



The Family Resource Center

Public Meltdowns: Managing Your Child's Emotions — And Yours

(By Claire Lerner, L.C.S.W.-C, www.pbs.org/parents)

Jacob, almost 3 years old, has thrown himself on the floor of the grocery store screaming that he must have one more candy, just "one more!" Sound familiar? If so, you are not alone. And you're also not alone if these public meltdowns sometimes make you feel embarrassed or self-conscious. Unfortunately, feeling judged is pretty common among parents. ZERO TO THREE's [Tuning In survey](#) showed that nearly 9 in 10 parents feel judged — and almost half say they feel judged all the time or nearly all the time.

It can be hard to avoid feeling ashamed of your child's out-of-control behavior — in large part because it sometimes feels like their outbursts are a reflection on your parenting. *Am I totally incompetent? Am I raising a spoiled or ungrateful child?* No! But, these moments naturally throw parents for a loop and can often leave you feeling upset or angry at

your child. Here are some things to keep in mind during these stressful situations:

Don't let onlookers get to you. Ideally, just tune them out. Most are likely feeling your pain, having been there themselves, and aren't judging. And for those feeling superior or compelled to teach a lesson, or who are experiencing some guilty pleasure that it's not them in the hot seat, ignoring is still a good strategy. This allows you to stay focused on helping your child cope.

Or, kill them with kindness. If a bystander makes a "helpful" comment ("Maybe he's tired" or "You really shouldn't let him call you names"), avoid being reactive. Instead, consider responding: "It's nice that you want to help. I really appreciate it. But I'm all good. Learning that he can't get everything he wants is a hard lesson for a little guy. You can't expect him to say, 'No problem, Mom, thanks

for helping me eat healthy.'" This is a nice way to send some important messages: you are in control, setting appropriate limits and helping your child learn to cope with life's disappointments. You are also providing important context about appropriate expectations for little kids. This can be a particularly good strategy when it is your mother, mother-in-law, another family member or a close friend who is trying to help.

Stay calm. If you are anxious and upset, your child is more likely to be anxious and upset. If you are calm and composed, she is likely to pull herself together more quickly. When she is falling apart, she needs you to be her rock. It's best to take a few deep breaths and remind yourself that if you lose it too, it will likely make the situation more stressful and challenging.

Validate your child's feelings. "I know you're very angry that I am (Cont. on page 4)

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Strengthening families since 1989

Volume 4, Issue 3

May/June 2017

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Recent and Upcoming FRC Events...

Easter Event at
Viewpoint Park
April 14, 2017
— Everyone had a
great time hunting for
Easter eggs!



Pinwheel Party at
Prescott Valley Events Center
April 15, 2017
— a garden of 3,000 pinwheels
was planted to symbolize the
happy, healthy childhoods we
wish for all children!

YRMC raised more than \$2000 to support the Big Brothers Big Sisters Program at their Bowl for Kids' Sake fundraiser event at Antelope Lanes in Prescott Valley on March 4, 2017!

**Please join us as the Family Resource Center
Celebrates Dads!**

Friday, June 16, 2017

3:30-5:00 p.m. at Bob Edwards Park

7201 E. Long Look Drive, Prescott Valley

We will have watermelon, outdoor games, and lots of summer fun!

What's Happening?

Be sure to take advantage of the many fun activities in the area that parents and children can share!

All events are FREE, unless otherwise noted (\$). For further details, contact event coordinators at the following locations or the numbers provided.

**Prescott Valley Public Library (PVPL)
Prescott Valley Civic Center (PVCC)**

7401 and 7501 E. Civic Circle
(928) 759-3040

Prescott Public Library (PPL)

215 E. Goodwin Street
(928) 777-1500

Chino Valley Public Library (CVPL)

1020 W. Palomino Road
(928) 636-2687

Story Time for Pre-Schoolers- Ages 3-6 (CVPL)

Every Monday and Wednesday at 10:30am

Story Time for Toddlers- Ages 18 mos-24 mos (CVPL)

Every Tuesday at 10:00am

Toddler Story Time (PPL)

Every Tuesday at 10:00am

Preschool Story Time- Ages 3-5 (PVPL)

Every Wednesday at 10:00 or 11:00am

Toddler Story Time- Ages 18 mos-3yrs (PVPL)

Every Thursday at 10:00 or 11:00am

Lap-sit Story Time- Babies (PPL)

Every Friday at 9:30am

Preschool Story Time- Ages 3-5 (PPL)

Every Friday at 10:30am

Family Story Time—All Ages (PPL)

Every Saturday at 11:00am

Zoo by Moonlight (\$)

5/10, 6/9 8:30-9:30pm

Heritage Park Zoo, Prescott

Breakfast with the Animals (\$)

