

# LIES about PARENTING

## The 2 Magic Words That Stop Temper Tantrums

It comes out of nowhere. One minute your child is happily going about the day, and the next they're on the floor, kicking and screaming.

It gets old fast, doesn't it?

The banging heads, stomping feet, streaming tears, and piercing wails.

Ugh. I have a headache already.

Today I have a few secrets to share with you. I've figured out how to stop temper tantrums, often in their tracks.

### **Because Common Solutions Don't Work**

If you're anything like me, you've probably scoured all the popular parenting websites, researching how to eliminate, circumvent, or avoid the dreaded tantrum.

Time-outs are popular. While removing a child from the situation has clear benefits, it's not always a feasible action.

Because who wants to leave the dinner table to drag their screaming toddler to the time-out corner?

I sure don't. Do you?

The other common solution is to talk it out. While talking with your child is critical to their development, talking to your toddler is pointless.

Toddlers can't reason (yet).

Detailed explanations about why little brother can't beat up his sister are a waste of time, energy, and sanity. If he's not capable of processing the emotions, how can he rationally discuss them?

It's not a bad thing. It just means we need to readjust how we approach our kids when they're emotionally charged.

Did you know there's **3 Magic Phrases, too?**:

#1 "Go Tell Daddy"

#2 "I'll Be Back Later."

#3 "Mommy needs a time-out."

**I'm kidding, I'm kidding. Kind of.**

The truth is, toddlers need constant reassurance.

The temper tantrum reaction is mainly because they don't believe you understand how serious the situation is. It's big, to them. Really BIG!

And they're right. Sort of.

Why is everything Such.A.BIG.Deal?

Because in that moment, to your child, *it is the end of the world.*

**The End Of The World, and the 2 Magic Words That Will Save You**

Toddlers, especially, don't have the self-awareness or control to differentiate between big and small problems. Everything is a big deal, because they don't know what a "small deal" is (yet).

That's just how toddlers deal.

It's time to use the temper tantrums as an opportunity to relate to our kids, and help them process their big feelings.

**The 2 Magic Words... "I Understand."**

I know, I know, you're a little disappointed. Hear me out: these words work, but only *when used correctly!*

Now, let's learn how to use them.

## How To Use The 2 Magic Words

Let's set the scene:

Your child's sitting in front of the tv, finishing up a favorite tv show, before dinner.

Walking by, you let him know it's almost time to eat dinner.

You remind him, making sure he looks at you and hears you, a few minutes later.

The show ends. You turn off the tv, and say it's time for dinner.

*Commence meltdown.*

If you follow the action plan below, confidently and consistently, you'll discover a happier, (mostly) meltdown free child is within your reach.

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### Magic Words Action Plan

1. Get down to their eye-level.
2. Make physical contact. (Gently place your hand on arm, back, or leg.)
3. Try to catch their eye, and say calmly, "I understand." Mean it! Remember, they feel like the world is ending right now.
4. Reinforce you understand why they're upset. Example: "I understand. I understand you want to watch more tv, but it is time for dinner now. We will watch tv later."
5. Offer a choice, unrelated to the issue at hand. Example: "Now, I need your help. What plate would you like to use for dinner? Green or blue?"

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The key to using the 2 Magic Words successfully is empathy, expressed through gentle action. Let your child know that you understand how they're feeling, while down at their eye-level.

The choice, outlined in Step 5, is somewhat about distraction, but primarily about offering your child an opportunity to regain control of his actions and emotions.

### Let's Try To Relate, Walking Dead Style

How you would feel if someone swooped in and turned off the tv during a marathon session of Walking Dead?

You'd be pissed off.

Now, imagine not understanding the difference between "off" and "gone forever".

You'd be even angrier.

Try and remember that feeling, the next time a tantrum rears its ugly head.

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