

Your Child's Development: What To Expect

(NAPSA)—Knowing what to expect at different ages and stages in a child's growth helps adults understand a child's behavior. But that doesn't mean that it's easy to respond appropriately.

Let's say your two-year-old throws a fit at the grocery store because he grabs a candy bar that you told him he couldn't have right now.

Why is this happening?

The child in this example is doing a very basic type of problem solving—he sees what he wants and goes for it. When the caregiver gets in his way, he is angry, and his intense feelings take over.

How can adults respond to the situation described here?

According to a booklet that focuses on child development from birth to age eight years, regardless of your feelings, you need to do several things. The booklet developed by the American Psychological Association, states when a child has a tantrum, adults should:

- Stay calm and don't use physical punishment.
- Remember that such behavior is common for children this age.
- Without giving in to his/her demands, help the child settle down.
- Shift the toddler's attention to something else—a game or an object.
- Stand firm and show the child that a tantrum won't get what he/she wants.
- Show him/her a better way to get what he/she wants.

Sometimes just using a few gentle words and taking the child to a



In the early years, children learn most of what they know from adults. Therefore, adults' words and actions have great influence on children's behaviors.

quiet place to wait for the storm to pass works wonders. Then, when the toddler is calmer, you can explain what he/she did and how you expect him/her to behave.

The booklet, *Teach Carefully; How Understanding Child Development Can Help Prevent Violence*, suggests that when adults know what a child is capable of understanding and doing at different ages, they will better understand the child's behavior and have more realistic expectations. It will also help them avoid harmful physical and emotional actions that might occur when they, as adults, become angry or frustrated with a child's difficult behavior.

The booklet, which gives different behaviors children may go through at different stages in their lives and how adults may respond to them, is available free by visiting the ACT Against Violence Web site at www.actagainstviolence.org.