



## Reacting to an Angry Child

Submitted by Sarah Fitz-Claridge on 18 September, 2003 - 22:56

Posted on the [TCS List](#) on Fri, 9 Jun, 2000

by [Sarah Fitz-Claridge](http://www.fitz-claridge.com/) (<http://www.fitz-claridge.com/>)



A poster wrote:

*Take the case of a toddler, where aggression (hitting, throwing) is directed towards the parent as a result of anger over various kinds of frustration that I think are common to toddlerhood, such as frustration over a request not being understood immediately, or misunderstood, or the immediate frustration over not getting something (before finding a common preference can be attempted). My sense is that in order for the child to learn from the situation, it is useful for the parent to communicate their honest reaction, whether it be showing hurt if they've been hurt, or any emotional response, such as feeling anger, or sadness.*

I think this is all true, even the showing anger part. However, it is vital to keep in mind that the normal, non-TCS purpose of displays of emotion is *to cause pain*, and if even a small amount of that happens, the parent will be systematically removing the conditions which make consent-based decision-making possible. If when the child behaves contrary to the parent's wishes, the parent intentionally inflicts pain, this violates what ought to be the object of the exercise once TCS has broken down – which is to restore the conditions for TCS.

*Is showing one's reaction in this situation (because the parent is the "victim") different from "intentionally punishing the aggressor, either physically or by even frowning at the aggressor" as cautioned against above? If not, how does the toddler learn that his action has had a real effect upon the one that has been hurt? I'm assuming that any explanation of the morality of this situation has to include the reason why hitting is not "right" (because it hurts someone else).*

This conveying of information about morality, etc., should have happened a lot earlier! At the point where everything has gone wrong, that is not the best time to start conveying it. It is a very bad idea to convey the idea that us not being hurt is the reason you *are* being hurt. That is a very bad trade-off to put in someone's mind.

To put that another way, if one is not careful, one may inadvertently give the child the impression that there is no possibility of finding a **common preference**, and that the situation – and worse, life more generally – is a zero-sum game – where I win and you lose, or you win and I lose. If winning is at the expense of another, then most often, no one wins. Instead, we should all be thinking of finding common preferences. The child should not be given the impression that they are impossible. If you were to grow up believing that life is a zero-sum game, just how open to consent-based decision-making would you be?

## Comments

### **Reacting to an Angry Child**

*Submitted by a TCS reader (not verified) on 20 January, 2004 - 23:27*

To pick up where Sarah left off... how did the child become so angry in the first place? I would not usually say that one should hide one's true feelings, but I am working from a theory that a parent is better able to step back and process the whole interaction than the young child. So let us go back a step. Has the parent caused pain to the child that has prompted this reaction? Is the parent then continuing the cycle by showing his pain/anger/ sadness in response to the anger of the child? And why is the parent's reaction to the anger of the child so negative? Would the reaction be the same if the child yelled? Cried? Perhaps it is an opportunity for the parent to learn more about his behaviour toward the child and how the child feels in response.

Maybe none of this is true. Maybe the child is frustrated because she cannot make a toy work and she enacts her frustration on the parent. My question then is, why would the parent have a negative reaction to the child's behaviour when it has nothing to do with them? Maybe the parent is a safe place for the child to express herself.

I tend to be of the view that we try and start teaching children about what is "right and wrong" [accepting for the sake of the discussion that such dichotomies exist] at far too young an age. In order to stop hitting, throwing, whatever, the child needs to be able to continue to express the emotion in an "appropriate" fashion, either in words or some other way, otherwise we risk losing the expression of feeling altogether into the morass of "it is wrong to hit."

A child at daycare starts biting another child. She is verbal, but just barely. A toddler. Upon investigation the caregivers learn that the other child has been scratching the biter when disputes arise over toys. Is the biter wrong? The scratcher? What both children need is help in finding common preference around ways to play together. They need help learning how to put their feelings into words. Both children feel that the other has done them an injustice, either by taking a toy or by scratching/ biting. Responding to an injustice is not inappropriate -- it is good!!! Let us encourage it!! And as the children begin to learn how to express themselves verbally, then discussions around biting, hitting etc can start to happen.

Namaste,

Ma Law

to post comments

### **angry child**

*Submitted by a TCS reader (not verified) on 4 October, 2004 - 18:07*

Imagine a six year old that only reacts that way when his 13 year old sib comes to visit, having lived in a domestic violence relationship and witnessed this from a very early age. It's important that people come from all different backgrounds and the reaction of the children may be for all different reasons.

to post comments

## Angry child

*Submitted by Allison (not verified) on 4 December, 2004 - 04:10*

I have a 6 year old and he is extremely angry. He has told me he doesn't like me or his younger sib. I ask him to help pick up toys, take a bath, get ready for bed or no he can't play outside and he totally flips out and I mean flips out. How do you handle a child like this I am at my end of strength. I miss my sweet child who was pleasant to be around. any suggestions?

[to post comments](#)

## angry babies

*Submitted by anon (not verified) on 3 January, 2005 - 12:53*

how does this work with babies?

I have a girl 1 1/2 year old who gets into extreme temper tantrums. I am trying desperately to find a way to communicate with her, but she doesn't talk yet, and I don't think she's old enough to understand a 'common preference'. If she doesn't get her way RIGHT NOW, she is instantly transformed into a red-faced raging scream machine. she hits me too. I don't know what to do, I'm trying to follow TCS, but it just seems impossible. All the advice here involves talking with the child, no one mentions how to 'talk' to a baby. A friend today told me that my baby is a spoiled brat who needs to have some discipline. that's like a slap in the face to me.

I'm trying to help my girl find solutions that we can both agree on, and have both of our needs met, but a baby just doesn't understand that mama has needs too, that aren't always the same as baby's needs.

I'm going crazy here, What can I do?

[to post comments](#)

## Angry 3 year old

*Submitted by Erica (not verified) on 30 January, 2005 - 18:44*

My little angry 3 year old seems to be so angry lately. I have a baby that is 11 months old and everyone says "oh it's because he's jealous!" I don't think so - at least not completely. I definitely think there are some new changes going on but I stay home with him and I always make sure he and I have a date at least every other day and provide him with adequate attention. I am not sure why he continues to hit kids and bully them at nursery. He only goes a couple days a week but even the teacher says he is just angry sometimes and pushes people over for no reason. I brought him to a birthday party today and he started throwing rubber balls at all the toddlers for no reason and then hitting on them. Sometimes he acts like I keep him cooped up in the house 24/7 which is totally not the case. I take him outside all the time and try and socialize him as much as possible. Not sure what else to do? He is just angry so often. My husband and I don't fight any more than any other married couple and never yell or say names - where is this anger coming from????

[to post comments](#)

## anger problem

*Submitted by plaidpants (not verified) on 18 March, 2005 - 14:00*

What do you mean by a person being angry? He is angry all the time? How is that? Most likely there is a lot of miscommunication going on, and possibly some unrealistic expectations on the part of the adult.

