

## **Big Deal/Little Deal Script:**

**Importance:** The long-term importance of having these concepts is:

- (1) to help children distinguish what is important from what is not important – so they might be less anxious about little things;
  - (2) possibly to help them break a perseverative set;
  - (3) possibly to help them avoid negative behaviors when staff needs to move beyond something that is really unimportant;
  - (4) possibly to get the children engaged in something important at a time when they would prefer not to.
- Script: There may be a need to experiment for purposes of identifying the best words here. Also, start the “Big Deal” script at times when the children are not upset. It is important to avoid creating bad associations with this script from the start.

### **Script:**

1. Identify/label the issue (e.g., “This not a big deal – this is just a little deal – this is not important”)
2. State the reason (e.g., “This is just a little deal because we can .....”)
3. Offer a strategy (e.g., “Maybe we can just wipe this yogurt up with a napkin”)
4. General reassurance (e.g., “There we go. You see, that was not a big deal. That was just a little deal. And there’s always something that works, isn’t there?”)

Gradually reduce external support as it becomes possible to do so.