5/13 Clouded Leopards

6/10 Mule Deer/Pronghorn

Heritage Park Zoo, Prescott

Prescott Highland Games (\$)

5/13-14 9:00am-5:00pm

FREE for children under 5

Watson Lake, Prescott

Craft! (PPL)

6/6, 6/13, 6/20, 6/27 1:00-2:30pm

Crafts for Toddlers

World's Oldest Rodeo (\$)

6/28-7/4

Prescott Rodeo Grounds

Kiwanis Kiddie Parade

6/30 9:00am

Courthouse Plaza, Prescott

Prescott Frontier Days Rodeo Parade

7/1 9:00am

Courthouse Plaza, Prescott

Local Area Activity Sources:

Bounce House Express

Mendicino & Florentine, Prescott Valley

928-277-9018

Freedom Station

2992 N. Park Drive, Prescott Valley

928-775-4040

Go Bananas

Prescott Gateway Mall

928-583-7655

Synergy Gymnastics

6th St., Prescott

928-899-4589

Prescott (Heritage Park) Zoo

Willow Creek Rd., Prescott

928-778-4242

Switch Dance Studio

540 Sixth St., Prescott

928-308-1311

Summer's Dance Works

843 Miller Valley Rd., Prescott

928-583-7277

The Boys & Girls Club

335 E. Aubrey St., Prescott

928-776-9191

YMCA

750 Whipple St., Prescott

928-445-7221

Full Swing Batting Cages

2555 N. Crown Point Dr.,

Prescott Valley

928-515-2300

Parent Talk Tip #712

The Parent Talk Tip Collection by Chick Moorman and Thomas Haller www.personalpowerpress.com

"I'm angry about the broken chair because..." is healthier than "You ought to be ashamed of yourself."

Prescott Valley Public Library e-Notifications

Did you know that you can receive information about library and local "happenings" by email? In the Google search engine, type in "Prescott

Valley Public Library." You will probably see a link to the website on the right side of your screen. Click on the link. Once on the website, scroll down and look for "Get Help" on the lower left side. Click on the "Sign up

for e-notifications" link and follow the instructions at the top of the page to begin receiving emails about the areas of interest you have chosen. When something new is scheduled, you should receive the information.

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not letting you have the gummies." Validating feelings is not the same as validating behavior. Feelings aren't the problem. It's what kids (and parents) do with their feelings that can be problematic. That's why one of your most important jobs is to help your child learn to manage these strong, difficult emotions. But that takes time and practice. (Many adults are still working on this skill!) And it starts with validation, which helps children feel understood — and is the first step in helping them identify and then manage these emotions.

Provide choices that you can implement. This might mean offering your child a choice of another, acceptable food — perhaps something that is a little special but healthy, such as yogurt raisins. Some parents don't want to offer a substitute at all. That is a

personal decision. Even when offering the alternative, your child may flat-out reject it and intensify the tantrum to show you just how lame he thinks this other option is. In that case, you might calmly say, "You are really upset about not getting what you want. It is my job to keep you safe so I am going to put you in the grocery cart. You will be okay." And then you follow through with as much calm as you can muster. Divert your child by talking about what you see in the grocery aisles. You might ask him if he can find and point to his favorite cereal. This lets him know you are going to ignore his outburst, but you are not ignoring him. And it helps him understand that you can handle his feelings and will be a "safe base" for him.

It's important not to allow your worry

about bystanders' opinions and judgments to drive your behavior in these situations. Many parents tell me that they end up giving in to their child — to end this miserable situation as quickly as possible — even though they don't think it's best for their child. When you give in, your child will realize, "Mommy or Daddy will pretty much give me anything to get me to quiet down when other people are around."

Instead, trust yourself: You know your child and what she needs when she's having a hard time. It's not your job to appease others around you; it's your job to raise a child who can cope with life's frustrations and disappointments, *and* who knows you have her back, even when the going gets rough.

Encouraging Nature Play (By Dr. Scott Sampson, www.pbs.org/parents)

Parenting is arguably a greater challenge now than at any time in the past century. American adults work longer hours than ever before. Dual-career families are the norm. Worried that our kids will be "left behind," we schedule almost every waking moment of their lives— school, organized sports, music lessons, sleepovers, summer camps—and rack up miles driving them to and fro. Fearing stranger danger, we keep youngsters locked indoors under effective "house arrest." Whether or not the statistics support the notion that kids are at higher risk of abduction by strangers (they don't), this media-catalyzed fear is all too real and deserving of empathy.

