

# Avoid problems before they start



## Plan ahead

- Let your tamariki know a change is coming. "After I've finished these dishes, it's bedtime."
- Balance the day so tamariki get a mixture of activity, rest, time with others, time alone, and some time with you.
- Watch their behaviour for signs that a change might be needed. Notice grizzling, fighting or whining.

## Each child is different

Keep expectations reasonable for your child's age and personality.



What are some things that might help you avoid problems?



Whānau say "Pēpi is showing signs of their own mana motuhake. They want to make little decisions and to do things for themselves. Give them simple choices – Red socks or blue socks? Marmite or jam? Praise them when they try hard."



## Acknowledge their feelings

Think about how you like to be treated when you're feeling upset.

## Avoid power struggles

Don't pick a fight that you can't win! Children's eating, sleeping and toileting habits can cause a lot of stress but you can't make them do things your way. You need them to cooperate.

Watch for signs of readiness:

- Eating – are they more interested when they have their own spoon?
- Tired – are they starting to rub their eyes, or suck their thumb?
- Toilet learning – are they telling you when they need a nappy change?

Set up routines so children can learn to anticipate what's happening next.

**"I think because we'd sung 'Moe moe pēpi' to Ella every time we put her to bed, it became a little sign to her that meant sleep time now. She'd start to suck her thumb and away she'd go."**

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What things can you do together this week?