

Tears No More



by Mary-Ann Schuler

COPYRIGHT AND TRADEMARK NOTICES

This eBook is Copyright © 2016 Mary-Ann Schuler (the "Author"). All Rights Reserved. Published in the United States of America. The legal notices, disclosures, and disclaimers at the front of this eBook are Copyright © 2009 Law Office of Michael E. Young PLLC, and licensed for use by the Author. All rights reserved.

No part of this eBook may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by an information storage and retrieval system -- except by a reviewer who may quote brief passages in a review to be printed in a magazine, newspaper, blog, or website -- without permission in writing from the Author. For information, please contact the Author by e-mail at maryann@babysleepmiracle.com or by mail at 2972 Columbia St., 7144 Torrance, CA 90503.

All trademarks and service marks are the properties of their respective owners. All references to these properties are made solely for editorial purposes. Except for marks actually owned by the Author, the Author (as both author and as publisher) does not make any commercial claims to their use, and is not affiliated with them in any way.

Unless otherwise expressly noted, none of the individuals or business entities mentioned herein have endorsed the contents of this eBook.

LIMITS OF LIABILITY & DISCLAIMERS OF WARRANTIES

This eBook is a general educational information product.

As an express condition to reading to this eBook, you understand and agree to the following terms.

The eBook's content is not a substitute for direct, personal, professional health or psychological diagnosis. None of the exercises or treatments (including products and services) mentioned in this eBook should be performed or otherwise used without clearance from your pediatrician.

There may be risks associated with participating in activities or using products mentioned in this eBook for babies in poor health or with pre-existing physical or mental health conditions.

Because these risks exist, you will not use this product with your baby or have him participate in such activities if he is in poor health or have a pre-existing mental or physical condition. If you choose to let him participate in these risks, you do so of your own free will and accord, knowingly and voluntarily assuming all risks associated with such activities.

The materials in this eBook are provided "as is" and without warranties of any kind either express or implied. The Author disclaims all warranties, express or implied, including, but not limited to, implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose. The Author does not warrant that defects will be corrected, or that the site or the server that makes this eBook available are free of viruses or other harmful components. The Author does not warrant or make any representations regarding the use or the results of the use of the materials in this eBook in terms of their correctness, accuracy, reliability, or otherwise. Applicable law may not allow the exclusion of implied warranties, so the above exclusion may not apply to you.

Under no circumstances, including, but not limited to, negligence, shall the Author be liable for any special or consequential damages that result from the use of, or the inability to use this eBook, even if the Author or his authorized representative has been advised of the possibility of such damages.

Applicable law may not allow the limitation or exclusion of liability or incidental or consequential damages, so the above limitation or exclusion may not apply to you. In no event shall the Author's total liability to you for all damages, losses, and causes of action (whether in contract, tort, including but not limited to, negligence or otherwise) exceed the amount paid by you, if any, for this eBook.

You agree to hold the Author of this eBook, the Author's owners, agents, affiliates, and employees harmless from any and all liability for all claims for damages due to injuries, including attorney fees and costs, incurred by you or caused to third parties by you, arising out of the products, services, and activities discussed in this eBook, excepting only claims for gross negligence or intentional tort.

You agree that any and all claims for gross negligence or intentional tort shall be settled solely by confidential binding arbitration per the American Arbitration Association's commercial arbitration rules. All arbitration must occur in the municipality where the Author's principal place of business is located. Arbitration fees and costs shall be split equally, and you are solely responsible for your own lawyer fees.

Facts and information are believed to be accurate at the time they were placed in this eBook. All data provided in this eBook is to be used for information purposes only. The information contained within is not intended to provide specific health advice, or any other advice whatsoever, for any individual or company and should not be relied upon in that regard. The services described are only offered in jurisdictions where they may be legally offered. Information provided is not all-inclusive, and is limited to information that is made available and such information should not be relied upon as all-inclusive or accurate.

For more information about this policy, please contact the Author at the e-mail address listed in the Copyright Notice for this eBook.

