns in order to get the other half. This is also known as “splitting the difference” or “sharing.” According to the model, when we compromise, we have in a moderately assertive and moderately cooperative fashion. Compromising can provide a workable solution in several situations, i.e., when we’re operating under a deadline, when goals are likely to remain incompatible, when the issues are too complex to be addressed in a timely manner, etc.



- **ASK** what are the benefits of using this conflict style and allow participants to respond. **ASK** what issues/pitfalls may arise from using this style.
- If we compromise, we may feel okay about the outcome, but still harbor resentments in the future.

- **SHOW** slide and discuss any information not already discussed.
- **STATE** Other experts in conflict resolution use animal analogies to describe the five conflict positions and the Giraffe symbolizes “compromising.”

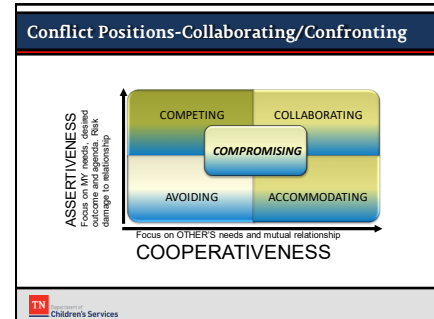
The slide is titled "Compromising" and contains the following text:

A compromising style is used when:

- Goals are moderately important
- Parties with equal power are committed to mutually exclusive goals
- Achieve temporary settlements to complex issues
- Expedient solutions under time pressure
- Collaboration or competition fail to be successful

 An image of a giraffe is shown in the bottom right corner. Below the image is the caption: "The giraffe symbolizes 'compromising'". The TN Department of Children's Services logo is in the bottom left corner.

- Collaborating/Confronting (**high assertiveness & cooperativeness**) The most ideal position – and the one that takes the most patience and commitment to achieve – is Collaborating. Unlike Accommodating, Competing, and Compromising, which only partially satisfy concerns, Collaborating



satisfies the concerns of all parties. When we take a collaborative position, we are being both highly assertive and highly cooperative. Collaborating is of particular use when we want to work through feelings to improve a relationship, when concerns are too important to be compromised or accommodated away, and when we are looking to build a consensus. Compromising can provide a workable solution in several situations – when we’re operating.

- **ASK** what are the benefits of using this conflict style and allow participants to respond. **ASK** what issues/pitfalls may arise from using this style.
- If we collaborate, we may not gain a better solution than a compromise might have yielded, but we are more likely to feel better about our chances for future understanding and goodwill.

- **SHOW** slide and discuss any information not already discussed.
- **STATE** Other experts in conflict resolution use animal analogies to describe the five conflict positions and the Owl symbolizes “collaborating/confronting.”

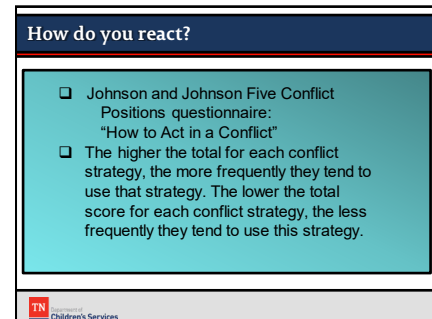
The slide is titled "Collaborating/Confronting" and contains the following text:

A collaborating style is used when:

- Integrative solutions where both sides are imminent
- Merge insights
- Gain commitment through consensual decision-making
- Interpersonal relationships are at risk

 Below the list is a photograph of an owl. Underneath the photo, it says: "The owl symbolizes 'collaborating/confronting'". The TN Department of Children's Services logo is in the bottom left corner.

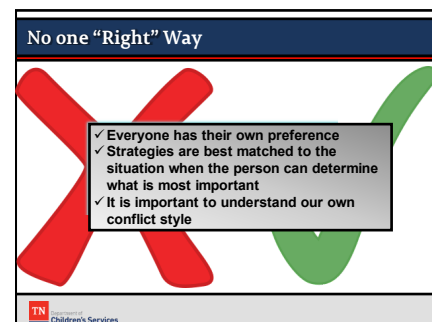
- **DEBRIEF ACTIVITY:** How do you react when faced with a conflict?



- Participants were asked to complete the questionnaire entitled: “How to Act in a Conflict” by Johnson & Johnson and score their responses **prior to class**.
- **SHARE** overall response will give an introductory glimpse into their own preferred strategy or strategies of reacting to any conflict.
- **TRAINER RESOURCE:** How I Act in a Conflict – Questionnaire. The proverbs listed below can be thought of as descriptions of some of the different strategies for resolving conflicts. Proverbs state traditional wisdom and they reflect traditional ways of resolving conflicts. Read each of the proverbs carefully.
- Using the following scale, indicate how typical each proverb is of your actions in a conflict. 5 = very often the way I act in a conflict 4 = frequently the way I act in a conflict 3 = sometimes the way I act in a conflict 2 = seldom the way I act in a conflict 1 = never the way I act in a conflict:
 - ___ 1. It is easier to refrain than to retreat from a quarrel.
 - ___ 2. If you cannot make a person think as you do, make him or her do as you think.
 - ___ 3. Soft words win hard hearts.
 - ___ 4. You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours.
 - ___ 5. Come now and let us reason together.
 - ___ 6. When two quarrel, the person who keeps silent first is the most praiseworthy.
 - ___ 7. Might overcomes right.
 - ___ 8. Smooth words make smooth ways.

- ___ 9. Better half a load than no bread at all.
- ___ 10. Truth lies in knowledge, not in majority opinion.
- ___ 11. He who fights and runs away lives to fight another day.
- ___ 12. He hath conquered well that hath made his enemies flee.
- ___ 13. Kill your enemies with kindness.
- ___ 14. A fair exchange brings no quarrel.
- ___ 15. No person has the final answer but every person has a piece to contribute.
- ___ 16. Stay away from people who disagree with you.
- ___ 17. Fields are won by those who believe in winning.
- ___ 18. Kind words are worth much and cost little.
- ___ 19. Tit for tat is fair play.
- ___ 20. Only the person who is willing to give up his or her monopoly on truth can ever profit from the truths that others told.
- ___ 21. Avoid quarrelsome people as they will only make your life miserable.
- ___ 22. A person who will not flee, will make others flee.
- ___ 23. Soft words ensure harmony.
- ___ 24. One gift for another makes good friends.
- ___ 25. Bring your conflicts into the open and face them directly; only then will the best solution be discovered.
- ___ 26. The best way of handling conflicts is to avoid them.
- ___ 27. Put your foot down where you mean to stand.
- ___ 28. Gentleness will triumph over anger.
- ___ 29. Getting part of what you want is better than not getting anything at all.
- ___ 30. Frankness, honesty, and trust will move mountains.
- ___ 31. There is nothing so important that you have to fight for it.
- ___ 32. There are two kinds of people in the world, the winners and the losers.
- ___ 33. When one hits you with a stone, hit him or her with a piece of cotton.
- ___ 34. When both people give in half-way, a fair settle is achieved.
- ___ 35. By digging and digging, the truth is discovered.

- **SHARE** with participants the higher the total for each conflict strategy, the more frequently they tend to use that strategy. The lower the total score for each conflict strategy, the less frequently they tend to use this strategy.
- **FOLLOWING** the activity **ASK** participants if there were any AHA moments about themselves that came to light regarding their preferred strategy.
- **DEBRIEF** their responses by having them come off mute or share thoughts in chat box.
- **SHARE** An important premise of the Thomas-Kilmann research is the fact that, while everyone has his/her own preference for handling conflict, there is no one universal **“right”** way. Conflict management strategies are best matched to the situation when the person in the conflict can step out of emotion and determine what is important. In some conflicts, the task or decision is most important. At other times, the relationship between the parties is more important than the task at hand.
- **REMIND** participants the benefit of understanding their own conflict style and how it will be beneficial in helping children/youth identify and understand their preferred conflict style.

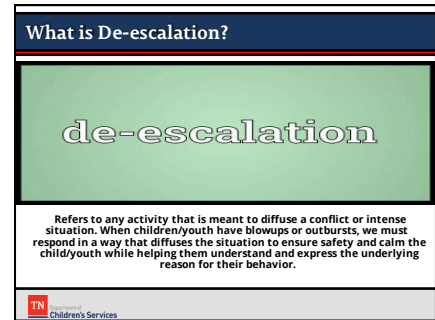


Lesson 2.3: It starts with YOU!

