

LESSON 8

Throwing Tantrums

Getting Ready

1. Read through the lesson before working with the child.
2. Organize the materials you will need for the lesson:
Progress Chart
Items necessary for completing lesson activities
Pencil or pen for marking charts
Reward badge or other tangible reward
3. Arrange a work space that will best suit lesson activities.
4. Begin working with the child.

Note: Make sure you observe and chart the child's behavior for one week before you begin the lesson. You can then compare the first week's chart with those of the following weeks to determine progress. (For more information on charting, refer to "Monitoring Child Progress" on page 9.)

Directions

A tantrum is a fit of temper in which a child cries, stomps his feet, ignores instructions, or acts very cross. If the child throws a tantrum often, it is probably because he has received what he wanted by doing it. This lesson will help you teach a child not to throw tantrums. Follow these suggestions:

1. When a child throws a tantrum in a place where he will not disturb other people, ignore him. You may leave the room. If the child follows you, let him know you will not permit that. If no one is around to notice his tantrum, a child will eventually discover that the tantrum will not get him what he wants.



2. If you are in public when a child throws a tantrum, take him out to the car and put him in the back seat. You sit in front and tell him that you are going to sit there until he has quieted down. Ignore him. Always stay with the child but give him no attention. When he has finished his tantrum, take him back wherever you were and continue what you were doing.

You must take a child back to where you were or he might get the idea that he can throw a tantrum to make you leave a place. Do not let the child keep you away from certain places because of his tantrums. You will probably have to repeat this procedure several times before the child understands that he cannot get away with tantrums.

3. If a child has tantrums at one particular time or place, you might be able to forestall them by promising to do something afterward that he enjoys. Explain this to him ahead of time, "We are going to the dentist. If you behave, we will go to the park afterward and you can play on the swings."
4. Be sure to chart the child's behavior so that you can determine his progress. Use the Progress Chart on page 68.
5. Once the child has mastered the skills in this lesson, give him a reward badge or other tangible reward.

Remember:

1. Notice when the child is behaving.
2. Be specific in your praise.
3. Reinforce immediately.
4. Reinforce small steps.
5. Follow the three steps for teaching.
6. Be consistent.
7. Ignore misbehavior.
8. Create a "quiet area" and use it when necessary.
9. Set conditions.
10. Make effective demands.
11. Reason with the child only when he is behaving.

Adult Dialogue

The skills to be taught in this lesson will vary from child to child. For this reason specific adult dialogue is not included. A few examples, however, are provided which demonstrate adult interactions with children in a variety of situations:

Example 1: Ignoring a tantrum.

A: (You are at home, and you have no visitors. The child's tantrum will not disturb anyone else. He is crying and kicking.)

(Ignore the child. If the tantrum is getting out of hand and you are having trouble ignoring him, leave the room. Let him cry it out, but

do not let him do anything destructive.)

Example 2: Taking a child to the car during a tantrum.

C: (Is crying and having a tantrum in the supermarket because you will not buy him some candy.)

A: **Having a tantrum will not get you what you want.**

C: (Continues tantrum.)

A: **We are going to go and sit in the car until you can behave. Then we will come back and finish our shopping.**

(Takes child out to car and puts him in back seat. Gets in front. Ignores child's tantrum.)

C: (Finally stops crying and fussing.)

A: **I see you are ready to behave. Now we can go finish our shopping.**

(If the child has another tantrum, repeat the above.)

Example 3: Setting Conditions.

A: **Come, Charles. We are going over to the dress shop.**

C: Aw, Mom! It's no fun in that shop. There's nothing to do.

A: **I know you don't enjoy it, but I need to do some shopping. If you behave while we're there, I'll take you to the pet shop afterward to look at the animals.**

C: Okay.

