

Dear Barbara

What should I do about my 10-month-old baby who is really starting to show his anger? When I take something away that he is not allowed to have, he arches his back and screams.

Dear Parent

Although parents often worry that this is the beginning of misbehaviour, it is actually a very positive sign that your son is expressing his angry feelings by arching his back and screaming around specific incidents. Your son has now developed to the point that he can connect his frustrated and angry feelings with specific experiences and he can let you know that he is displeased about these things. You can help him by identifying these feelings even more clearly for him. Acknowledging his anger, and helping him understand his feelings are important. Say "You are angry you can't have scissors. I'm sorry, you feel upset. Scissors hurt. Lets play with your blocks."

When he gets a few months older, it will not be as easy to distract him from what he wants. If he is really upset and continues to cry when frustrated, try to comfort him, saying, "I know how upset you are, I am sorry I can't let you have the scissors." Hold him, rock him, read to him. Do whatever helps him get over his angry feelings. Reassure him that his big, angry feelings will become little angry feelings and will eventu-

ally go right away so he feels happy again.

This approach helps your son recognize when he feels angry (many adults cannot do this!). Knowing how we feel inside helps us figure out ways to cope. By treating your son's angry feelings with respect, and helping him over-come these feelings without being told he is a "bad" boy for having them, you give him a tremendous base for coping with his aggressive and unco-operative feelings that will become even stronger as he moves through the developmental stages. Discovering that his mother can still love him (and doesn't reject him by sending him to his room) when he feels angry helps him develop a feeling that he has value ... even though he sometimes feels very angry.



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Photo by Murray Pellowe

Barbara Burrows welcomes your questions at www.barbaraburrows.com. For more discussion of parenting issues with Barbara Burrows, tune into CH TV Morning Live Wednesday mornings at 8:50 AM.



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HALTON HILLS PARENTING MAGAZINE

TIPS FOR Hallowe'en

☀ Talk to your child about their ideas for costumes, and share your family's way of having a fun, not scary Hallowe'en.

☀ Encourage your child to think about a real person, or an occupation they would like to dress up as.

☀ Help your child find out information about this person or occupation as you work together on preparing a costume.

☀ Talk with your child about scary things they see, and be alert for signs of an overwhelmed child.



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