

Understanding and disciplining toddlers

1. Be present..... Correct with your fullest attention, even if you need to sacrifice your comfort.
2. Anticipate..... Learn to read you child's expressions. Change the situation (the child's activity or surrounding objects) at the first sign of impending trouble. Avoid disasters before they happen.
3. Act swiftly..... It's less painful if actions come when trouble is first noted; especially when the child knows he/she is wrong.
4. Be succinct..... See that your words have been acted upon immediately. Your child won't get in the habit of ignoring you; your anger and frustration thus get eliminated. With early involvement gruffness is generally unnecessary.
5. Follow through..... Make the "punishment fit the crime". A few choice words or the use of "time-out" technique are often more than enough.

REVIEWING PROBLEMS WITH A SPOUSE

We each came from backgrounds that differ in style and in values. Once we had children, issues came to the surface that were not previously important. These must be discussed or they will lead to martial strife and parental disharmony.

The purpose of these meetings is for you and your spouse to understand each other's point of view. Only when there is mutual understanding can workable solutions be achieved.

Remember: no one ever sees another's point of view during an argument!!!

DEALING WITH "PROBLEM" BEHAVIORS

1. Get a good idea of the behavior. Note what brings it on and how it resolves.
2. How would you like the situation that triggers the behavior to go instead? Clarify your thoughts. Discuss your insights and ideas with your spouse.
3. Hold a discussion with your child to review the problem. Include your spouse and have it when nothing else is on your mind.
 - a. Point out your love for the child and review the undesired behavior.
 - b. Ask the child if he/she recognizes the behavior in question.
 - c. Let your child know that he/she is quite capable, in your view, of stopping the behavior.
 - d. Ask if he/she can stop it. Ask if he/she is willing to stop it.
 - e. Once this meeting is over, be particularly attentive to the behavior. If you don't, the old ways will quickly return.



in association with

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Managing normal tantrums: 10 tips for parents

Author: North Carolina Assuring Better Child Development Project

- 1. Minimize the need to say, "No".**
Store breakable items: and if possible, dangerous furniture.
- 2. Use distraction.**
When frustration begins to mount, redirect the child to less frustrating or more acceptable activity.
- 3. Present choices within the limits of what is acceptable.**
"Do you want to wear your red pajamas or your blue ones?"
- 4. Pick your battles carefully.**
The more important the issue, Safety, for example, the more firmness and consistency are required.
- 5. When a preschool child throws a tantrum, stay within the child's sight and carry on normal activities without talking to him.**
Some preschoolers need to be held in order to regain control.
- 6. For an older child, establish the rule that he must go to his room until he calms down.**
When a tantrum occurs, tell him to leave, but do not lecture, threaten or argue. Model self-control.
- 7. Take into account that your own emotions may interfere with effective management of a tantrum.**
Never let a child hurt himself, or others, including you. A child who is in danger of hurting himself (thrashing around on a hard floor, for example) should be moved to a safer place.
- 8. Use words like "out of control" instead of "bad child" to describe tantrum-throwing behavior.**
Praise the child's ability to regain control after a tantrum. You might say, "You did a good job of getting yourself under control."
- 9. Once a tantrum is over, the child is entitled to start over with a clean slate.**
Comfort may be given, but any original demands the child had should not be fulfilled. Otherwise, tantrums will become a way of life.
- 10. "Catch your child being good."**
Try to establish an environment of positive reinforcement in the household, by commenting on and praising desirable behavior every few minutes as a general habit.

Also available at: <http://www.dbpeds.org/articles/detail.cfm?TextID=16>

A guide for parents on teaching their children the concept of "no"

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By: [Jane Anderson, MD](#)

Source: Contemporary Pediatrics

It's important that your child learn the concept of "no" for many reasons:

- To learn what behavior is acceptable and what is not acceptable
- To demonstrate that he/she is a different individual than you, ie, that they have different thoughts
- To learn how to stop a behavior when told to do so
- To learn how to problem solve and be creative (eg, "If I can't touch the hot stove, what can I do for fun?")

You can teach your 9-month-old the concept of "no" by using the five "Ds":

Determine the rules

This is actually one of the more difficult tasks for first-time parents, since everything your child does will be new, cute, and exciting. The first time your child touches the remote control, for instance, you will probably laugh and enjoy the new activity. However, you need to be the adult in your child's life, and be able to look into the future. Will you continue to enjoy this childish behavior if the child does it repeatedly over the next week? Will it still be funny and cute, or will it become quite annoying?

If the answer is that it will be annoying, you may decide that this activity should be discouraged by using the word "no." (Or you may decide to move the object, changing the infant's physical environment.)

Demeanor changes

Parents should change their demeanor if they are going to use the word "no." Remember: infants and young children pay close attention to your face and tone of voice, responding more to your demeanor than words spoken. Turn your face away from your infant and finish laughing before attempting to use the word "no." Your face should be very serious and your voice lowered. Moms, especially, need to lower their voices so that the infant will recognize that this conversation is different and meaningful.

Displace the infant

Once you have said "no" to a behavior, move your child away from the offending object.

Distraction

Now that your child is in a safe place, distract your infant with something else—a toy or a book. Your infant may choose to crawl back to the desired, forbidden item. Therefore, the next "D" becomes very important.

Diligence

(because "consistency" didn't start with a "D"!)

Children learn from consistency. Consistency allows children to predict consequences of their actions, adjust their behavior, and ultimately develop self-control. Being consistent is very difficult for parents, but you need to remember that your child will learn that you mean what you say when you are consistent in your actions.

Most parents who do use the word "no" have experienced another situation. The infant is heading toward a forbidden object, reaches out to touch it, but first looks back at the parent to see what might happen. The infant is clearly incorporating the concept of "no" and while in the process of learning, wants to make certain that the parents will indeed be consistent.

Helping children learn the concept of "no" will begin to help them understand the rules of their world and will help them begin to respect your leadership in your home, just as they will need to respect the leadership of teachers and employers later in life.

If this approach is not working either because your young child does not respond, or you find the recommendations hard to follow, please let your pediatrician know.