

NEWS ARTICLE

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IS YOUR CHILD THROWING A FIT?

Does your child throw a temper tantrum? If so, they are not alone. Most young children throw one occasionally. Temper tantrums can be exhausting for any parent or caregiver. It may feel like the child is trying to annoy you, but more than likely they have lost control of emotions. Adults can wrongly assume the child is able to pull it together, when in fact, they may want to pull it together, but they can't. What can you as a parent do?

First, remember what NOT to do. Don't threaten or punish a child for having strong emotions. In the short run, they will become more upset, and in the long run, it will teach them to suppress their emotions instead of learning to deal with them.

Make sure the child's basic needs are met. Sometimes, all a child needs are a nap, or a snack, or a drink of water to become the sweet, loving child you know they are.

Stick to a gentle, stable routine and set predictable boundaries. Children, and even adults, do best when they know what to expect. This includes knowing what they can and cannot do. Set routines and boundaries that can be flexible when needed but are generally predictable. The child may deviate from the routine for a little while, but generally they will return. For example, you may have a bedtime routine of taking a bath, putting on your pajamas, reading a book and saying prayers before lights out. While this may be ideal, it may not always be possible and depending upon the age of the child, it may not work for a while. An eight-month-old, who has been following a routine, suddenly stops. That's normal. Encourage following the routine and usually within a couple of weeks they will pick it back up.

Identify triggers. If a child has regular trouble controlling emotions, pay attention to what happens before the tantrum and be proactive dealing with the trigger. Maybe they always breakdown around the same time of day or around the same transition or person. If the transition from lunch to naptime is tough, make sure they have a lovey or give them a nap spot away from others.

Help the child feel in control. Kids may have a hard time telling you how they feel. One way to help is to give them words to tell you how they feel and help them regain control. Help them describe how the emotion feels physically or as a color or a “hot” emotion. Giving them ways to describe it can help them work through it and even feel it coming on.

Be calm, kind, and sensitive. Meeting a tantrum with a tantrum may feel good in the moment, but it won't help. Remaining calm and kind in the face of a screaming child can help them understand that they are safe and sound. Avoid telling them not to cry or not to feel how they feel. This can have unintended consequences as they get older, so naming and dealing in the moment teaches them those feelings are good and normal and can be handled.

Keep in mind, most children throw a temper tantum on occasion. Learn how to help them deal with it in a positive way. For more information on parenting issues, contact the Howard County Extension Service at 870-845-7517 or visit our office located on the second floor of the courthouse. You can also check out the website <https://www.uaex.uada.edu/life-skills-wellness/personal-family-well-being/parenting/>

Recipe of the Week

Thanksgiving is just around the corner. Here is a recipe from ChooseMyPlate.gov that received high ratings. The combination of cranberries and apples are perfect for this homemade dessert. The best thing is it can fit into an overall healthy diet with 158 calories per slice!

Deep Dish Apple Cranberry Pie

4 apples (large, peeled, cored, and sliced)

2 ½ cups cranberries (fresh or frozen)

¾ cup sugar

¼ cup flour

1 teaspoon apple pie spice

1 pie crust (prepared)

Directions:

1. Stir all ingredients (except for the pie crust) together in a medium sized mixing bowl and place in a 10-inch-deep dish pie pan.
2. Place one pie crust on top of the fruits. Cut 3 or 4 slits to allow the steam to escape.
3. Bake at 375 degrees for about an hour. Serve warm. Refrigerate any leftovers.
4. Yield: 10 servings

Nutrition Information per Serving: 158 calories, 1 g fat, 15 mg sodium, 37 g carbohydrates, 4 g fiber, 1 g protein, 11 mg calcium, 137 mg potassium