

## Helpful Tips for Parents/Caregivers for Encouraging Positive Behavior

When tantrums occur, adults can say to children:

- “When your body is calm, I can talk to you.”
- “I’m moving away until your body is calm, when you’re ready let me know.”
- “I don’t (behavior- hit, scratch, yell) at you, you don’t have the right to do that to me.”

While child is having a tantrum, negative attention is still attention. Talking, eye contact or offering choices can often increase the behavior. Sit nearby while modeling counting or deep breathing. When your child is calm, then you can discuss the issue and problem solve. “When...then...” language helps children learn cause-and-effect and make the connection that their actions impact the outcomes:

- “**When** you get your shoes on **then** we can go to the store.”
- “**When** you brush your teeth **then** we can read 2 books.”
- “**When** we leave school **then** we can go ride your bike.”

Offering choices can decrease power struggles and support compliance. Offer two choices, both of which are appropriate for the situation. Follow through with child’s choice, even if it results in a tantrum.

- “You can stand up and walk on your own or I can hold your hand and walk.”
- “We can read 2 long books or 3 short books.”

Follow through and consistency are essential to changing/shaping behavior. Children like pleasing adults and structure, when limits are set they are able to comply and be successful on their own supporting autonomy.