



System Offering Actions for Resilience In Early Childhood

TEMPER TANTRUMS



For a child who is becoming more independent between ages 1-3, one of the hardest things to learn is how to express themselves. While they may tantrum, here is some information to help give your child the support they need.

Why does my child tantrum?

Most of the time, children can't use words to describe their feelings and what they want. However, this is the age where they begin to feel more independent and develop their own wants, needs, and ideas. This conflict of knowing what they want and not being able to express themselves often results in tantrums. Tantrums can also be a response to you setting limits or saying no.

What is normal for children this age?

It's normal for a child to say "no!" "mine!" and "do it myself!" They also will test rules over and over to see how people (especially parents) will react. On top of imitating grown-ups and needing a set routine to their schedule, toddlers this age struggle with the idea of sharing.

How do you prevent a temper tantrum?

It's easier to prevent a tantrum than to try to stop one after it has already begun. Here are some tips for helping your children before their emotions become too overwhelming.

- Direct their attention to something else
- Give your child a choice in small matters
- Stick to a daily routine that balances fun with rest and food
- Anticipate when your child will be bored or disappointed
- Praise your child when they show self-control and expresses their feelings with words

Here's something you can try with your child:

Practice time-outs and time-ins: Time-outs are used if your child is starting to hit, kick or spit. It should mean for the child to be "quiet and still". Since this is hard for a toddler to accomplish, it is important that you teach them how to be quiet and still. Do this by picking them up as soon as the behavior starts (but looking away so they know it is not a hug), holding them gently until they are quiet and still, and ending time-out as soon as they are quiet and still. Time-outs are also about teaching your child "this is how I calm myself." Time-in, on the other hand, is when your child is the center of attention and you read books together, play together or snuggle. They can learn to ask for this by picking up a book or a toy.