

Tips and Tricks for Difficult Conversations

General

1. Really Actively Listen
2. **Focus on FACTS** And be a person
3. Focus on **SOLUTION**
4. Stay composed - breathe
5. Provide a safe and confidential space
6. Don't be on the defensive or on the offensive
7. Set a time limit for the conversation
8. Come from a place of **SUPPORT**
9. Frame conversations around what is best for **YOUTH**

With Staff

1. Really listen and ask for their side, don't assume the worst
2. **COACH** to find resolution
 - a. Professional development
 - b. Knowledge of program resources
3. Make sure they are set up for success
 - a. Is what you're asking possible or realistic
4. Make sure the tone is serious, but don't come from a place of anger
5. Be flexible but also hold your ground, what is your bottom line
6. Find solutions **TOGETHER**
7. Know when it's really not working

With Parents

1. Actively **LISTEN** and try to understand their perspective
 - a. If you are a parent, try to use that
 - b. Empathy
2. Create sense of teamwork
 - a. You and the parent are a team, trying to help the student
3. Come from a place of knowing the child and appreciating their **STRENGTHS**
4. Use professional and skill-based language
5. Reiterate program structure
6. Bring in daytime staff support and agency support if needed
 - a. Know when to do this
7. Make sure you are supported emotionally as well
8. Make sure there is a paper trail as a back-up
 - a. Narratives

- b. Emails
 - c. Reports
- 9. Make sure to schedule follow-up meetings