Lesson Time: 25 minutes

Key Teaching Points / Instructions

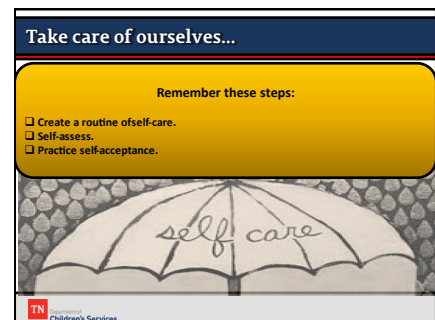
- **ASK** participants what is de-escalation? **SHARE** De-escalation refers to any activity that is meant to diffuse a conflict or intense situation. When children/youth have blow-ups or outbursts, staff must respond in a way that diffuses the situation to ensure safety and calm the child/youth while helping them understand and express the underlying reason for their behavior.



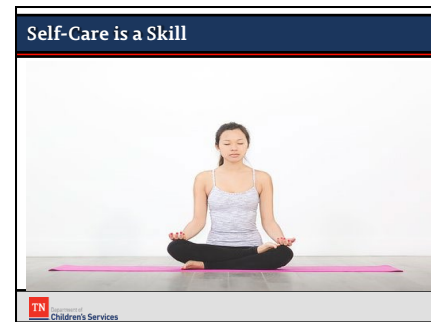
- **STATE** the before begins with you. **EXPLAIN** the way we help de-escalate a situation starts with our ability to control ourselves and handle stressful situations. Assisting a child/youth in care can be one of the most rewarding experiences of your life, but also stressful for you. Taking care of yourself is **CRITICALLY IMPORTANT** not only for your well-being but for the children/youth you will come into contact.



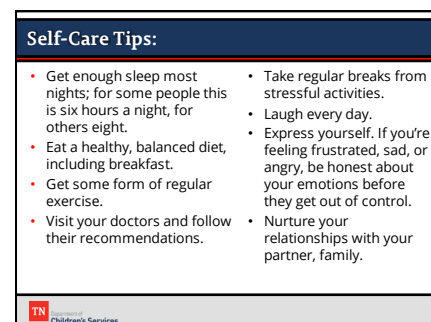
- **STRESS** before engaging in the work we do in dealing with trauma responses, we must take care of ourselves including:
 - Create a routine of **self-care**
 - **Self-assess** to determine your own temperament style and how you respond to conflict.



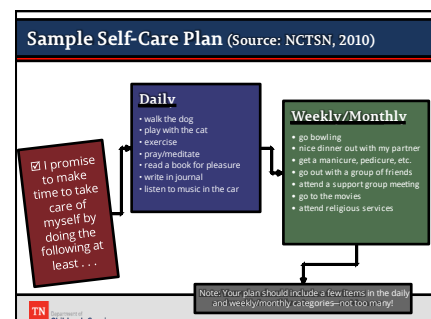
- Practice **self-acceptance** because there are no perfect people.
- **EXPLAIN** One thing to keep in mind about self-care is that it is a skill— something you can practice and get better at. You will make mistakes or slip up, but if you keep at it, it will become easier and a natural part of your daily life. **ASK** participants to share any self-care tips they utilize and **RECORD** responses on the whiteboard or flip chart.



- **SHARE** possible self-care tips including:
 - Get enough sleep most nights; for some people this is six hours a night, for others eight
 - Eat a healthy, balanced diet, including breakfast
 - Get some form of regular exercise
 - Visit your doctors and follow their recommendations
 - Take regular breaks from stressful activities
 - Laugh every day
 - Express yourself. If you're feeling frustrated, sad, or angry, be honest about your emotions before they get out of control
 - Nurture your relationships with your partner, family



- **STATE** It will be important to create a self-care plan. **SHARE** Sample Self-Care plan with participants such as "I promise to make time to take care of myself by doing the following at least daily, weekly, or monthly." **CHALLENGE**



participants to find a strategy that works for them and have them write down (assist with commitment). Options may include:

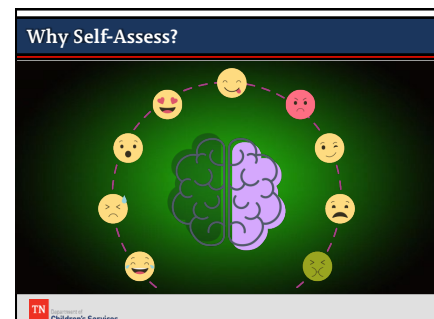
- **Daily**

- walk the dog
- play with the cat
- exercise
- pray/meditate
- read a book for pleasure
- write in a journal
- listen to music in the car

- **Weekly/Monthly**

- go bowling
- nice dinner out with my partner
- get a manicure, pedicure, etc.
- go out with a group of friends
- attend a support group meeting
- go to the movies
- attend religious services

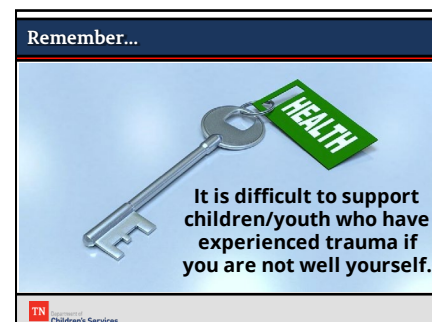
- **STATE** another way we take care of ourselves is by self-assessing. **ASK** Why we need to self-assess ourselves when it comes to working with children/youth? **STATE** children/youth come into care with behaviors that allowed them to survive their often-traumatic home life. These behaviors can often **trigger** emotions in us that make it difficult to engage them calmly. It is vital to assess the way you



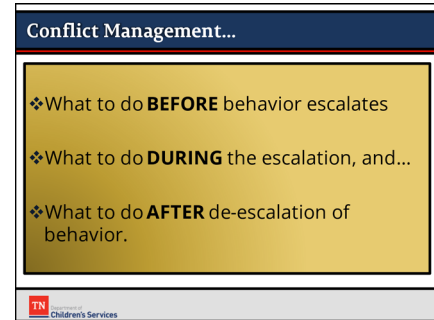
regulate your emotions, so that you can assist children/youth in regulating theirs.

- **EXPRESS** Being able to manage and relieve stress in the moment is the key to staying balanced, focused, and in control, no matter what challenges you face. If you don't know how to stay centered and in control of yourself, you will become overwhelmed in conflict situations and unable to respond in healthy ways.
- **AFFIRM** Emotional awareness is important to understanding yourself and others. If you don't know how or why you feel a certain way, you won't be able to communicate effectively or resolve disagreements.
 - Although knowing your own feelings may sound simple, many people ignore or try to sedate strong emotions like anger, sadness, and fear. Your ability to handle conflict, however, depends on being connected to these feelings. If you're afraid of strong emotions or if you insist on finding solutions that are strictly rational, your ability to face and resolve differences will be limited.
- **EMPHASIZE** It is difficult to support children/youth who have experienced trauma if you are not well yourself.
- **LASTLY, STRESS** self-acceptance is important and is not going to happen overnight. We all make mistakes and lose our cool from time to time.

STATE There is no perfect person. We don't always get our response right in conflict and that's okay. We want to treat ourselves well and do the best we can.



- **TRANSITION** We will be discussing what to do before behavior escalates, during an escalation of behavior, and after.



Unit 3: Communicating for Conflict Resolution

Unit Time: 100 minutes

Learning Objectives:

- Participants will understand the importance and role of communication in the prevention and/or resolution of conflict.
- Participants will examine “triggers” and “de-escalation” strategies for intervening in the traumatic response and supporting trauma impacted youth.

