

Handling a Tantrum

We found this “Handling a Tantrum” schematic interesting and would like to share our views on this, as experts in family, parenting and discipline systems.

“Remain Calm” and “Don’t show anger” is excellent advice. We believe that anger is to child discipline what drinking is to driving – most will get away with it but when it fails, the results can be catastrophic.

The “Don’t talk” seems to contradict the four bubbles from “I can see how mad you are” onward. No matter what parenting style is used, communication should always be available as the basis of the behaviour management spectrum PIE (Preventions, Interventions & Enforcements) despite the fact that they cannot yet be appealed to by methods of reason alone.

Here’s where we respectfully have differing opinions. Dr. Baumrind (UC Berkeley) originally coining the basic “7 parenting styles”, which we further expanded in our research. The least desirable parenting style, for obvious reasons, is aggressive-abusive.

The second least desirable is the permissive-disengaged spectrum. The advice of “Let it run its course” and “Minimize Physical Interaction” are hallmarks of this inferior parenting strategy.

Children under the age of 8 reside entirely in the physical world, and this is why physical interaction is not just most effective, but necessary to affirm authority, security, nurturance & firm guidance - all things toddlers crave constantly.

The advice “Don’t spank” is poor advice and not scientifically sound. 40 years of clinical research (Baumrind et al, Larzelere OK State U, et al, Gunnoe, Calvin MI et al) show that moderate physical discipline is more effective for 2-6 year olds than any other enforcement, when P&I methods fail as they did in this example. Hoff et al (IGR) showed that physical discipline was particularly effective to modify anti-social behaviours in this age group. What does that look like? Two firm open-handed swats to the seat, followed by affirming the error being made, a hug/kiss (confirming affection), and then distracting on to something else. This works to reset the child much like Ctrl-Alt-Delete resets a computer.

The most desirable parenting method is Authoritative, being high in nurturance, demandingness and responsiveness. While all Authoritative parents spank, how they use it is important because this is a very nuanced science. Authoritative parenting uses it occasionally and moderately (like described above) as a back-up to other methods in a nurturing environment.

The problem with letting behaviours “Run their Course” is that it can entrench and encourage undesirable behaviours by signaling silent consent. The longer-term result is often emotionally and psychologically feeble outcomes; children raised ill-prepared for a

world intolerant of anti-social behaviour and where all have real consequences. These manifestations often don't appear until youth to early adulthood. That's why most cannot relate the poor outcomes to these early childrearing errors.

This is repeatedly proven by countries with long-standing bans against spanking or other discipline: it forces all parents into the positive-permissive-disengaged or aggressive-abusive spectrum. This promotes a myriad of harms consistently observed. As one example, youth growing up in the 3 earliest ban countries exhibit the highest per-capita drug-induced death rates and other dependencies. This attests to the failures of removing firmly guiding upbringing, which they have all been forced to be subjected to.

So, while this meme sounds nice, it is promoting permissive methods already proven to produce inferior developmental outcomes. Thank you for considering our viewpoint - Respectfully, the K43 Team.

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- DON'T TALK**
Your child is in no frame of mind to listen to logic or reason.
- REMAIN CALM**
Tantrums are a natural reaction to frustration and anger for little kids.
- DON'T GIVE IN!**
Don't let her do or get whatever caused the tantrum. Giving in only reinforces the behavior and makes it more likely it'll happen again.
- DON'T PUNISH**
That's like pouring gasoline on a fire.
- DON'T SHOW ANGER**
...or disgust. You will not be able to shame your child out of the tantrum.
- LET IT RUN IT'S COURSE**
They need to run out of steam on their own.
- "I can see how made you are."**
- "It sounds like you are frustrated."**
- "What you are feeling right now is anger."**
- NAME & VALIDATE YOUR CHILD'S EMOTIONS**
- Remember, your child is not the enemy. She needs to know you're there for her and will help her regain control. Be a role model for how to properly express anger and upsetting feelings.**
- MINIMIZE PHYSICAL INTERACTIONS**
 - stay nearby
 - create safety barriers
 - seclude yourselves
 - don't spank

Tantrum Tips from the book Stress-Free Discipline, via www.stressfreeparent.com