For example, when you ask him to clean up, are you asking? Does he have the option to say "no" or "later"? I know I would be angry if someone forced me to do something I didn't want to do. Generally, if I feel a need to clean up and my child isn't interested I will extend an invitation while simultaneously doing some of the cleaning. Most of the time this is effective - young children enjoy their parents' company and are often very happy to do things with them, but the operative word is "with". When its not effective - well, I'm the one with the "cleanliness issue". Children sometimes decide to clean (could play a strange little "cleaning game" that a child devises, like maybe a variation of fifty-two-pick-up) but if a child is stacking and unstacking objects and a parent says "clean up time" for reasons that aren't apparent to her, she will be p.o'd - why the heck shouldn't she be? If you can give her some warning and help find some common ground BEFORE clean-up time actually arrives, she might even start to do it on her own.

In the middle of an explosion, your options are pretty limited. Validate emotions, limit damage, get past the moment somehow. In between crises start to re-evaluate your relationship and think about improving your end of the communication. If there is no in-between, start looking into allergens and toxic environmental effects.

[to post comments](#)

## How do i know if my 3 year old is angry

*Submitted by Octavia (not verified) on 7 April, 2005 - 05:56*

HI i have looking around the web to find out if my child is an angry child or not. He's a beautiful boy the gets along with children. He's also eager to play with other children. I do not see the angryness in him at all. Some times he acts out in front (show off) of people. But it is not in a bad way. He just does things to get your attention. I was told by two people that he is angry. I still don't see it. I mean I try to be the best parent, I'm not perfect -- I know that I can raise my voice when he makes me angry. I just want to do right by my son. Can someone please offer their advice because I don't know what to think.

[to post comments](#)

## Help Please.

*Submitted by Lisa (not verified) on 13 November, 2005 - 01:21*

Consider a young child who throws a fit when, say, taken out and gets mad when s/he doesent get something in the store what s/he wants, getting loud and thowing a fit when told put it back. If a child really throws a fit when you say 'we are leaving' and you have to lift hir up and bring hir out of the store-- what can you do? Help!!!

[to post comments](#)

## **Extremely angry and overeating six-year-olds**

*Submitted by Michelle (not verified) on 5 January, 2006 - 15:09*

I have fraternal 6-year-old twins. My husband decided that drugs were more important than our family, so I took the children and left. Now my son is exhibiting extreme rage and anger at everyone around him, especially female family members. My daughter is wanting to eat everything in sight from the time she gets home from school until after bedtime. I think my son is angry at me because I took them away from their Daddy and I think my daughter is overeating out of insecurity. I don't know what to do. I don't know how to handle my son's episodes and I can't seem to console my daughter by letting her know that she is still loved very much. I am totally lost.....

[to post comments](#)

## **angry 6 year old**

*Submitted by julie (not verified) on 24 January, 2006 - 18:36*

Hi,

My father and sister decided drugs were also more important to them than our family, so I have custody of my 6 year old nephew. To top that off, my father died as a result of his drug use shortly after I took custody of my nephew (he was the primary caregiver, the boy's mother was in prison).

He's a sweet child with a bad temper. he has "angry episodes" and hits kids at school, even though the children are his "friends" and he is very remorseful about it afterwards.

One thing that is obvious is that he is angry at my father for leaving him like he did, angry for the things he did to him...but he also feels guilty about being angry at him because he is dead. ALso he feels it is somehow his fault, that he should have been there to keep him from dying.

Your son may also be angry at his father not just you...he may not even know that he is! You have my sympathy having two to deal with. just be there for them, lots of hugs and kisses and talking about making the "right choices" seems to be helping us. you may need to talk to him about what his father was telling him too. my dad taught my nephew to lie to my mom, so he wouldn't get into trouble (dad that is) and he taught him that her not giving him money (for drugs) made her a mean person. so you may need to question him about things like that.

hang in there, hope things get better.

[to post comments](#)

## **hitting from a toddler**

*Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 18 March, 2006 - 18:13*

when a toddler has a major tantrum when she wants to do something but is stopped, eg, short walk which she likes but wont turn around to go back to the car. With screams and hitting and a struggle to get back to the car...Its embarrassing too....please advice.

to post comments

## **Excuse me?**

*Submitted by Salamanda (not verified) on 12 June, 2006 - 23:38*

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How is it that you have assumed the adult is responsible for a lack of communication?

Are you asking? I can't believe I read this. There is no asking. It is, "you need to clean your room". Not, "sweetie, do you mind cleaning your room? Oh, you don't? Okay, well I'll do it. Some kids don't like to clean."

That's the problem with society. Children have no boundaries. I actually went to a seminar recently and the speaker said that the worst thing you can tell a child is no. Never say no, she explained, instead just say something like, maybe later you can do that. Or honey, I think you should think about if you really want that.

How about this. No.

Today's world is a scary place to live in and everyday I come to understand more and more why that is. Children crave structure and rules, despite the beliefs of spineless adults.

If someone forced you to do something you wouldn't do you would be living in the real world. I know I don't care to get up and go to work every day, but I am forced to because that is the way society functions. The sooner kids understand responsibility, the easier it will be to accept. Imagine living life responsibility free, and then one day waking up to the truth.

The problem is not are you asking your child. It could be anything. Yes, it is okay to say would you like to clean up now or in five minutes. That's fine. No, it is not okay for a child to decide if he/she will do it at all. If the child is having outbursts like this, it is much deeper than not wanting to do a chore. I would suggest sitting down and talking about it with him while the two of you are doing something like drawing or playing video games so he feels comfortable. Maybe even write a story together and see what comes out.

to post comments

## **Angry Child**

*Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 2 August, 2006 - 17:04*

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I came across this article from a couple of years ago. I am finding myself in the same situation you described. Since it has been awhile since you wrote this, looking back now do you have any suggestions for me? I am very frustrated and would appreciate anything you can tell me. How did you handle this now?

Thanks! Janine

to post comments

## **Food allergies?**

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If I had a child acting out for no good reason (to put it simply) I would take a good look at his diet. Food additives like artificial colors and flavors and MSG are often the culprit, or food allergies (often dairy, wheat, eggs, shellfish, peanuts). Eliminating those factors can make an astounding difference in a child's behavior.

[to post comments](#)

## **my son is 10 year old and hates his life**

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 24 October, 2006 - 14:00

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[moderator's note: please hypotheticalize in responses. We like to avoid discussing specific children's lives in a public forum. Thank you.]

I'm a mother of two children. I feel there is an anger problem with my son. No one wants to think there is something wrong with their children, but there comes a time when all things to correct their behavior have failed and nothing works. My family calls my children the ying-yang twins because they are different as day and night. My son is 10 years old, he is very angry all the time. He said his life is miserable and he wishes he could die, he hates everything and everyone. My daughter is 15 and a very happy child, she loves everything about everyone, loves school and her friends and is thankful for everything. My son is home schooled due to his behavior in public and private school, they don't know what to do with him. I am at the point of crying 3-4 times a week because of his actions. I have made an appointment to take him to see someone to help him, hopefully not to put him on medicine. I was needing some tip to help at home. Thank you

[to post comments](#)

## **angry child**

Submitted by Josee (not verified) on 6 December, 2006 - 22:05

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I am reading your comment from two years ago and am wondering how things are going now? My child is six and also gets angry quickly, not always and not daily, but does flip out.

[to post comments](#)

## **The child is angry because**

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 27 December, 2006 - 20:50

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The child is angry because he has no limits. He can act any way he wants and not suffer consequences. I see it all the time this day in age.

