



The way you handle your child's challenging behaviors can make a big difference in their overall behavior during the lockdown.

Your child's routine has changed, just like yours, so they may be more irritable, too! Knowing how to respond appropriately and make it a learning opportunity can help you both!

Responding to temper tantrums

1. If your child is safe and able to calm down on their own, ignore the tantrum. Watch out of the corner of your eye to make sure the child stays safe and is calming down. Calming might be harder now.
2. Take a few deep breaths yourself and release tension, relax your shoulders.
3. Use a lower, slower, and deeper voice.
4. Remind your child how to calm down such as take deep breaths and blow the mad out or push on the wall.
5. Encourage the child to calm down by saying things like "I know you can calm your body."
6. Praise the child for behaviors that are even close to the right thing, such as "thank you for sitting."
7. After the tears have stopped, the body has relaxed, and the breathing has returned to normal, talk with your child about what happened, how they felt, and what they need. Mostly listen and let them tell you since your child needs practice putting these things into words. With young toddlers, you might need to tell them what happened, label their feelings and suggest things to help because they might not be able to verbalize how they feel.

Responding to misbehavior

1. Quickly, calmly, and consistently stop the behavior and explain why. Example: "What you are doing is not safe. Someone could get hurt."
2. Calmly tell them what they *can* do that is a safe or more appropriate alternative. If possible, give two or three choices and let them pick one.
3. Give them the chance to do it and show you that they can do the right thing.
4. For very young children, help them to choose or get started on the safer, more appropriate alternative.
5. Doing things together can reduce the lonely feelings for both you and your children.
6. Praise them for making a good choice or following the directions well, even if it was not perfect. When they know that they can please you, they will try to do so more often.



Additional Resources

If you are feeling like this is all too much and you need more specific advice or you are afraid of hurting yourself or your children, reach out to a professional for help. Most helping professions are providing services by phone or video sessions.

- Call Cuyahoga County Children Services' 24-hour Child Abuse Hotline at (216) 696-5437.
- Call Beech Brook to request consultation or therapy services for your child (216) 831-2255.
- Call NAMI HelpLine Monday through Friday from 10:00 am-6:00 pm (EDT) at 1-800-950-NAMI (6264) or 216-875-7776 or info@nami.org or support@namicleveland.org to get support for your own mental health needs. If you or a loved one is in crisis, you can text "NAMI" TO 741741.
- Call 211 for United Way's First Call for Help for information about community resources.
- Call 844-604-LIFE or Text 741741 if you are concerned about suicide (for yourself or someone else).