

4. Help Without Taking Over

Use the ladder to decide what kind of help fits the situation. The goal is not to withhold help; it is to give the smallest useful amount that still leaves the child doing the learning.

They do not know how

TEACH

Show or explain the skill.

They know, but need practice

COACH

Stay nearby, prompt, or break the task down.

They can do it but want rescue

ASK

Use a question before taking over.

They can do it independently

STEP BACK

Let ownership become real.

Safety or adult-sized consequences

INTERVENE

Adults keep the responsibility that belongs to adults.

Where are we most tempted to take over?

Question to try first: "What part do you want help with?" or "What do you think the next step is?"