[to post comments](#)

## So glad someone wrote the

*Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 13 February, 2007 - 16:27*

So glad someone wrote the comment above. I too wonder how one arrives at the conclusion that the parent is at fault here. No wonder kids have no respect for their parents. Adults do things all the time that we don't enjoy and we learn to do them anyways without a huge fit. The sooner children learn that certain things like cleaning, bedtime and so forth are nessecary, the easier their life will be later. Then there will be less familiar people they have to content with (like at a job that will earn the money for a living). During their childhood they can lash out at their loved one (like MOM) because her love remains even if treated badly by the child. Later that may get them fired from a decent job. If you ask me, firmness, calmness and consistency are your best way to treat anger problems. If you are not abusive, screaming or throwing a fit just like the child, you are not doing anything wrong. Just hang tight and pray hard and if it doesn't quite work as well or as fast as some other cases, it may be due to the fact that all our precious children are different but it is that, which makes the world go around! :-)

[to post comments](#)

## angry children

*Submitted by canyonstar on 13 February, 2007 - 18:51*

the assumption that a child is getting angry 'for no reason' is symptomatic of the rampant disrespect for children in mainstream society, imo. i think it is safe to say that when people get angry, at any age, they have a reason. to assume that they don't, because they are a child, is not taking them seriously.

disrespect for parent's own self is rampant, as well, when people (as per comments above) believe that they have to knuckle under to authority and bear no authority in themselves, let alone dignity and the right to autonomy. if people accept that for themselves, what chance is there that they can help thier children to claim and support their own autonomy?

it is not a matter of assigning fault for anger, but rather of recognizing problems and wanting to solve them. if you think that anger is ok, and that it is ok to hurt others in the process of learning, then you are not likely to be looking beyond that to find ways to interact with children and to help them in ways that do not require anger and hurting. that is what we are doing here, with tcs.

we all have limits in the physical universe. gravity will have its way, and we can't leap up and fly in the air at will, and there are myriad expectations and laws of society to learn to negotiate. how much better, to be helped to learn and grow and to be able to think rationally about these things, than to have arbitrary limits laid down and coercively enforced. the resultant resentment and anger gets in the way of learning and relationships, as so many of the comments above demonstrate.

try listening. try questioning your assumptions and expectations. try opening up to learning yourself, along with your child. try remembering what it was like to be a small child. try helping yourself and your child get what you both want in life, not one at the expense of the other. there is a lot to learn about how to live together with love and kindness and genuine wanting to help. consider that anger is not a necessary frequent emotion to be experiencing. you can change that, for parent and child.

[to post comments](#)

## Do Not Disturb

Submitted by [emma \(not verified\)](http://www.childrenarepeople.blogspot.com) (http://www.childrenarepeople.blogspot.com) on 14 April, 2007 - 17:01

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For parents of angry children of any age, my advice would be

1) Stop. Observe. See if you can work out what is making them angry. If it is something you are doing to them, stop doing it.

Then

2) Start thinking creatively about the situation. If you want child to put jigsaw pieces away after finishing a jigsaw, be present as they do the jigsaw and then start modelling by putting jigsaw away. Don't nag, don't expect results today or this week, and find some way to make the process joyful for yourself (count the pieces into the box? Swoosh them all off the edge of the table into the box? Try to slip the completely jigsaw into the box so that it is still complete but put away - that's REALLY hard). Soon, if putting jigsaw pieces away is really fun, child will join in.

3) Stop hurrying your child. So many conflict situations are brought about because parent is on some arbitrary adult schedule in which child has no investment. Relax. Smell the flowers. Enjoy the clean air on your walk. Read your book while child plays with object in shop. What do you mean you don't have your book with you???? (that's an excusable mistake once only ;-)). Give them time to make decisions, to squeeze every drop of enjoyment out of the situations in which they find themselves

4) don't label your child as the naughty one or the angry one or the tantruming one. Acknowledge that they are a rational human being trying to make sense of the universe. You can help them by being a trusted guide better than by being an authority figure who imposes arbitrary rules on them.

to post comments

## That's a fact, another drama

Submitted by [Gordman \(not verified\)](#) on 26 July, 2007 - 07:53

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That's a fact, another drama listed due to drug abuse. As i was thinking, drugs take victims lives but also their families happiness and tranquility. I am sorry to hear about your father but may be there is still a chance for your sister in a [drug rehab treatment](http://www.3daymom.com/2007/06/04/drug-treatment/) center once she gets out of jail. She needs to do this for her troubled kid, obviously he is seriously affected by this whole mess.

to post comments

## my 12 month old baby is so angry

Submitted by [a reader \(not verified\)](#) on 19 September, 2007 - 17:16

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i need to no why my 12 month old baby is so angry. he hits

everyone and anything that comes near him, i am not saying its

24/7 but a majority of the time. the angry noises that he

makes at all of his family members even the dogs are unreal.

please if anyone can give me an explanation for this it would

be greatly appreciated. thanks.

[to post comments](#)

### **3 year old hitting mum**

*Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 24 September, 2007 - 20:01*

My nearly 3 year old often hits me even when im playing with him, suddenly he gives a mischevious smile and laugh and hits me. I put him in his highchair which he no longer uses to eat and leave him for a few minutes. He says sorry and strokes me and plays nicely again but may then hit me again later! I thought it was because i'm a single mum and if i'm cooking or washing up he hasn't got my attention, as he throws his toys at me over the stairgate which is in the kitchen doorway. I have taken most of his toys out of his sight. Also he doesn't see his father but he doesn't ask for him either. Please help, i try really hard to give him my attention all day but he still hits sometimes. He is at nursery 4 days a week and he's adorable when hes there.

[to post comments](#)

### **One of My 4year old boys is always angry...**

*Submitted by mother of two s... (not verified) on 6 March, 2008 - 17:51*

I have a 4 year old boy who is always angry, about everything. It can stem from the littlest thing and at times his anger can blow into full rage where he spits, hits, swears, and so on. Time outs are issued but with no result he only becomes more riled up. I take things away and he acts as though they dont mean anything to him. He did not always used to be like this, I have tried to find a reason from which the anger may have stemed from but with no results. He does not get angry anywhere else but at home, school he does well, grandmas house he does well also... I guess i am just wondering if it could be me as a mother I mean in all reality I think once you get to the point I am at, every mother questions her skills as a mother. I dont want to be a tyrant, and i dont want him to feel like I am against him, I just need advice on how to get him to control his anger.... thanks, mother of 2 twin sets.

[to post comments](#)

### **Daughter 10 yrs old behaves in ODD manner**

*Submitted by n suresh (not verified) on 7 May, 2008 - 17:06*

My daughter is 10 yrs old. she becomes very angry and becomes adamant on reaching home. On sight of her mother she becomes very angry. With others and outside she is OK but very innocent.Sometimes she says that she will run away from house and sometimes she says she will commit suicide. It is very disturbing. she also sleeps too much and does not exercise and in studies also she is very dull. What may be the reason.

