



## What to Do If You See Abusive Behavior in Public

- **If the parent sounds angry** or says emotionally hurtful words to a child — sympathize with the adult to direct attention away from the child. “Looks like you’re having a rough time.”
- **If a child is showing signs of irritability**, whining or misbehaving — remember humor can help defuse a tense situation. “Kids can be a handful. That little one looks like he/she is ready for a nap.”
- **If a child is upset because he or she wants a toy**, the parent says “no” and this escalates into an argument — help the parent understand the child’s perspective. “Kids don’t really understand the value of money.” Or “Remember when you were a kid and wanted all the fancy new toys.”
- **If a parent appears to be at wit’s end** with his or her child’s restlessness — talk to the child if possible. Demonstrate that a little positive attention can go a long way.
- **If a parent is hitting, kicking, pinching or physically hurting the child** in any way — take action if necessary for the physical safety of the child. Alert a store manager or CALL 911.