



NEWBORN

How to Respond in a Way That Actually Helps

Tantrums can throw a wrench in your day and leave you feeling at a loss. This guide offers practical steps to help you respond effectively, supporting your child's emotional regulation during tough moments. Use this checklist to stay on track when your kid's meltdown hits.

A free guide from maternity.app

Tantrums can be overwhelming, and you're not alone when you're navigating this challenging part of parenting. Responding with understanding instead of frustration can truly make a difference.

Remember, your child isn't being manipulative.

During a tantrum, your child's brain isn't able to process logic. Recognizing this is key to shifting your approach.

Focus on emotional regulation.

- ☐ Co-regulate first: Take a deep breath. Your child mirrors your internal calm, not your anger.
- ☐ Name the feeling: Validate the emotion directly. Say, 'You are mad we have to leave,' instead of 'Stop crying.'
- ☐ Keep words minimalist: Use fewer words. A stressed brain cannot process complex logic or lectures.
- ☐ Hold boundaries firmly: Validating an emotion does not mean giving in. Say, 'I know you're sad, but it is time to brush teeth.'
- ☐ Redirect physical energy: If aggressive, offer a safe release: 'I won't let you hit, but you can stomp your feet.'

Understanding tantrums.

Tantrums are involuntary neurological survival responses, not calculated behavior. During a meltdown, the amygdala hijacks the prefrontal cortex, which hinders logical reasoning. Focus on providing a calm and predictable presence.

HELPFUL REMINDER

When a tantrum strikes, start by grounding yourself. Your calm can set the tone for your child's ability to settle.

When to seek help.

If tantrums last over 25 minutes, involve self-harm, or happen multiple times daily without the ability to calm down, consult a specialist.

Navigating tantrums is tough, but you're equipped to handle them. Keep this guide handy, and remember, you're doing amazing.