

Help Toddlers and Preschoolers Cooperate 3-Step Solution

1. **Empathize:** show that you understand your child’s feelings.
 - Reflect your child’s emotions. Say, “I understand how you feel. I see it the way you do.”
 - Give names to the feelings.
 - Keep your voice calm. Be firm, reassuring, and kind.
 - Wait patiently as your child’s feelings begin to change.

2. **Reinforce** what you want the child to do.
 - Keep explanations short and sweet.
 - Say, “I am here to keep you safe. I won’t let you [hit/kick/bite/run/etc.]”
 - Follow through on limits.

3. **Redirect** to another activity.
 - Allow and welcome all feelings, and then move on.
 - Your response depends on your child’s emotion.

If your child is	Try
Sad or disappointed	A calming activity, like hugging a comfort object, waving a glitter wand, or playing with a sensory balloon or stress ball
Angry or frustrated	Pounding playdough, stomping on a pad, or punching a pillow
Upset in general	Smelling a flower, blowing out a candle

- Make a positive connection with your child: cuddle, look out the window together, do a chore.

