

TANTRUM TRUTHS:

6

THINGS PARENTS GET WRONG ABOUT BIG EMOTIONS (And How to Fix Them Fast)

PLUS: THE EXACT PHRASES AND CALMING
TRICKS THAT ACTUALLY WORK

**Includes Bonus!!
Calming Phrases in
a FREE
Downloadable**




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INTRODUCTION

Discover what's really behind your child's big emotions—and what to say and do in the heat of the moment.

These 6 eye-opening truths will change the way you handle meltdowns forever, bringing more peace, connection, and confidence to your parenting.



IF STAYING
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CHAPTER 01

WHY TANTRUMS AREN'T BAD BEHAVIOUR

Think of a tantrum like a storm passing through—trying to stop it only makes it worse. But standing beside your child with an umbrella? That teaches them they're not alone in the rain.



*"Behind every behavior is a feeling,
and behind every feeling is a need."
– Ashleigh Warner*

Understanding tantrums starts with changing the way we see them. Most of us were raised to believe that tantrums were defiance or manipulation—but they're not. In reality, they're signs that a child's brain is overwhelmed and crying out for connection, not correction.

ACTION ITEM 1: Rethink What a Tantrum Really Is

A tantrum isn't your child "being naughty"—it's their nervous system hitting overload. Kids under 7 don't yet have a fully developed prefrontal cortex, meaning self-control and logic go offline when emotions flood in. Start viewing tantrums as a sign your child is struggling, not misbehaving.

ACTION ITEM 2: Ditch the Discipline, Offer Co-Regulation

Traditional discipline during a tantrum—like timeouts or threats—often makes things worse by triggering more fear or shame. Instead, aim to co-regulate: stay calm, breathe, and offer presence over punishment. This builds your child's emotional safety and trust.

ACTION ITEM 3: Validate First, Always

Before trying to fix, solve, or teach—validate. Saying, "That was really hard for you" or "I see how upset you are" helps your child feel seen. Validation doesn't mean you agree with the behavior; it means you're acknowledging their emotional truth.

CHAPTER 02

THE REAL ROLE OF EMOTIONAL MELTDOWNS

A meltdown is like a pressure valve releasing steam—if you try to seal it too tight, it'll just explode later. Letting it out safely teaches your child to self-regulate instead of suppress.



"Emotions are not problems to be solved. They are signals to be heard."

– Rachel Macy Stafford

Emotional meltdowns can feel chaotic—but they actually serve a powerful purpose. They're the body's way of releasing stress, processing overwhelm, and asking for help when words fall short. When we understand the role meltdowns play, we can respond with wisdom instead of frustration.

ACTION ITEM 1: Recognise Meltdowns as Emotional Detox

Just like tears release stress hormones, a meltdown is a nervous system "reset" when your child hits their emotional limit. Instead of seeing it as a failure, recognise it as an opportunity for healing. Think of it as your child's way of coming back to balance.

ACTION ITEM 2: Stay Present, Even If You Can't Fix It

You don't need the perfect script—you just need to stay. Your calm presence tells your child they are safe, even when they feel out of control. Sit nearby, breathe slowly, and use simple phrases like "I'm right here" or "We'll get through this together."

ACTION ITEM 3: Debrief After, Not During

Once the storm has passed, that's your window to talk and teach. Gently reflect: "That was a big feeling. What helped you feel better?" This builds emotional insight and prepares your child for next time. In the heat of it, don't teach—just be the anchor.

CHAPTER 03

WHAT YOU'RE SAYING THAT ISN'T HELPING

Trying to use reason in a tantrum is like throwing a life jacket at someone mid-wave—they can't grab it until they stop flailing. First, help them ride the wave.



"Speak to your children as if they are the wisest, kindest, most beautiful humans on Earth, for what they believe is what they will become."
– Brooke Hampton

In the thick of a tantrum, it's easy to say things out of habit—things we heard growing up, or things we think will snap our kids out of it. But often, those phrases backfire. Instead of calming our child, they escalate the storm or leave them feeling misunderstood.

ACTION ITEM 1: Avoid Dismissive Phrases

Saying things like "You're fine," "Stop crying," or "Calm down" can feel invalidating. These words may seem harmless, but they shut down emotional expression. Try swapping them for "I hear you," "It's okay to feel upset," or "Let's take a breath together."