Supporting Materials:

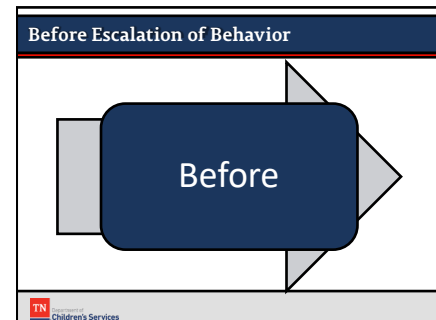
- Communicating for Conflict Resolution PowerPoint
- Resource: Sitter Tip Sheet
- Resource: Behavior Support Techniques
- Policy: Child Abuse Prevention Standard of Practice
- Form: Child/Youth Safety Plan (CS-1044)
- Policy 14.12 Removal: Safety and Permanency Considerations

- Policy 31.18 Safety Planning for High-Risk Behaviors in Children and Youth in DCS Custody
- Policy 19.11 and 19.12 Use of Physical Restraint and Seclusion and Behavior Management

Lesson 3.1: Before Behavior Escalates

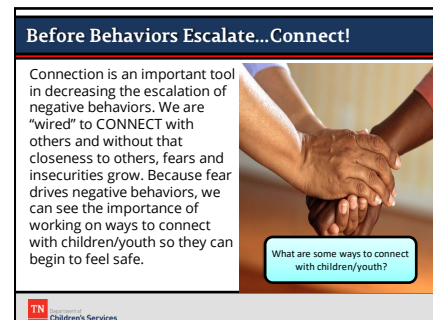
Lesson Time: 15 minutes

Key Teaching Points / Instructions



- **SUMMARIZE** As we have discussed, we want to prevent behavior from happening during a stressful situation; however, conflict can and does occur.
- **SHARE DISCLAIMER WITH THE GROUP** The material we are about to discuss is primarily centered around our work with children and youth; however, it can be applied to all of our interactions with others.

- **STATE** Connection is an important tool in decreasing the escalation of negative behaviors. We are “wired” to CONNECT with others and without that closeness to others, fears and insecurities grow. Because fear drives negative behaviors, we can see the importance of working on ways to connect with our children/youth so they can begin to feel safe.




- **ASK** participants what are some ways they try to connect with children/youth.
- **DISCUSS** The following ways to connect with children/youth if not discussed:

- **Listen:** Learn to stop what you are doing and really listen to the child/youth.
- **Eye Contact:** Children from hard places have a tough time making eye contact, so this will take time. Be playful in trying to meet their eyes and not forceful. Eye contact assists in connecting with our children/youth.
- **Safe, Healthy Touch:** Research proves over and over that touch is vital to healthy development in humans. It releases chemicals in the brain that increase happiness and decreases stress. Examples include side hugs, fist bumps, and high fives, etc.
- **Play:** Play communicates safety to a child and disarms fear. Allow the youth to take the lead in play which offers control to their world. Examples: Card games such as Uno, Spades, Wizard, Spoons. Board games like Pictionary, Monopoly.
- **Calm Voice:** Always use a calm and reassuring tone with the children/youth especially when situations are tense. Learning to do this with every interaction with a child/youth, will help you remain calm when behaviors escalate.

Ways To Connect With Children/Youth:

- **Listen:** Learn to stop what you are doing and really listen to your child.
- **Eye Contact:** Children from hard places have a tough time making eye contact, so this will take time
- **Safe, Healthy Touch:** Research proves over and over that touch is vital to healthy development in humans.



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Ways To Connect With Children/Youth:

- **Play:** Play communicates safety to a child and disarms fear. Allow the youth to take the lead in play which offers control to their world. Examples: Card games such as Uno, Spades, Wizard, Spoons. Board games like Pictionary, Monopoly.



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Ways To Connect With Children/Youth:

- **Calm Voice:** Always use a calm and reassuring tone with the children/youth especially when situations are tense. Learning to do this with every interaction with a child/youth, will help you remain calm when behaviors escalate.
- **Mimic:** Think of close connections you have with others, and mimic how that closeness developed. (Keeping promises, kindness, respect, trust, having fun) Treat the children/youth in the same manner, even when they can not return the gesture.

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- **Mimic:** Think of close connections you have with others, and mimic how that closeness developed. (Keeping promises, kindness, respect, trust, having fun) Treat the children/youth in the same manner, even when they cannot return the gesture.

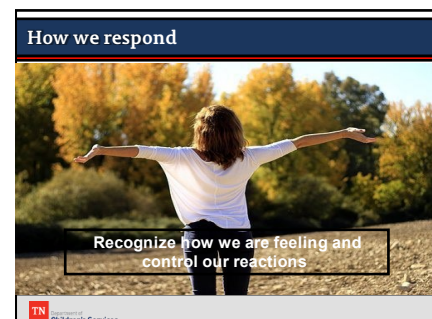
- **SHARE** The additional pointers from the slide for staff if not already discussed:

- Identify what typically sets the child/youth off. It's important to recognize patterns.
- Set up clear rules.
- Develop a safe, caring relationship.
- Communicate requests or directions to the child/youth in ways that are the most calm and least provocative to them.
- Recognize and reward even the smallest steps toward good behavior.
- Note what a child/youth has said or how he/she has reacted emotionally and verbally to learn the child/youth's point of view.
- Do not try to solve the problem for the child/youth but work with them to solve the problem and build awareness of the outburst.
- Help the child/youth interpret the behavior, possibly by drawing pictures and translating them into words.

Pointers For Staff	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify what typically sets the child/youth off. It's important to recognize patterns. • Set up clear rules. • Develop a safe, caring relationship. • Communicate requests or directions to the child/youth in ways that are the calmest and least provocative to them. • Recognize and reward even the smallest steps toward good behavior. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note what a child/youth has said or how he/she has reacted emotionally and verbally to learn the child/youth's point of view. • Don't try to solve the problem for the child/youth, but work with them to solve the problem and build awareness of the outburst. • Help the child/youth interpret the behavior, possibly by drawing pictures and translating them into words.

- **EMPHASIZE** It is always important for us to recognize how we are feeling and control our reactions. One technique is to **Control your breathing:**

- When we are stressed, angry or tense, our breathing becomes more shallow and rapid. If we take deeper, slower breaths, this will not only help keep us calm, but the child/youth will begin to



match our own breathing pattern. It can sometimes help to match the child/youth's breathing initially then gradually slow it down.

- So, remember to breathe and teach the children/youth the techniques of calming breathing. They will begin to regulate their own emotions when they are taught how to.

- **SHARE** An example that can be used is the

Breathing Technique: 4-7-8

- The numbers in the name -- 4-7-8 -- refer to the counts when breathing in, holding your breath, and exhaling.

Breathing Technique: 4 – 7 – 8

The numbers in the name -- 4-7-8 -- refer to the counts when breathing in, holding your breath and exhaling.

- Start by sitting up straight in a comfortable position.
- Next, place the tip of your tongue on the ridge of your gums, just behind your upper front teeth.
- Expand your diaphragm and slowly inhale through your nose for a count of 4.
- Hold your breath for another count of 7.
- Open your mouth slightly, keeping your tongue in place, and exhale for 8 counts.
- Repeat this cycle 3 times.

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- Start by sitting up straight in a comfortable position.
- Next, place the tip of your tongue on the ridge of your gums, just behind your upper front teeth.
- Expand your diaphragm and slowly inhale through your nose for a count of 4.
- Hold your breath for another count of 7.
- Open your mouth slightly, keeping your tongue in place, and exhale for 8 counts.
- Repeat this cycle 3 times.

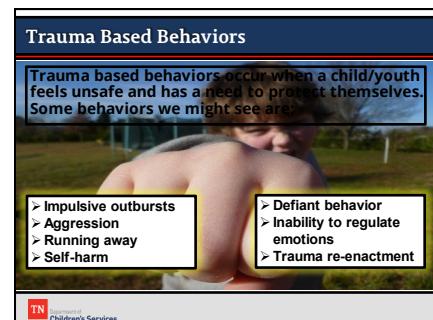
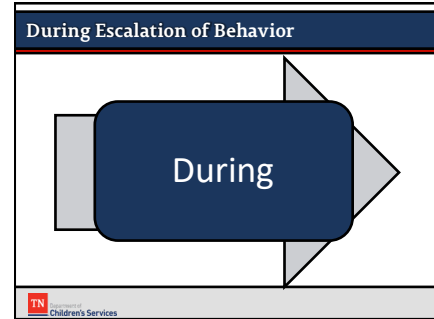
- **PRACTICE** This breathing technique with participants as it is important in helping remain calm in a crisis situation. **ASK** participants to complete the cycle three times.

