



GREEN LIGHT

When Calm, Plan Ahead

- Set aside a time when calm to develop a personal [Family Safety Plan](#). Think about what you can do when things get heated up between you and your child. This is especially helpful if blow-ups and meltdowns are common in your home. Write your plan down and review it often.
- Gather and write down your personal emergency numbers in a place or notebook that you can find easily.
- Enter emergency numbers into your cell phone for easy access (such as under EMERGENCY)
- Talk about your plan with your family. Use verbal cues with your children (“this is getting to be a yellow light situation!”) Let them know your job is to keep everyone safe and that is why you have a plan in place.

**Parenting
911**

When Things Get Tough



1-800-478-7307

1-866-478-7307

www.acrf.org

acrf@nwresource.org



YELLOW LIGHT

Urgency, Not Emergency

When things start to heat up, take action. Do everything you can to prevent escalating into a full blown Red Light Situation.

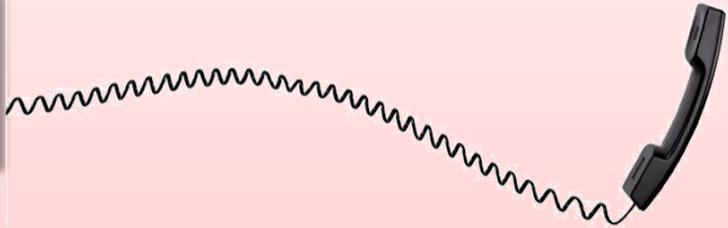
- **CALM YOURSELF FIRST!** You can't control the situation if you don't have control of yourself. Bring the energy in the room down (or at least don't add to it.)
- Use your words to de-escalate the situation. Control your level and tone. Consciously speak lower, slower, and softer.
- Talk to yourself in your head to keep in your thinking brain—don't flip your lid and join in the chaos. Remain the adult in the room.
- If emotions are too heated in the room, don't try to problem solve or discipline in the moment. Focus on bringing down the heat. Reassure others you hear them and you care about them but things have to calm down first. Come back and work it out when things are calmer.
- Remember your [Family Safety Plan](#)— What's your internal or external break plan? What were the phrases you developed to help you keep calm? What is the safety level in the room?

When things have calmed, reach out to the Alaska Center for Resource Families or other agencies to find therapeutic resources and assistance.



RED LIGHT

Emergency– Safety First!



Red Light Situations means someone is going to get hurt or is putting themselves or others in danger. Always remember, *Safety is Your First Priority.*

- Avoid putting your hands on a child or youth to overcome, grab, fight, or restrain him in an aggressive way. Physical interaction is going to escalate the situation. If you have to use force to prevent a child from hurting another child or himself, use just enough to stop the interaction then release as soon as you are able. “Hands on” usually escalates the situation and increases the chance of physical harm to the child or to you. Avoid if at all possible.
- Continue to use your de-escalation skills—talk slowly and reassuring, avoid raising your voice, give positives when a child shows compliance or self-control, give gentle simple commands and use the child’s name. Don’t lecture or threaten. EXAMPLES: *Put the lamp down, Sammy. Come sit on the couch. We can work this out. Take a deep breath with me.*
- If serious physical threats, impending harm, or weapons are involved, direct other out of the room (if needed into a locked room). Call 911 or law enforcement for assistance if necessary.
- Some hospital emergency rooms also have a psychiatric emergency service that you can contact by phone for guidance. (Did you put this number in your phone?)

IF A YOUTH RUNS AWAY....

Conflict between a caregiver and teen is the most common reason for running away. Running is often a spur of the moment—so emotion is involved. Teens on the street are extremely vulnerable so act as soon as you suspect the youth has run.

If a child runs from your home..

- If the child is in foster care, report the runaway to OCS as soon as possible.
- Contact your local legal enforcement and make a report.
- Call people in the child’s social circle— friends, classmates, teachers, family members— for help, details or possible information of where the child went. Ask them to pass on the message that you care about the youth and want to make sure he is safe.
- Contact your local runaway shelter if you have one or call 1-800-RUNAWAY for support.
- If your child contacts you, show your concern and desire for him or her to come home. STAY CALM--avoid lecture or yelling. Ask straight, short questions, “Where are you? Are you safe? Do you want me to come and take you back home?”