

tips for **Parents**

Kids 1-4

*Helping your kids
to **BEHAVE** well
and **BE HAPPY***

ON THE MOVE
*Your child's safety
out & about*

What to do about
TANTRUMS

useful information • contacts • stories



YOUNG KIDS ARE
LEARNING
ALL THE TIME

Settling into a **NEW SITUATION**

Melissa and Peter's two year- old son, Ben, is not very happy about his new baby sister. His mum spends a lot of time with baby Alice.

He has started mucking up and throwing temper tantrums in places like the supermarket and the childcare centre. Melissa doesn't know what makes her feel worse – the tantrums or all the different advice other parents keep giving her.

Melissa and Peter are constantly tired – she from the new baby and he from working long hours. They both really want to help Ben adjust and stop his tantrums. Sometimes they just want to smack him – but they know that could make him want to smack them back, or worse, smack his baby sister.

They talk to their other friends with children. Melissa also talks to the worker at the baby health centre.

The worker at the centre says they should try to spend more special time with Ben to help him get into a routine.

his mum spends *a lot* of *time* with baby Alice

Melissa starts getting Ben to do little things to help her with the baby. She and Peter spend more time playing with Ben. Each night, at bedtime, they read him a story and play some quiet music in his room.

Gradually Ben becomes calmer and happier and settles into a routine.



ROUTINES are **REASSURING** for

Remember there is a reason for your child's behaviour.

- How you react to their behaviour will make a difference. Always show approval when they behave well. Be consistent. Let your child know you love them – it's their behaviour you don't like.

Young kids learn all the time

- They like to be included. Ask them to help you with safe, simple things around the house.
- They like to be independent and try new things. Give them toy versions of things you use to play with. They are curious and like to copy you.

Kids like routines

- They like to do the same thing each day at the same time. Try to have bathtime and bedtime at the same time each day.
- Read them a story before you say goodnight. Have special toys to play with in the bath.

Be aware of your kids' safety

- Kids need adults to look after them. Make sure there is nothing dangerous in their reach.
- Always be aware of where your children are. Keep them away from the kitchen when you are cooking. Feel the water in the tap or bath before they get in. Don't leave them alone near water or pools. Keep them away from open windows and stairs to prevent falls.

Meal times can be messy

- Kids often enjoy playing with food. Be patient if they are mucking up when you are trying to get them to eat. Try to get them to eat something from each food group.



young kids



Toilet training

- ➔ Every child is different. Some kids are ready for toilet training at about 18 months, while some kids are not ready until they are nearly 3.

Temper tantrums

- ➔ It is common for small children to have tantrums. Try to ignore tantrums so they don't use them to get your attention. If tantrums become regular or extreme, you may need to seek help.
- ➔ Tantrums may be a sign that something is upsetting your child. Have they just started childcare or pre-school? Are there changes at home?

Play with your kids

- ➔ Spend time doing fun things with your kids. Join in their play and go along with their games. Give them warning when enjoyable activities are going to end.



Childcare

- ➔ Find out from your local council about childcare options in your area. Find out about what subsidies are available to help you pay.

Some young kids don't like to be left with other people

- ➔ Practise leaving your child for a short time at first. Some children are clingy. Try to reassure your child that you will be back soon. Gradually build up the amount of time you are away.

Meet other parents and take your kids to play group

- ➔ Play groups are fun for kids. You can meet other parents and get support too.

Look after yourself and get support

- ➔ Looking after yourself when you have small kids is important. Try to get someone else to look after your kids when you need a break.



If you feel angry

- Find a safe place to put your child. Ring a friend, have a shower or call a help line (see phone numbers on the back of this booklet).

When times are hard

- Talk to friends and relatives as well as health workers to get ideas. Listen to what works for them. Remember every child is different and what worked for them may not work for you and your child.

Trust your judgement

- Trust your judgement about what is right for you and your child. If you are unsure, ask and keep talking to people until you work it out.



Say **YES** instead of **NO**



When kids hear “no” too often they don’t take it seriously. Try to give them choices or let them know you will be with them as soon as you finish what you are doing.

Karlie is three-and-a-half and she wants her mother’s attention all the time. When Lily is trying to cook dinner or clean the house, Karlie keeps asking her to come and do something else. She wants Lily to help with her puzzle or do some drawing or go for a walk. Lily feels like a broken record saying “no” all the time. She is beginning to feel that “no” doesn’t mean anything to Karlie anymore.

If Lily says no, Karlie just gets upset and cries or does something more annoying to get her attention.

One of Lily's friends suggests that Lily tries to say "yes"; instead of "no" and to give Karlie a choice of other things to do. Then she could say "no" only when she really meant it.

When Karlie next asked Lily to come and play when she was cooking, Lily said "yes"; as soon as she finished cooking dinner. She gave Karlie two choices; she could either play with dough or get her puzzle ready. Karlie asked to play with the dough and played happily until dinner time.

"Small kids need lots of attention. They love to play and try out new things. Make special time with them to play games."



TIP - Getting things done

Try setting toddlers up with something interesting to do before you start an activity yourself.

Get the set!



You can also get brochures dealing with:

• **Babies** • **Kids 5-11** • **Adolescents** • **Parents**

To order your copies from the Commonwealth
Department of Health and Ageing:

Fax 1800 634 400 to order now, or **phone 1800 066 247**

Useful numbers



Parent help lines in the following States and Territories:

NSW	1300 1300 52
VIC	13 22 89
SA	1300 364 100
QLD	1300 301 300
NT	1300 301 300
TAS	1300 808 178
ACT	02 6287 3833
WA	1800 654 432

LifeLine 13 11 14
Kids Helpline
1800 55 1800
Playgroup Australia
1800 171 882
Raising Children Network
The Australian Parenting Website
<http://raisingchildren.net.au/>

You can also contact Maternal and Child Health services, social workers, community health centres or your GP. Check the White Pages for phone numbers.

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