



## Anger Management

### Anger Management: Teaching Children How to Deal with Their Anger

Teaching children how to deal with their anger is hard because you don't know when your child will get angry again. Use the time between angry outbursts to discuss and practice how to deal with anger. Practice each evening for about 2 to 3 minutes.

There are 5 important parts to teaching anger management. They are:

1. **Practice a substitute behavior.** You and your child should practice a new behavior to use when he is getting angry. Some ideas include counting, counting backwards, picturing a peaceful scene in his mind, or blowing pretend bubbles. Blowing pretend bubbles is a good one to start with because it is easy and encourages your child to take long, slow breaths. Start by blowing real bubbles using a bubble solution and then have him pretend he is blowing bubbles by holding his hand up to his mouth as though it were the bubble wand. Teach your child to do this as soon as he starts to feel frustrated or upset.
2. **Reward.** With your child, make a list of rewards that he can earn by practicing the behavior every day. Also reward for using the new behavior to avoid feeling frustrated or angry. Rewards are very helpful to help children learn to manage their anger.
3. **Give examples.** Tell your child about times when you have been angry and stressed, and what you did. Give examples of what your child could do in a similar situation. It is important that your child see you successfully deal with your own anger.
4. **Encourage using the new behavior.** When your child first starts to get upset, remind him or her to practice the new behavior. The sooner you prompt your child, the easier it will be for him to try it. If you wait until your child loses control, the exercises probably will not help. Only tell your child once.

- 5. Avoid arguments and correct him consistently.** Don't argue with your child. Everybody loses when there is an argument. Set a good example and deal with your child in a quiet, calm manner. When you need to discipline your child, use your normal method of discipline (for example, time-outs). Don't change what you do because you are angry or because you don't want your child to get angry.

The more you work on teaching these skills, the faster your child will learn to deal with their own anger. Once a child has learned to deal with their anger, they won't need as much help with it.

\*NOTE: This information is provided as a public educational service. The information does not replace any of the instructions your physician gives you. If you have a medical emergency please call 911 or call the Hospital at (208) 529-6111. If you have questions about your child's care, please call Idaho Falls Pediatrics at (208) 522-4600.