IF YOU DO NOT AGREE WITH THESE TERMS AND EXPRESS CONDITIONS, DO NOT READ THIS EBOOK. YOUR USE OF THIS EBOOK, PRODUCTS, SERVICES, AND ANY PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES MENTIONED ON THIS EBOOK, MEAN THAT YOU ARE AGREEING TO BE LEGALLY BOUND BY THESE TERMS.

AFFILIATE COMPENSATION DISCLOSURE

This eBook contains hyperlinks to websites and information created and maintained by other individuals and organizations. The Author does not control or guarantee the accuracy, completeness, relevance, or timeliness of any information or privacy policies posted on these linked websites.

You should assume that all references to products and services in this eBook are made because material connections exist between the Author and the providers of the mentioned products and services ("Provider"). You should also assume that all hyperlinks within this book are affiliate links for either (a) the Author or (b) someone else who is an affiliate for the mentioned products and services (individually and collectively, the "Affiliate").

The Affiliate recommends products and services in this eBook based in part on a good faith belief that the purchase of such products or services will help readers in general. The Affiliate has this good faith belief because (a) the Affiliate has tried the product or service mentioned prior to recommending it or (b) the Affiliate has researched the reputation of the Provider and has made the decision to recommend the Provider's products or services based on the Provider's history of providing these or other products or services. The representations made by the Affiliate about products and services reflect the Affiliate's honest opinion based upon the facts known to the Affiliate at the time this eBook was distributed by the Affiliate.

Because there is a material connection between the Affiliate and Providers of products or services mentioned in this eBook, you should always assume that the Affiliate may be biased because of the Affiliate's relationship with a Provider and/or because the Affiliate has received or will receive something of value from a Provider.

Perform your own due diligence before purchasing a product or service mentioned in this eBook.

The type of compensation received by the Affiliate may vary. In some instances, the Affiliate may receive complimentary products, services, or money from a Provider prior to mentioning the Provider's products or services in this eBook.

In addition, the Affiliate may receive a monetary commission or non-monetary compensation when you take action by clicking on a hyperlink in this eBook. This includes, but is not limited to, when you purchase a product or service from a Provider after clicking on an affiliate link in this eBook.

YOU SHOULD ALWAYS CONDUCT YOUR OWN INVESTIGATION (PERFORM DUE DILIGENCE) BEFORE BUYING PRODUCTS OR SERVICES FROM ANYONE VIA THE INTERNET. THIS INCLUDES PRODUCTS AND SERVICES SOLD VIA HYPERLINKS EMBEDDED IN THIS EBOOK.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>COPYRIGHT AND TRADEMARK NOTICES</u>	1
<u>LIMITS OF LIABILITY & DISCLAIMERS OF WARRANTY</u>	1
<u>AFFILIATE COMPENSATION DISCLOSURE</u>	2
INTRODUCTION	5
WHY ARE CHILDREN IRRITABLE	7
WHAT MAKES YOUR CHILD IRRITABLE	10
HOW DOES A CHILD BECOME CALM	13
GUIDELINES TO MAKE YOUR CHILD BECOME A HAPPIER CHILD	19
REFERENCES & RESOURCES	25



One of the most disturbing psychological challenges of parenthood is a child who is chronically irritable, angry, and who explodes into temper tantrums.

In fact, anger and irritability are among the most common reason parents consult health professionals.

Irritability can have a damaging effect on the child's development, the parent-child relationship, and family life.

What's worse, parents become desperate in their attempts to calm their child.

And when nothing works, parents often feel useless and worry why their child appears unhappy most of the time. For the child, it is an unsettling experience

to be chronically unregulated when things like transitions to a new activity, getting dressed, or being bathed trigger a tantrum.

Usually such children learn to depend on their parents to soothe them because they lack [strategies for self-calming](#).

And because they are irritable most of the time, they may not experience pleasurable interactions with others.

There are many reasons a child is irritable or has problems regulating his or her mood. It is helpful for parents to understand what might be setting off the irritability, as well as learn ways to help their child learn to stay calm when frustrated or distressed.

This short guide will help you achieve exactly that by showing you an easy-to-read, easy-to-follow method to help calm your baby in a family-oriented mix of guidance, support, and efficient techniques.



There are several reasons why children are irritable.

Sometimes there are medical problems like chronic ear infections, severe allergies, or urinary tract infections that may make your child uncomfortable and experience pain.

A common problem frequently overlooked is intolerance to milk. Children who rely on a diet heavy in gluten (wheat products) or sugar products can experience frequent mood swings and become picky eaters.

Some children are born fussy and have a difficult temperament. Children with [a difficult temperament](#) are usually more intense, have a hard time tolerating change, and distress easily.

It may be hard for them to keep a happy mood for very long. In addition, these children tend to be less flexible when changes of any sort are introduced.

As a result, they often get angry, wishing that things be done exactly how they want them to be.

Perhaps the most common reason children are irritable is because they become easily overstimulated in response to sensory stimulation.

Basic experiences like face washing, dressing, noise on the playground, or a busy household can load their nervous system and create an internal state that can be overwhelming to the child and which can ultimately lead to meltdowns.

An inflexible child is often an irritable child.

Children who have problems with organization and planning often fall apart when they are required to come up with a new way of doing things.

In addition to getting overstimulated easily, these irritable children often get angry when they have to organize themselves to perform a complex task.

This problem is commonly associated with attention deficit disorder, executive functioning problems, as well as motor planning issues.

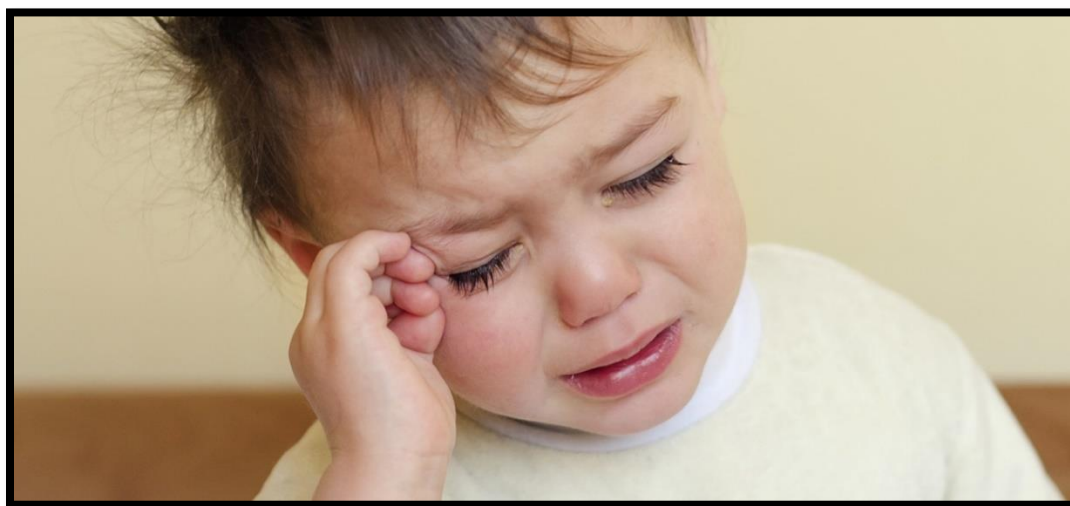
Finally, it is important to determine whether your child has a [mood regulation problem](#) that makes it difficult for him to keep a content mood.

Many parents worry about what this could mean for their child as he grows older. The truth is, it's very difficult to diagnose a mood disorder in very young children, but irritability is a factor in disorders such as anxiety or depression. As your child grows older, you may notice other things that point out to the

fact that there is an underlying mood problem that goes beyond a fussy, irritable temperament.

When the mood problems are unresponsive to typical solutions presented in this guide, a consultation with a developmental or behavioral pediatrician or a child psychologist is important.

However, an important aspect for parents to keep in mind is that what the child needs most is to learn how to self-calm on his or her own and to tolerate distress and frustration. This is a major focus of the strategy in this guide.



It is important not to overlook the impact that the parents' moods have on a child – it is not unusual for children with mood problems to have parents who also struggle with their mood.

