



# What To Say (Or Do) When Parents Abuse Their Children In Public

1. "He seems to be trying your patience."
2. "Is he tired? Does he need a nap?"
3. "My child used to get upset like that."
4. "Children can wear you out, can't they? Is there anything I can do to help?"
5. Strike up a conversation with the adult. See if you can redirect his/her attention away from the child.
6. Sympathize with the parent. "Isn't it amazing how children think they can get what they want by kicking and screaming?"
7. "My son behaves like that sometimes, and I . . ."
8. If you are concerned about the physical safety of the child, alert the store manager.
9. Divert the child's attention (if he is misbehaving) by talking to him or engaging him in conversation.
10. Praise the child and parent at first opportunity.
11. If the child is in danger, offer assistance. For example, if the child was left unattended in a grocery cart, stand by the child until the parent returns.
12. Find something positive to say about the child to the parent. "Your child is beautiful," or "What pretty hair she has."
13. "Looks like you're having a rough day. Is there anything I can do to help?"
14. "Looks like your little boy is giving you a hard time." Try to relieve tension and perhaps open communication.
15. If you know the parent, offer to watch the child while she/he takes a break, gets a drink, etc.

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