Also kindly refer me a good phychiatrist in Chennai who deals with children

to post comments

## angry mean baby

*Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 18 December, 2008 - 06:52*

I have a 18 month old daughter who has thrown temper tantrums since she could lift her head. When she was able to grasp things, she started to grasp my face and scratch the skin off. She slaps me, and scratches me. She throws her head backwards on the floor to the point where her head is flat on the back. I have two other babies here too and she beats them up and scratches them constantly when she is upset over something or tired. It's like having a dog that bites and you can't do anything about it. I cannot muzzle my baby, or tie her down. I am frustrated because you cannot reason with a baby. She is not spoiled. This is how she was born and who she is. I am writing to ask you, what did you do? Did it change? Did it get better? I have asked my pediatrition several times and he laughs it off. Please let me know if anything helped you. At this point I am thinking my baby may be psychotic or something, and I don't know what to do. Thank you Rhonda [RBadalucco910@yahoo.com](mailto:RBadalucco910@yahoo.com)

to post comments

## Hi Rhonda.

*Submitted by a tcs reader (not verified) on 23 March, 2009 - 12:08*

Hello, Rhonda. I read your comment, and... well... I'm going to ask you some questions, and maybe make some comments. You may not *like* some of the questions or assertions, but I can at least honestly promise you that they're well-intentioned.

"I have a 18 month old daughter who has thrown temper tantrums since she could lift her head. When she was able to grasp things, she started to grasp my face and scratch the skin off."

...are you *\*sure\** you might not be reading things into her that, well... weren't there at the start?

I ask this because, well... a newborn baby *\*has no way to know\** if something will injure or cause pain to another person, until they learn this. They may have a full and competent set of reasoning skills which allows them to deduce the meaning of a new language, learn skills in walking and holding and affecting their world, recognize hundreds of foods in terms of ones they like and ones they don't, and learn several other things about their world in a very short few years... but their actual starting *\*scientific\** knowledge is nihl, and can only be learned through experience, experimentation, and learning about their world.

You could have been made of an impervious substance, or completely lacking a central nervous system, for all she knew. It's literally impossible, the FIRST time, for her to have been trying to hurt you.

Because of this, I'm going to make two guesses.

- I'm going to guess that you're not overly skilled at reading the emotions or understanding the thought processes of a newborn infant. This is okay - some people are better at reading facial expression, some are worse, it's

nothing to be ashamed of, and frankly, communicating with someone without language is hard. You seem - by what little I can read - to be slightly worse at doing this than others, but that's nothing to be ashamed of.

...and...

- I'm going to guess that, because of this, she ~has~ learned since then that violence is the only way to make herself heard at all.

That last one is probably going to complicate things a lot, if any of my guesses are right. She's NOT a baby anymore, not by a LONG shot, and from trying to communicate her needs without language, to getting frustrated, to learning that frustration can actually push people around to get her needs met, to learning that some of the things she just naturally does when frustrated (grabbing objects, etc) can actually hurt others, to learning that hurting others can bully them into meeting her needs... that's... a long lifetime of learning in getting her needs met, and most of the means are destructive towards others, and not really helpful to herself - she'd have an easier and more comfortable life if she actually \*knew\* nonviolent means to have her needs met.

All that learning inbetween is going to be an obstacle, unfortunately.

"I am frustrated because you cannot reason with a baby."

That's... actually not true.

Studies with sign language appear to show that the average baby has learned a few words by about three months, and a decent handful by about six months. They may not have the vocal control or knowledge to make the sounds themselves (though they can sign, if sign is used in the home), but they recognize a moderate vocabulary well before toddlerhood.

In addition to this, emotion is... well, cross-cultural and one of the few pieces of genetic knowledge possessed, it seems; expressive communications, used creatively, can allow communication and empathetic reasoning before even the first acquisition of language at about three months, theoretically.

Of course, your daughter is well beyond being a baby - they start toddling at about 6-8 months or so, in the pulling themselves up/cruising/toddling/walking fashion. I'm guessing she's all the way to "walking" right now, rather than toddling a few steps and falling down, so she's probably past both "baby" and "toddler," and well on to the next stage. But... yes, reasoning ~with~ a baby is theoretically possible.

Now... I'm guessing you're looking for something more than theory on how frustration leads to violence as a learned response, or whether or not bilateral communication and discourse with newborns is possible, so... I'm going to give a few suggestions of what I might try first. Doesn't mean they're good suggestions, just the first things that would come to my mind... and I'm not anyone special. ;)

First things first :

- physically prevent her from hurting others without punishing or criticizing her.

Yes. Hurting other people falls under the "danger to self or others" mantra, and is one of the few times where minimal coercion is possible. This should be done nonjudgementally - she has every right to whatever \*feelings\* she's having, and that should never be compromised... and right now, she ~might~ not have learned the self-awareness from her environment that would allow her to distinguish between her feelings and actions based on those feelings just yet.

Simply putting your hand between her swinging fist and whoever she's trying to hit is probably sufficient, and if she wants to beat on your arm for a while until she calms down, you might as well let her. It's not like she's in a high weight category for fighting ranks. Grabbing/scratching (of the arm you put between her and the target, not of her target) can usually be defused just by turning the arm slightly so the skin slips out of her grasp.

While we're on the subject of 'danger to self or others' - go ahead and throw a soft pillow under her head when she feels like slamming it into something - and then just let her do it. Whatever makes her feel better...

...and...

The cheater :

- tyrosine.

It's an amino acid which turns into dopamine. Anger happens when one runs out of dopamine, whether through environmental inhibitions on release or poor nutrition. If your pediatrician ok's it, there's nothing wrong with slipping her a little protien - even a single-amino-acid protien. :)

Now, with some basics established, here's what I'd try...

- Let her throw a tantrum.

She has a right to her feelings. She has a right to express her feelings in at least \*some\* fashion which works for her. Judging by where she's at right now, I'd keep the restrictions on 'appropriate expression of feeling' to the simple 'not hurting people,' and even then - just prevent her from doing so in a non-judgemental manner, rather than trying to teach her not to hurt people. We'll work on "not hurting other people" after she learns the "it's okay to have feelings" and "the people around you acknowledge and respect your feelings" bits. One step at a time. Just throw your arm between her and whoever she's hitting 'till then.

- Patiently try to help her meet her needs while she's throwing a tantrum.

Don't be surprised if she's too frustrated to help you. That's actually perfectly natural and okay - by the time "trying to meet her needs" has collapsed to "total meltdown," she's probably a bit beyond calmly progressing to a goal. That's okay, the important thing is for her to know that attempts at help are there if and when she wants to use them, and that she is free to throw a tantrum until such time as she is capable of utilizing them, or until meeting her needs would even once again become helpful to her in her managing of her emotion.

- Invite an entire circle of caring into your and your daughters' life.

Yes, your post already made me guess that you're really not all that good at 'reading' people, and there's nothing wrong with that, despite the downward cycle of mutual frustration this may have caused in you and your daughter's life. This can help with that - but it can also be helpful if my guess is wrong (always a possibility); even the most successful of empathetic communicators still have only one point of view. The more people in you and your daughters' community, the more people are available to find ways to help your daughter meet her needs that are more effective than violence. It can be hard to find such a community - both in terms of having to discard people who focus on punishment-based solutions, and in finding people willing to devote their time and energy into helping your daughter find solutions to meet her needs - but having more people present can solve two problems; it brings more points of view who might notice events or solutions that others may have missed, and it also helps free up the burden on your patience and energy (which is probably also pretty important at this stage). ;)

More caring people = more solutions = more chances to find a solution that works for both you and her. A community willing to be helpful in a trying time can be hard to find, but I honestly believe it's also something that every caregiver (and every child) deserves and needs.

-- People are, by nature, inherently two things : selfish, and rational. By providing a physical barrier to her using violence as an emotional coping mechanism (and a recruitment tool to getting her needs met), you make sure she has to find other solutions (positive or negative). By providing her with more effective solutions to meet her needs, you give her a toolkit BESIDES violence to serve her self-interest.

