

Children's Services

TIPS TO HANDLE ANGER AND TANTRUMS

Anger and tantrums in young children are extremely common, from the age of one children's social and emotional skills are only just starting to develop and they don't often have the words to express big emotions.

It is a way for them to express and manage their feelings, and try to understand or change what's going on around them.

Tips to handle tantrums:

1. Stay calm (or pretend to!) – If you need to speak keep your voice calm and level, act deliberately and slowly. Try not get angry as it'll make the situation harder for you and your child
2. Acknowledge your child's feelings – This can help prevent behavior getting more out of control and gives your child a chance to reset emotions. For example 'It's really upsetting when your ice cream falls out of your cone, isn't it?'
3. Wait it out - Stay close to your child so they know you're there but don't try reason or distract them, it's too late once a tantrum has started. If in a public place you might want to move your child to a quieter area. You may want to say something like 'I can see you are very angry. I'll wait for you to cool off.'
4. Don't 'give in' – By giving into that lolly you're teaching your child they can win by exhausting all your defenses. You want to reward and teach good behavior in children with positive discipline.

Here are a few helpful tips to help children avoid tantrums:

1. Reduce stress – Children are more likely to experience tantrums or anger outbursts if they are tired, hungry or overstimulated.
2. Give your child control – Try offering choices to give them some control over their lives. For example if you usually stick to a shopping list perhaps give the child the option to pick the type of juice at the shop.
3. Redirect thoughts – Divert your child's attention by guiding them to stop or leave what they are doing and find interest in something else to distract them.
4. Identify tantrum triggers – Try plan ahead or change the environment. For example, it may help to go shopping after your child has had a nap and snack.

References:

www.brighthorizons.com/family-resources/e-family-news/2009-taming-temper-tantrums

www.raisingchildren.net.au/articles/temper_tantrums.html

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

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