

# Take Home Tips

EARLY CHILDHOOD FAMILY EDUCATION



ANOKA-HENNEPIN SCHOOLS

PRESCHOOL

Early Learning

## Do's of Teaching Your Child to Cope with Anger

Here are some helpful tips to teach your children how to cope with anger:

- 1. DO recognize and acknowledge your child's feelings.** If you validate your child's feelings, then your child doesn't need to defend those feelings and is less likely to respond in anger. Acknowledging feelings causes your child's anger to soften and leaves a safe space in which he or she can learn empathy and coping skills.
- 2. DO practice empathy.** By listening to your child's feelings without interruption or defense, you create space for your child's anger to dissipate, as they no longer need to use up energy defending the fairness of their position. The consistency of your open reception to your child's anger teaches him or her to react less emotionally and more critically.
- 3. DO teach your children problem-solving skills.** Neurological tracking occurs when children creatively problem-solve. The more children practice and rehearse problem-solving rather than emotional reacting, the more their neurological pathways assist them in controlling their impulses.
- 4. DO establish clear standards for acceptable and unacceptable behavior.** This means that though we want to validate all our child is feeling, allowing those emotions does not translate into the acceptance of bad behavior. There are common rules of engagement which include: no hitting, throwing, breaking objects or disrespect.
- 5. DO teach your child relaxation methods.** By teaching children progressive relaxation, breathing techniques and other self-managing tools for stress, they can calm themselves down when confronted with anger.
- 6. DO try a "time in" instead of a "time out."** As the parent, you are your child's main guide in life, and as their guide, they rely on you to be there with them through their emotional experience, whatever that may be. Therefore, no time out, no isolation. Instead, try a "time in" — sit with your child and incorporate other methods mentioned in this post: work on breathing with them, ask them questions about their feelings.



**7. DO teach your children to recognize anger cues.** If children can self-monitor, they can self-manage. By recognizing the feelings that accompany anger, children can recognize the onset of those emotions. This gives them time in which to self-manage before they are caught in the chaos of emotion.

**8. DO teach your children how to bring their feelings to consciousness.** By recognizing the emotions that drive their behavior, children can learn to skillfully manage that behavior. Writing, drawing and painting are wonderful ways to express the issues that are bothering children, especially if they have trouble verbalizing their emotions.

**9. Do invest your child in the process of managing their anger.** Ask your children to give you some tips on how they could positively manage their emotions. Make a list of five actions they can take — such as breathing deeply for one minute or drawing a picture — and leave the list somewhere your child can see it, such as his or her bedroom door or on your refrigerator door.

**10. DO bond with your child.** A well-bonded child can learn to cope and manage his or her emotions, to problem-solve, to process and to stick with a problem until it is resolved. They are also more adventuresome and will creatively explore different options as solutions to problems. The well-bonded child feels like he or she can depend on parents.

In the end, remember that you, as the parent, make all the difference. By following these tips, you can help strengthen your relationship.

Source: Dr. Gross, Gail

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