While anger is a natural emotion, violence is *\*always\** a learned behavior; people are not born knowing that they - can- hurt people, nor -how-. If one finds the need it meets - from coping with intense and complex emotions to recruiting other people to satisfy her basic needs - one can start working on meeting that need or set of needs in a more effective and less destructive fashion.

Good luck with the task ahead of you. It certainly doesn't sound like it has been easy for you, and it might not get easier immediately even if you find a solution that ~does~ work... and eighteen months is a long time of learning, when it's been a lifetime.

Good luck.

[to post comments](#)

## **Rhona's 18mth old**

*Submitted by Willow on 27 March, 2009 - 21:13*

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I find that me being wound up affects both my children. My new technique is to start singing. That calms me down and therefore the children.

Is your child bored? Could you get out more. We love toddler groups, the park, soft play, getting muddy and stuff.

One thing I have found helps me and the child, is to say nice things about the child. If I have just stopped 1 year old from tearing chunks out of the breast he isn't feeding from, he gets very cross. Telling him I love him and what a cutie he is makes me remember what it's all about. I've just thought of a better idea for that specific. Must find a good soft squeezey toy.

Is it possible you have PND. There really is no such thing as a mean baby. If you are thinking of your child as being mean, there might be an underlying cause.

You say she is not spoiled. Why on earth not? She is a little girl. Give her everything and anything you possibly can. Letting her have her own way when you can will mean she will take you seriously when you have to do things she doesn't like.

Best of luck. Willow.

[to post comments](#)

## **my son gets so angry and doesnt listen to what i say**

*Submitted by Mo (not verified) on 30 March, 2009 - 21:06*

My son really upsets me, he is spoilt and shouts at me, on a couple of occasions he has hit me, he now runs away when i tell him off or try to disapline him. I love him very much but i need help because i feel like im dying inside. He says that i dont listen, but his behaviour is really terriable, he always says he hates his sister and this is not normal. He can be quite horrible to her and especially me. He is not so bnad to my partner. He doesn't see his real dad and doesnt want to. I dont know what to do to make him behave nicely and do things i ask. He does the same to my mum now who is nearly 80. I work very hard to give him all the nice things a boy of his age woud want. We clash really bad and i dont want to lose him but i feel that when we go out its always hell. Help please

[to post comments](#)

## **My daughter's behaviour.**

*Submitted by Maryanne (not verified) on 28 April, 2009 - 15:19*

I have a ten year old daughter and her behaviour sometimes towards me upsets me. When I say No to something she starts shouting at me and sometimes even saying words to hurt my feelings. She don't admit that I tell her what to do and she gets nervous if she doesn't have what she wants. As a child she is very caring,kind and honest. In her school reports she always had excellent marks regarding the school subjects, how she cope with her schoolmates and teachers, and on her behaviour. On their written reports they mention how kindhearted she is. I try my best to teach her the good values and be the best mum to her. That is why I feel so disappointed when I see her doing this to me. I admit that I loose my temper too and even her father when he sees her doing this to me he gets angry with her.Sometimes I think perhaps her hormones are changing. I feel confused and depressed sometimes. Thank you. Looking foward to hear from you.

[to post comments](#)

## **Angry child**

*Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 21 May, 2009 - 03:08*

Allison, I actually have a question for you. I am currently in your situation in 04. What happened with your son? I am at the end of my rope with my 6yr old. The behavior started at about age 3 and is not getting any better. Your child should now be 11. What happened & DOES IT GET BETTER????? Thanks for your time!!!

Very concerned mother.

[to post comments](#)

## **extreme temper tantrums**

*Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 15 June, 2009 - 13:57*

In response to the case of the toddler that throws extreme temper tantrums:

My daughter did the exact same thing.. and also included banging her head on the floor.. just out of the blue these expulsions would happen. I searched out the internet and actually found on one site that this is the reaction that happens to some children that are taking Zyrtek.. the allergy medicine. My daughter was taking this and i immediately took her off of it and the temper tantrums stopped the next day. I am just hoping that this helps someone.

[to post comments](#)

## **Where has the happy boy gone??**

*Submitted by anon (not verified) on 23 September, 2009 - 08:12*

I know just how you feel. My 3 year old seems to be constantly angry and vying for the upper hand against both myself and my husband most of the time, most days. It's not that he cannot convey how he feels - he's been talking in sentences since he was 18 months old and is an extremely verbal and articulate little boy - I always try to explain what he could say in a situation when he needs to tell us something that's troubling him, sometimes even before an 'event' happens if I can spot it coming. We are at the end of our tethers with it. He can be a very loving and sweet, but seems not to want any affection at all, unless it's completely instigated by him and on his terms. He tells us all the time he doesn't like us or want us anymore - sometimes just for stroking his head gently on our way past him! He has been like this for at least 6 months now, getting steadily worse. Where on earth has our happy, friendly little boy gone and how can we get him back? It seems like nothing we have tried so far works at all.

[to post comments](#)

## **How I should handle both kids**

*Submitted by Vani (not verified) on 30 September, 2009 - 10:10*

I have to sons aged 10 yrs and 8 yrs. From last 2-3 months, both of them remains very angry to me. After returning home in the evening, the moment I told them to have milk or to have dinner they start saying me that we r not going to have it. We are not talking to you. or they say we don't like this dish (whatever i cooked for them). Me also remained tired from work, first of all I request them to have that, but after sometimes I shout at them. But they never listened. No method applies to them. I don't know what to do. Sometime I feel this way they will become far from me. Pl. do suggest something.

[to post comments](#)

## **Angry 13 yo son**

*Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 26 October, 2009 - 13:09*

My son seems so angry. His dad and I divorced 18 months ago and now we have to move because his dad has lost his job and I cannot afford to support us in the house we currently live. I understand he has had alot of change and moving at his age is not something he wants to do. I have made sure he will stay in the same school so that he will not have the pressure of starting a new school.

He argues with everyone. His teachers have all reported his disrespectful nature. When you ask him about it he will reply "If they talk to me it makes me mad, if they would just leave me alone I would be okay". However, he isn't performing well so of course they have to interact with him.

He argues with me about everything at home. He seems to think that everything he does or does not do is his choice. When or if he does his homework is his choice, if he fails... well then he'll learn his own lesson. These are the things he says to me.

What can I do? I can't leave him to self destruct but when I try to talk to him he interrupts me and becomes angry. It seems like whatever I do it's wrong.

Any help would be appreciated.

[to post comments](#)

## **Have you ever heard of an**

*Submitted by Reane Postma (not verified) on 30 October, 2009 - 03:56*

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Have you ever heard of an angry newborn?

[to post comments](#)

## **Hi Salamanda, I have to just**

*Submitted by cat (not verified) on 12 December, 2009 - 10:52*

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Hi Salamanda, I have to just say I TOTALLY AGREE WITH EVERYTHING YOU SAY!! and phew.... what a relief! It seems like the world is going mad with adults rolling over and letting their children control them, all children really want is boundaries and when they push those boundaries and find there are actually no boundaries because the adults just give in all the time, the child's world becomes a very confusing and scary place... they end up not knowing what to believe or how to act or what is expected of them...