Lesson 3.2: During Escalation of Behavior

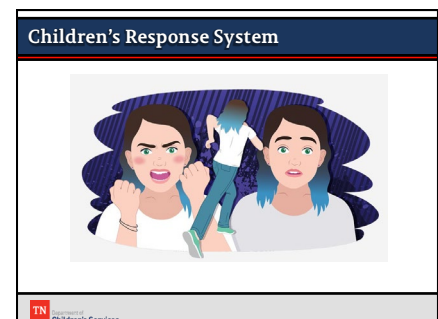
Lesson Time: 40 minutes

Key Teaching Points / Instructions

- **STATE** Behavior is communication and children/youth are communicating a need. The following are things to consider:
 - First it is important to remember that a child/youth’s behavior is trying to tell us something. So, it is important to find out what that need is before escalation occurs.
 - When thinking about the brain and how the amygdala acts up and gets emotional and if the pre-frontal cortex is unable to regulate that intense emotion, it spills over into an explosion of negative behavior.
 - At that point, we have a decision to make: Remain calm and in control as you work through the behavior, or overreact to the behavior, potentially increasing it into a crisis situation.
- **EXPRESS** Trauma based behaviors occur when a child/youth feels unsafe and has a need to protect themselves. Some behaviors we might see are:
 - Impulsive outbursts
 - Aggression
 - Running away
 - Self-harm
 - Defiant behavior

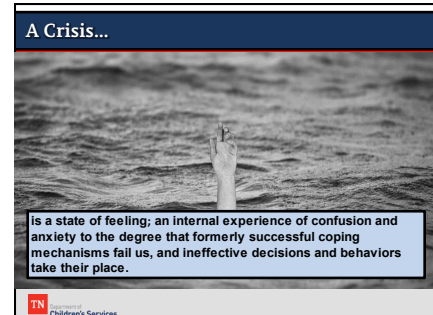


- Inability to regulate emotions
- Trauma re-enactment
- **SHARE** and **EXPLAIN** the analogy of the Bear:
 - If you are in a forest and see a bear, your body reacts with heavy breathing, increased heart rate, body temperature rises (face turns red) etc.
 - You brain kicks in with a Fight, Flight or Freeze response where you either run, stay and fight the bear, or you are so scared you are frozen and unable to move.
 - Once away from the bear, your breathing and heart rate returns to normal and you figure out you need to stay away from the forest with the bear.
 - But for children/youth in care, they go home to “the bear” every day. So, they become stuck in the fight, flight or freeze state. (Ready to react to protect themselves).
 - Their brain is “stuck” in a protective state and do not know what to expect and fear sets in.
 - When something triggers the child/youth, they respond the same way they would if they were in the forest (home) with a bear, because that is what they have always known.
 - Our job is to help them regulate their emotions until they are in a safer state of mind to regulate themselves.
 - Remember, all they have known is “the bear” and until they can begin to feel safe, they will need help regulating their emotional responses.
- **EXPRESS** We all experience a variety of stressful events in our lifetime. Each of us has unique ways of dealing with these events in order to maintain a comfortable



emotional balance, and when the usual coping mechanisms fail, we seek new ways of coping. A crisis state comes into being when these new attempts fail to return us to the precrisis level of emotional balance.

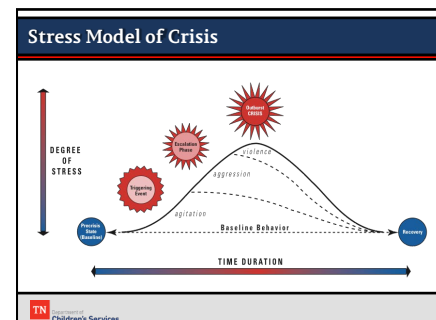
- **SHARE** Crisis is a state of feeling; an internal experience of confusion and anxiety to the degree that formerly successful coping mechanisms fail us, and ineffective decisions and behaviors take their place. As a result, the person in crisis may feel confused, vulnerable, anxious, afraid, angry, guilty, hopeless, and helpless.
- **EXPLAIN** Crisis is both a time of opportunity and danger. Crisis is useful when it causes one to go beyond familiar coping skills (both internal and external) and to develop new skills, therefore becoming more competent and autonomous. A crisis is dangerous when the person becomes overwhelmed with anxiety and pain and adapts in negative ways.



- **INTRODUCE** the Stress Model of Crisis from Therapeutic Crisis Intervention. **EXPLAIN** the model includes the degree of stress and time duration of a crisis including:

- Pre-crisis state (baseline)
- Triggering event (agitation)
- Escalation phase (aggression)
- Outburst CRISIS (violence)
- Recovery

- **STRESS** The degree of stress determines the length of duration it requires to return to baseline. It takes approximately 45 minutes for adrenaline/cortisol to dissipate from our bodies. **SHARE:**



- Your ENCOUNTER with the child/youth can either ENGAGE OR ENRAGE - If you engage, the youth can return to pre-crisis (baseline) phase; if you ENRAGE, the youth continues to Escalation (Aggression) phase.

Stress Model of Crisis

• Your ENCOUNTER with the child can either ENGAGE OR ENRAGE- If you engage, the youth can return to pre-crisis (baseline) phase; if you ENRAGE, the youth continues to Escalation (Aggression) phase.

• The first goal is to decrease the stressor and secondly, teach coping skills to youth.

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- The first goal is to decrease the stressor and secondly, teach coping skills to youth.

- **STATE** there are four questions we ask ourselves in a crisis to help manage the situation:

- What am I feeling now?
- What does the child feel, need, or want?
- How is the environment affecting the young person?
- How do I best respond?

4 Questions We Ask Ourselves In A Crisis

1. What am I feeling now?
2. What does the child feel, need or want?
3. How is the environment affecting the young person?
4. How do I best respond?

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- **EXPLAIN** De-escalation techniques are most successful when used early before the child/youth becomes physically aggressive. To do this, it is necessary to be aware of and spot early signs of agitation. **ASK** participants what some early signs of agitation our youth exhibit. **SHARE** the following if not discussed:

When To De-Escalate

De-escalation techniques are most successful when used early, before the child/youth becomes physically aggressive. To do this, it is necessary to be aware of and spot early signs of agitation.

What are early signs of agitation?

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- balled up fists
- fidgeting
- shaking
- "eye-balling" another child
- head thrust forward
- clenched jaw
- speech becoming more rapid or high-pitched

- **STRESS** the following skills to consider in de-escalating the crisis early (use MI-OARS):

- **Active Listening:** Communicating that you understand the child/youth by being respectful, empathetic, and validating their feelings. Active listening allows and encourages young people to talk out rather act out.
- **Understanding Responses:** Reflective responses mirror what the child/youth is saying or feeling.
- **Summarization:** This helps the child/youth understand the meaning of what has been said.

De-escalating The Crisis

- **Active Listening:** Communicating that you understand the child by being respectful, empathetic, and validating their feelings. Active listening allows and encourages young people to talk out rather act out.
- **Understanding Responses:** Reflective responses mirror what the child is saying or feeling, for example: "I would be upset too if my visit had been canceled."
- **Summarization:** This helps the child/youth understand the meaning of what has been said. "So, let me get this right, your visit has been canceled again and this is why you are upset?"

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- **EMPHASIZE** Understanding responses help young people sort out what is happening to them and help de-escalate potential crisis such as "I'm sorry you feel upset" or "I can see you are really angry."
- **STATE** We are now going to look at the conflict cycle and how things can progress including the stressful incident, child's feelings, child's behavior, and the adult response. We will start with the Stressful Incident or Trigger, progress through slides.

De-escalating The Crisis

- Understanding responses help young people sort out what is happening to them and help de-escalate potential crisis: "I'm sorry you feel upset" or "I can see you are really angry."

