

The Importance of Staying Calm

- Anxious/angry parents model anxiousness and inappropriate anger for the child
- Anxious parents are less likely to follow through on consequences
- Angry parent/child interactions reinforce acting out behavior by the child (The Coercive Parent/Child Cycle)
- Angry/anxious parents are easily distracted when trying to discipline

How to Stay Calm During Discipline

- Rehearse what you intend to say ahead of time.
- Take a deep breath before your encounter.
- Keep your voice low and measured when talking.
- Take your time in responding to your child's comments.

- Stay focused on the behavior goal (e.g., Homework first, Xbox later).
- Anticipate the child's reaction to your behavior (e.g., He's going to blow up when he can't find his Xbox).
- Talk yourself through it ("I can get through this. If I stay calm she'll calm down.")
- Call in another adult to help
- Have an Exit Strategy.

Tools that Decrease Fear

- Understanding the role of uncertainty: Just because it might happen doesn't mean it will happen.
- Identifying your "What if" thoughts
- Realistically appraising risk
- Decatastrophizing