

4 STEPS TO TAKE DURING A CRISIS AS A RAD PARENT

What to do, and how to prepare, in case your child with reactive attachment disorder (RAD) poses a danger to themselves or someone else

1

TRY TO REMAIN CALM

The calmer you are, the calmer your child with RAD will be.

- Prep tip: Research and practice self-regulation techniques to prepare for times of crisis, i.e. the 5 senses grounding exercise.

ASSESS THE SCENE

Take a moment to determine what is happening and who is in danger.

2

- Prep tip: Learn to recognize your child's triggers so you can recognize and prevent possible escalation.
- Additional prep tip: Ask someone you trust to be your safe person to help if needed. For example, you could call a neighbor and ask them to bring sugar over. The mere presence of an outside party can often defuse the situation.

3

DIRECT OTHER CHILDREN TO SAFETY

Tell other children to leave the room if there's potential for physical harm or mental distress.

- Prep tip: Have a safety drill appropriate for the age of your children, including a code word, a safe place to retreat, and a conversation about how and when to call first responders.

SEEK SAFETY FOR YOURSELF AND ASSISTANCE

If you're in danger, find shelter and call first responders.

4

- Prep tip: If it is necessary to call first responders, calmly and clearly tell them what you need. For example, do you need them to safely transport your child to the emergency room? Do you need them to press charges against your child? Do not use vague language. For example, explaining that your child is enraged is often more accurate than saying that your child is upset in moments of crisis.

WHAT TO DO KNOW ABOUT RAGES IN CHILDREN WITH RAD

- Rages are, unfortunately, common for children in the moderate to severe range for RAD. This does NOT mean that you should accept an unsafe home environment as normal for your family.
- Your child's primary caregiver (often the mother figure) is most likely your child's trigger. This is a sad but real symptom of RAD and something to understand as you consider safety for your family.
- RAD is a serious disorder, not a phase that your child will "outgrow" with love and time. RAD requires clinical expertise and family support as early as possible.
- This guide is for emergencies or to prepare for an emergency. It is not intended as a weekly lifestyle tool. If rages are a regular occurrence, RAD Advocates can help you to determine options to keep your family safe.

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