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Conflict Cycle

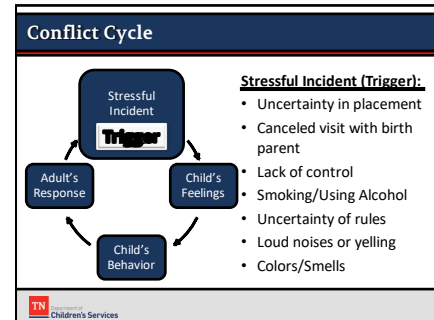
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graph TD
    A[Stressful Incident] --> B[Child's Feelings]
    B --> C[Child's Behavior]
    C --> D[Adult's Response]
    D --> A
            
```

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○ **Stressful Incident (Trigger):**

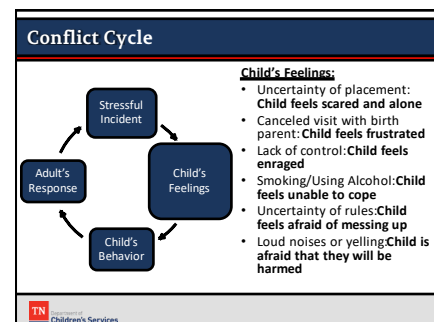
- Uncertainty in placement
- Canceled visit with birth parent
- Lack of control
- Smoking/Using Alcohol
- Uncertainty of rules
- Loud noises or yelling
- Colors/Smells



● **NEXT** Review the Child's feelings to the trigger may look like this:

○ **Child's Feelings:**

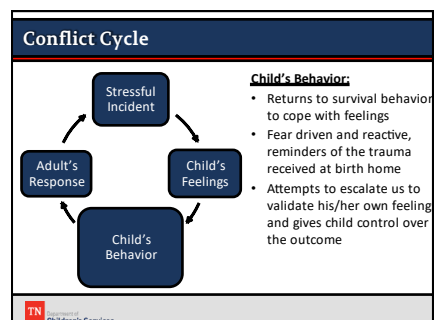
- Uncertainty of placement: Child feels scared and alone
- Canceled visit with birth parent: Child feels frustrated
- Lack of control: Child feels enraged
- Smoking/Using Alcohol: Child feels unable to cope
- Uncertainty of rules: Child feels afraid of messing up
- Loud noises or yelling: Child is afraid that they will be harmed
- Colors/Smells: Child feels scared and anxious



● **SHARE** the behavior of the child/youth may include:

○ **Child's Behavior:**

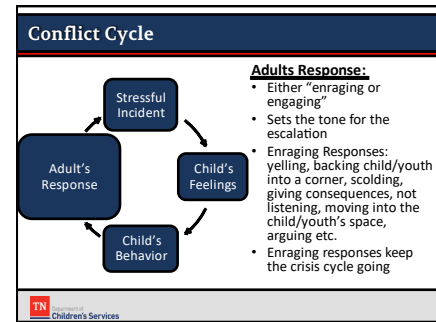
- Returns to survival behaviors to cope with feelings
- Fear driven and reactive, reminders of the trauma received at birth home
- Attempts to escalate staff to validate their own feelings and gives child control



- **LASTLY** the adult response:

- **Adults Response:**

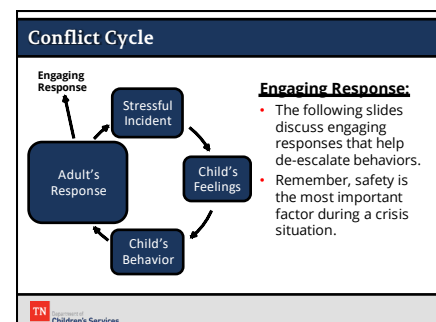
- Either “enraging or engaging”
 - Sets the tone for the escalation
 - Enraging Responses: yelling, backing child/youth into a corner, scolding, giving consequences, not listening, moving into the child/youth’s space, arguing etc.
 - Enraging responses keep the crisis cycle going



- **PIVOT** Into discussing how our **ENGAGING** Response can help de-escalate the situation.

- **Engaging Response:**

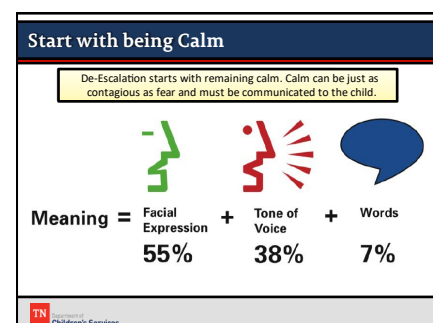
- The following slides discuss engaging responses that help de-escalate behaviors.
 - Remember, safety is the most important factor during a crisis situation.



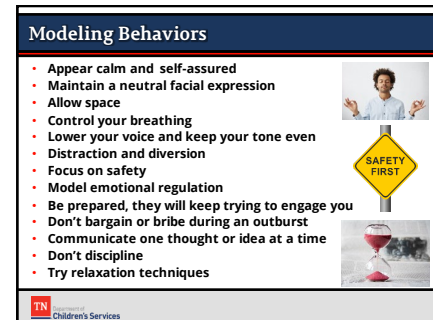
- **EXPLAIN** the ability to successfully resolve conflict depends on your ability to learn and practice skills. **STRESS** How to de-escalate a situation starts with remaining calm:

- Calm can be just as contagious as fear and must be communicated to the child.

Approximately 55% of what we communicate is through physiology, 38% is through the tone of our voice and just 7% is through the words that we use. It is useful to remember these proportions when you are trying to de-escalate.

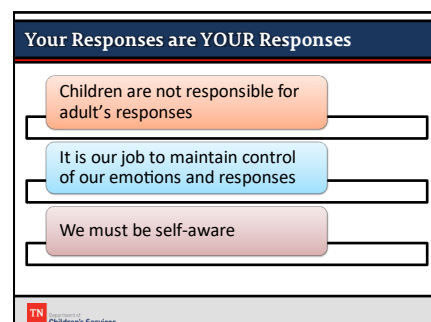


- **ENSURE** you are modeling the behavior you want the child to emulate. **SHARE** the following behaviors briefly with the group.
 - **Appear calm and self-assured**
 - Make sure you are not displaying the same signs of agitation that can be seen in the child: unclench your fists, do not hold eye contact and avoid standing square to the child.
 - **Maintain a neutral facial expression**
 - Even our eyebrows can indicate we are surprised or angry, and similarly our mouths can betray our emotions unwittingly. Another natural reaction we often have when under stress is to smirk or giggle, which must be controlled.
 - **Allow space**
 - Entering a person's personal space can be useful to refocus on a task when the situation is calm, but when a child is agitated this can indicate aggression and escalate the situation. Staying some distance away will also help keep you safe should the child become physically aggressive.
 - **Control your breathing**
 - When we are stressed, angry or tense, our breathing becomes more shallow and rapid. If we take deeper, slower breaths, this will not only help keep us calm, but the child will begin to match our own breathing pattern. It can sometimes help to match the child's breathing initially then gradually slow it down.
 - **Lower your voice and keep your tone even.**
 - It is hard to have an argument with someone who is not responding aggressively back to you.



- **Distraction and diversion are extremely useful.**
 - When a child is aggressive, they are responding with their own fight-or-flight instincts and not thinking about their actions.
 - Distract them and engage their thinking brain, perhaps by changing the subject or commenting on something that is happening outside the window.
 - Give choices, repeat these using the broken-record technique if necessary, and do not get drawn into secondary behaviors such as arguing back, which are designed to distract or upset you.
 - Acknowledging the child's feelings shows that you have listened to them and can be crucial when diffusing a situation; for example, 'It must be really difficult for you ... thank you for letting me know'.
 - Use words and phrases that de-escalate, such as:
 - I wonder if...
 - let's try...
 - it seems like...
 - maybe we can...
 - Tell the child what you want them to do rather than what you do not want them to do; for example, 'I want you to sit down' rather than 'stop arguing with me'.
 - Give the child time following any direction and avoid backing them into a corner, either verbally or physically.
- **Focus on safety**
 - Remove children and others from the area, remove any objects that can be unsafe if thrown.
- **Model emotional regulation**

- Do not appear angry or raise your voice. The child will feed off of your anger because he or she is looking for an emotional response from you. Appearing angry is like you giving the child permission to get angrier.
- **Be prepared that they will keep trying to engage you**
 - You may need to remove yourself from the child to get rid of the “audience”.
- **Don’t bargain or bribe a child during an outburst**
 - Children cannot use logic or reasoning skills during an outburst.
- **Communicate one thought or idea at a time**
 - Children are not using rational thinking skills during an outburst, and you do not want to overwhelm the child.
- **Don’t discipline**
 - By trying to discuss the behavior or give consequences, you will only escalate the child’s outburst.
- **Try relaxation techniques**
 - Encourage the child to count to 10 before speaking or take deep breaths using the 4 – 7 – 8 technique mentioned earlier.
- **STATE** Your responses are **YOUR** responses:
 - Children are not responsible for adult’s responses.
 - It is our job as adults to maintain control of our emotions and responses when working with any child.
 - If we know our “buttons” are easily pushed, or we tend to take things personally, the task of dealing with conflict will be difficult. We must be self-aware and make adjustments as needed.

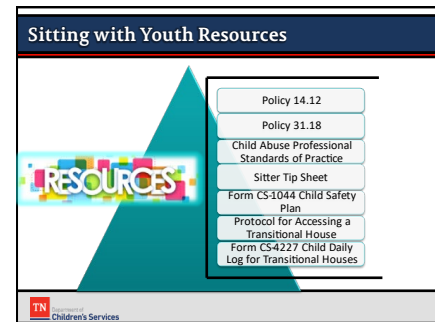


Lesson 3.3: Sitting with Youth

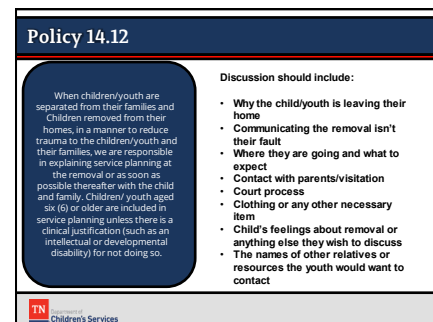
Lesson Time: 20 minutes

Key Teaching Points / Instructions

- TRANSITION** Whether we have children/ youth on our caseload or we are assisting within the Region to help sit with youth we must be aware of our own responses and have awareness of how children and or youth may respond to our involvement. There are several Policies and Resources to be aware of in preparation for sitting with children/youth including those on the slide.



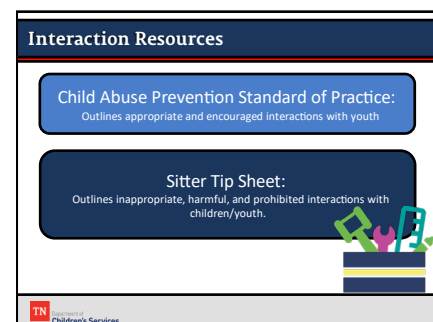
