

Parent Guide



@twinklparents

We are excited to share this content with you. If you are interested in finding more resources made especially for Parents, then check out these links to different areas of the **Twinkl Parents** hub.

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Subject Guides

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Supporting Learning



What is this resource and how do I use it?

Sometimes, it feels like whatever we do as parents is wrong in our little people's eyes! This is especially true when they are tired, hungry, or have had a busy day - all things that will probably come together at the end of the school day. This guide offers ways to try and manage the meltdowns and make for a happier end of the day for everyone.

What is the focus of this resource?

Being Prepared

Self-Regulation

Understanding Emotions

Managing Emotions

Further Ideas and Suggestions

Some of the meltdowns your child experiences could come from feeling unsure about things, such as who is picking them up from school. Try this guide to [Plan Out Your Child's After-School Activities](#). Even if they're not going to clubs, it can be useful to see what the plan is for each day.

Parents Blog



Parenting Wiki



Parenting Podcast



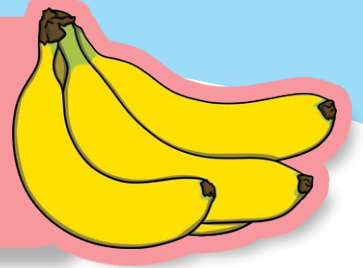
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Parents
Hub

Tips for Managing After-School Meltdowns

If you are finding yourself trying to cope with after-school meltdowns from your child, know you are not alone! This is really common for children of all ages. The reasons can be varied. Maybe your child has had enough of sitting down for most of the day and needs to let off steam, they had a disagreement with a friend at lunchtime and don't feel like it's been resolved or maybe they are simply 'hangry' (this could go alongside either of the above, too). Regardless of the cause, there are things you can do to help manage the meltdowns and make the transition from school to home a little smoother.

Have a healthy snack ready and waiting for the journey home - bananas are ideal but anything that is going to give them a boost of energy and keep them going until their evening meal will be good. Avoid sugary treats at this time - they provide a temporary energy fix but often come with a bigger crash later, which could actually cause its own meltdown!



Don't forget the water! Even if your child has a water bottle at school, you can't guarantee they will even touch it during the day. Sometimes, a fresh bottle of water simply handed to them quietly will make your child take a big, healthy drink, without them even really realising they've accepted it!

Try not to bombard your child with questions. Instead, greet them with a smile and a hug and let them steer the conversation. If they want to tell you something, they will. If they would rather mooch along quietly, likewise.

You could try modelling how to talk about your day. For example, tell them about your day, where you've been, something that's been good, something that's maybe not been so good. This can help your child build a framework for how to talk about their day when they are ready to.

Be present. This can be hard, especially if you are still on work calls or emails during pick-ups or are working in the evening, but having even a small window of time where you can focus on your child really matters to them.

Does your child struggle with separation from you? A little note in their pocket, or [Lunchbox Encouragement Card](#), could give them a bit more security throughout the day.

Some children really thrive on structure and need this to continue once they get home from school. You could try having a semi-set routine that you do every day when you get in - whether that's flopping for half an hour's downtime, or going straight to get changed out of their uniform - it can really help children to have a little plan in their minds for what is going to happen next.



Similarly, some children will prefer to get their homework, reading books, times table practice, etc. out of the way as soon as they get in. Others need the time away from school work before they feel they can tackle it. If you build this in, so you and your child know they will do their work after dinner, for example, it adds to the structure of their evening as well as giving them some say in how it goes.



Your child might relax by going off by themselves and having some quiet time - maybe curling up with a book. Set up space for them to do this. If they're not a keen reader, you could print off some [Colour by Numbers](#) activities that they can complete independently.

For most people in general, getting outside is always a good idea. If you can't make a quick park run on the way home (or you find that these prove tricky for your family - post-park meltdowns), try some of our [Fun in the Garden](#) activities.

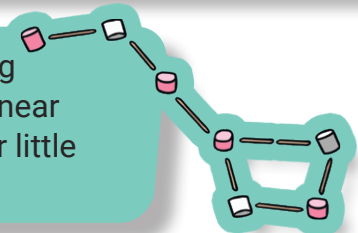
Got lots of after-school activities? The success is all in the planning. In the morning, remind them what they have after school and try to run through a little plan. You can keep it loose if you need to! Hint: pack extra snacks on these days!

Trial and error - what works for one child, may not work for another. You could have three children with completely different ways of decompressing after school. Try your best to accommodate their needs but also remember, you need to look after yourself too! Make some things non-negotiable, such as all sitting down for dinner together at your desired time.



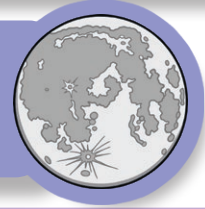
Meltdowns occurring because you are trying to cook tea and your little one wants you? Try involving them in the cooking. Child-safe knives are available fairly cheaply and involving children in cooking teaches them a lot of different skills. Bonus, they often eat better if they have played a part in making it!

If involving your child in cooking is just not practical for you, try keeping them occupied with a quick and easy to set up activity, but keep them near you. It could be making hoop cereal towers on a piece of spaghetti (for little ones) or creations from matchsticks and marshmallows.



Listen. Sometimes you just need to listen, not fix.

Again with the routine... keep bedtimes consistent. Your child does a lot in school every day, whether they tell you about it all or not. It is important they get a chance to properly rest.



Let it happen. We all need to let our feelings out sometimes. You are your child's safe place so if they need to blow, let them, just ensure they are safe whilst it happens. When they have completely calmed down, reassure them that you love them no matter what and perhaps go over some ideas for how they can try and communicate their feelings next time they feel them building up into a storm. Our [Managing Emotions](#) area has lots of resources that can help with this.

Try not to get caught up in the meltdown yourself. This can be hard. You are likely worn out after a busy day and your temper might be near boiling point. Take a moment to close your eyes and breathe - maybe engaging in some of the mindfulness techniques you have practised with your child.

