



# Stop, Wait, Go

## FACTSHEET

[www.stopwaitgo.net.au](http://www.stopwaitgo.net.au)

# STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH YOUR CHILD'S MELTDOWNS

## Emotional Coaching:

Experiences help children to get a sense of who they are and their emotional self. As part of these experiences they need good congruent feedback that leads them to develop the ability to manage their emotions. When we deal with their emotions by anger, we teach that anger and using power over others is the way to manage strong emotions.

Emotional Coaching immerses children in the language of feelings and attunement.

- Observe and recognize their emotion
- Listen to what they are saying
- Label the feelings with stem statements
- Set limits with children and help them problem solve.

You won't believe the result of your acknowledgement of their feelings.

## Stem Statements

- *"I hear that you are feeling upset/angry"*
- *"I am sure it is very frustrating for you"*
- *"That feeling in your tummy is warning you that the anger is getting control, I understand how that is feeling uncomfortable"*
- *"While you are that angry you cannot get control of yourself, we need to use our calming strategies"*
- *"That feeling in your tummy is saying you are really angry, we could try going to your room until that feeling has gone"*

These reflective stem statements allow the cessation or slow- down of the hormone cortisol. It may take 5 statements, delivered in a calm, slow and low tone, with a little space in between, if you are doing it right you will register the slowing down of the meltdown.

## Calm Breathing

The following strategy needs to be taught when not in a meltdown and practised. After reading a story when lying on the bed is a good idea.

- Breathing out for longer than breathing in E.g. Breathe in 123, breathe out 123 ½ is a natural mechanism to reduce stress hormones.
- Relaxing the muscles that are tense
- Move down the body squeeze your face up let it go
- Squeeze you shoulders up to your ears and let go etc all the way down to the toes flexing and relaxing the muscles.
- Breathing as above.