- SHARE** Policy 14.12 Removal: Safety and Permanency Considerations Section H Number 7 explains when children/youth are separated from their families and removed from their homes, in a manner to reduce trauma to the children/youth and their families, we are responsible in explaining service planning at the removal or as soon as possible thereafter with the child and family. Children/ youth age six (6) or older are included in service planning unless there is a clinical justification (such as an intellectual or developmental disability) for not doing so. The discussion should include, if appropriate:



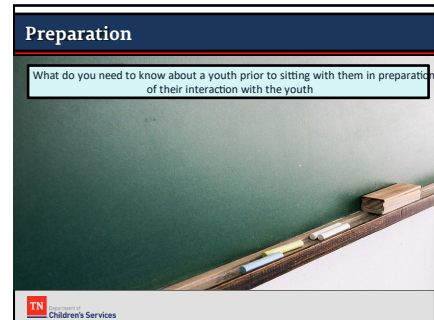
- Why the child/youth is leaving the home (This is done in language that is not accusatory or degrading of the parents)
 - Communicating to the child/youth that the removal is not their fault, but is due to the lack of safety in their current home environment

- Where the child/youth is going and what to expect in that setting
 - Under what conditions he/she may visit/contact the parent(s) or guardian(s)
 - The court process including court hearings and permanency planning
 - Ensuring that any additional clothing, toys, special items or special equipment for the medically fragile child/youth, or medications are retrieved from the home for the child/youth
 - The child/youth's feelings about the removal and any other issues he/she wishes to discuss
 - The names of other relatives the child/ youth would want to contact or who might be resources for the child/youth.
- **EMPHASIZE** the Department wants to minimize the impact on children/ youth during removal as much as possible. It will be important to understand that youth misbehavior is primarily a product of a still developing brain, poor impulse control, peer pressure, lack of appreciation of consequences, and lack of practice with effective problem-solving skills. We will need to consider the degree to which mental illness, trauma, substance abuse, and the disruption of a youth's family life can lead to outbursts and other negative behaviors.
-
- **EXPLAIN** there will be times when staff are asked to sit with youth awaiting placement and we want to maximize safety for everyone and prevent and reduce trauma responses. Relationships between youth and staff are considered the primary way in which the behavior of youth is managed.
 - **ASK** participants how they are able to build relationships with children/ youth they have just met. **ELICIT** ideas from the participants.

- **SHARE** Positive relationships are built on a foundation of trust. That trust is developed through active listening, honesty in all interactions, respectful communication, fair and thoughtful responses to the youth's actions, and concern for the youth's well-being as demonstrated by caring behavior, encouragement, protection of the youth, and the teaching of problem-solving skills.
- **STATE** Youth are highly capable of seeing through superficial or non-genuine interactions, and inconsistent responses on the part of staff are certain to lead to a lack of trust. Many youth have complicated family and educational histories that already lead them to mistrust adults. Many of them lack positive, caring relationships with adults and have little reason to behave well for those they do not trust. But, where there is a trusting, caring, mutual relationship with an adult, the youth want to succeed and control their behaviors to please that individual.
- **STATE** the Child Abuse Prevention Standard of Practice outlines appropriate and encouraged interactions with youth. However, it also outlines inappropriate, harmful, and prohibited interactions with children/youth. Ensure staff are aware of the code of conduct and what is expected of them during their interactions with children/ youth.
- **SHARE** Sitter Tip sheet and explain the purpose of the tip sheet is to provide a general overview of tips and techniques that will be helpful when sitting with youth awaiting placement. It is important to remember that every youth and situation is different. Staff will be responsible for preparing for the interaction and be knowledgeable of expectations specific for that youth and location.

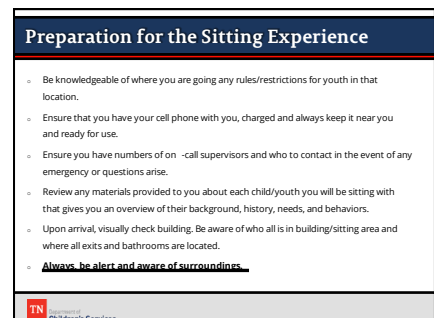


- **ASK** participants what they will need to know about a youth prior to sitting with them in preparation of their interaction with the youth. **UTILIZE** the slide to document responses or document on a prepared flip chart. **ENSURE** the following are discussed if not addressed:
 - Name
 - What the child prefers to be called/ pronouns
 - High Risk Behaviors
 - Safety Plan: Attach if so
 - Medication
 - Likes/ Dislikes
 - Specifics Rules/ Request

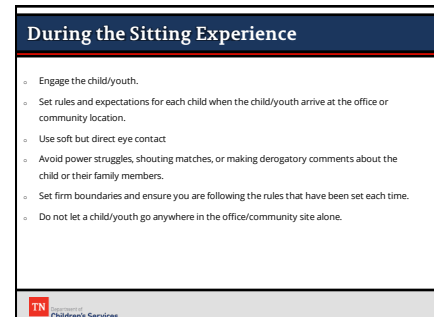


- **EMPHASIZE** Preparing for Sitting is important for the safety of the youth and staff and staff can be prepared by (if not already discussed):

- Be knowledgeable of where you are going any rules/restrictions for youth in that location.
- Ensure that you have your cell phone with you, charged and always keep it near you and ready for use.
- Ensure you have numbers of on-call supervisors and who to contact in the event of any emergency or questions arise.

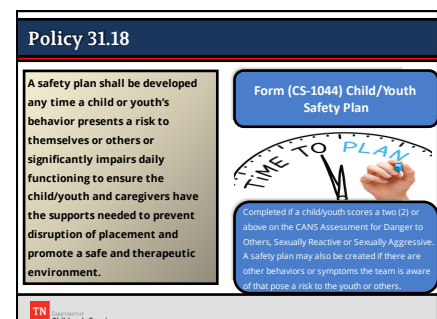


- Review any materials provided to you about each child/youth you will be sitting with that gives you an overview of their background, history, needs, and behaviors.
- Upon arrival, visually check building. Be aware of who all is in building/sitting area and where all exits and bathrooms are located.
- Always, be alert and aware of surroundings.
- **ADVISE** during the sitting experience it is important to engage the youth and build trust. **SHARE** the following expectations During the Sitting episode including:

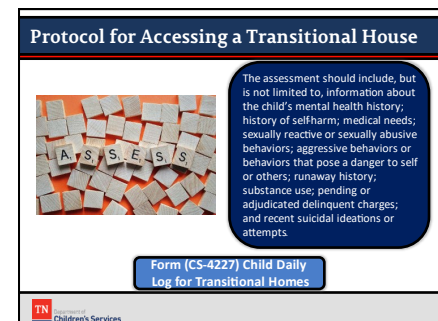


- Engage the child/youth. Ask about their likes and interests. Show curiosity in what they are sharing. Help them to see you as a person and not just an authority figure.
- Set rules and expectations for each child when the child/youth arrive at the office or community location. Review the rules and expectations if you are relieving someone else. Use language that is clear, direct, easy to understand and considerate/respectful.
- Use soft but direct eye contact. Use a tone that is compassionate, kind, and calm. Even when the child becomes upset or their voice begins to rise, you demonstrate control by keeping a calm tone that is at a normal volume or range.
- Avoid power struggles, shouting matches, or making derogatory comments about the child or their family members. Avoid asking the child/youth about overly personal details such as reason the child came into custody or where their parents are. If they bring these things up, you want to listen without

- judgement or asking additional probing questions. You can make affirming statements such as “I appreciate you sharing that with me” or “it sounds like you are dealing with a lot right now, I am here to listen.”
- Set firm boundaries and ensure you are following the rules that have been set each time. Consistency is key. However, do not expect perfect behavior. You want to be tolerant of differences in music, language, self-expression.
 - Do not let a child/youth go anywhere in the office/community site alone.
 - Always follow them whether it is to get a snack or go to the bathroom.
