

# Challenging behaviour

Children's tough behaviour can leave us and them feeling exhausted, overwhelmed, and out of control.

Here are a couple of things you can do in the heat of the moment when things feel like they're just too much:

## 1

Stop, observe, and accept your own response to their behaviour. This presses the PAUSE button, giving you time to respond rather than react. Ask yourself:

- Is this behaviour pushing my buttons? If so, what's going on for me?
  - Is my heart beating faster? Are my muscles getting tense?
- Do I want to react in an unhelpful way?
  - If so, are my expectations of my child realistic?
- What could I do to slow myself down? Remind myself:
  - "My child is learning how to have big feelings, and I am their teacher".
  - "I need to be the bigger, stronger and wiser person right now"

This can help to ease the situation & allow you to respond in a calmer way.

## 2

Talk to and comfort your child:

- Acknowledge just how tough the situation is
- Let them know their feelings are big and hard to manage, but that they are ok and you will help
- Respectfully listen to and name the feelings they are trying to show you through their behaviour.

This will build trust within your relationship

## 3

Talk out loud to your young child about what you will do to help make things better.

## 4

After things have cooled down, it can be helpful to reflect on the situation by noticing how your baby responded to your efforts to help and sooth: what worked well?

