

Supporting Your Child's Emotional Growth: A Tip Sheet for Parents & Caregivers of a 2-Year-Old Toddler



Balancing
Emotions

Una Serie de TheGreatest8™

Terrific Two's: Big Moves and Bigger Moods



Your child feels big emotions that they will probably struggle to handle on their own. One minute they're laughing, the next they're emphatically yelling "No!" or crying. At age 2, they don't always have the words to tell you how they feel, so they show feelings through actions like hitting, biting, or clinging. It's hard, but your calm and loving response helps them feel safe. And over time, they learn to manage their emotions.



What does Balancing Emotions mean?

Your child depends on you to help them understand and deal with their feelings and moods. Managing strong emotions is critical to helping your child learn how to face challenging situations throughout their life.

Focus Your Attention on Helping Your Child Balance Their Emotions

Why It Matters

At age 2, toddlers feel big emotions – like joy, fear, and frustration – but they can't control these feelings yet. They use you as a model to learn how to handle their big feelings. When you stay calm and demonstrate coping skills, like deep breathing or taking a short break from an activity, you show them that all feelings are okay. With time, they'll learn to manage them, too.



Everyday Moments

What It Looks Like

Your child melts down because their cup is the wrong color. Don't rush in to get a different cup! Stay close and acknowledge their feelings. "You're upset – it's okay to feel mad." You can offer a hug, allow them the choice to have a drink out of the non-preferred cup (or not!), and suggest a different activity, like reading a book or coloring. With practice, they'll learn to handle frustrations, make choices, and develop a toolbox of skills to help them feel better faster.



What You Can Do – A Checklist for You!

- ☐ Notice and name their feelings, as well as why they might be feeling that way: "You're sad because I turned off the TV"
- ☐ Stay calm and use a soft voice during meltdowns – your calm helps them calm down faster
- ☐ Don't rush in to fix it – just be there and offer comfort
- ☐ Use a gentle touch, hold their hand, rub their back or give a cuddle
- ☐ Keep emotion words simple: "You're mad" "You're excited" "You're scared"
- ☐ Set limits: "It's okay to feel mad, but not okay to hit"

Visit TheGreatest8.org to learn more about the 8 key developmental skills



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Balancing
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