



Nurturing Believers Solutions

Situation # 1

The child throws a tantrum when he/she wants something



Tagged: Behaviour, 2-7 years

Children make lots of demands, and those demands are often unreasonable from our perspective (even though they make perfect sense to the children themselves!). It is also quite normal for children to make a fuss when they really want something, specially if they learn from experience that the fuss will get them attention, and eventually what they want.

Often parents react to a child's demands and associated tantrums in any of the following **unhelpful** ways:



Giving the child what they want, because they want the child to stop screaming and crying (this happens more so when the tantrum is in front of others or in a public place).

Result

- The child learns that throwing a tantrum, and embarrassing parents in front of others, is the way to get what he wants, and tantrums will increase in frequency and become worse.



Categorically refusing to give the child whatever he wants

Result

- The child becomes angry and frustrated, and this may lead to the tantrum worsening
- The child starts to resent the parents, and may engage in more defiant behavior just to make them angry



Promising to give the child what he wants if he calms down, but breaking the promise once he does

Result

- The child loses trust in the parents
- The child learns that lying is acceptable
- The child becomes frustrated and angry
- The child starts to resent the parents, and may engage in more defiant behavior just to irk them









Yelling at the child and threatening him with punishments

Result

- The child reacts with even more crying and screaming and bad behavior

SO, WHAT THEN IS THE SOLUTION?

If the demand is reasonable and can be easily fulfilled (e.g. the child wants a cookie)...	If the demand is unreasonable or you are unable to fulfil it at present (e.g. the child has a sore throat but wants ice-cream)...
<p>Tell the child clearly:</p> <p>If you insist, you don't get it.</p> <p> This message should be repeated again and again, firmly, and no amount of pressure should make you back off from that position</p>	<p>Tell the child clearly:</p> <p>If you insist, you don't get anything. If you calm down, we can talk about it.</p> <p> As long as he continues to throw the tantrum, just ignore, periodically telling him the same as above, that in order to discuss it, you must calm down.</p>
<p>Also tell the child:</p> <p>If you stop insisting, you will get it after ____.</p> <p> Set a time limit (like 15 minutes or half an hour; don't give it immediately after he stops as you want to train him in being patient, but don't make it too long as that will be testing his patience too much), or link to another activity (like "after dinner", or "after you clean your room.") Make it a rule that during this time the child cannot ask for the desired object at all; if he asks for it, the waiting period starts all over again.</p>	<p>When he calms down, explain WHY it is not possible to give him what he wants; remember that to the child, his demand is entirely reasonable.</p> <p> Also, offer the child something in place of what he is demanding, (e.g. I can't get you ice-cream because your throat is sore and ice-cream is cold so it will make your throat hurt more, BUT let's buy you a new coloring book!) or turn his attention towards something he likes (e.g. lets play with your blocks)</p>
<p> Make sure that you follow through with your commitment. This is crucial, so that the child understands that patience is rewarded, and trusts you next time you make him an offer.</p>	<p> Once he is calm tell him that in Jannah he can have whatever he wants, whenever he wants it, and he will not need even need your permission to get it. For example with regards to ice-cream, tell him that the ice-cream of Jannah will not make his throat hurt. Express your own excitement at the prospect and describe the kind of ice-cream you want to have there (be creative and exaggerate about the flavors and toppings etc. even, for example, that you want a mountain or a house made of ice-cream).</p> <p>This discussion will not only distract the child but will make him happy, and will also create in him the desire for Jannah.</p>



REMEMBER!!!

- Do not give in to the child's tantrum just to make him stop, even if it is in public; your child's *tarbiyah* is more important than what people will think of you.
- Make **"If you insist, you don't get it"** a firm and consistent rule of your home, to the extent that children understand that insisting and throwing a tantrum will be counterproductive and resort to other ways of asking for what they want in the first instance.
- Make sure you give the child what he wants once he stops the tantrum so he learns that patience is indeed rewarded.