

- When possible, decide what you want to say to a parent and how you will say it before meeting
- Use words or phrases that will diffuse the parent
- “Deal With Yourself”
- Stay focused
- Maintain your composure
- Do not yell or argue
- Remain professional
- Look the parent in the eye and use a calm voice
- Do not be afraid of confrontation
- Be honest and acknowledge their concern
- Be as understanding as possible
- Thank the parent upfront for bringing the concern to your attention and investigate as soon as possible if necessary
- Be willing to admit when the parent has a valid concern and apologize for what occurred no matter how small
- Follow up with the parent within a couple of weeks to ensure their concerns have been addressed
- Understand the balance of listening to concerns and supporting your staff
- Stand firm and be willing to enforce all policies with all families
- Document all verbal exchanges and save emails
- Know when enough is enough and do not accept abuse
- Remember, “It’s fine to disagree, but it is not fine to be disagreeable”
- Be in charge and lead your center with confidence!

Consider using the following phrases to help diffuse a difficult parent:

Use this:	Instead of this:
Here’s what we can do...	The policy states...
We may be able to consider...	I cannot...
Let me find out for you...	I don’t know...
...And...	...But...
I can understand why you...	You should have...
Sounds like you...	Why didn’t you...
The best option for us may be...	The only thing you can do...
I think we are at an impasse...	You need to understand this...