

TODDLER TANTRUMS

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As seen in
haven
for families
Magazine



HOW CAN I SUPPORT MY CHILD TO GET THEIR EMOTIONS UNDER CONTROL? *The key to remember is that 'Behaviour is not who the person is. Behaviour is what a person does'.*

Tantrums are simply a form of behaviour – something a person is doing, but not who the person is. At the core of every person is an awesome, amazing loveable being – although sometimes their behaviour is not always equally amazing!

Amazing beings cannot change – behaviours can always be changed when taught how!

Tantrum behaviours are often seen as a person being 'bad' or 'naughty'. The truth is all behaviour is a form of communication. When a person is having a tantrum it is important to learn to understand the behaviour and never judge the behaviour. When a tantrum is pending or occurring first we could ask, "What is this child trying to say?"

The temper tantrum must not be seen as something we judge the child to be. The tantrum is simply that child's way of communicating that something is happening in their life that they are finding uncomfortable, difficult or challenging in some way. The child is not feeling equipped to manage or like they have the skills to respond appropriately to what life is presenting at that time.

When any person does not feel equipped to manage, their anxiety levels will increase. Anxiety levels increasing will always be the first sign that 'unwanted behaviours' are pending.

To effectively change the temper tantrums we must first come from a place of understanding and not simply judging the behaviour as wrong.

With three simple steps we can support our tempering child to grow up to be an independent and responsible person who feels equipped to manage all parts of life using 'thumbs up' wanted behaviours:

STEP ONE – BODY

Learn to observe the body and all the behaviours the body uses. The body will be the first form of communication to indicate when anxiety levels are increasing. As soon as the body leaves a calm, tension-free state it is experiencing anxiety, which if left unaddressed can lead to temper tantrums occurring.

STEP TWO – LIFE

As soon as the body has changed from using calm and wanted behaviours, we know it is that person's way of saying, "life has just become uncomfortable, difficult or challenging in some way". Step Two is about identifying the aspect of life the person is finding uncomfortable - the part of life the person does not feel completely equipped to manage and feels they are lacking skills for.

STEP THREE – SKILLS

This step is about teaching the person new

skills - new wanted behaviours that will enable them to feel more equipped to respond to life. Basically our role as carers is to teach children the skills to respond to all aspects of life – never assume this will be learnt automatically. Our key role is as a teacher!

Thus supporting our child to get their emotions under control is about us developing understanding:

- That behaviour is a form of communication.
- That unwanted behaviour is that person responding to a part of life they are currently finding difficult.

We must first connect with the child and truly meet them for who they are. This will allow us to observe the behaviour for what is really is (a form of communication) and not take it personally (which will cause us to react and not understand what is really going on).

Our role is to teach how to respond to life and not expect these skills will be automatically learnt.

When a person has the required skills to respond to 'life' their anxiety levels will be lowered and wanted behaviours will be a natural occurrence.

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understanding and changing behaviour

Behaviour Specialist Centre



FABIC Director: Tanya Curtis leads a team of psychologists who all employ the unique Fobic methodology based on supporting people to understand & change unwanted behaviour. For general enquiries email info@fobic.com.au or call 07 5530 5099

FABIC National Behavioural Centres: Level One Worongary Town Centre, Worongary, Gold Coast QLD. fobic.com.au

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