



# Tip Sheet



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## How to Weather the Storm at the Peak

(Part of the “Teach Before The Peak Mini-Series”)

We all have experienced horrible moments of strong emotions we couldn't control. We have all experienced moments we regret and wished never happened...times when our stress built up...and we finally...blew up. During these times, we may say or do things we wish we could take back or now find ourselves needing to repair a relationship or situation.

Adults with fully functioning frontal cortexes will many times, struggle with reactions to stress and create unfortunate moments of not being able to handle that stress. Not surprisingly, children, who do not have fully functioning frontal cortexes, also struggle.

Children need us to help guide them out of feeling stuck and feeling out of control. Children need us to understand that they do not want to be in that out-of-control place.

This tip sheet is designed to help you, as a child's guide, understand what to do when a child is at the peak of their stress and escalation. This is when a child may be doing things like hitting, kicking, screaming, biting, or lashing out physically and/or verbally. On a scale of 1-5, it is when a child is at a five or has gone over the edge of acceptable or seemingly manageable behaviors.



This is a neurological state, and is our body's natural response to fear and/or threat. Cognitive reasoning is not available at this point. Thus, all of your words and actions need to be directed toward the child's feelings of threat vs negotiation or reasoning. NO teaching can happen at this peak.



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To learn more about what to do at the **PEAK** (i.e., when you encounter a child in Fight, Flight, or Freeze/Level 5), [watch this training video](#). It walks you through the following steps for more effective and efficient teaching (and learning):

1. Find your CALM, CONFIDENCE, and CURIOSITY
2. Observe (e.g., safety & body language)
3. Change what you can (e.g., move people or objects away)
4. Go silent
5. Start experimenting with mini-bids
6. Give the child an “out” vs an ultimatum
7. Allow processing time - “I’ll wait until you are ready”
8. Only go verbal again once child is re-regulating and responding to mini-bids