The demise of outdoor play

One of the greatest casualties of

this indoor migration is the most quintessential of childhood activities—outdoor play. Overscheduled kids have no time for it. Over-screened kids opt for virtual worlds invented by others. And overprotected kids are kept inside under constant supervision. As the parent of a 12 year-old girl, I have experienced all of these challenges.

I refer here to real play, or free play. Damming streams, building makeshift forts and dens, holding back the tide with castle walls of sand, creating miniature cities in the garden, being a fireman one minute and Tarzan the next, quickly followed by a super hero—these are the kinds of things that make up real play. It is freely chosen and directed by children, with no external goal or reward. And it

often occurs outdoors, immersed in all the "loose pieces" and sensory wonders of the natural world.

If you're over 40 years of age, chances are your childhood was filled with such unfettered, exuberant play. But today, play is fast becoming a "four-letter word," equated with wasting time.

The benefits of play

Play researchers adamantly argue that authentic play is (and has always been) the most critical activity of early childhood, and gives children a number of benefits, including:

Promoting creativity and imagination, problem-solving and higher IQ scores, and emotional and social development.

Engendering a sense of self and a sense of place, allowing

(Cont. on page 5)

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children to recognize both their independence and interdependence.

Fostering cognitive, emotional, and moral development, especially in outdoor settings.

Improving such motor skills as balance, coordination, and agility, critical for growing bodies.

Far from being frivolous, play is the fuel that drives healthy brain development, and the very crucible of learning.

So how do we then foster outdoor play while minimizing risks and managing our fears?

1. Practice “hummingbird parenting.” We’ve all heard about helicopter parents, incessantly hovering over their kids, protecting them from any danger. Most of us have an intuitive sense that the helicopter approach isn’t the best way to oversee children, given their growing need for autonomy.

But what’s the alternative? Parent and blogger Michele Whitaker offers a potent alternative—“hummingbird parenting.” Beginning around five or six years of age, children long for some more separation and independence from grown-ups. One of the greatest challenges for parents and

other caregivers is to honor this need, fighting the urge to be ever present.

Becoming a hummingbird parent means giving kids space and autonomy to take risks, staying on the periphery sipping nectar most of the time and zooming in only when necessary. If the idea of hanging back makes you nervous, start off close, slowly work your way back, and see how it feels. Monitor how the children are feeling about your distance too. As they get older, increase that separation so as to give kids the freedom to take bigger risks, make some mistakes, and deal with consequences.

In short, the goal should not be to eliminate risk. Children need to learn how to deal with risky circumstances, or face much larger consequences as inexperienced adolescents and adults.

2. Schedule unstructured play. By scheduling in nature play, and developing your flight skills as a hummingbird parent, you can find ways to keep kids safe while allowing them to take appropriate risks and push limits. If we’re successful, the end result will be another generation of confident, free-range kids! Encourage kids to create their own imaginative games and activities, preferably using

readily available natural elements—loose parts like water, sticks, dirt, and rocks. Feel free to gather up some of these loose parts or, better yet, have the kids do it. Bigger elements, such as large sticks, can be used for creating makeshift structures, like forts or bridges. Smaller items can be used in an almost infinite array of activities.

3. Let kids engage fully with nature. Too often these days, a child’s encounters with nature are dominated by a look-but-don’t-touch directive. Fearing that we must protect nature and our kids at all cost, we often do far more harm than good. Nature connection depends on firsthand, multisensory encounters. It’s a messy, dirty business—picking leaves and flowers, turning over rocks, holding wriggling worms, and splashing in ponds. Rather than saying “no” every time a child wants to pick up a stick, throw a rock, climb a tree, or jump into the mud, take a deep breath and cheer them on instead. Remember, clothes can be washed, and cuts heal.

Nature connection is a contact sport, and both kids and nature can take it!

Recipe: Mini Bow Ties with Bacon and Peas (www.myrecipes.com)

Ingredients:

8 ounces uncooked mini bow tie pasta
3 center-cut bacon slices, chopped
1/2 cup prechopped onion
2 medium carrots, peeled and diced
1 cup unsalted chicken stock
1 cup frozen green peas
1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
5/8 teaspoon kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
3 ounces 1/3-less-fat cream cheese

Method:

- Cook pasta according to package directions, omitting salt and fat. Drain pasta, reserving 1/4 cup cooking liquid; set aside.
- Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add bacon; cook 4 minutes, stirring frequently. Remove bacon with a slotted spoon.

- Add onion and carrot to drippings in pan; cook 5 minutes. Add stock; bring to a boil. Add peas; cook 2 minutes.
- Remove pan from heat; stir in reserved 1/4 cup cooking liquid, bacon, thyme, salt, pepper, and cream cheese. Add pasta to pan; toss to coat. Serve immediately.

Color this picture of a baby bird learning to fly and hang it on your refrigerator!

