

TODDLERS

Understanding Toddler Behaviour

The toddler years may be a challenging time for parents. As toddlers mature and begin to explore the world they will experience a whole new range of emotions which may be difficult for them to manage. Your toddler may need your support to help manage some of these behaviours.

What to remember about Toddlers

- They are finding out how exciting the world is and how everything works
- They are inquisitive and curious
- They can't see that their actions will have an effect on others or themselves
- They are learning to regulate their emotions and feelings.
- They want to try and test everything
- Have rapid mood changes
- Have a short attention span
- They are striving for independence
- They will test their limits and capabilities

These points are a normal part of toddler development and may cause parent concern.

A common response from toddlers is "No!". This can give the impression that they don't want to cooperate.

Be reassured this is a normal part of learning about life e.g. negotiating, discipline, safety and rules.

Remember

How parents and carers respond to toddlers can influence how they progress through life.

What toddlers need from you:

- Love
- Security
- To be safe
- Boundaries
- Spend time with your toddler
- Play, have fun and be active together
- Lots of support and understanding to enable them to learn social skills



How to get the Best Out of Your Toddler

- Be a positive role model
- Celebrate their successes and achievements
- Get down to their eye level
- Look for the opportunities to let them know when they are doing the right thing
- Offer labelled praise – describe what they have done well eg: Bella, well done, you picked up all your toys when I asked
- Pick your battles – allow them to explore unless it is dangerous to themselves or others
- Divert and distract from potential harm or unwanted behaviour
- Give clear simple instructions
- Allow opportunities to problem solve. Be available to help if needed
- Engage with your Toddler by spending time reading and playing.
- Encourage your toddler to help pack away after play
- Allow toddlers a sense of independence, offering limited choices. e.g. Red shirt or blue shirt rather than entire contents of wardrobe
- If they refuse to cooperate, it may be best to remove them from the situation. If there is immediate danger with what they are doing, (pulling on an electrical cord), calmly remove them from the danger. Explain after the risk of danger has passed
- Help language development by encouraging toddlers to say words of things they are asking for. Remember this is prime time for learning language so talking and repeating words will help build their language

TODDLERS: Tantrums

Karitane respects each family has their own culture and parenting practices. This guide is an evidence based resource you may use in your parenting. Relationship building is essential and recognising what triggers the tantrum may allow you to step in before they occur.



What is a Tantrum

A tantrum is a toddler's way of expressing and coping with feelings they cannot control or understand. Here are some reasons that tantrums can occur:

- Jealousy
- Tiredness
- Frustration
- Family conflict
- Feeling insecure
- Trouble with expressing themselves

**Don't hit or smack toddlers,
instead teach them physical
aggression is not acceptable**

Reviewed April 2015 - FAM030 References available on request.

Strategies that may Help

- Use distraction to redirect their attention
- Limit use of the word 'no'. If you must say 'no' give them a simple reason why in a gentle, calm tone
- Kneel down to the Toddlers level to talk to them
- Avoid further explanations
- Stay with your toddler while the tantrum is happening may help them feel safe and secure
- If you feel you are becoming frustrated, take a deep breath, step away from the situation to calm yourself or ask for help
- Once the tantrum is over give your child a cuddle to reassure them. A tantrum can be frightening for a toddler
- Acknowledge, name and talk about their feelings (e.g. "I understand you're sad that you can't have mum's keys")

Outings with Toddlers

If you are going out with your toddler, for example shopping, plan ahead. To help make your outing as fun and productive as possible, here are some suggestions that may help:

- Ensure your toddler is not tired and it's not time for a sleep
- Ensure your toddler is not hungry and it's not time for a meal
- Give your toddler a healthy meal or snack before you go out
- Make some healthy snacks and a drink to take with you
- Take some activities along for your toddler
- Where possible let your toddler help with the tasks of your outing, for example by getting items from the shopping list from the shelf
- Try to have a routine where you finish with a small healthy treat or fun activity when they behave well. This gives them something to look forward to and rewards behaviours to be encouraged

If tantrums increase while you are out, take your toddler somewhere quiet until they have calmed down.

Need Help?

Call Karitane's Careline for support on:
Karitane Careline **1300 CARING (1300 227 464)**
Visit www.karitane.com.au

www.karitane.com.au

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For Parenting information:

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