

Inclusive Developmental and Therapy Center

Calmer Behaviour & Fewer Meltdowns

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When the days feel like one long battle of tantrums, refusals and meltdowns, it is exhausting and it can leave you feeling like you are failing. You are not. Difficult behaviour is nearly always a child trying to tell us something they do not yet have the words for — and there are kind, proven ways to help.

This program is built on gentle, positive strategies. It is not about punishing your child harder; it is about understanding what sits behind the behaviour and slowly guiding them towards calmer ways to cope. It supports your family but does not replace professional advice if you need it.

♥ Who this program is for

- ✓ Children who have frequent tantrums or meltdowns
- ✓ Little ones who say “no” to almost everything or refuse routines
- ✓ Families stuck in a cycle of shouting and feeling worn out
- ✓ Parents wanting to be firm and loving at the same time
- ✓ Anyone who wants practical calm-down strategies that actually work

⚡ Important – when to get professional help

This is a supportive home program, not a diagnosis or a substitute for an assessment. Please speak to a professional promptly if:

Aggression or self-harm, such as hitting their own head, biting or hurting themselves

A sudden, marked change in behaviour that is not like your child at all

Seriously hurting other children or adults on a regular basis

A loss of skills or a return to much younger behaviour your child had grown out of

Behaviour that leaves your child, or you, frightened or unable to cope day to day

☆ Your step-by-step roadmap

Move at your child's pace, not the calendar's — the “weeks” are a gentle order, not a race. Repeat any stage as long as it helps.

Week 1 – Look for the pattern

Understand what triggers the hard moments.

For a few days, quietly note when meltdowns happen and what came just before.

Look for common triggers: hunger, tiredness, transitions or being asked to stop something.

Notice the calm times too, and what was different about them.

⚡ **Try this:** Behaviour is a message, not misbehaviour. Find the pattern before you change anything.

Week 2 – Catch the good

Grow the behaviour you want with attention.

Deliberately praise the small moments your child does the right thing.

Be specific and warm: “You waited so nicely, thank you.”

Give calm behaviour lots of your attention, so it is worth their while to repeat it.

 **Try** Children repeat whatever gets our attention. Feed the behaviour you
this: want to see more of.

Week 3 – Clear and kind limits

Make expectations simple and consistent.

Agree two or three simple family rules and say them in positive words.

Tell your child what to do instead, not just what to stop: “Gentle hands, please.”

Keep your response the same every time, so the boundary feels safe and predictable.

 **Try** Consistency is kindness. A rule that changes daily is harder for a child
this: than a firm, steady one.

Week 4 – Smooth the flashpoints

Prevent meltdowns before they build.

Give a gentle warning before changes: “Two more minutes, then we tidy up.”

Offer small, real choices to reduce power struggles: “Shoes first or coat first?”

Plan ahead for known tricky times, like leaving the park or bedtime.

 **Try** A little warning gives a busy brain time to switch gears, and heads off
this: many meltdowns.

Week 5 – Stay calm through the storm

Respond steadily when a meltdown happens.

Keep yourself calm first; a child cannot settle beside a frightened or angry adult.

Stay close, keep them safe, and use few words until the wave passes.

Reconnect warmly afterwards, and talk it through only once everyone is calm.

 **Try** You cannot reason with a child mid-meltdown. Be the calm harbour,
this: then teach later.

Tricks that make it work

- ✓ Decide on your response before the moment, not in the heat of it.
- ✓ Meet basic needs first — a hungry, tired child melts down far more easily.
- ✓ Make sure both parents and carers handle things the same way.
- ✓ Keep instructions short and give one at a time.

✓ Repair after a hard moment with a hug; your bond is never in question.

✓ Look after yourself too, so you have the patience these strategies need.

How you'll know it's working

- Meltdowns happen less often, or pass more quickly, than before.
- Your child follows a simple rule or request more of the time.
- There is less shouting and more calm in the house overall.
- You feel more confident about how to respond when things get hard.



Is this based on real methods? This program is based on positive behaviour support and ABA principles, which focus on understanding a behaviour's triggers, consistent routines and praising the behaviour you want rather than only reacting to the behaviour you do not.