



The Happiest Toddler on the Block: How to Eliminate Tantrums and Raise a Patient, Respectful, and Cooperative One- to Four-Year-Old: Revised Edition

Harvey Karp

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Perfect for expecting parents who want to prepare themselves for the challenging toddler years (which starts around eight months of age), this essential guide, a national bestseller by respected pediatrician and child development expert Dr. Harvey Karp, not only helps reduce tantrums but makes happy kids even happier by boosting patience, cooperation, and self-confidence.

Toddlers can drive you bonkers...so adorable and fun one minute...so stubborn and demanding the next! Yet, as unbelievable as it sounds, there is a way to turn the daily stream of “nos” and “don’ts” into “yeses” and hugs...if you know how to speak your toddler’s language. In one of the most useful advances in parenting techniques of the past twenty-five years, Dr. Karp reveals that toddlers, with their immature brains and stormy outbursts, should be thought of not as pint-size people but as pintsize...cavemen.

Having noticed that the usual techniques often failed to calm crying toddlers, Dr. Karp discovered that the key to effective communication was to speak to them in their own primitive language. When he did, suddenly he was able to soothe their outbursts almost every time! This amazing success led him to the realization that children between the ages of one and four go through four stages of “evolutionary” growth, each linked to the development of the brain, and each echoing a step in prehistoric humankind’s journey to civilization:

- The “Charming Chimp-Child” (12 to 18 months): Wobbles around on two legs, grabs everything in reach, plays a nonstop game of “monkey see monkey do.”
- The “Knee-High Neanderthal” (18 to 24 months): Strong-willed, fun-loving, messy, with a vocabulary of about thirty words, the favorites being “no” and “mine.”
- The “Clever Caveman” (24 to 36 months):
Just beginning to learn how to share, make friends, take turns, and use the potty.
- The “Versatile Villager” (36 to 48 months): Loves to tell stories, sing songs and dance, while trying hard to behave.

To speak to these children, Dr. Karp has developed two extraordinarily effective techniques:

- 1) The “fast food” rule—restating what your child has said to make sure you got it right;
- 2) The four-step rule—using gesture, repetition, simplicity, and tone to help your irate Stone-Ager be happy again.

Once you’ve mastered “toddler-ese,” you will be ready to apply behavioral techniques specific to each stage of your child’s development, such as teaching patience and calm, doing time-outs (and time-ins), praise through “gossiping,” and many other strategies. Then all the major challenges of the toddler years—including separation anxiety, sibling rivalry, toilet training, night fears, sleep problems, picky eating, biting and hitting, medicine taking — can be handled in a way that will make your toddler feel understood. The result: fewer tantrums, less yelling, and, best of all, more happy, loving time for you and your child.

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