[to post comments](#)

## **My 15 year old daughter is**

*Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 16 December, 2009 - 20:36*

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My 15 year old daughter is very rebellious and she is even more rebellious towards my mate. She keeps taking things that don't belong to her from the house and then lying about. She goes in our room and uses my mate's lotions perfumes and anything she wants to. Which is a major problem. She talks back to her and seems very quiet when I am home but when I am not there she gives my mate pure hell. If we tell the kids don't touch anything without asking, she goes and gets it anyway. What do I do does she need counseling

[to post comments](#)

## **Rebellious 15 Year Old**

*Submitted by Sensical (not verified) on 7 January, 2010 - 09:11*

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I think counselling would be a good idea for your daughter. Not because there's anything wrong with her, but if your mate is living with you and isn't one of her parents, that can be confusing for a child. And counselling might help her sort out her feelings.

Even better would be the two of you going together. That would show her that you are really with her, even when she is difficult. Also, it would give you a chance to talk to somebody neutral about the problems in your family right now, as you have described them.

Good luck with everything. Remember, it's hard to be a teenager, and it doesn't last forever. What lasts forever is your relationship- for better or worse. Hopefully for better!

[to post comments](#)

## **Angry children**

*Submitted by Momof7 (not verified) on 18 January, 2010 - 12:45*

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I have just finished reading all the posts about angry children and I have a few suggestions that may help some of you. I have had to deal with anger in all of my children at one point or another. Anger is a secondary emotion, a response to another primary emotion and so the most important thing to do is to find the primary cause.

For those of you who have angry children as a result of a loss of a parent (through divorce or whatever), the most likely explanation for the child's anger is this loss. Since they are children, they usually do not know how to express the deeper feelings of loss, betrayal, guilt, and grief they are no doubt feeling, so they vent those emotions through anger. Children in this sort of situation need help getting in touch with those primary feelings, which are scary. This may call for the help of a third party, such as a counselor or youth minister, who can help the child reach those feelings and deal with them appropriately. Sometimes it is easier for a child to tell someone who is not their parent about how they feel, because they may be feeling negatively about the remaining parent as well. So yes, for all of you with angry children because of the loss of a parent, counseling of some kind may be of the most help. My own children suffered a temporary loss of their father and have received and continue to receive counseling, which is helping them more than I've been able to.

Young children, such as the babies and toddlers described by some of you, also experience anger as a secondary emotion. The advice given by several of you about looking for the primary causes in the environment and in the parental interactions is a great place to start. My oldest child had very strong emotions and we spent many years, beginning when he was an infant, helping him learn how to channel his feelings into appropriate actions rather than destructive ones. Sometimes that required "coercive" methods; in fact, for a short period when he was just turned 2, he literally demanded that we earn the right to be "in charge" of him. He would repeatedly and deliberately challenge every request we made of him, flying into a rage of refusal. We had to be firm and insist that he comply, especially since most of these requests were for his safety and well being. Reasoning and discussion were impossible; he ignored it and continued to rage until we forcibly stopped him and made him do whatever it was. After about of a month of this, he seemed to accept that we were in charge and the raging stopped. Not that he never challenged the boundaries again, but he no longer seemed focused exclusively on challenging us. This is in keeping with everything I've studied on child development. Infants, toddlers, and

preschoolers need to have boundaries that are consistently and lovingly enforced in order to feel safe, emotionally and physically. Some of these very young children can be reasoned with; others need a firm hand. In my experience, temper tantrums are best handled at the moment by removing the child from the situation, even if that means cutting a shopping trip short or putting the child in its room or in time-out. I found that saying something like "I understand you're upset, but we can't talk about it until you calm down" and then nothing more until the tantrum is over does a couple of things: it communicates that you recognize and validate the child's feelings but does not reward the child's behavior with your attention. I have had to put my child in its room, say my piece, and then walk away and not return until the child calms down. I use the time to examine the situation that led up to the tantrum and see if there is a way to prevent it in the future. For some of my children, that meant simply not taking them to the store, or any other environment that triggered the behavior, until they were older and could understand ideas such as "when we're in the store, you must ask me before touching anything, stay with me all the time, and if you see something you want, you may ask, but I will not be buying you everything you see."

As someone else said, sometimes tantrums, anger, and physical violence are a way of getting parental attention or other needs met. I found with my children that if I spent some good one-on-one time with each of them every day, they were less likely to act out and use bad behavior to get my attention, leaving me free to do things like cooking and housework and schooling the older children. Every child needs that one-on-one time; even ten or fifteen minutes will do wonders. For example, a regular story time, say just before afternoon nap, is one idea that children respond well to. If you have difficulty with this, a grandparent or other close family member can help. What is important is that the infant, toddler, and preschooler feel that they are important, valued, and listened to with respect.

Be aware of their emotional needs as well as the physical; this was hard for me but easy for my husband, so between us we were able to give them what they needed most of the time.

Children who are violent need to be restrained from continuing to hit/hurt, and then encouraged to express their feelings with words (if they are able), and to vent their feelings in a safe, acceptable manner, such as hitting a pillow, drawing a picture, tearing up paper, and so on. Here again what is important is that the child's feelings are validated, not repressed.

I know from my own experience that when children are told some feelings are "bad" or "wrong", they will have difficulty with those feelings as adults, to the impairment or destruction of their adult relationships. Children should not be permitted to hurt anyone else, at whatever age, and I think as parents we must do whatever is necessary to stop the behavior immediately, and then look for causes and solutions. I cured my babies of biting the breast by a loud yell and abrupt removal; it didn't take more than once or twice of this for them to stop, even as young as six months old.

I agree with most of the philosophy of TCS, however, I do believe that discussion, reasoning, and finding the "win-win" solution may not always be possible, especially with young children. My own experience reflects the research I've read on child development, by Piaget, Vygotsky, Dobson, and others. Children younger than around six or seven simply are not equipped psychologically to respond effectively to reasoning much of the time. We must teach them gradually how to participate in this sort of cooperation, by giving them choices ("red shirt or yellow? Peanut butter or ham? etc.) when possible, by finding ways to solicit their ideas and feelings as much as possible, yet still have those boundaries, firmly and lovingly enforced, that create the psychological safe zone young children must have in order to grow and thrive. School age children are more ready for increased use of the problem-solving approach; my own have been much more creative at coming up with solutions for chores and so on than I have.

One final thought: anger often comes from a sense of powerlessness. Those of you with older angry children may want to look for ways to empower their children. This may mean home schooling rather than traditional school, and allowing the student to take charge of what he is learning rather than having it imposed on him from without.

What students need to be successful as adults is not information, but skills: they need to know how to find out what they want to know and how to reason critically about what they learn.

Schools have not yet caught up to the realities of the 21st century. Children from 12 and up need to begin taking responsibility for their own education; parents need to be advisors and facilitators. My oldest five children have all finished or are currently in high school, yet they all took different paths because of their different goals and needs. Three of them did not get "regular" diplomas, but that isn't stopping them from successfully pursuing their dreams. The two that are still in high school understand that it is **their** responsibility to do their schoolwork, get to school on time, obey schools rules, and so on, not mine. Going to regular high school was also their choice; I was more than willing to home school them if they preferred. Since school is the primary focus of the older child's life, I urge you to consider ways to give the responsibility for and power over education to your child.

