

# ▶ onekindword: the steps

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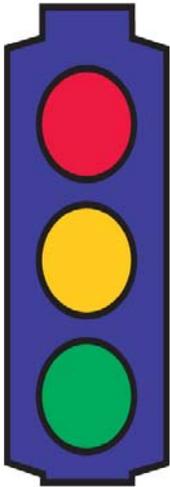
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Before approaching a situation, you may find it helpful to remember these steps:

## 1. STOP ... and Recognize

that this could be a situation in which you may be able to help.

Is the parent **Overwhelmed? Preoccupied? Or Angry?**

**If the situation you're observing makes you stop and take notice, then chances are that you could do something to help.**

## 2. TAKE A MOMENT ... and Get Ready

to step in. **Do whatever you need to remain calm.** You could to **take a deep breath, smile** or **think about what you might want to say or do.** **If you don't feel up to stepping-in, be sure to get someone else who can help ...** like another co-worker or your supervisor.

## 3. TRY "ONE KIND WORD" ... by Connecting with, Distracting or Assisting the parent or child.

You can make a difference just by saying OneKindWord, or by showing a kind gesture. Your actions may be all it takes to help a parent get through a difficult experience with their child and stop a situation from getting worse.

**Try some of these ideas when stepping in to help:**

**CONNECT** with the parent by saying something like: **"It's not easy, is it? Is there anything I can do to help?"** or **"I remember when my kids used to do that, too. Hang in there."**

**DISTRACT** attention away from the child. **Sometimes just your physical presence will help.** Move closer to the situation and keep your eye on things to make sure it doesn't escalate. **Talk to the parent or child** (about anything—the weather, parenting, etc.) You **could also use humor** if you think it would be appropriate and helpful.

**ASSIST** the parent by offering to help. **Sometimes an extra pair of hands is all that is needed.** You can offer to help clean a mess, if the child dropped, broke or knocked something down; or if a parent has more than one child with them, you can offer to stand with a child while the parent helps the other child calm down.

**And don't forget that if at any time you are concerned for your safety or for the child or parent's safety, you should STEP AWAY from the situation and alert a manager (if at a store or other public venue) or security.**

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making a difference when parenting gets tough