



The Early Edition

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The Early Edition is a publication of the Matrix Family Resource Center (FRC) program — part of California's interagency system of early intervention services for children from birth to 36 months. Our FRC staff is here to provide information and support to help you care for your baby. Additional information and resources are also provided in a designated Birth to 3 section on our website at www.matrixparents.org.

BIRTH TO 3

Practical Tips for Managing Behavior

When your toddler struggles with a feeling that cannot be soothed by a physical item, it can be helpful to begin labeling those feelings.

Behavior is how we express ourselves in response to a situation or being stimulated. Before a child learns a method of communication, behavior is their only tool to get their needs met. Along with teaching our little ones how to communicate their needs, one of our first jobs as parents is to teach and model appropriate behavior to our children. This is a difficult aspect of parenthood under normal circumstances! The effects of your child coping with a disability can weigh heavily on the whole family.

The emotional life of a toddler can be overflowing with a variety of feelings: excitement, frustration, boredom, fear, joy, and anger, to name a few. Our pint-sized whirlwinds are also famous for a lack of impulse control! Admittedly, it can be easier to teach them how to communicate a physical need like hunger or thirst than it can be to teach them how to express emotion. Sometimes, on an exhausting daily basis, toddlers will demonstrate many unwanted behaviors. When your toddler struggles with a feeling that cannot be soothed by a physical item, it can be helpful to begin labeling those feelings.

A good strategy is to model this idea by labeling your own emotions.

Overwhelming emotions can sometimes be the root cause of unwanted behavior. For a young child who lacks maturity and the verbal skills to handle these situations, helping them label emotions can be a good first step. With consistency, they may begin to associate that feeling with a word. A good strategy is to model this idea by labeling your own emotions. As adults, we understand how deeply we can feel the sensations of fear and anger. Showing your little one that you experience the same feelings can give them confidence and generalization.

If your child gains the skills to identify when they have a negative feeling reward them! Give positive reinforcement and keep up the great work!



We can help with transition to preschool.
call 800.578.2592



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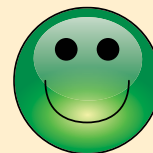
HELPFUL RESOURCES

Here is a web page of resource links on Emotions & Behavior – KidsHealth, posted on the Nemours website (nemours.org). <http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/emotions/#catfeelings>

“Understanding Your Toddler’s Emotional Mood”, by Amy Bellows, Ph.D., posted on PsycheCentral website (psychcentral.com) is a helpful six minute read. <https://psychcentral.com/lib/understanding-your-toddlers-emotional-moods/>



Happy Very Happy



Sad

Angry