

Tantrums



Most children have tantrums, usually when they're frustrated and can't tell you how they are feeling.

Tantrums can be triggered by children being tired, hungry, uncomfortable, bored or over-stimulated. They also happen when children feel jealous, frightened or unhappy.

Preventing tantrums



Sometimes you can stop tantrums from getting started by:

- slowing things down
- giving limited choices – for example, apple or orange?
- letting your child know what's happening next
- thinking ahead – for example, take snacks when you go out, snuggle when they're tired
- avoid saying “no”, instead try saying “as soon as we're home” or “when you've had your sleep”
- giving them some attention, even when you're busy
- telling them “it's time to go soon”.



Dealing with tantrums

It's hard to stop a tantrum that's already happening (sometimes distraction can work if they're about to have a tantrum).

Help your child calm down faster by:

1. **Giving them space.** If they are in danger of hurting themselves or there's too much going on, take them somewhere safer and calmer.
2. **Standing by calmly.** Even if you're feeling angry, try not to show it. Taking a few deep breaths helps.
3. **Ignoring the tantrum.** Paying attention will often prolong the tantrum. Don't try to reason or discipline them during a tantrum.

When they've calmed down, comfort them and praise them for calming down. Don't give in to any demands they were making and give yourself a pat on the back for keeping your cool.

Whānau say

“Don't feel like you've failed when your child has a tantrum – it's normal and okay. It's how you handle it that counts.”

