

Triggers and Overprotective Parenting

Common situations	Common response from parent
Baby or child looks sad when mother tries to leave or put them to sleep	Parent feels guilty and decides not to follow through
Baby looks uncomfortable during "tummy time"	Parent gets scared and does not let baby practice "tummy time" anymore
Family makes plans to leave baby with babysitter	Parent panics and decides not to leave home or spends the whole time away preoccupied with the thought of baby at home
Baby coughs while swallowing a piece of sweet potato or solid food on first attempt	Parent gets scared and purées all of baby's food from now on
Baby catches a cold after being outside	Parent worries and rarely lets baby out of house
Baby develops rash	Parent panics and rushes baby to doctor's office
Baby bumps head on coffee table while crawling on floor	Parent worries that baby is seriously injured and rushes baby to Emergency Room
Once child is a toddler, child falls off slide the first time they go down	Parent is now scared to let toddler slide down without holding them
Child is a little older (6 or 7) and wants to play on hanging bars. Child slips and falls	Parent is scared to let child play on hanging bars anymore
Parent tries to dress toddler for the day but child resists, squirms, and hits parent	Parent gives up and lets child wear pyjamas all day
Toddler sees candy in store and cries/screams that they want it	Parent first says "no" but then feels bad and gives in
Baby screams every time they are put into car seat	Parent avoids taking baby into the car

Can you imagine yourself responding in the ways listed above?

- What are you thinking and how do those thoughts make you feel?
- How would you handle the situation?
- How would you handle the potential anxiety, panic, or stress?
- Do you think if you could pause and use the tools we used during the triggers exercise, your response might be different?
- What might your new response be?
- How would you compare your initial response vs. your new response as far as impact on your baby?