THE METHOD

The 3-Beat Reset

Three short beats you can run in about a minute.



1 · STEADY 0 to 10 seconds

Calm your own body first.

Feet flat on the floor. Breathe out slowly, longer than you breathe in. Drop your shoulders. Soften your face. You are not trying to fix anything yet. You are only getting your own engine to slow down, so your child has something calm to borrow.



2 · SAY 10 to 30 seconds

One short line that names the feeling and holds the plan.

Get low, near your child’s eye level. Use one or two short sentences. First name what they feel, then say what is happening next. Keep your voice quiet and slow. Then stop talking.

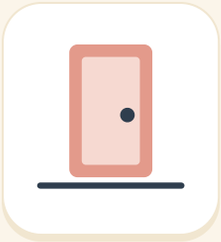


3 · STEER 40 seconds to 1 minute

Offer one small step with two choices.

After a slow ten-second pause, offer a tiny next step with two choices you are happy with. Choices give a small child a little control inside a plan that is not changing. Then wait. Do not add more words.

Why the order matters. Steady comes first because a calm adult is the most useful tool in the room. Say comes second because a child in a big feeling needs to feel understood before anything else. Steer comes last because a small step with a choice gives them somewhere to go.



SITUATION 1 OF 8

Won’t leave a fun place

The moment. The park was great. Shoes are on, the car is waiting, and your child drops to the ground and shouts that they are not going.

What is going on

Stopping something fun is hard for a small child. The switch from play to leave feels sudden, and they are still building the skill of bending with it. This is not a test of you. It is a skill that is still under construction.

The one-minute script

STEADY 0:00 to 0:10

Feet flat. Breathe out slowly. Drop your shoulders. Take one full slow breath before you say anything.

SAY 0:10 to 0:30

Ages 3-4 “You don’t want to go. Playing is fun. We are leaving now.”

Ages 5-7 “You’re not ready to go. It’s hard to stop something fun. We are leaving now, and I’m right here.”

0:30 to 0:40 Pause. Stop talking. Stay close. Ten slow breaths.

STEER 0:40 to 1:00

Ages 3-4 Hold out your hand and offer two ways to get to the car.

“Hop like a bunny” or “Hold my hand and walk”

Ages 5-7 Offer two ways to leave, then step toward the car and wait.

“Walk like a bear or hop like a bunny?”



SITUATION 1, CONTINUED

Won’t leave a fun place

If the crying continues

If the answer is more crying, do not add words. Say the same line once more, then wait ten slow seconds. Calm, repeated words are easier for an upset child to follow than new ones.

Skip this. Skip the countdown threats like ‘I’m leaving without you’ and skip a long explanation of why it is time. More talking gives the meltdown more to push against.

After the wave passes

Wait until your child is calm and breathing normally. Then use a short, warm line to reconnect.

Ages 3-4 “That was hard. You walked to the car. Good job.”

Ages 5-7 “That was a big feeling, and you got to the car. Next time, let’s pick a goodbye move before we leave.”

If it goes sideways

If your child goes limp or runs the other way, safety comes first. Pick them up if you need to, keep your voice low, and narrate: ‘I’m carrying you so you’re safe.’ Teaching can wait for later.

Practice in calm. At home, play a goodbye game. Set a timer for a favorite toy, wave when it rings, say ‘bye bye blocks,’ and cheer. Five calm minutes, no pressure.

Our version: write the words that sound like you.

SHARE IT

Caregiver Card

Print this page. Put it on the fridge. Give a copy to grandma, the sitter, the school.

THE 3-BEAT RESET

1 STEADY
Feet flat. Slow breath out. Soften your face.

2 SAY
One or two short sentences. Name the feeling. Say the plan.

3 STEER
Pause ten seconds. Offer two choices you are happy with.

Five phrases that help

- You're upset. I'm here.
- That was hard to stop.
- The answer is still no.
- I won't let anyone get hurt.
- You did a hard thing.

Please don't say

“Stop crying.” “You're fine.” “Big kids don't cry.” Threats or deals made in the heat of the moment.

If anyone is in danger, call 911.

Parent or guardian
Phone
Pediatrician
Another trusted adult
Allergies or health notes

Practical parenting ideas, not therapy or medical advice. If anyone is in danger, call 911.