

GETTING IT RIGHT FOR CHILDREN (2026)

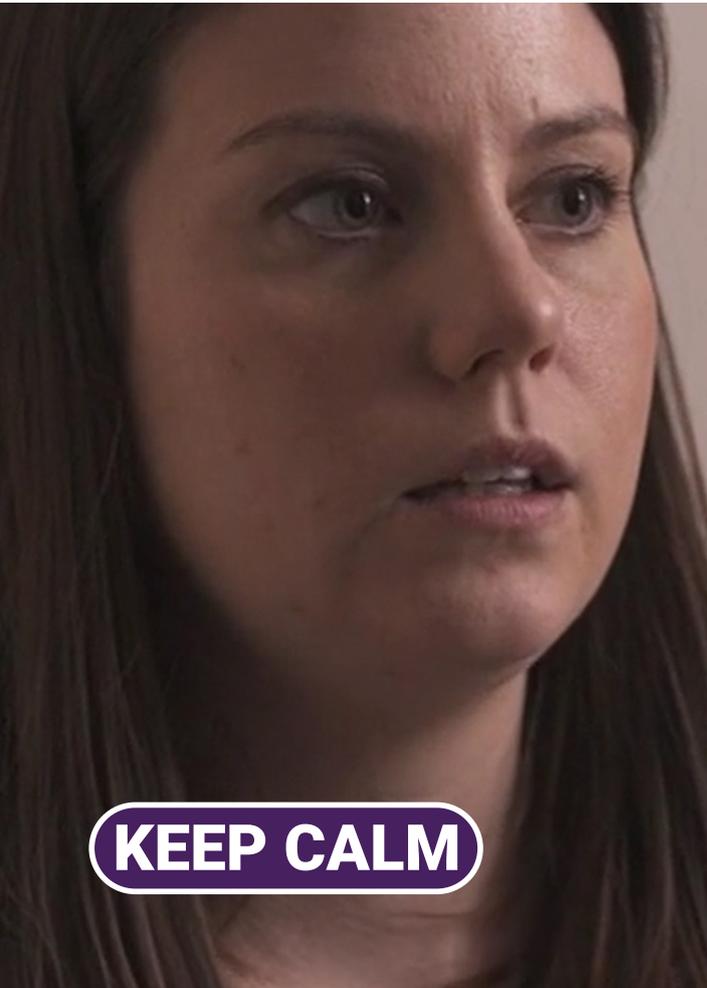


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KEEP CALM

If you need to have a difficult conversation with your ex, the first step is to **STAY CALM**.

Staying calm makes it easier to listen and to be listened to. This can help you to find solutions without the conversation getting out of hand.



- **Focus on finding a solution.**
- **Get clear on what you want to say.**
- **Be prepared to listen.**
- **Take a long, slow, deep breath.**
- **Relax your shoulders.**
- **Ready?**

You can try these steps before starting a difficult conversation. You can even use them to reset yourself if something comes up during the conversation that upsets you.

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SEE IT DIFFERENTLY

There will be times when you and your ex need to put your differences aside and look at things from your child's point of view. This can be hard, but it only takes one of you to **SEE IT DIFFERENTLY and start making a change.**



SEE IT DIFFERENTLY

Use an 'I' statement to talk about what you want:

"I'd really like you to see your gran."

Look at it from the other person's point of view:

"I'm sure your mummy does too."

Reframe the situation:

"She's probably trying to work out when is best."

Offer a solution:

"Do you want me to speak to her, see what we can sort out?"

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SPEAK FOR YOURSELF

When you need to ask for something, it can be helpful to **SPEAK FOR YOURSELF**. This means saying how you feel and being clear about what you need, rather than what you wish the other person would do.



SPEAK FOR YOURSELF

Use an 'I' statement to talk about how you feel.

"I feel upset when the kids get home, and they haven't done their homework..."

Explain why it's important.

"... because by then they're too tired to do a good job."

Be clear on what you need.

"I would be grateful if we could both plan homework time for when the kids are with us."

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NEGOTIATE

When you can see things differently and speak for yourself, it becomes easier to **NEGOTIATE**. It's important to remember that this isn't about getting what you want – it's about finding a compromise that works for your child.



Make a clear and polite request:

“I would like Josh to be there for all of the fireworks.”

Offer something positive that you can do:

“OK. How about I leave earlier and drop him straight to the party?”

Find a compromise that everyone can agree to:

“He’s not got his wellies... but I could bring them and meet you there.”

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WORK IT OUT

When you're able to speak for yourself and negotiate, you may find it becomes possible to **WORK IT OUT** and find solutions together. Once you've agreed on a solution, you'll need to try it a few times to see if it works.



WORK IT OUT

Make a suggestion:

"You could leave earlier."

Look at the pros and cons...

"I have to work late to clear the days with the kids..."

... and make a positive counteroffer:

"... but I could stay at my brother's the night before."

Choose an option and agree to it:

"OK. Perhaps you could send Ellie a text the night before."

Test your decision to see how well it works:

"Let's try it. The next three times?"