I hope these thoughts can be some help for you who are dealing with angry children, of whatever age. God bless you and your children, and I pray for peace for your households.

to post comments

## **My 4 year old is going**

*Submitted by olwyn (not verified) on 8 February, 2010 - 13:27*

My 4 year old is going through this at the moment. I know his anger is genuine, but also notice that over time he is expressing it more forcefully - now he knocks over chairs, slams doors, throws things, shouts, hits me etc. Like you, I think I am the main target. I also suspect he is wondering how much he can indulge himself. He is fine in school and at granny's. I have been on the point of tears, and don't always get my reaction right, but last week made a conscious effort to be better.

1. Avoidance. Try to steer clear of things that will cause a row.
2. Hunger. He's much more prone to this behaviour if his meals are late.
3. If there is a big blow out, keep calm. As all the books tell you. It's VERY hard, but pays dividends. Lower yourself down to his level, hold his hand, talk quietly, and maybe inject humour. I did this a couple of times recently and his anger disappeared, there was no horrible aftermath etc.
4. Limit tv time!!! I suspected that the more he watched during the day, the crankier/more prone to anger he was. When I limited it (had to get him to accept that, by discussion and offering loads of alternatives) there was an immediate difference.
5. Vary his activities. Spend definite 1-1 time with him. They say 8 minutes 1-1 time per day is what a child needs to feel secure. It's not a lot.

I'd be interested to hear how things progressed with your boy?

to post comments

**I read about your issue with**

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I read about your issue with your angry 6 year old from 2004. We are dealing with a similar 6 year old now. I am curious to hear how everything is turning out with your son's development and what advice you could give. Thanks

[to post comments](#)

### **Aggression in Four-Year-Old Boy**

*Submitted by elise (not verified) on 31 May, 2010 - 06:52*

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I am a mother to a beautiful, will-full four year old boy. Recently, my son has started hitting, biting and spiting when we try to establish limitations. When I react in anger, the situation quickly degrades itself. Being angry in response to negative behavior has done nothing but aggravate the situation. My son simply mirrors my words and emotions back at me. It's awful. I am beginning to think that there is no such thing as positive punishment. I am realizing that re-direction and kind, gentle words sooth the situation. At the same time, I am concerned that he will not fully understand the "wrongness" of his actions. Also , I am finding a growing chasm in our relationship. He has suddenly grown interested in swords and is always talking about fighting off coyotes and other wild animals. I find this type of talk slightly offensive and definitely not engaging. My son needs constant stimulation. If I stop reading to him after the 6th book and start reading my own, he starts attacking me with a pillow. He is constantly needing our attention..... I was thinking of homeschooling but am now feeling like I would not be able to handle it. I would love to read of any suggestions or comments, Elise

[to post comments](#)

### **agry child**

*Submitted by namrata (not verified) on 31 May, 2010 - 11:08*

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my niece is 2 year old, she is very angry. she throws her toys when anyone of our family or outsider doesnt do what she wants to do, she also hits anyone in anger. what to do plz suggest

[to post comments](#)

### **Elsie's 4 year old**

*Submitted by Willow on 8 June, 2010 - 12:13*

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I ward against sending your son to school. I can't see how this could make things better and it could quite easily make matters worse.

My son is the same age. We recently did some sword fighting at a re-enactment event we attended. It went really well and he completely understood that he can hit someone else's sword or sheild as hard as he can but needs to be more gentle with boddies.

He does get furious some times. I just make him safe and let him get on with it if it's something I can't fix.

When I'm frustrated, I sometimes leave and go to my bedroom and put the radio on. My son has picked up on this strategy and now will take himself to his room to calm down sometimes.

Do you explain why hitting is hurtful? You may need to wait until he has calmed down, but we just explain that we don't hit people because it hurts them and makes them sad. Then I ask him to think about how he would feel if he was hit.

He still gets angry at things, but this is usually well directed and he doesn't take it out on other people.

[to post comments](#)

## **My experience...**

*Submitted by vivekkej on 17 August, 2010 - 21:04*

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We as parents are mostly responsible for their behavior. I feel 100% responsible for whatever my 3 year old does. The mistake I was making was to laugh at my child when he's angry. That makes him throw a fit. But if I acknowledge his feelings and try and negotiate, it doesn't work either. I usually end up doing what he wants me to do.

[to post comments](#)

## **Thank you Olwyn!**

*Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 27 September, 2010 - 23:02*

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At last: sensible 'to do list' with pointers and advice that I can follow from tomorrow for my gorgeous bright and kind hearted yet often volatile, violent and baffling daughter. Thank you - I shall try every tactic xxx

I've read all the posts on here and love the expression of acting like a trusted guide rather than military parent.

My first child, a boy, is so laid back my second, a daughter; so difficult - but you know all parents on here are GOOD and LOVING parents - all feeling the shame of being at their wits end - how do I know they are good parents? Cos like me they are desperate to do the right thing - and are researching to frantically help their child and their family.

I also agree and believe that a child needs boundaries and most difficult behaviour derives from 'pushing the boundaries' as they grow.

I believe the word 'no' is important - used in the right context - as they are going to find out you need to take responsibility and deal with negatives when entering the big wide world. Not stating this word and letting your babies believe everyone will bend over backwards for them inevitable will do more harm than good (I mean how will they learn coping strategies to life negatives with non-family members?)

Thank you to all the posters and well done and hang on in there to parents like me who really are just wanting to do the right thing and need that little bit of hope and help (my mum always says 'it's just a phase' ...but it's hard to look beyond and above when in the situation).

In the words of Winston Churchill 'Keep Calm & Carry On' - this coupled with those tips; I have new hope and belief that my daughter and I can reach a new calmer beginning x

[to post comments](#)

### **angry babies RE:**

*Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 15 February, 2011 - 23:15*

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I am having the exact same problem with my son. He has been this way since birth. He is angry 90% of time time.

[to post comments](#)

### **I will second this! My 4 year**

*Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 8 March, 2011 - 17:25*

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I will second this! My 4 year old has a lot of trouble coping with disappointment and will have extreme meltdowns when things don't go her way. We've removed artificial flavours & colours and MSG from her diet and it makes an enormous difference!

[to post comments](#)

### **unhappy baby**

*Submitted by neeraj (not verified) on 19 March, 2011 - 17:59*

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my baby remains unhappy, angry, upset, screaming.....need help...

[to post comments](#)

### **My 9 year old son!**

*Submitted by Mther0f3 (not verified) on 26 April, 2011 - 16:21*

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My nine year old son is angry with me because he believes I have taken him away from his father whom he loves very much. He is an angel around everyone else, but at home he is a holy terror. He constantly is aggressive toward his younger sister, and tries to be toward me. I don't know what to do about his anger issues. I would love to let him be with his father, but his father is in an extremely unhealthy relationship with a woman whom I absolutely refuse to have my son living with. ANY advice would be greatly appreciated. Thanks.

[to post comments](#)

## **angry 6yr old**

*Submitted by laura (not verified) on 24 August, 2011 - 04:22*

For the past year my daughter has been angry, with burying, throwing and breaking things. Her dad and are together. I am at my witts end and do not know what to do. She only does this with us and nobody us, especially not at school. Tried time outs, don't work. Take things away etc with no succées. I need help please.

