



## Persistent and Challenging Behaviors Resources

### Temper Tantrums

A temper tantrum is an emotional outburst, usually associated with children or those in emotional distress. Tantrums are usually the result of frustration, anger, jealousy, dislike or a battle of wills in young children. Older children might throw a tantrum because they don't have the skills or know ways to show their determination. The military lifestyle can add stressors that could increase the likelihood that a child may have tantrums.

When you see your child is having a tantrum, check to see if the child is **Hungry, Angry, Lonely or Tired (HALT)**.

#### When a tantrum occurs:

- Don't take it personally
- Praise behaviors you want to encourage
- Take a break
- Respond when child obeys or calms down
- Be firm, not passive
- Teach child new strategies and skills
- Identify triggers
- Provide a "quiet place"
- Avoid giving in to child's desire
- Ignore undesired behavior
- Help child move on
- Apologize when necessary

For More Information: [Parents@MilitaryChild.org](mailto:Parents@MilitaryChild.org)



## **Did You Know That. . . .**

- All behavior is a way to communicate?
- All behavior that persists is usually working for the child?
- All problem behavior has a cause and a goal?
- There is a connection between a child's ability to communicate and challenging behavior?
- The pattern of behavior is important: not single or isolated events?
- The best approaches to challenging behavior are ones that (1) Respond to the underlying cause and need for the behavior? (2) Use positive approaches?
- The best way to prevent challenging behavior is to foster children's social and emotional needs and skills?

## ***What More Can We Do?***

For more serious or challenging behaviors that do not respond to regular strategies, it would be helpful to determine the trigger of the challenging behavior(s). Some challenging behavior may have an underlying physical cause or be the result of an undiagnosed disability. For persistent and serious challenging behaviors, please get support from all adults who care for your child. Teamwork is essential to come up with a positive behavior support plan for any child and family dealing with challenging behaviors.

### **Steps to Take:**

1. Consult your child's doctor to rule out or diagnose any physical causes.
2. Speak with and get observations and feedback from your child care provider or child's teacher.
3. Put together written observations of your child's behavior over a period of time. Make sure your observations list:
  - » When the behavior occurs
  - » What happens before it occurs
  - » Who are the people in the environment when it is happening
  - » What is said to your child, and
  - » How the situation was handled

4. Use a team approach to address your child's behavior. The team should include you, other family members or people who interact with your child in a significant way, your child's provider or teacher, your child's doctor, and, possibly, a counselor.

*Reference: The Daily Parent: Newsletter for Working Parents, Children with Challenging Behavior,*

<http://www.childcareresourcesinc.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/Issue-75-CHILDREN-WITH-CHALLENGING-BEHAVIOR-E1.pdf>

### **General Tips and Strategies**

- HealthyChildren.org sponsored by the American Academy of Pediatrics offers information on communication and discipline at:  
<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/family-dynamics/communication-discipline/Pages/How-to-Shape-Manage-Young-Child-Behavior.aspx>
- Tips on what to do when children lie:  
<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/family-dynamics/communication-discipline/Pages/When-Children-Lie.aspx>
- The Challenging Behaviors Tool Kit for people with autism provides strategies and resources to address challenging behaviors and helps support you during difficult situations.  
<https://www.autismspeaks.org/tool-kit/challenging-behaviors-tool-kit>
- Media use recommendations by the American Academic of Pediatrics,  
<https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/Pages/American-Academy-of-Pediatrics-Announces-New-Recommendations-for-Childrens-Media-Use.aspx>
- Positive Reinforcement: Positive Psychology,  
<https://positivepsychology.com/parenting-positive-reinforcement/>
- Time Outs. American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations on time outs,  
<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/family-dynamics/communication-discipline/Pages/Time-Outs-101.aspx>

## Young Children

- Dr. Sears: 8 Tools For Toddler Discipline:  
<https://www.askdrsears.com/topics/parenting/discipline-behavior/8-tools-toddler-discipline>
- Hand in Hand: Handling Aggression: Setting Limits with the Vigorous Snuggle:  
<https://www.handinhandparenting.org/article/handling-a-childs-aggression-setting-limits-with-vigorous-snuggle/>
- National Association for the Education of Young Children has suggestions on transition times:  
<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/sep2018/reducing-challenging-behaviors-during-transitions>
- Sesame Street has information and tips on dealing with challenging behavior:  
<https://sesamestreetincommunities.org/activities/mean-aggressive-behavior/>
- ***Setting Limits with Your Strong-Willed Child*** by Robert Mackenzie
- ZERO TO THREE has many resources and tips on behaviors:  
<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/326-toddlers-and-challenging-behavior-why-they-do-it-and-how-to-respond>  
and ZERO TO THREE <https://www.zerotothree.org/espanol/challenging-behaviors>

## School-Aged

- ***Common Sense Parenting: Using Your Head as well as Your Heart to Raise School-Aged Children*** by Dr. Ray Burke, Ron Herron and Bridget A. Barnes.
- Very Well Family offers discipline strategies:  
<https://www.verywellfamily.com/discipline-strategies-for-school-age-kids-620099>
- Empowering Parents offers advice on how to handle the top 4 issues:  
<https://www.empoweringparents.com/article/problems-at-school-how-to-handle-the-top-4-issues/>

## Teens

- A Parent's Guide to Surviving the Teen Years:  
<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/adolescence.html>

- Center for Parent & Teen Communication offers advice on strengthening family connections and helping teens to thrive:  
<https://parentandteen.com/>
- Positive Parenting Strategies for the Teenage Years:  
[https://www.wfm.noaa.gov/pdfs/ParentingYourTeen\\_Handout1.pdf](https://www.wfm.noaa.gov/pdfs/ParentingYourTeen_Handout1.pdf)
- Teen Discipline: Strategies and Challenges. Behavioral problems and effective solutions for your 13 to 18-year-olds:  
<https://www.verywellfamily.com/discipline-strategies-for-teens-1094840>

### **Contracts and Apps**

- American Academic of Pediatrics Family Media Plan:  
<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/media/Pages/default.aspx>
- Behavior Contract (downloadable):  
<https://www.understood.org/en/family/managing-everyday-challenges/daily-expectations-child/download-parent-child-behavior-contracts>
- Behavior Apps general information:  
<https://www.bestappsforkids.com/2015/chore-apps-for-kids/>

### **Seek Help**

- Families Overcoming Under Stress (FOCUS) provides a wide range of effective prevention services customized to the needs of military service members and their loved ones. TeleFOCUS offers video teleconferencing to all military families around the world.  
<https://www.focusproject.org/>
- Help for parents of troubled teens:  
<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/parenting-family/helping-troubled-teens.htm>
- Military Family Life Consultants (MFLC):  
<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/confidential-help/non-medical-counseling/military-and-family-life-counseling>
- Military One Source also offers counseling help: 800-342-9647 or live chat 24/7.

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## NOTES:

