



Tips and tricks for supporting your child with tantrums:

1. **Reduce your expectations** if your child is having a difficult day or not feeling well. If you give them instructions, give them time to respond.
2. **Use preferred items/activities** to help motivate their behaviour (e.g., "first put the cars away, then snack"). Especially when they need to stop a preferred activity (e.g., "when we leave the park, do you want goldfish crackers or a granola bar?"). But remember to use this before the behaviours have a chance to start!
3. **Offer choices** of what, where, how, and/or with whom? E.g., "Do you want to put your hat on first or your shoes?", "Do you want Aunty to read you a story or Grandma?"
4. **Make a plan.** Whether you are at home or out in the community, have a plan and stick to it (e.g., at the grocery store, tell your child they can get a treat on the way out, but they need to stay with you and help only get what is on your list. If they cry or scream, they will not get a treat).
5. **Timers** can be used to help indicate it's time to change activities or complete a task (e.g., when leaving the park, give a 10 minute warning, then a five minute warning, then show when the time is up).
6. **Use priming.** Explain your expectations before starting new activities (e.g. "The cars stay on the floor, they are not for throwing. If you throw them, they will be all done."). Be sure to provide praise for following the expectations or follow through with the stated consequence for not following the expectations.
7. **Model** appropriate behaviour when disappointed or angry. State your feelings, model and describe what you are doing to stay calm (e.g., "I am so upset they don't have my favourite chips. I want to cry. I am going to take a breath and think of what else I can get. Can you help me? What other treat should I get?")
8. **Provide praise** to your child for cooperation and coping with difficult situations. Remember they are learning and you are their best teacher!

References

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