

How can parents solve the situation when children frequently throw tantrums?



Source: Senior Parenting Education Expert, Bally

It is easy to see whether parents are competent based on how they handle a child's tantrums. If a child is yelling and screaming, can parents quickly calm the child's emotions? Some competent parents simply crouch down, make eye contact, and hold their child tightly while gently asking, "Why are you crying? Don't throw tantrums."

Our first priority is to help the child regain control of their emotions. If they can't control their emotions, they won't be able to hear anything. We shouldn't try to teach or scold them when their emotions are high because they often won't listen. If a child throws a tantrum and we can't control our own emotions, raising our voice and scolding them louder will only make them escalate further. Therefore, we must be able to teach children to control their emotions.

Sometimes we see children in supermarkets throwing tantrums, shouting, crying, and even rolling on the floor. When this happens, the child is already challenging the boundaries set by adults. If at that moment, we are afraid of embarrassment or concerned about how others will perceive us, and we try to compromise just to calm things down, then we are teaching the child to reach such a level in the future. We might say, "If you scream and roll on the floor, I will buy it for you, but if you don't, I won't." Therefore, we must lead by example when teaching children and not worry about how others perceive us.



What would be a more appropriate approach to handling the situation? Parents should set aside everything and crouch down to talk to the child, saying, "Mom just told you earlier that we won't be buying anything. Do you remember? If you really want to throw a tantrum, Mom won't buy anything at all. Let go of everything, and let's go home." Because we need to persist consistently, the child will understand that they cannot challenge their parents, and they won't escalate their behavior.

Many times, parents are not aware of their own language expression, and they may unintentionally encourage children to cry. In reality, if we frequently say, "Don't!" the child will only hear that word. For example, if we say, "Don't cry anymore," the child will only hear the word "cry." So what should we ask them to do instead? "You should calm down, wipe away your tears, and be calm before I talk to you." If we stand upright, speaking loudly, and say, "If you dare to cry again, just wait and see what I will do...", the child's anger will only intensify. Therefore, we need to pay attention to our words and actions and encourage them in a positive manner.

When faced with problems such as a child throwing tantrums, refusing to do homework, or not wanting to eat, we often get stuck in that particular issue. How can we make the child finish quickly so that we can move on to another activity? We need to think of the next "reward" for them. For example, if the child dislikes doing homework, we can say, "How about this? If we finish within 15 minutes, we can read a book together, watch cartoons, play with building blocks, or play with toys." These are things that children enjoy and look forward to, so we should keep emphasizing and magnifying these activities.

We need to show them the future consequences that are directly linked to their current behavior. If the child cries or throws tantrums at home during the process, parents often place them in a "Quiet Corner" where they can calm their emotions. This can be done in their familiar and safe room or on their bed, allowing them to gradually stop crying.



If competent parents have enough ability to make the child reflect and express themselves, they could say, "Mommy is really sorry. I feel like I was wrong earlier." Assigning roles can make it easier, for example, when the mother is doing homework with the child and the child starts throwing tantrums and refusing to do it. The mother can say, "Go to your room now, sit on your own bed, and think about what you did wrong."

Then the father or another person can enter the room and tell the child, "Do you know that you made Mommy very unhappy just now? Do you know that she will be very angry?" We share our adult world, thoughts, and feelings with the child, helping them understand and willingly say, "I really made a mistake. I was really wrong. I'm sorry, Mommy."