

We've Got Mail!

Parents share their tried and tested ways of teaching children to handle and deal with disappointments, frustration, tantrums and whining behaviours.

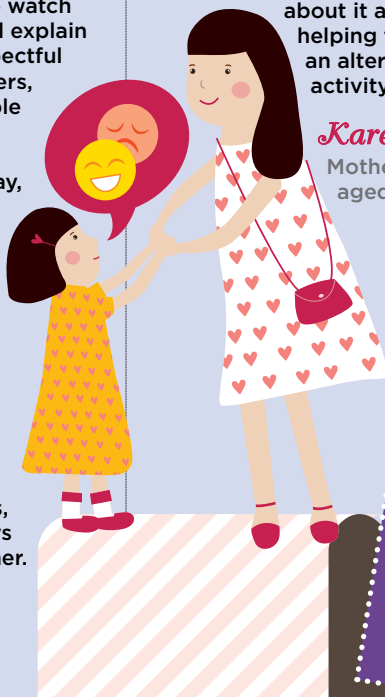


As parents, we feel frustrated too when our children get upset. However, we need to put ourselves in our children's shoes to understand them. My two children get the blues when they are not able to watch their favourite television programme when their grandparents want to watch another channel. I will explain to them why it is respectful to give in to their elders, and that not being able to always get what they want is part of growing up. In this way, I hope they will grow up with the right values. To reduce disappointments, I would propose an alternate family activity for them to learn that they can take control of a situation and move on. I believe that such activities strengthen family ties, and a family that plays together stays together.

Doreen Chew
Mother of two aged 3 and 5

Pre-empting our daughter is how my husband and I deal with possible disappointments and frustrations. We always take the opportunity to discuss and share with our daughter that plans may change due to certain factors like the weather or Daddy's work schedules. I illustrate this by turning a tap on and off to show her that doing so can stop the flow of water, but we cannot do that to stop rain. It has taken a while, but now she understands that some factors are beyond anyone's control. She is also happy that there are always alternative activities that are just as fun. Instead of whining or throwing tantrums, we have taught our daughter to express disappointment in a healthy manner like talking about it and helping to plan an alternative activity.

Karen Lee
Mother of one aged 5



The one thing that my son loves best is playing with Transformers toys. So I have incorporated his favourite toy as part of a reward system to encourage him to demonstrate positive or appropriate behaviours. For this, I created a wall chart with images of three Transformers toys in the columns, with a set of points under each image. Positive behaviour or an appropriate reaction to a disappointment or setback will gain him points for a specific Transformers toy. Points are deducted when his behaviour is negative or inappropriate. After he has collected enough points for the Transformers toy of his choice, I videotape him describing how he would 'transform' the toy. Through this, my son learns that positive or appropriate behaviours brings about a sense of satisfaction.

Adeline Lee
Mother of two aged 3 and 5



The saying "It takes a village to raise a child" is something parents might have heard. But what does it really mean and achieve? Parents, if you have any examples of how your extended family, or the community, has helped towards the development of your child, let us know! Your story may be featured in the next issue of *Beanstalk*.

Send your story to beanstalk@mediacorp.com.sg

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