

Note: This is an example of a crisis prevention training tool used during onsite training sessions with family members.

JOHN DOE: REACTIVE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

The purpose of this intervention is to provide strategies for dealing with John's behaviours while the other interventions are taking effect. The following are suggestions on how to cope with John's temper tantrums; however, they are not ways of eliminating or decreasing the problems.

If John hits or kicks you...

- Say nothing about the hitting or kicking.
- Calmly & firmly re-direct him back to the task
- Give strong rewards (praise etc.) for appropriate behaviour.
- Protect yourself by putting your arm up or standing a safe distance away.

If John hits or kicks other people...

- Give attentions and praise to the other people (if they are not retaliating).
- Ignore the temper tantrum and anything John says during the temper tantrum (do not answer if John says things like "I hate you, I wish you weren't my mum, etc.>").
- Stand between the two people and re-direct John to another activity.

If John throws something...

- Ignore the behaviour totally.
- Don't ask John to pick what he has thrown

If John goes into a full blown tantrum...

- Don't tell him off or talk about any of the behaviours. Don't send him to his room. Make sure no one tells him off or talks about the behaviour.
- Protect yourself and others. Try to get Jan out of the room, if possible, so that she does not become a target or inadvertently make things worse.
- Remain calm, talk in a soothing, relaxed tone of voice.
- Or, try stimulus change...for a full explanation see the last page.
- Remember, John can't have a tantrum forever because it wears him out.
- As John calms down, re-direct him into another activity.
- Don't give him extra cuddles and kisses if he comes to you after a tantrum but do reward him when he stops crying and starts talking about or working on appropriate tasks.

If you are working with John and you see he is becoming tense and angry...

- Take a break (maybe to use the toilet if you can)
- Re-direct him by talking about introducing a new task..
- Use a calm, soothing tone of voice.

If John refuses to participate (not leaving the TV, not getting into the car)...

- Show John the picture schedule of activities
- Try using physical guidance but don't get into a tug of war.
- If John won't do a task, wherever possible, take the task to him.
- Reward any approximation towards participating in the activity ("Thanks for putting your coat on John!").

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If John still refuses...

- Give the instructions again.
- Don't get into a tug of war.
- Be prepared to wait for 30 minutes.
- Don't let anyone interfere

If you can see John may have a temper tantrum in the community because he is begging for something or keeps saying he wants to leave...

- Use the picture schedule to tell him how much longer he has to wait
- Give him something to do and reward him if he does it
- Answer him clearly and firmly once but do not keep saying no. Instead, ignore his pleas and talk to him about other things.

If John drops to the ground and refuses to move...

- Don't try to force him to get up.
- Wait patiently next to John without giving him eye contact or any talking. Be prepared to wait for awhile.
- When he begins to calm down, talk about unrelated topics until you can re-direct him into what you want him to do.
- When he gets up reward him.

If John runs away in the community...

- Block further progress, if possible, without causing a confrontation.
- Stop making any demands.
- Re-direct John by showing him things or talking about unrelated topics.

Stimulus Change

John is easily distracted by his environment (objects, the television etc.). This may improve the chances that you can introduce something new to a situation and distract John from a temper tantrum. The introduction of a novel stimulus should be as dramatic as possible. Here are some examples:

Pretend to be ignoring John while...

- Put a lampshade on your head and dance around.
- Start singing a silly song out of tune.
- Jump around on one foot.
- Start rearranging furniture in an odd way (turn all the chairs toward the walls).
- Do something strange to the room you are in (i.e. turn the table over and start setting objects on it like it was right side up, set the chair on its side and try to sit in it etc.).
- Put your coat on backwards and inside out.
- Put your coat on your head and act blind saying "Hey, who turned off the lights!" or walk into the wall, trip over things etc.
- Start planting big sloppy kisses on your houseplant.

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- Put your hands in your shoes and try crawling on your hands and knees without them falling off.
- Balance some books on your head and let them fall on the ground.
- Rip some paper up and throw it over your head like confetti.
- Say something ridiculous (“Look a pink elephant!).

Humour is a great way of distracting John; however, be careful that you do not look like you’re making fun of him. This would not help and may make things worse. In time, if you use the same things over and over, you will find that John gets used to it and that particular stimulus change idea will get old. Remember, be creative and silly!!!! Use any break in tantrum behavior to redirect John to a new activity or his picture schedule.

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