

# Why Does Your Toddler “Act Out”?

Your toddler will often do things you don't like. But there's usually a reason for why they're behaving the way they are:

- **Do they have the ability to do what you expect?** Or are you expecting too much? (See [Temperament](#))
- **Is the way they're acting a normal stage in their development?** It's natural for your toddler to see themselves as the centre of the world.
- **Are they trying to communicate how they feel?** Toddlers also have very big emotions, which they haven't yet figured out how to deal with or communicate. This can feel overwhelming. And often a toddler's behaviour is simply a way for them to assert their independence.
- **Are they feeling okay, or do they need something?** They may be hungry, tired or over-stimulated by too many activities.
- **Has something changed in their life?** Toddlers do best with routine. Knowing what to expect gives them a feeling of control and security.

- **Are they getting the connection they need?** You'll help them feel secure by responding to them warmly and consistently.
- **Is the setting suitable for them?** Some things – like a long sit-down meal or a crowded event – may require more control than they have.

**Remember that all of us – parents, caregivers and children – feel all kinds of emotions, including anger, frustration, sadness and excitement.** The key is to learn to handle our emotions in healthy ways.



### KEY TAKEAWAY

When your toddler acts a certain way, they may be trying to tell you that they need something, like rest, food, comfort or connection with you. By watching them closely, you'll start to learn what each behaviour means, and how to respond in a way that builds your bond and helps them learn and grow.

