



Top tips for managing
challenging behaviour



Managing your *younger child's* challenging behaviour

2-7 years

- 1 Pre-empt (where possible) what will happen in the day and tell them. Also, be mindful of whether they are hungry, tired, or unwell

- 2 Use distractions such as shall we read a book, sing a song, or say CBeebies is about to start

- 3 Change the environment to another room in the house, outside, garden or park


- 4 Choose your battles and do not respond to everything your child says. If they say I hate you, say, well, I love you, turn their statement into a positive one, or ignore their verbal rant and do not take it personally.

(Good preparation for all stages of childhood, especially the teenage years)

- 5 Plan ahead. for example, ensure you leave enough time to get ready and leave the house

- 6 Stay calm and firm. If your child is demanding another biscuit and you feel they have had enough, 'That's enough, stay firm and move and focus on something such as tidying the kitchen

- 7 Breathe or count to 5 or 10, whatever number works for you



Use the three-step strategy:

- 8**
1. I understand you are feeling sad because you want to keep playing in the park
 2. It is time to go home for dinner
 3. We can come to the park on Thursday

Stick to the script, say it confidently and repeat (Focus on the issue, keep it simple rather than stating that they really need to leave the park, never want to leave the park, etc.)

- 9** Acknowledge how you are feeling, say it out loud if you think it would help
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- 10** Cuddle your child
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- 11** Acknowledge your child's difficult feelings, I know that you are upset because you want Jo's toy. This can prevent the tantrum from escalating and give your child a chance to reset their emotions
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- 12** Encourage your child to express how they are feeling
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- 13** Have age-related expectations and focus on the reality of the situation
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- 14** Be consistent and calm in your approach. It is confusing for a child if sometimes you give them what they want and sometimes you don't
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15 Take charge when you need to. If your child is having a tantrum because they want something, do not give it to them. If the child doesn't want to get out of the bath, it might be safer to take the plug out than trying to pull them out of the bath

16 Talk quietly, lower your voice rather than trying to compete with your child's loud voice

17 Explain expectations clearly. Instead of Don't jump on the sofa, try we sit on the sofa

18 Remember, you need to be the calm in your child's storm

[read more for older children's challenging behaviour >>>](#)



Managing your *older child's* challenging behaviour

7+ years

1 Be a positive role model don't yell or mirror their behaviour

2 Wait until you have both calmed down to reason and talk about things

3 Pay attention to their reactions

4 Think about what is behind the behaviour

5 Pause, breath, smile

6 Don't get physical with your child

7 Try not to freeze up and become overwhelmed so that you give in



8 Give out consequences when things have calmed down

9 Role model appropriate responses- when you are angry- Explain how you are feeling. I feel frustrated, so I am taking a break- I'm really upset. I'm going to wait until I am calm, then we can talk

10 Give consequences for the behaviour, not the emotion (swearing, breaking things, not the anger)

11 Take a break, do something on your own for a while and allow your child to do the same

12 Instead of go to your room for an hour, try when you feel better, not upset anymore, you can come and join us

13 Do not lecture or catastrophize the situation

14 Ensure you are listening to what your child is saying

15 Have a family meeting, where each member of the family can give their opinions and it is an opportunity to reset the expectations in the home

16 Be the calm in your child's storm

Hi, I'm Cherie

I help parents discover their own parenting strengths, offer them a secure and judgement-free space, and give them personalised advice that suits their specific needs.

If you would like further support with parenting, why not call me for a **free 30-minute consultation** call?

During which you can explain the current challenges you are facing and I can outline how I would support you.



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*Be the Parent You Have
Always Wanted to Be.*

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