There is also the genetic component. You may have a grandparent who had been diagnosed with anxiety, an uncle with depression, or you yourself struggled with a mood disorder your entire life.

If this is the case, it becomes even more important to consult with a mental health professional to understand if your child may have a mood disorder that makes him or her irritable.

When children are exposed to a parent who is angry, irritable, or depressed most of the time, they learn to respond to these strong emotions.

So even if your child doesn't have a mood disorder, he can learn that this is how one behaves.

The important thing is for you as a parent is to take care of yourself and [find ways to self-calm](#) and be available anytime for the difficult task of parenting.

Common Irritability Causes

Can't fall and stay asleep	Overstimulated by sensory stimulation	Distresses easily	Allergies, medical problems	Reflux, eating problems
Poor organization skills	Overwhelmed by limits and change	Inflexibility and inability to adapt	Home life disorganized	Parent(s) angry or depressed

Sometimes, parents find that they are constantly walking on eggshells around their irritable child. They may be afraid to set a limit or impose a change of activity because they know their child is likely to explode into a long tantrum.

Some parents structure every minute of the child's day to keep them organized. But this technique can be double-edged.

By overstimulating the child or giving him one activity after the next in order to distract him can backfire, and cause the child to become flooded with too much stimulation, ultimately leading to an never-ending cycle of tantrums.

In scientific studies of irritable children with regulatory problems, experts found that irritable children express themselves through distress signals.

They may scream, kick, push, bite, and yell to let you know how they feel.

There may be very little calm discussion about things, or happy activity that fills their time. This state of chaos and intensity causes the parent-child interaction to become disrupted and thus everything becomes negative.

Sometimes, parents withdraw or disengage to avoid negative interactions with their child. Moreover, they may let their child play alone when they are happy and miss the best time to interact with them.



Every child has to learn how to handle his or her own distress.

Initially the parents calm the child.

As they read their child's cues and see what works, they come up with a set of soothing strategies that work for their child.

The child begins to mentally process these strategies and gradually takes over the task of self-calming.

The process of becoming a well-regulated person depends on certain skills.

The child also needs models in the environment for how to become a good self-calmer.

Here are some methods that help a child become well-regulated:

- When babies cry, it helps them to have a responsive, caring, and sensitive parent who helps them calm down. This gives the child the message that their basic needs can be met and there are ways to handle distress. This step requires that parent(s) know how to read their child's signals and gestures, as well as have a host of calming strategies at their fingertips.
- As a child matures, he learns to internalize strategies to self-calm. Consistent use of good calming strategies helps the child learn which ones to call upon in different situations. The child also observes others solve similar problems and learns when and where to use which strategies.

Calming strategies and environmental modifications are most useful when one anticipates what could go wrong and have things in place for that moment when the child needs them.

This leads to the importance of teaching the child to understand the precursors of irritability, to anticipate the onset of frustration and distress, and to use appropriate strategies that are available.

Self-calming depends on the ability to problem solve before, during, and after a distressing episode.

The child gradually learns a variety of ways to help himself organize and monitor his own actions and to tolerate various negative emotions.

To help your child become a thinking child, it is useful to help him or her step out of the negative emotions and be thoughtful about the sequence of events that occurred. Many parents say things like “I’ve told him a thousand times that when he falls apart, he needs to go to his bedroom and calm down, but he never listens. If I pick him up and put him there, he screams even more”.

The problem is that once the child reaches a distressed state, he may completely shut off his thinking brain and cannot follow the strategy that his parents are trying to teach him.

This is why it’s important to break the strategy down into steps so that the child learns a successful approximation of what may work.

For instance, instead of expecting the child to go directly to the bedroom, the parent may guide the child to go to a corner of the room and hug his body tightly while humming a calm-down song.



The idea behind this is to teach your child how to stop and think in the moment, then slowly move towards anticipating what could go wrong, remembering the strategy, and using it.

It isn't until children have the capacity to remember past events and reflect on what has happened that they are able to internalize and use strategies that might work.

This is when the child develops insight into his behavior.