 - Always let them lead so they are not walking behind you. Instruct them to go in front of you if needed.
 - If it is a bathroom with multiple stalls, go inside the bathroom with them and wait outside the stall.
 - If it is the opposite sex **or** a single bathroom, wait outside the closed door.
 - If it is a younger child, you may need to assist them. Explain to them what you are doing and ask permission to assist so they feel comfortable with assistance. Leave the bathroom door open if possible when you are in this situation by yourself.
 - **SHARE** Policy 31.18 Safety Planning for High Risk Behaviors in Children and Youth in DCS Custody states a safety plan shall be developed any time a child or youth’s behavior presents a risk to themselves or others or significantly impairs daily functioning to ensure the child/youth and caregivers have the supports needed to prevent disruption of placement and promote a safe and therapeutic environment.



- **EXPLAIN** a Child/Youth Safety Plan (CS-1044) is completed if a child/youth scores a two (2) or above on the CANS Assessment for Danger to Others, Sexually Reactive or Sexually Aggressive. A safety plan may also be created if there are other behaviors or symptoms the team is aware of that pose a risk to the youth or others.
- **EMPHASIZE** the importance of being aware if there is a current safety plan for the youth they are sitting with or if there is a need for one to be created due to the behavior of the youth.
- **LASTLY**, share the Protocol for Accessing a Transitional House and the CS-4227 Child Daily Log for Transitional Houses are important to understanding the responsibilities of case managers waiting with the children/youth while placement is located. **REITERATE** for staff to check in with their supervisor to learn specifics for their assigned region.



- Transitional Houses are community-based locations where a custodial child awaiting placement in a foster home or facility may, for a short period of time, wait in a home-like setting, while still under the direct supervision of Department staff.
- An assessment of each child's needs will be considered, to determine if a space can be safely shared with others, and the experience level, gender, and number of DCS Workers who will be providing supervision. The assessment should include, but is not limited to, information about the child's mental health history; history of self-harm; medical needs; sexually reactive or sexually abusive behaviors; aggressive behaviors or behaviors that pose a

danger to self or others; runaway history; substance use; pending or adjudicated delinquent charges; and recent suicidal ideations or attempts.

- **STATE** Case Managers will need to read the protocol and pay particular attention to sections discussing the Child Daily Log, Technology, and Supervision (**sections 5, 7, and 8 included below for Trainer Note only and does not require discussion**):

- 5. A child daily log form, CS-4227, Child Daily Log for Transitional Houses, will accompany each child taken to a transitional house. Any safety plan that was created will also accompany the Child Daily Log for Transitional Houses. The DCS Worker transporting the child to the Transitional House ensures that the log is completed and is provided to any subsequent DCS Worker that may be sitting with the child, along with a verbal update about the status of the child and any pertinent information (e.g., when the child last ate; any medication distributed; any information learned in the last shift, etc.). At the beginning of each DCS Worker's shift at a Transitional House, the DCS Worker will also assess the safety of the location, including checking windows and doors to ensure the structure is secure; removing any sharp objects or other hazards; and securing items that could be damaged.
- 7. Technology access for the child should be limited and only allowed when the DCS Worker can directly supervise the screen of the device. Children should not be allowed to access cell phones while in the Transitional House unless it is for the purpose of conducting a supervised phone call visitation with the parent(s). The child and family team can assess the appropriateness of a child's access to a cell phone once the child is permanently placed.
- 8. Supervision

- While a child is at a Transitional House, DCS maintains the **responsibility of providing continuous supervision of the child**. The DCS Worker or DCS contracted provider (e.g., a sitter service) will ensure twenty-four (24) hour a day supervision whenever a child is present at a Transitional House. While Transitional Houses may have approved volunteers at the location to assist DCS Workers, supervision still remains DCS' responsibility.
- Children will be directly supervised in a manner that allows the DCS Worker to see and hear the child at all times.
- While the DCS Worker may be able to complete some other work while supervising a child, the DCS Worker must still be able to view and hear the child. The DCS Worker shall not discuss confidential information in front of a child or any volunteers at the Transitional House. Any phone calls taken while supervising children should not discuss confidential information and should be as brief as possible to ensure appropriate supervision of the child. The DCS Worker will not conduct CFTMs while supervising children unless it is a CFTM for the child being supervised.
- Two DCS Workers will be present and providing supervision in the Transitional House when children are present. However, if the individualized circumstances of the child warrant reduced supervision, a waiver of this requirement may be granted by the Regional Administrator/CPS Director/JJ Director to allow only one DCS Worker to be present and providing supervision. A waiver shall not be used because of limited staff availability, but only if the child can be safely supervised by one DCS Worker. When making this determination, the Regional Administrator may also consider the availability of contracted sitters, approved volunteers, etc. to provide support to the DCS Worker. Under no

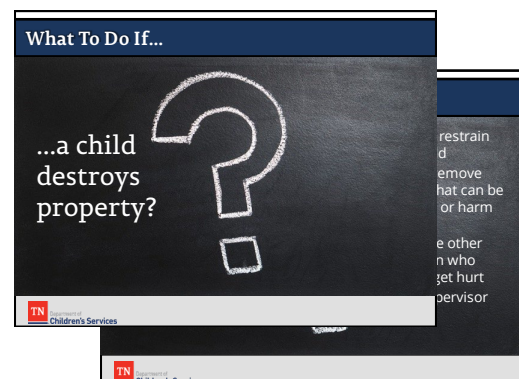
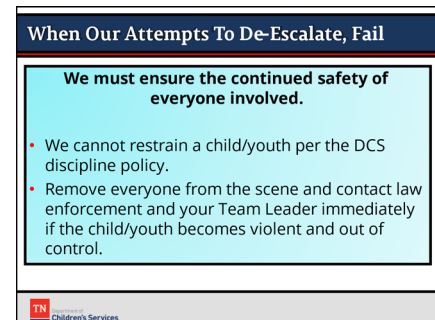
- circumstances shall the ratio of children to DCS staff exceed 3:1. Additional DCS Workers may also need to be present based upon the needs of the child.
- DCS workers should alternate in shifts to provide supervision and care of children in a Transitional House. A DCS worker's shift of direct supervision of children in a Transitional House should not exceed six (6) consecutive hours and/or twelve (12) total hours within a twenty-four (24) hour period. DCS Workers providing supervision of children should be allotted a thirty (30) minute break if working a shift for six (6) consecutive hours which should be alternated between co-supervisors.
 - The on-call DCS supervisor, or other designated DCS supervisor, will check in with the DCS Workers providing supervision of children in a Transitional House at least once per hour by phone call or in person, if they are in the same building. Text messaging may be used to relay information outside of the check in, but the hourly check in should hear the voices of the DCS Workers to ensure safety.
