



Defuse with Limits

Review Page

When to set limits with your co-parent:

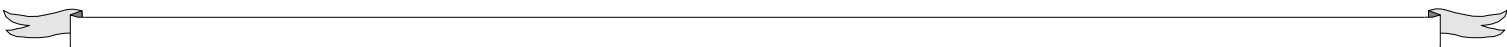
- To protect yourself from an uncomfortable or unsafe situation
- To end a discussion that is deteriorating or continually off the topic
- To protect your child from experiencing parental conflict or tension

How to set limits:

- Use an "I" statement to request a change in volume, behavior, etc.
- Ask to continue the conversation later and offer a date and time
- Tell the co-parent in clear and specific language what behaviors you will not tolerate. Then stand behind your words and remove yourself from the situation if the behaviors of the co-parent do not change.
- Use the above behaviors to set limits on the phone. When the co-parent does not respond to the limits, do the next five steps immediately.

1. Announce that you are getting off the phone
2. Offer a time to "try again"
3. Do **not** wait for agreement
4. Gently hang up the phone
5. Call them back when you agreed to

As with any limits, they will mean absolutely nothing if you do not follow through.





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Directions: Rewrite each of the comments to reflect limit-setting behaviors and statements.

1. "I hate when you start yelling at me when I am dropping off our daughter. Can't you see how upset you are making her? Please don't do this; don't be difficult. Please, please... Just stop yelling at me!"

2. "You called to talk to Jeffrey, so why are you always asking to talk to me? I've told you before that I don't want to talk with you! Please don't put him in the middle. No, I don't want to discuss that either. Why are you pushing this?"

3. " He is coming home with me; it's supposed to be my day anyhow! What do you mean he can't come with me? How dare you! He is coming home with me right now, so get out of our way! Don't try to stop me!" (You grab your child from the other parent. Your child looks anxious and confused. Your child begins to cry).