ACTION ITEM 2: Ditch Logic Mid-Tantrum

During big emotional outbursts, your child's brain is in fight-or-flight—not logic or reason. Trying to explain, lecture, or rationalise often frustrates them more. Instead, meet emotion with empathy first, and save the teaching moment for later when calm returns.

ACTION ITEM 3: Watch Your Tone and Body Language

It's not just what you say—it's how you say it. A calm, soft tone and open posture can soothe far more than sharp words or crossed arms. Be the emotional mirror: the calmer you are, the more regulated your child can become.

CHAPTER 04

PHRASES AND TOOLS THAT ACTUALLY WORK

The right words and tools are like emotional first aid—gentle, effective, and reassuring in the moment pain shows up.



"Sometimes the smallest things take up the most room in your heart."

– A.A. Milne

When your child is overwhelmed, what you say and do can either inflame the moment—or diffuse it with connection. The good news? You don't need to be a therapist to help your child feel safe. Just a few calm, intentional tools can work wonders.

ACTION ITEM 1: Use Grounding Language

Phrases like "You're safe," "I'm right here," or "Let's breathe together" bring your child back to their body. These grounding words help regulate the nervous system and anchor them in the present. Keep it simple, steady, and slow.

ACTION ITEM 2: Offer a Soothing Tool

Introduce calming options like squeezing a soft toy, drawing a "worry picture," or lying under a weighted blanket. Kids often respond better to physical tools than verbal ones in the heat of emotion. Create a "calm corner" stocked with sensory or self-soothing items.

ACTION ITEM 3: Let Them Choose Their Calm

Empower your child with choices: "Would you like a hug or space?" "Do you want to stomp it out or snuggle in?" Giving options helps them feel a sense of control and fosters emotional intelligence by linking actions with feelings.

CHAPTER 05

BUILDING EMOTIONAL STRENGTH FOR THE FUTURE

Raising an emotionally strong child is like planting a tree—each small response, each moment of patience, is a root that helps them grow tall and grounded for life.



*"Don't prepare the path for the child.
Prepare the child for the path."
– Native American Proverb*

Helping your child navigate big emotions now is more than just surviving the moment—it's investing in their emotional future. Each meltdown handled with compassion lays the groundwork for lifelong resilience, self-awareness, and confidence. It's not about perfection; it's about practice and presence.

ACTION ITEM 1: Reflect and Name Emotions Together

After calm returns, gently revisit what happened: "You were really mad when the game ended. That's okay." Naming emotions builds your child's emotional vocabulary and helps them understand what they feel. It's the foundation of emotional intelligence.

ACTION ITEM 2: Build a Toolbox of Coping Strategies

Don't wait for the meltdown—practice calm strategies in peaceful moments. Breathing exercises, movement breaks, or drawing out feelings all reinforce emotional skills. The more familiar these tools become, the more likely your child is to use them when it counts.

ACTION ITEM 3: Model Emotional Regulation Yourself

Your child is always watching. Showing them how you manage frustration, speak about feelings, or take space when needed gives them a roadmap. You don't need to be perfect—just real, and willing to repair when needed.

“When we know better, we do better.” – Maya Angelou

Bonus: The 6 Myths Parents Get Wrong About Big Emotions

Myth #1: Tantrums = Bad Behavior

Truth: Tantrums are not misbehavior—they’re emotional overwhelm. Kids aren’t acting out, they’re maxed out.

Myth #2: Meltdowns Should Be Stopped ASAP

Truth: Meltdowns are a natural emotional release. Suppressing them teaches kids to bottle up instead of regulate.

Myth #3: Saying “Calm Down” Helps Kids Calm Down

Truth: Dismissive phrases can escalate emotions. Validation and empathy work better.

Myth #4: Explaining or Reasoning Will Work Mid-Tantrum

Truth: A dysregulated child can’t access logic. First calm the body, then teach later.

Myth #5: You Just Need to Be Firmer

Truth: Emotional safety—not discipline—leads to cooperation. Connection is the shortcut to calm.

Myth #6: Kids Will Just “Grow Out of It”

Truth: Emotional regulation is a learned skill. Proactive support now builds lifelong resilience.

Because Kids Don't Come With a Manual —But This Comes Close

Tame the Tantrums Before They Start With
“It's OK to Feel...” Emotional Regulation Cards.



YES, I NEED THIS!



Bonus Download:
Calming phrases in a
printable checklist?

 Download the
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