[to post comments](#)

## **Angry baby**

*Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 16 September, 2011 - 06:16*

I'm wondering if you and your baby experienced a difficult birth. Often babies have birth trauma that they need to work through. Allowing a small baby to cry and rage without shushing them can be really helpful. It will feel strange at first because as a parent it feels like you are failing if your baby is crying. If you are sure that your bub is not hungry or doesn't have any other needs that are not being met (nappy or sleep etc...) then you could allow your child to cry either in your arms or next to you if they prefer. Usually they will either finish by having a big sleep or will be extremely calm afterward. You know how it feels when you have a really big cry. Kinda good. There are a lot of chemicals that are released that help us to de-stress when we cry. Babies need this too. Just remember don't leave your child to cry alone. It is important that they feel safe and connected when crying or raging. This may help. Your baby may seem angry all the time if they are never adequately allowed to release their emotions.

[to post comments](#)

## **My EXTREME 5 year old**

*Submitted by ashleighnarie (not verified) on 30 October, 2011 - 01:50*

I am in need of some advice a.s.a.p before I start losing my sanity... I'm a young single mother, my son has never met his dad (his left when he was born) I am also a recovering addict. My son is 5..over 4 feet, and almost 70 pounds...that's half my weight. He's EXTREMELY aggressive, hits me, tells me to cry, and laughs at me... I'm not the only one he hits. He'll hit someone any chance he gets. He's not very social, making it extremely hard to go anywhere with him...He's been expelled from school, on his way to a "special" one geared towards children with behavioural issues. No matter how I react, or dicipline, it doesn't seem to work. I've tackled the situation with a quiet voice, asking if he just needs someone to hug, and he's hit me harder...I've raised my voice, and he yells louder... I NEED advice...how can I get my 5 year old son to stop beating me up.... ???

[to post comments](#)

## **Just dint bother them I am 13**

*Submitted by Cesar (not verified) on 17 November, 2011 - 02:16*

Just dint bother them I am 13 years old with the same problem any thing will make me so mad even if you don't do anything. Try not to take stuff away from them my mom does that it makes me mader the I already am it's cuz

were going throw puberty.

[to post comments](#)

### **Angry 3 year old**

*Submitted by Cassandra (not verified) on 17 January, 2012 - 05:38*

my daughter will be 3 in march and she is getting to be very angry. i try no to show her agrestion, she has rules and boundries and im not to strick. i play with her and show her love but latly she is spitting at me, hitting me, telling me no. she screams at me if i tell her she can do or have something. and today she bit me out of raige. i dont know what to do, i hate seeing my little girl so angry. did i do something wrong, what do i need to change.

[to post comments](#)

### **Angry Child**

*Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 19 January, 2012 - 16:17*

I am a Nanny to a 3 year old who is just like that. He tells me to go home, and becomes violent. He says he doesnt like me, and tells me not to talk, his parent let him eat ice cream for breakfast, he tells them to shut up and even hits them. I am dumb founded and dont know what to do.

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### **4 year old son hits alot**

*Submitted by mattsmom (not verified) on 24 February, 2012 - 01:59*

I know exactly what you are going through. My son hits, spits, yells, back talks not only with me but with his teachers and the other kids. He is the only child so he gets all the attention here at home. Time outs DO NOT WORK!!! I also have taken away toys, bikes you name it he has lost them all. It doesn't seem to phase him one bit. I am a good mother, but I to question my skills, do I do the right things that a mother should do? I just don't know what to do. His teacher told me that when he is in class no other teacher wants to go in there because he acts out and does not listen. I know this probably did not help you, but I just wanted to let you know that you are not alone...

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### **how to help an angry children - please help**

*Submitted by Fatima Domingo (not verified) on 1 March, 2012 - 09:54*

I have two girls 12 and 9 years. I have been in an abusive marriage for 13 years and now I have walk away as he wanted to kill me infront of the eldest. She stopped him and it now seems that with all of that she is angry with

me.

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## **My three year has suddenly become so angry**

*Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 21 April, 2012 - 15:18*

I have recently switched my children's child care centers due to an issue with my other child. My baby that just turned three and was close to the teacher there and now is acting out at the new center. He has been telling the majority of the teachers NO and I Hate you and You suck. I have never ever heard my child say things of that nature. It has now become a problem at home. It has become very obvious that he is angry. I have tried talking to him, I have spanked him, I have put him in time out, I have tried everything my mom has suggested for me to do. I am at a loss of how to handle this situation. It has now started to happen at home. how can I help my child deal with his anger?

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## **maybe this will help cassandra**

*Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 25 April, 2012 - 13:38*

I have just read ur comments. my son will be 4 end of this year and he use to throw fits and have tantrums when i told him it was bed time or time to tidy up, you wouldnt believe the difference it made giving him a count down so he could prepare himself for it. i do it with lots of things; bed time, tidyin toys, cummin in from playin out the back, goin in bath, at a soft play etc.

its got to the point now that i just give him 1 10 min warnin or tel him he can have one more go on something then its time to go, no arguments or tantrums. He had been fine for ages but recently started getting angry again and i think it mite be due to nursery. all the kids are already 4 and alot more advanced than him some can read etc. i think he gets frustrated that he cant. even at home if a toy doesnt work he will throw it, its just a way of them dealing with it.

the best thing you can do is talk to her let her know that it is ok to be angry but then explain an appropriate way to express how shes feelin. you could get her a specail chair and sit it somewhere that she is still near toys, tv so she doesnt feel like shes being punishd and tell her if she gets angry she can sit there and count or sing to calm down then go play again or she could even come to you and explain to you why shes angry and you could help calm her down.

im still at the moment doin this with my son. if i ask him whats wrong he is either too angry to tell me and sometimes me just tellin him its ok to be angry but we dont throw toys (or wotever shes done) come to mummy and i'll help you. if not workin ask her about what she was doin- distracting her mite work or ask her if she wants a cuddle, that sumtimes workd with my son.

With hitting and spitting though i would try a 'naughty spot'. i do that with my son. if she hits you ask her not to do it and explain that if she does she will be in naughty spot. if she does it again sit her there 4 mins, explain why. if she's not used to it, then don't expect her to stay there.

it mite take a while but it does work, some days more than others! but i have done it since he was old enough to understand, just for very naughty things not for everything because then ur child wud just think if she goes there for every little things then she mite aswell be very naughty

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## **naughty spots and time out**

*Submitted by emma (not verified) on 13 May, 2012 - 16:54*

I wouldn't do those things myself (time out and naughty spot). What do you think they will achieve???

If you search for "emma" on this page, you'll find a post I wrote years ago, which might help suggest alternatives.

Children are allowed to be angry. It's really important to help them learn to recognise that emotion. "you seem to be angry" "can you feel a cross feeling in your tummy?" that sort of thing.

and then it's important to be very clearly on their side.

If there's something you are doing which is making them angry, and which you have control over, and which you actually could stop doing, stop doing it. Take them out of the day care centre that they hate (put one child in each day care centre!)

If there is something that is out of your control that they are angry over, just be with them, fully present, while they express that anger. Be patient, don't hurry it, just hear their frustration and show them that you hear it. No need to judge. Just listen.

If a child is angry, watch your own emotion! Anger is terribly contagious. Don't act in anger. Just be calm and still and wait for the anger to subside before acting (it takes about 90 seconds). If necessary, say to the child "I'm sorry - I'm feeling angry. Give me a minute to calm down" and go away and sit somewhere quietly to calm down before you can help them. That's a good modelling for them for controlling their own emotions. but don't force your child to be on their own when angry - they probably aren't mature enough for that yet!

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