

Building Better Relationships with Parents

Teachers work with parents and teachers often speak of the benefits of “reframing” difficult behaviors in children. Acting on the basis of these “new definitions” is often effective in maintaining a calm and positive attitude. The same reframing techniques might be useful in rethinking your work with parents, especially those who are in crisis. The suggestions below are some possible explanations for a parent’s behavior or emotional state.

If you see (Perceived Behavior)	Try Thinking (Reframing Suggestion)	and Try (New Reaction)
frazzled	stressed	slow down
poor memory	sleep loss	take notes & offering copies
defensive	worried	invite questions
argumentative	battle scars	state your empathy
tearful	loves their child	state a positive trait
disorganized	overwhelmed	present one idea at a time
challenging	well-informed	acknowledge your limits
noncompliant	not ready yet	wait, suggest again
noncompliant	needs not met	revise the plan, ask for ideas
rejecting	sees a problem	discuss concerns
rejecting	info overload	present one idea at a time
unrealistic	grieving	invite sharing

