

Tips for Parents of Young Children



Parenting.
Give it time.

Tantrums

(suitable from 1-4 years)

Tantrums are very common in toddlers and young children. They happen when children are frustrated and stressed. They can also be triggered when children are tired and hungry or feel jealous, frightened or unhappy.

Most young children between the ages of one and four have tantrums. This is a normal part of growing up. They don't mean your child is naughty. Hang in there – tantrums happen less often after children turn four.



What to do when your child has a tantrum

- **Make sure they're safe.** You can't stop a tantrum but make sure your child is safe. Stay nearby and if needed move them somewhere safe, quiet and calm.
- **Stand by calmly.** Try not to show anger. Counting to ten and taking a few deep breaths might help. If you are at the shops, pick up your child and take your child out to the car or somewhere quiet until they calm down.
- **Ignore the tantrum.** If you give your child attention you might make the tantrum go on longer. Don't try to talk to them, reason with them or shout or smack.
- **When they've calmed down comfort them and praise them for calming down.**
- **Don't give in to any demands** they made before the tantrum started.
- **Think about when tantrums happen.** What triggers this behaviour? Try to avoid stressful activities or places where your child tends to have tantrums.

Ways to avoid tantrums

- **Is your child worried or anxious about something?** Give your child lots of reassurance with love and cuddles.
- **Plan ahead.** Take some snacks and small toys when you go out and about.
- **Give your child some simple choices.** Toddlers crave independence. They may get angry and tearful if they are never given any choice or control. You can offer simple choices like “Do you want to play with your blocks or draw a picture?” or “Would you like an apple or a banana?”
- **Help your child express their feelings.** Label your toddler’s feelings, for example when you see that they are happy, sad, cross, disappointed or frustrated. It will help them learn the word for that feeling or emotion so they are able to learn to express how they feel later.
- **Make time for active play every day.** Make time for active play so your child can “let off steam”. Go to the park, play in the garden or put some music on and dance.
- **Avoid harsh punishment, like smacking.** This will only make tantrums worse.
- **If you are concerned in any way speak to your Health Visitor.** Your Health Visitor is there to support you and can provide advice and assistance.

Don't worry about what other people think!

It can be stressful if your child has a tantrum in a public place. Don't worry if there are people watching. Stay calm and forget them – most people will be sympathetic as they've probably been through it too!



Look after yourself

Meeting up with other Mums and Dads may help remind you that you're not alone. Your **Family Information Service** will be able to tell you what's on in your area. You can contact them by telephone on 0300 123 7777. The **Family Point** website (familypoint.cymru) also has information on services and activities in your area.

For more helpful tips on tantrums and on positive parenting techniques, visit: gov.wales/giveittime