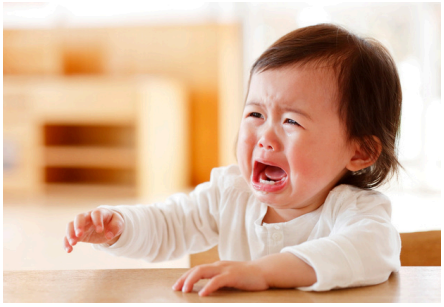


WHEN BIG FEELINGS TAKE OVER...

A TODDLERESE QUICK-REFERENCE GUIDE

Before you try to stop the meltdown, try to understand what's happening.

1. WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE BRAIN?



Emotional overload.

When big feelings take over, a toddler's ability to process words, reason, and follow directions becomes harder. They aren't ready for a lecture or logical explanation. They need connection first.

2. WHAT CAN I SAY?



Less explaining. More connecting.

Instead of telling a toddler how to feel or what to do, use simple words that acknowledge and reflect their experience.

INSTEAD OF...	***TRY TODDLERESE...***
"You're okay!"	*"Scary! That was scary! Don't like that. Scary."*
"You have to share."	*"Want toy! You want that toy! Love that toy. Toy!"*
"Stop crying. Dad always comes back."	*"Miss Daddy! Want Dad. Sad Dad left. Want Dad."*
"Quiet. It's not that big of a deal."	*"Mad. You feel mad. Want that. Grrr. Mad."*

3. REMEMBER THE FOUR STEPS

1 – Get down.
Calmly move to the child's level.

2 – Name it.
Describe their feelings using a few simple words.

3 – Match it.
Gently reflect their feelings with facial expressions & tone.

4 – Pause and listen.
Give them time. Watch their cues and show you're listening.

THE GOAL ISN'T TO STOP THE FEELINGS. IT'S TO HELP THE CHILD FEEL UNDERSTOOD.

The fire we see may be fueled by emotional overload.
Before you try to put out the fire, connect with the child.

I see you. I understand. I'm here.



Early Childhood
Tips & Tools with
Raelene Ostberg, M.Ed.

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