

- Child development

Ways to handle temper tantrums in children

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Parents are usually unprepared to handle their children's temper tantrums and unexpected meltdowns. It is important to remember that the child is not intentionally creating a scene. A tantrum is how children express their displeasure, anger and discomfort when unable to communicate verbally.

Tantrums are normal part of children's growth and development. Tantrums usually begin when the child is around 1-year-old and can continue well beyond age three. As the child begins to understand their emotions better and to put them in words, the tantrums begin to reduce.

Causes or triggers

As children reach their oneyear milestone, they learn to become more independent and as they grow older, exert independence in their choices. Once restrained, this can be frustrating to the child. This is when a tantrum is likely to begin.

Common reasons

Hungry, but aren't able to communicate, worried, upset or angry, tired, unable to understand their feelings, sick and in discomfort, dealing with going to school/daycare (separation anxiety), trying to get attention, have been denied an item or something has been taken away from them, unable to communicate, they want to be alone and get upset when you take them out in a crowd and in a stressful environment. It is vital to deal it in a manner that helps soothe the child and enables them to understand their feelings better. Stay calm and try not to show your own negative emotions. Completely avoid hitting or spanking your child.

Do not give in to your child's demands to end the tantrum, as it will make them think it is a means to get their way each.

Ways to handle

Create a routine, stick to schedules, avoid long outings and delayed meals and naps, distract your child with a toy, don't expect child to be perfect, and help your child express their emotions. Let your child understand that rules are present for a reason and there is no leeway.