Self-calming requires the child to decrease the state of arousal he experiences related to distress.

An adaptable child learns to recognize the internal state of distress and hyperarousal, then finds ways to inhibit the arousal through strategies such as closing his eyes.

A toddler may hold his hands together or put them in his pockets when told not to touch a fragile object, thus inhibiting himself in an adaptable way.

An adult struggling to master a very difficult task may take a break to refresh himself mentally and physically, thus avoiding an adult-sized tantrum.

Self-regulation develops through synchronized, reciprocal, and well-modulated interactions between parents and their children.

A task of the young infant is to be able to tolerate the intensity of arousal they feel while interacting with their mom or dad. An infant who is flooded with too much arousal during interactions will avoid them and shut down.

For a child to experience pleasure from playing or interacting with his parent(s), he needs to find ways to avoid becoming over-stimulated.

The child has to find an optimal level of internal arousal to remain engaged in the interaction.

Consequently, the parent acts to help regulate the child's arousal by timing her responses, laughing at the right moment, touching her child periodically, encouraging him, and other behaviors that engage the child.

If you're too active, though, and doing more than what your child can process, the child will respond by backing away or becoming distressed.

Research has shown that when the parent and child are out-of-sync, the child learns to withdraw from the overly arousing interaction.

This can lead to disengagement, with resulting insecurity in attachments.

So how do you find the most optimal level of stimulation when you interact with your child?

The first thing you need to keep in mind is that the optimal level varies greatly from one child to the next and depends upon the child's threshold for arousal, tolerance for stimulation, and ability to self-control arousal.

The best way to know if you're on the right track is to watch your child's response. If you are offering an optimal level of stimulation, smiling occurs.

An increase in your child's attentiveness will usually relate to you becoming less active and more attentive to what your child is doing. Pay attention to what your child is seeking and [needing from you](#). If you are too active and directive of your child, he is likely to become less focused and attentive.

Here are the skills needed for your child to become an effective self-calmer:

- Provide a model of what it looks and feels like to be calm.
- Validate your child's level of distress. Respond to him gently through gestures and words.
- Show your child how to calm down in many different situations.
- Expand your child's repertoire of self-calming strategies so that when one fails, another one might work.
- Help your child find activities that give him pleasure so that he can shift from a distressed feeling to a positive one.
- Once your child is calm, help him think through what caused his distress and what he can do to make himself feel better next time it happens.
- While he is distressed, help your child to decrease that feeling. Use calming strategies that involve his cognitive abilities.
- Help your child think of what the next step might be and remain focused on accomplishing that goal.



Before embarking on a program to address your child's irritability, it is useful to think about when and where crying and irritability occur, and for how long, to determine the causes of the behavior.

In some cases, a crying infant or irritable child may be responding to tensions that you are feeling which may cause you to handle your child briskly or to snap at them when they ask for something.

All parents have bad days, but if this is a normal course of events for you, then what is irritability may occur whenever changes are introduced in the everyday routine or activity.

Once it is more apparent what might be underlying the child's irritability, treatment ideas can be tried.

It is very hard to help intensely unregulated children to calm down.

Sometimes parents say that once the tantrum begins, it has to run its course and may take several hours before things get better.

An important aspect in helping your child is to develop a consistent plan in approaching different behaviors.

The key principle to keep in mind is that we need to teach your child to calm himself down, to become a better problem solver, and to tolerate distress when he can't change a frustrating situation.

As parents we need to keep calm, understand our own limits, and make a plan that will work. At the same time, it is essential for you to understand your child's distress and feelings while learning how to set limits and redirect your child to purposeful activity.

Below are listed a number of guidelines that can be used in helping your child become a happier child:

→ Rule Out Medical Problems

When an infant or child is inconsolable, it is important to determine if the child has any medical problem that may be the primary reason for the crying or chronic irritability.

→ Address Irritability-Generating Sensory Hypersensitivities

Inconsolability may be related to hypersensitivities that the child has to environmental stimulation. These hypersensitivities may include clothes that agitates the child, noises that overstimulate him, or too many activities in a room that create an overloading effect.

