

When your child has a temper tantrum

How you handle a temper tantrum may vary depending upon the age of the child who is having the tantrum and what triggered the tantrum. In this instance, let's assume the child is three or older.

It is always very important that you, as the care provider, remain calm. You must also ensure that the other children in the space are kept out of harm's way.

If the child having the tantrum is hurting himself — for example, banging his head on the ground — it is appropriate to try to protect the head by moving the child to a soft and/or safer location.

There are times when the child who is displaying this behavior will need to be removed from the environment until she has calmed down. In instances such as these, the other children in the child care need to be reassured that their friend will be O.K.

Once the child has calmed down, the care provider should talk to the child about her behavior and try to glean from the conversation what triggered the tantrum. The care provider should also use this opportunity to offer the child some alternative ways to handle any issues she or he may have.

If serious temper tantrums continue frequently, this may be a sign of a serious developmental problem. In cases such as these, you should ask family members for a conference and/or refer them to their family health care provider for assistance in getting the appropriate help for this child.