

Q&A HOW TO HELP CHILDREN STRUGGLING WITH THEIR EMOTIONS OR NUMERACY AND LITERACY SKILLS.



FOR PARENTS

Q How can I help my child manage tantrums and learn better ways to express emotions?

Rather than react to a child screaming, stomping or throwing himself to the ground, pause awhile to understand what is happening. Even though it may be difficult to do so, it is vital to remain calm. Find out what is triggering such behaviours.

Tantrums happen for various reasons: the child may be seeking attention, expressing frustration over a certain activity, expressing hurt, or wanting to take control. Younger children may lack the words to communicate their feelings and emotions.

To deal with temper tantrums:

- > **Know your child's limits.** Avoid scheduling challenging activities when he is hungry or overtired.
- > **Use feeling words.** Validate your child's feelings by saying "I see you feel angry right now" instead of "Don't cry". Teach him to verbalise how he feels.
- > **Remain calm.** Avoid exhibiting a tantrum yourself. Otherwise, your child will learn that screaming or shouting is an effective way to get what he wants.
- > **Reinforce positive behaviour.** When the tantrum is over, say things like "I like the way you decided to play with your toy cars again".

Tantrums usually decline over time as children learn more socially appropriate ways and the language to deal with their emotions.

Q How can educators support children who are struggling with their numeracy and literacy skills?

When children have trouble counting, naming and remembering numbers, or understanding basic number concepts, provide them more hands-on activities using concrete materials and objects.

Here are some strategies:

1. **Match, sort and group.** Provide a variety of materials like building blocks, plastic bottles and caps, pebbles, and boxes of varying sizes for children to sort and group these objects into different categories (e.g. colour, size, shape).
2. **Make comparisons.** Ask children to arrange crayons, sticks, recycled bottles or cartons by size from tallest/longest to shortest, or from biggest to smallest. For instance, experiment with containers that can hold the most sand or water to ones that hold the least. Provide verbal support by describing what they are doing.
3. **Recognise patterns and sequences.** Use children's literature (picture-based stories). Look for patterns such as designs on buildings, clothes and fabric, or even the veins on leaves and markings on tree trunks. Create patterns in the sand or with materials found around the preschool.

Authentic and meaningful experiences can be found everywhere, and you can use different materials and activities to support young children's numeracy and literacy skills. Most importantly, remember to have fun!

FOR EDUCATORS



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