



Learning Community

## DE-ESCALATION TIP SHEET

### Overarching Principles of De-escalation

- **Maintain the safety of everyone** involved.
- **Reflect respect and dignity** towards the parties involved in conflict, youth and adults alike.
- **Consider the needs of the young person** (or adult) that you are dealing with.
- **Keep calm and maintain your role** as a staff person.

### Effective De-escalation Strategies

- **Assess the situation.** Determine whether anyone is in real danger.
- **Isolate the situation.** Separate young people whenever possible.
- **Use active/reflective listening** – give young person the opportunity to vent and/or explain; ask questions to clarify and identify appropriate action: “Talk to me.” “Why are you getting upset?”
- **Negotiate a win-win resolution.** “If you do \_\_\_\_\_, I’ll do \_\_\_\_\_.”
- **Speak calmly.**
- **Consider the way you are using your body to communicate**, i.e. avoid “getting in young person’s face” or using aggressive body language. Remember, non-verbal messages carry significantly more impact than verbal messages.
- **Recognize that a known trigger was activated.** “I know you hate when people...”
- **Redirect the behavior.**
- **Do not take things personally.**
- **Suggest positive outcomes.**
- **Ask for help.** Consider reaching out to staff youth trusts or is more comfortable with.
- **Work as a team** with other staff.
- **Breathe and relax.**