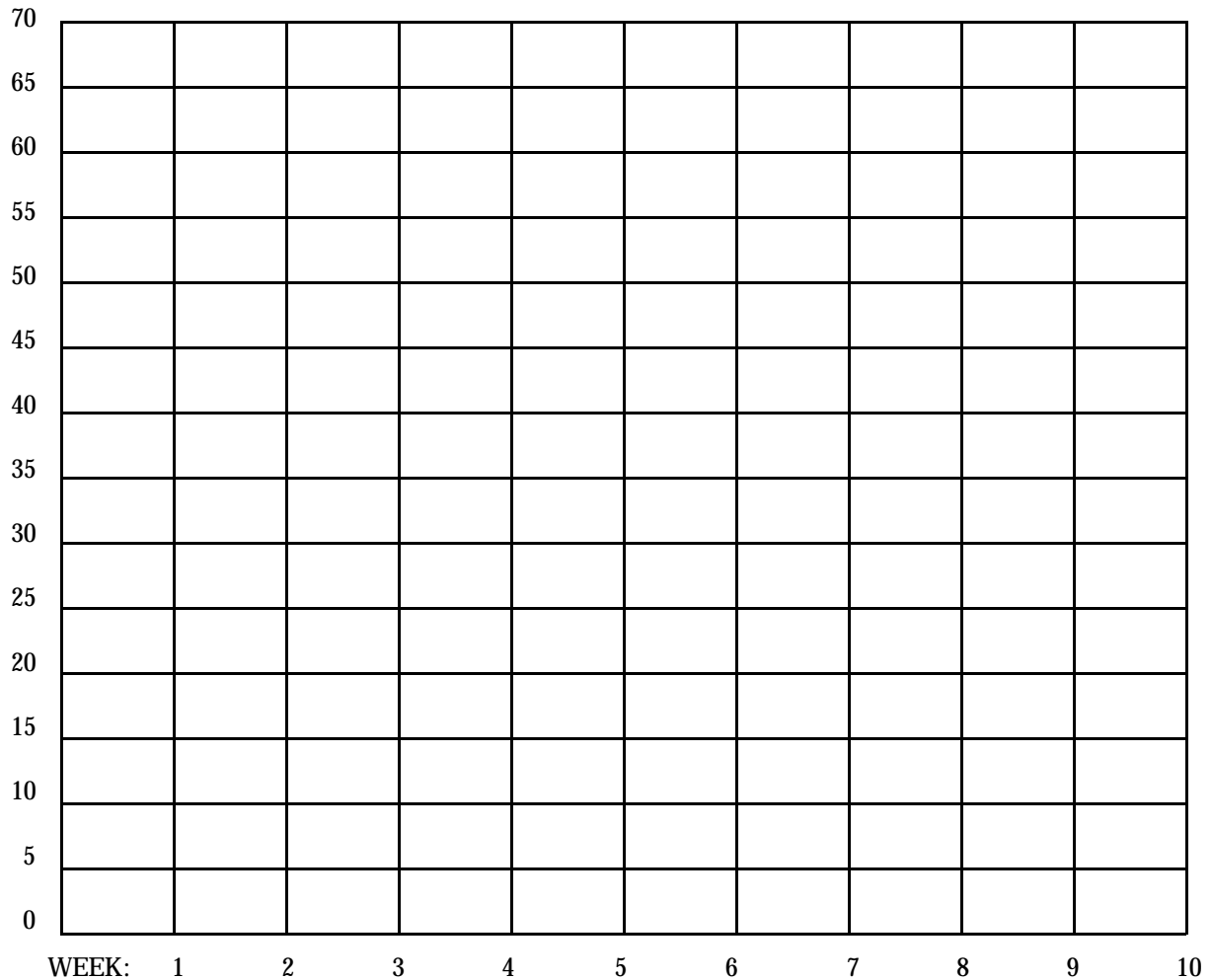
Progress Chart

BEHAVIOR: _____

Daily Tally

DATES	MON	TUE	WED	THR	FRI	SAT	SUN	TOTAL

Weekly Graph



DATE: