



## The Dump Truck Ticket Booth!

*Kids who have tantrums love to go on this ride!*

Dump Tickets are a light way of dealing with those tense moments when your child is winding up for a nice long tantrum or helping them to release and work through their negative moods.

Divorced parents sometimes experience their children returning from a weekend visit from their ex-spouse, not as the cute kids who left their home a few days ago--- but as a tupperware container of that ex-spouse's resentment, pain or loneliness. Nurturing that tupperware container feels toxic, so we either get sick, ignore it or gain weight.

But how do we help our kids process all the complicated adult emotions they absorb from adults?

### Problem:

Your kids throws tantrums especially after coming home from your ex-spouse's house.

### Why do kids have tantrums?:

They feel like they have to have a tantrum just to be heard.

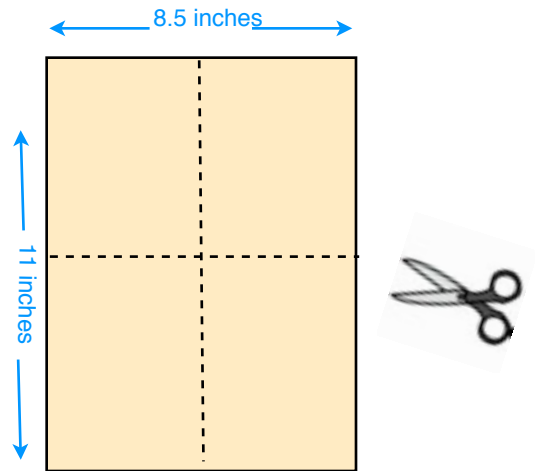
Imagine that it isn't your kids talking to you. It is your ex's silent resentment and unheard pain. Since you refused to hear his/her emotional baggage when you were married, it is now throwing a tantrum just when you thought you were divorced and free!

## WHEN YOU

- 1. YOU GET A WARNING**
- 2. AFTER THE WARNING:**
  - A. YOU CAN BEHAVE**
  - B. YOU CAN NOT BEHAVE AND CHOOSE TO DO THE DUMP TRUCK**

## Step 1: Dump Tickets

1. Make small sheets of blank paper. These are your blank dump tickets.
2. When you kid starts acting up, you ask him “Do you need to dump?”
3. Hand him a dump package:
  - Crayons
  - Markers
  - Blank dump tickets
  - Glass jar where you put all your tickets



## Step 2: Ticket Booth

1. On the front side of the dump ticket, your kid is going to draw **WHAT HE DOESN'T WANT**.

For example, if he doesn't want to wash his hands, then he is going to draw a bar of soap with a big red X slashed through it.



Front of ticket

2. On the back side of the dump ticket, your kid is going to draw **WHAT HE WANTS, INSTEAD**.

For example, if he would rather smash all the plates in the sink, then he draws broken plates.

It has to be an alternative to what he does want. So if he doesn't want to wash his hands, then what does he want instead?



Back of ticket

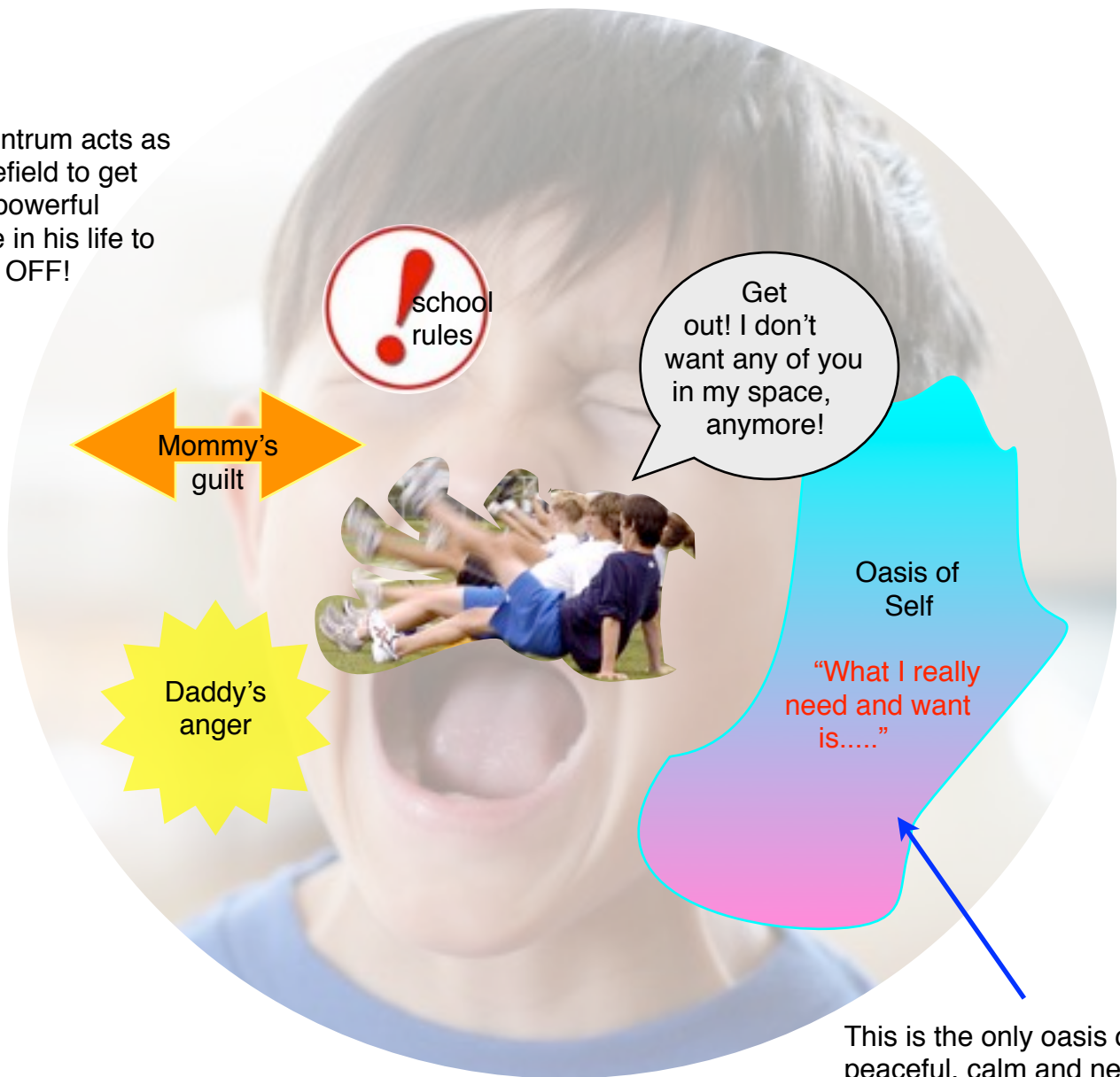
3. The dump pictures represent the child's CHOICE.

What is he choosing? He gets to choose between what he wants and what he doesn't want. He also has to express this choice in the form of pictures or words. **He gets to verbalize making a conscious choice** through the dump pictures.

4. The goal is to shift the child from what “I don't want,” to what “I do want.” Even if both choices are negative, it gets the child closer to expressing what he truly wants. **The tantrum is a mask. It is only hiding what truly wants to be expressed.**

# Anatomy of a Temper

The tantrum acts as a forcefield to get more powerful people in his life to BACK OFF!



To protect his neutral space, your kid will start kicking at anything that **OVERRIDES** his own fundamental needs, wants or peace of mind. The tantrum is just your kid clearing his space.

The problem is when he gets lost and forgets how to get back to his oasis. The "Dump Truck" will show him how to get back there.

This is the only oasis of peaceful, calm and neutral feelings that your kid has.

- His needs/ wants are fulfilled
- He can freely express himself
- He is heard
- He is cared for

**Step 3: How many tickets do we make? Answer: However many it takes!**

1st Ticket:

**Child:** I want to color easter eggs NOW!

**Parent:** Let's make dump tickets for easter eggs.

**Child draws:**

Front side of ticket: picture of an easter egg.

Back side of ticket: "NO WAITING!"

2nd Ticket:

**Parent:** Did that make you feel better? Did you dump all your feelings about the eggs?

**Child:** NO!!

**Parent:** Let's make another dump ticket for the easter eggs, then.

**Child draws:**

Front side of ticket: picture of an easter egg.

**Parent:** Okay, what do you NOT want, instead of the easter eggs?

**Child draws:**

Back side of ticket: picture of NOT sitting at home and playing trucks.

**Child:** I don't want to sit here and play trucks. I want easter eggs!

3rd Ticket:

**Parent:** Did that make you feel better? Did you dump all your feelings about the eggs?

**Child:** NO!!

**Parent:** Let's make another dump ticket for the easter eggs, then.

**Child thinks:** He is going to realize that he can make 12 dump pictures for the easter eggs and still not get the easter eggs. So he changes his picture immediately, while still preserving the feeling he gets from them.

**Child draws:**

Front side of ticket: marshmallow bunnies

Back side of ticket: no easter eggs

4th Ticket:

**Parent:** Did that make you feel better? Did you dump all your feelings about the eggs?

**Child:** Yeah, but now I want bunnies!

**Parent:** Make a dump ticket for bunnies, then.

**Child draws:**

Front side of ticket: marshmallow bunnies

Back side of ticket: doesn't want to eat veggies

Continuing this pattern:

Your child is going to keep changing what he wants, until he realizes that it is the FEELING that the easter eggs gave him--- that he can get through many ways, not just through "Easter eggs, NOW!"

He can get that feeling from marshmallow bunnies, from a hug from Mommy, from going shopping for Easter cards, from many different alternatives. There is not just ONE THING on this planet that gives him joy.

#### **Step 4: After he is done dumping**

1. Mommy looks at child's dump tickets.
2. Mommy decides how many dump tickets SHE is going to allow him to keep.

**Parent:** "You get to keep 2 dump tickets. Which ones do you want to keep?"

He has to forget about all the other dump tickets. If he made 13 dump tickets, he only gets to keep 2.

**Child:** I want to keep this dump ticket  
front side: no wash hands  
back side: use handi-wipes, instead

4. Negotiate over the dump tickets

**Option 1:** Give him what he wants (back side of ticket)

**Option 2:** Bargain. Give him what he wants, but only if he gives up something else or does something to make up for getting what he wants.

**Option 3:** Don't give him what he wants. Enforce a rule. If he breaks that rule, there are consequences.

5. Another example of negotiating:

**Parent:** You can pick ONE dump ticket.

**Child:** I want to keep this dump ticket  
front side: easter eggs  
back side: no waiting

**Parent:** Wednesday, we will do the easter eggs if..... today you go to bed and be quiet.

#### **The goal of negotiating is:**

NOT "how to break Mommy's rules"

BUT... "How to honor Mommy's rules" in a way that makes us BOTH feel good

## Step 5: Relationships vs. Selfish Needs

Example of when you can give him what he wants:

1. **Child:** “Mommy, I want a hug. But I was just pretending I didn’t want to wash my hands, so you would hug me.”
2. Mommy gives him a hug.
3. He washes his hands.
4. He is going to realize that washing his hands is not a big deal. That he would RATHER feel good and get a hug, than NOT wash his hands. He stops making a big deal about giving up control over EVERYTHING (he isn’t center of the universe). **He realizes that RELATIONSHIP with Mommy is more important than asserting his selfish needs/wants.**

## Step 6: Getting to choose his own feelings

Problem: At Daddy’s house, he doesn’t have to wash his hands. At Mommy’s house, he does.

Solution: Child won’t remember or focus on the different sets of rules at each building. He is only going to learn that at Mommy’s house, he has the RIGHT and the FREEDOM to focus on and express WHAT HE WANTS.

Part of his tantrums is that he cannot fully express what he wants or he doesn’t know what he wants--- he only know how he feels. And those feelings are confusing because are they Daddy’s feelings, Todd’s feelings or Mommy’s feelings?

- This exercise helps child to sort out all the feelings that he has collected from all the places that he has been in the past few days---- and then pick and choose which feelings he wants to keep and which feelings he wants to dump.
- Then, express those feelings into desires or wants.
- Then, negotiate getting those wants from Mommy--- by following her rules.