

# FIRST AID GUIDE TO RELEASE TANTRUMS

Tips to live out emotions peacefully

Stop  
Enfance  
sans violences  
VEO



## Why are tantrums so difficult to deal with?

Anger is an unpleasant emotion ; it is often misunderstood. It should not be interpreted as being negative : there is a meaning. When anger emanates from a child, adults may judge it to be excessive and abrupt because of how it is outwardly expressed : tense muscles, explosions of rage, screaming, fury... It's called an emotional storm because the emotion can be so difficult for the child to manage. This makes the adult want to curb it. But every emotion is legitimate and expresses an unfulfilled need (to move, to sleep, to play, to get attention, etc.). The adult must not take the child's anger personally, but help the child to deal with his emotions so that he can grow and develop in a healthy, safe and secure way. Adults can offer children techniques and tools for expressing their anger without hurting themselves or others, or breaking objects, etc.

### On the spot

- **Secure** the environment where the child's anger is taking place to avoid any danger.
- **Describe** the child's emotion : *"I can see that you are flushed, that you want to throw things away, I think you're feeling angry..."* and avoid labels (*"You're angry"*).
- **Adopt** an empathetic attitude : *"I can imagine that it's frustrating for you not to be able to play any longer"*.
- **Offer** to stay close if this is possible for the adult.
- **Suggest** that the child physically releases the emotion (jumping/dancing/running/laughing) without suggesting that they vent their emotion through violent gestures so that they do not associate anger with violence.
- **Do not try to reason** with the child during the crisis for example by immediately offering rational solutions (he is too strongly connected to the emotion to be able to listen).



### When the anger is over

- During the moment when the emotion is expressed, **remember** that this is not a whim, but a period of time of real distress when the emotion is expressed.
- **Replay** the scene with a role play : *"How could Tom get his anger out ?"*
- **Make** the child an actor in the situation and **suggest** that he finds a solution to express his anger in an appropriate way.
- **Make** an anger toolbox together with tools (barometer of anger, squish balls, etc.).

### What is OEV ?

OEV (Ordinary Educational Violence) is physical, psychological and/or verbal violence described as « educational » because it is used to educate and make the child obey and « ordinary » because it is often daily and considered normal.

**According to the law of July 10th 2019 an VEO: "Parental authority shall be exercised without physical nor psychological violence."**



For more information : [www.stopveo.org](http://www.stopveo.org)

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## Adults anger



When faced with a child's behaviour or attitude, as adults, we can become overwhelmed by anger and react with violence. How can we learn to express our anger in a non-violent way? How can we adopt a non-violent attitude towards the child (either verbally or physically) and that will help him to emotionally develop? A child who sees an adult calmly managing his anger will know that he himself has the right to be angry, but that it is possible to deal with it and express it in a non-violent way.

**Adults are always responsible for their anger.  
The child is never responsible for the adult's anger.**

### In the heat of the moment

- Take a deep breath.
- Refrain from making any remarks that will hurt feelings.
- Drink a glass of cold water.
- Express your emotion: *"I'm feeling angry; I'm going to go and calm down; then I'll be able to talk"*.
- Leave the room to allow yourself to calm down: it's better to leave a child alone for a few moments and come back calm rather than to risk behaving violently towards him.
- Hand over the child to another adult and go for a walk/run to release tension.
- Put some music on and dance.

### With a cool head



- Apologise: *"I'm sorry, I was angry but that didn't give me the right to shout at you"*.
- Identify your underlying need and express it when the situation has calmed down, without ever justifying our outburst because of the child's behaviour/attitude
- Depending on the child's age, reflect on *"How could we do it differently next time?"*



A child is unable to manage his emotions, this requires neural connections that begin to develop around the age of 5-6 years old and will continue to develop for many years. Therefore, the younger a child is, the more difficult, if not impossible, it is for him to verbalise his needs or emotions on his own. Likewise, the younger a child is, the more he needs to move, to explore what he sees. Have confidence in yourself and in him; know that every situation in which you calmly accompany him is a big step for his development and the quality of your relationship in the long term.

