

# Tips for Parents



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Parenting.  
Give it time.  
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## Understanding and Soothing a Crying Toddler

Just like babies, toddlers cry because they're hungry, tired, uncomfortable or need to feel connected with you. Once your toddler can talk, it will be much easier for them to express why they're upset and for you to understand what they need.



### Tips to manage your toddler's crying

- **Check they're not unwell or in pain.** If they have a high temperature, they may have an illness. If you think there's something wrong contact **NHS 111 Wales** free on **111** ([www.111.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.111.wales.nhs.uk)) for advice. If you don't see any obvious signs of illness, a headache or earache could be causing them to cry.
- **Try to work out why your toddler is crying.** Using **HALT** is a good starting point. Think about if your child is **Hungry**, **Angry**, **Lonely** or **Tired**. A snack, some quiet time or a rest might help.
- **Stay close and stay calm.** It is important your child knows that you are still there and with them; this might be by giving them a soothing hug, saying something reassuring in a soft tone of voice or maintaining eye contact with them. Show them how to respond to feelings of frustration so that your child learns from watching you.
- **Is your child worried or anxious about something?** Your child may be worried or anxious about going to nursery, moving house or a new baby. Crying is their way of expressing their anxiety. Give your child lots of reassurance with love and make them feel safe and secure.
- **Try taking your child out.** Go for a walk, to the park or join a parent and toddler group. A change of scenery can help.
- **Talk about and acknowledge their feelings.** If your child can describe how they feel and/or sign with words, it can help them understand and manage their feelings.
- **Try distracting your toddler.** Use a toy or play activity or point out something interesting.
- **Do not smack or physically punish your child.** This is illegal in Wales. You might think it will stop the behaviour but it doesn't respond to your child's needs, or help them learn how to understand their emotions and develop more control over their behaviours.

## It's OK to ask for help

There are services and organisations which can give you support and advice.

You may find these helplines useful:

- **Community Advice and Listening Line (C.A.L.L)** – [callhelpline.org.uk](https://www.callhelpline.org.uk) – call on **0800 132 737** (24 hour service), or text 'help' to **81066**. This is a confidential helpline which offers emotional support on mental health and related matters.
- **Samaritans** ([samaritans.org](https://www.samaritans.org)) on **116 123** (confidential 24 hour service). You can get in touch about anything that's troubling you, no matter how large or small the issue.



## Where to get advice and support

Universal parenting support and advice is provided by midwives, health visitors, GPs and your local authority. Early help programmes such as Flying Start (if you live in a Flying Start area) and Families First are also available.

Look after yourself. Meeting up with other parents can be great for your wellbeing. Your local **Family Information Service** ([www.fis.wales](https://www.fis.wales)) will be able to tell you what's on in your area.

For positive parenting tips and expert advice, visit: [gov.wales/giveittime](https://www.gov.wales/giveittime)

