



## CONNECT TO THE CLASSROOM

# Tantrums

In this part of the module, you learned about common tantrum behaviors in toddlers and situations that may trigger tantrums. Remember that ways to minimize tantrums include:

- Having regular, predictable routines to help children know what to expect.
- Giving reminders and cues before and during transition times to help children manage stopping an activity and starting another one. If you don't currently give "heads-up" reminders, make a plan to start using some kind of signal to do this, and explain it to the children. Explain what signal you will use and show them what it will look and sound like. Then start using your signal(s) consistently. Expect it to take at least a week for children to get used to your new routine. Notice any changes in how children handle transitions when using the new strategies.
- Giving choices within limits to allow children to have some control over what they do.
- Watching for signs of escalating emotion in children and offering comfort and help with problems.

**Think about the children in your class as you reflect on the following questions.**

**1** What kind of choices do you offer children in your class throughout the day? List at least three examples.

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**2** Do you give children consistent "heads-up" reminders before transitions between activities (i.e., not just at the moment of the transition)? If so, what signals do you use (e.g., a bell, a song, a verbal cue, a gesture cue), and does it seem to help children get ready to change activities?

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**3** When a child rejects help and comfort, how do you let him/her express anger and frustration safely? Does this seem to help the child? Why or why not?

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**4** Take some time this week to watch for signs of escalating emotion that your children show BEFORE they have a tantrum. What signals and changes can you notice in their facial expressions, gestures, words or vocalizations, or other behaviors that happen before a tantrum? Paying attention to these behaviors can help you know when children need help calming down and/or solving a problem.

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