

## Hot Button Activity

We all have hot buttons, behaviors that drive us crazy. When we are not aware of our hot buttons or able to communicate them, they can become sources of conflict. Here are some common hot buttons that staff members who work together might experience:

- Inconsistency
- Different expectations for children
- Differences in organization and cleanliness expectations
- Supervision of children
- Different communication styles
- Different planning expectations
- Different ideas about environmental set-up
- Tardiness or absences of coworkers

Use the following directions to lead reflection and discussion with staff members about their hot buttons:

1. Print the following page for each staff member. Provide a box of colored pencils, crayons, or markers.
2. Ask each staff member to independently write down hot buttons (the things that make them angry or frustrated). These can be related to interactions with children or adults.
3. For each hot button, ask staff to identify the emotions that come up when they experience a hot button, their responses to hot buttons, and the impact of their reaction on their relationships.
4. Ask these questions to help the staff members reflect on and open up about their hot buttons:
  - a. Look over your list. Do you see any themes or similarities? Use a colored pencil to color code your responses by theme (i.e., color all of the items related to “cleanliness” green).
  - b. You don’t have to share specifics today, but what general topics seem to be your hot buttons?
  - c. What should your co-workers know about you and your hot buttons?
  - d. What is one easy fix that would solve one hot button issue for you?

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Write a “hot button” issue in each circle.