 - Children should be provided the ability to use the restroom and shower with privacy. Children must be accompanied to the entry of the restroom and the DCS worker should remain within visual distance of the entry/exit points of the restroom while it is in use. Children may not be accompanied by other children inside the restroom/showing area.

Lesson 3.4: Behavior Support and What to do

Lesson Time: 15 minutes

Key Teaching Points / Instructions

- **EXPLAIN** There may be times when our attempts to de-escalate fails. There will be times when we have used all of the strategies, we are aware of, and the child/youth is unable to calm down and regulate their emotions. When this happens, we must ensure the continued safety of everyone involved.
 - We cannot restrain a child/youth per the DCS policy (Policy 19.11 and 19.12).
 - Remove everyone from the scene and contact law enforcement and your Team Leader immediately if the child becomes violent and out of control.
- **REFER** participants to Behavior Support Techniques resource for ideas that can be used to assist in de-escalating behavior. **TRAINER NOTE:** participants received this resource prior to class, and it does not need to be debriefed unless there is a specific question by participants.
- **TRANSITION** into a group discussion on “What to do if” scenarios occur. **ELICIT** ideas from the group on what to do during these situations and process their thoughts. **ALLOW** annotation on the slides. **SHARE** ideas from the slides with the group.
 - A child destroys property?
 - Do not restrain the child
 - Try to remove items that can be broken or harm child



- Remove other children who might get hurt
- Call Supervisor
- A child is hurting another child?
 - Do not restrain the aggressive child
 - Firmly tell the child to stop
 - Remove other children who might get hurt
 - Call 911 if warranted
 - Call Supervisor
- A child begins to harm himself/ herself?
 - Use active listening skills and remain supportive
 - Try to remove items that can be used to harm themselves
 - Call 911 if warranted
 - Call Supervisor
- A child begins to harm you?
 - Firmly tell the child to stop
 - Step back or leave the room
 - Protect yourself but do not retaliate
 - Use active listening skills
 - Call 911
 - Call Supervisor

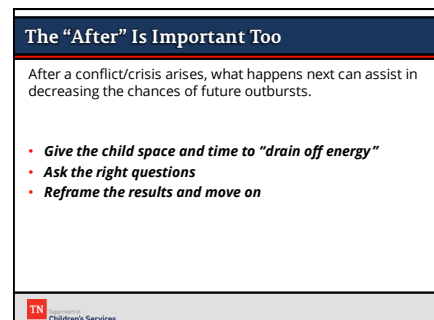
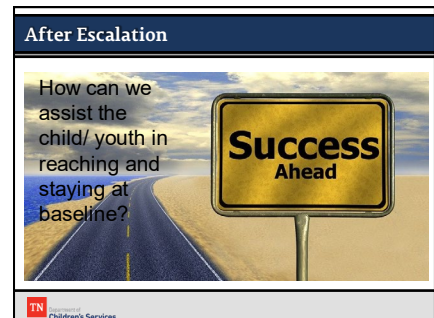
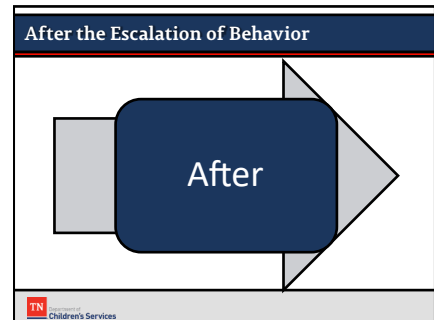


Lesson 3.5: After Escalation of Behavior

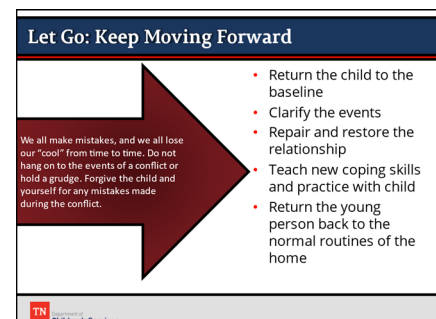
Lesson Time: 10 minutes

Key Teaching Points / Instructions

- **ASK** participants after an escalation of behavior occurs how can we assist the child/ youth in reaching and staying at baseline.
- **EXPLAIN** The “After” is also important following an escalation of behavior. After a conflict/crisis arises, what happens next can assist in decreasing the chances of future outbursts.
 - **Give the child space and time to “drain off energy”**
 - Strong emotions have the ability to shut down the language center of the brain, making reasonable discussions of the “how” and “why” of a target behavior impossible. Give children time to calm down before asking them to describe what happened or explain why they were so upset. Sit close by, relaxing the child by your deep breathing, and maintaining a neutral facial expression.
 - **Ask the right questions**
 - Encourage the child to describe the incident from their point of view by asking open ended questions in a nonjudgmental manner: “How did it happen?” “Can you say a little more about...?” “I missed that last point. Would you mind repeating it?”



- The goal is to establish a timeline for what happened from the child's point of view. Gently correct any misunderstandings and identify what s/he hoped the conflict would achieve. Direct the child away from any self-defeating behaviors.
- **Reframe the results and move on**
 - Acknowledge how the child feels as a result of the conflict. Help them recall self-soothing strategies that they can use to feel better about what happened. If mistakes were made, support their efforts to repair any injury they may have caused. If they were able to manage the conflict successfully, point out the decisions they made that allowed this to happen. Regardless of the outcome, make a plan for how they will handle similar situations in the future.
 - Ask them how they could have dealt with the stress/anger differently. This teaches coping skills.
- **EXPLAIN** we must keep things moving. We all make mistakes, and we all "lose our cool" from time to time. Do not hang onto the events of a conflict or hold a grudge. Forgive the child/youth or yourself for any mistakes made during the conflict.
 - Return the child to the baseline
 - Clarify the events
 - Repair and restore the relationship
 - Teach new coping skills and practice with child
 - Return the young person back to the normal routines of the home
- **SHARE** Safety is **paramount**, and we want staff to respond in a way that diffuses the situation to ensure safety for everyone.



- **REMIND** Pulling in the Child and Family Team to help plan and refer for services for the child/ youth in crisis will be needed.

Unit 4: Wrap Up

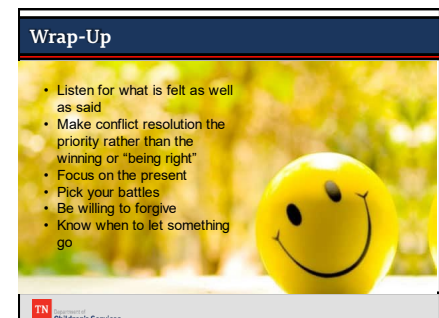
Unit Time: 10 minutes

Lesson 4.1: Wrap Up

Lesson Time: 10 minutes

Key Teaching Points / Instructions

- **TRANSITION** by **ASKING** participants to share at least one take-away from this course.
- **LASTLY, STATE** You can ensure the process of managing and resolving conflict as positive as possible by sticking to the following basic guidelines (discuss briefly):
 - **Listen for what is felt as well as said.** When you really listen, you connect more deeply to your own needs and emotions, and to those of other people. Listening also strengthens, informs, and makes it easier for others to hear you when it's your turn to speak.
 - **Make conflict resolution the priority rather than winning or “being right.”** Maintaining and strengthening the relationship, rather than “winning” the argument, should always be your first priority. Be respectful of the other person and their viewpoint.
 - **Focus on the present.** If you're holding on to grudges based on past conflicts, your ability to see the reality of the current situation will be impaired. Rather



than looking to the past and assigning blame, focus on what you can do in the here-and-now to solve the problem.

- **Pick your battles.** Conflicts can be draining, so it's important to consider whether the issue is really worth your time and energy.
- **Be willing to forgive.** Resolving conflict is impossible if you are unwilling or unable to forgive others. Resolution lies in releasing the urge to punish, which can serve only to deplete and drain your life.
- **Know when to let something go.** If you cannot come to an agreement, agree to disagree. It takes two people to keep an argument going. If a conflict is going nowhere, you can choose to disengage and move on.
- **ASK** participants if they have any questions about conflict resolution or de-escalation of behaviors.
- **REMIND** them situations often start with them. Your **ENCOUNTER** with the child/youth can either engage or enrage. **ENSURE** you are modeling the behavior you want the child to emulate.
- **THANK** participants for their time and their commitment to gain knowledge and understanding around conflict management.



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