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# HANDLING TODDLER TANTRUMS



EFFECTIVE PARENTING



# Hello!

Don't we all wish we could wave a magic wand and make our kids' tantrums go away? But that's not such a good idea! That's because tantrums are practice for learning emotional regulation.

How we respond to tantrums will affect what our kids learn from them. As a developmental and behavioral pediatrician, I've been helping parents deal with toddler tantrums even before I became a mom.

But talking about it in my clinic is completely different from being in the middle of one! I have felt your worry, frustration, and helplessness. That's why I made this for you.

So that instead of feeling lost in tantrum territory, you have a guide to tell you where to go - and where not to.

*Victoria*



# 5 STEP PLAN

## FOR HANDLING TODDLER TANTRUMS

### 1 BREATHE

Stop. Take a step back.

I know you want to jump in and fix everything right away. But taking a few seconds to do this will make everything you do afterwards more effective.

### 2 PROTECT

Make sure your child is safe. Remove any objects that can cause injury. Or move your child to a safer space.

### 3 OBSERVE

What is happening?  
Look at your child and at the situation.

### 4 ASSESS

Check for the common tantrum triggers. These are not always obvious!

### 5 HELP

Help your child calm down. Listen to your child. Acknowledge feelings. Give a hug.

#### Notes

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#### TANTRUM TRIGGERS

##### *Is your child...*

- tired or sleepy?
- uncomfortable?
  - hungry or thirsty?
  - teething?
  - feeling hot or cold?
  - needing to pee/poop?
  - feeling unwell?
- overwhelmed and overstimulated?
- frustrated?
- afraid, hurt, anxious or upset?

# 5 THINGS TO AVOID

DON'T...

## × LECTURE AND EXPLAIN

Your child is NOT receptive to explanations at this time. The logical part of the brain shuts off during a tantrum.

## × PUNISH

Punishment doesn't teach your child anything about how to regulate emotions.

## × OVERSTIMULATE

Panicking, arguing, offering rapid fire suggestions, or too many people trying to "fix" the tantrum will make it worse.

Offering toys or gadgets might seem to stop the tantrum, but this does NOT build emotional skills.

## × ASSUME OR LABEL

Don't assume what motives your child has. Tantrums are a cry for help, NOT "naughty" or "manipulative" behavior, and NOT a "power struggle".

## × FEEL DISCOURAGED

Your child's tantrum does NOT make you a bad mom. It does NOT mean that you failed, or that your child failed.

### Notes

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# Next Steps

Many of what we call "tantrums" are more accurately called meltdowns. That's why we should never assume or label! To learn more about the difference, [read this article](#) from the Effective Mommy blog.

If you're worried about whether your child's tantrums are "normal", [check out this article](#).

Get a detailed guide, complete with examples, on each of the action steps and tantrum triggers. Beat the four tantrum hotspots, and prevent tantrums with five actions for success. Learn all these and more in my course, [Tame Your Toddler's Tantrums](#).

**DISCLAIMER:** This guide is for informational purposes only and DOES NOT CONSTITUTE MEDICAL ADVICE. It is NOT a substitute for consulting your doctor. Downloading this guide does NOT initiate a patient-doctor relationship with the author. You should always seek the advice of your physician with any questions or concerns you may have. You should never disregard or delay seeking medical advice because of what you see here. We have no liability in any way to you or any other entity for any injury, loss or damage, direct or indirect, arising from the use of the information contained herein. Read the full [disclaimer policy](#), [terms of use](#), and [copyright notice](#) here.

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the fun!*

