

## ***WAYS OF DE-ESCALATING CONFLICT OR POSSIBLE VIOLENCE***

1. Speak softly.
2. Speak slowly.
3. Be aware of your body language
  - Use appropriate eye contact
  - Relax, take a deep breath
  - Have your legs and arms uncrossed
  - Sit or stand at eye level, not up or down
4. Keep thinking, “We can find a win/win solution to this problem.
5. Ask for a break if you need it – take time out to cool down.
6. Use “I” messages or statements
7. Repeat and try to clarify...” “Could you explain that to me again?” “I think I heard you say...” “I’m not sure but It sounds like you...”
8. Be aware of your choice of words.
  - Words that escalate a conflict are: never, always, can’t, won’t, don’t, should, shouldn’t, unless, better not, etc.
  - Words that de-escalate a conflict are: maybe, what if, I feel, it seems like, I think, sometimes, perhaps, I wonder, etc.
9. Affirm the other person’s needs and point of view, *e.g.*...., “It sounds hard for you to...”; or “I appreciate your situation...”
10. Ask open-ended questions which cannot be answered by “Yes” or “No.” Instead of, “Did Ricky hit you?” you could say, “Can you tell me what happened?”
11. . Check what is happening with yourself.
  - Is your voice calm, relaxed, and in control?
  - Are you really listening?
  - What is your body language communicating?
  - Are you brainstorming possible solutions?
  - Are you thinking about the other person’s point of view?