The child's sensory hypersensitivities should be addressed whenever possible through play. If your child is hypersensitive to sounds, he should be encouraged to engage in activities that allow him to make sounds.

In addition, movement activities are very calming, particularly ones that provide linear movement like glider chairs and trampolines.

→ Avoid Overstimulating Your Child

A common problem confronting the parent who is trying to console a crying child is a tendency to become frantic when their efforts do not seem to work.

You may find yourself rocking your child in a forward and back motion for a few minutes, then swinging your child in the air when the crying resumes.

Or if your child is older, you may hand him a book to look at, music to listen to, or convince him to go outside for a change of scenery.

When each of your ideas fail to work, you find yourself scanning the list in your mind to offer something else that might work.

Whatever you do, it's a good idea to step back and think how many things did you just do to help your child calm down? If you count more than three, and all in a short period of time, it probably is too many.

The important thing is to try one thing long enough to see if it works.

One trick is to watch to see if there are certain situations or demands that consistently overwhelm your child.

For example, some children are overwhelmed by noisy, crowded environments. In this case, the issue is more sensory based.

This kind of child needs to have smaller amounts of stimulation in his life.

In this regard, it is helpful to teach your child to find healthy escapes when he is overwhelmed.

Other children cannot stand to have limits place on them because of their inflexibility in tolerating change or their need to control what happens to them.

Once you figure out what might be contributing to the irritability, you might be able to help your child by prompting him when a limit is on the horizon.

An easy way to do this is to use a [behavioral chart](#) with clear pictures or symbols of upcoming events or tasks that need to be done.

It is very comforting for children to know what's next on the agenda.

→ Help The Child Become More Self-Reliant

Many parents complain that their child is constantly whining and demanding their attention.

To help build the child's capacity to organize himself and decrease reliance on the parent to entertain him, you should try playing with your child for about 10 to 15 minutes using the child's favorite toys.

After the child is playing well, you should encourage him to keep playing while you do a small chore or activity in the same room.

Every few minutes, you should check in, reassure, and praise him.

Whenever you are involved in a task such as cooking a meal, it is wise to offer your young child some pots and pans, plastic containers, and small objects to use in filling, dumping, stirring, etc. so that your child can play and imitate you while you cook. If your child complains, you should try to redirect him physically or verbally. Moreover, you should be clear to your child about

when it is time that you will pick them up or help them and when it isn't because you are busy.

As soon as you are finished with your chore, you should reward them for playing alone or waiting by sitting with them to read a story or playing with them briefly.

For young babies, they may be carried about in a sling while you do household chores so that he or she can see what you are doing.

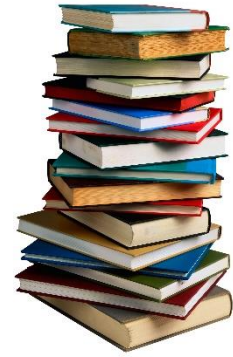
With older children – preschoolers and school-aged children – it is helpful to teach your child to label his or her emotions and to read bodily signals so that he or she can implement calm-down strategies on their own.

Sometimes children respond to ideas like a traffic light or mood meter with red color denoting “time to put on the brakes” or mad or angry feelings and green or blue colors for feeling calm or focused.

Other children respond well to thinking about their engine is running.

REFERENCES & RESOURCES

The Baby Owner’s Manual: Operating Instructions, Trouble-Shooting Tips, And Advice On First-Year Maintenance – Louis Borgenicht M.D., Joe Borgenicht; Quirk Books Publishing; 2012



What To Expect The First Year – Heidi Murkoff, Sharon Mazel; Workman Publishing Company; 2014

Baby Knows Best: Raising A Confident And Resourceful Child, The RIE™ Way – Deborah Carlisle Solomon; Little, Brown and Company Publishing; 2015

Permission To Parent: How To Raise Your Child With Love And Limits – Robin Berman; Harper Wave Publishing; 2015

Brain Rules for Baby: How to Raise a Smart and Happy Child from Zero to Five – John Medina; Pear Press Publishing; 2011