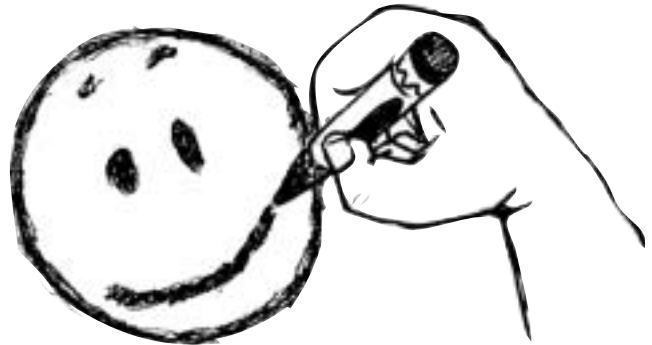


Anger Management: Working With the Class

The following are examples of class activities on managing anger. Teachers should select the activities that are developmentally appropriate for their class.



Ages 3 - 4

1. *How-I-Feel Faces*

Give children paper plates and have each one draw a happy face. Have them tell you about something that makes them happy. Next, have them turn the paper plate over and draw an angry face. Have them tell you about something that makes them angry. Talk about how it is okay to have angry feelings, but not okay to show them in ways that hurt yourself or others.

2. *How Do the Puppets Feel?*

Use puppets or dolls to act out a dialogue for an emotion (happy, sad, afraid, angry). Ask the children to tell you how the puppets are feeling. Continue each puppet dialogue to show a healthy way in which the puppets express feelings. Help children learn that all people have feelings, and that we want to behave in ways that do not hurt anyone.

3. *Relaxing*

Use images to help your child relax when they are anxious or angry.

Some examples are:

- Have child lie down and try to melt into the floor like a puddle of water.
- Have child try to bend over and hang limply like a rag doll or towel.
- Have child bend and sway from side to side like a slow-moving blade of grass.
- Have child lie down and pretend they are floating on a fluffy white cloud.

Children's Literature

Read a book like *Alexander and the Horrible No Good Very Bad Day* or *The Grumpy Lady Bug*, and talk about how the characters were feeling and what happened at the end of each story.

Ages 5 - 6

1. Be a **STAR** (Stop, Think, Act, and Review)

Simplify the **IDEAL** model by explaining to the children in this age group that they can be a **STAR** even when they are angry. Go over the ideas and role-play them for the children. Model the thoughts by thinking out loud as you go over the steps in the model. For example, as you role-play, say, "I am really angry. I want to fight her, but, wait, I would rather be a **STAR**. So I will Stop, count to 10, and take 3 deep breaths to calm down. (Model this.) "Now I must Think. Why am I so angry? What safe thing can I do? I know I will just tell her, 'Stacy you are mean to grab my paint brush.' I will walk away and tell the teacher." Act. (Model telling Stacy and walking away.) Let me Review or Remember by thinking about what I did. I am really proud of myself for calming down, thinking, and choosing not to hit Stacy for grabbing my paint brush!"

2. Really Mad Story

Read the story below, or a similar one, and have children talk about how the story might end. Before you read this story, talk about what a bully is and how a bully acts. After the story, talk about boys and girls having fair chances to do everything. Boys are not better than girls are. Girls are not better than boys are. They are equal. Talk about what "equal" means. Give several examples that emphasize inclusion and celebration of diversity. Ask the children if they have other examples.

Paul and Kyle built a fort out of boxes and blankets. They put up a sign on the front box that said "NO GIRLS." Rita and Kyle had been playing together since kindergarten. Rita knew Kyle was nice. She was happy he was her friend. When she saw the fort, she ran over to it and said, "Cool fort, Kyle." Paul, the class bully, rushed up and pushed her backward so hard she fell into the bushes. He yelled. "Can't you read, dummy? 'No Girls.'" Rita was so angry she felt like crying.

Ask these questions:

1. What could Rita do? As children name possible choices, have them say if they think the choice is a safe one. Have the children vote on the best choice.
 2. What could Kyle do? Repeat as above.
 3. What should Paul do now? Repeat as above.
3. Teach the children in simple words what it means to be an aggressor, victim, and bystander. Use examples they can understand. For example:
 - A person who hurts someone is an aggressor.
 - A person who gets hurt is a victim.
 - A person who sees someone get hurt is a bystander.
 4. To check for understanding, have children listen to the following sentences and see if they can tell who is the aggressor? Who is the victim? Who is the bystander?

- James hit Tony with the stick while Mary watched.
- Mark was pushed down by Theresa, who wanted to get to the swings first. Pat saw the whole thing.
- Bobby watched as Marco kicked Julia on her leg.

their worst feeling. (The nicest feeling goes at 3:00 and the worst feeling at 12:00.)

- Ask the children to draw something that they associate with each feeling under the word on the plate. Ask the children not to draw weapons to show angry feelings.

5. *Teachable Classroom Moments*

If anger erupts in the classroom or on the playground, use the scenario to role-play with the children later. Talk about the choices the angry child and the person against whom the anger is directed can make to resolve the situation. Talk about what children should do if they see an angry person who is out of control.

Examples:

3 o'clock:

Very Happy (picture of a rainbow)

6 o'clock:

Sad (picture of a sad-looking pumpkin)

9 o'clock:

Afraid (picture of a scary ghost)

12 o'clock:

Mad (picture of an angry face)

Ages 7 - 8

1. *A Feelings Clock*

Supplies: One sturdy dinner-size paper plate and one sturdy plastic straw for each child. Scissors and crayons or markers for children to share.

- Brainstorm with the children, listing on the board feelings people have.
- Have each child identify four feelings he or she has.
- Have each child write the numbers 3, 6, 9, and 12 in the correct positions on the face of their clock.
- Ask them to write the names of these feelings on the paper plate at the 3, 6, 9, and 12 o'clock positions. Have them put their feelings in order, from their nicest feeling to

- Have children use closed scissors to punch a small hole in the middle of the plate just big enough to poke a straw through.
- Have children bend the straw to create an hour-hand for their feelings clock.
- Have them put the hand on a feeling they are having now. (If they are not feeling any of the four feelings they chose, they should place the hand between any of the feeling words on the clock.)
- Discuss with the children what they think are their best feelings and worst feelings. Talk about how feelings change many times during the course of an hour, day, and week. Ask each child to think about one

feeling they need to express in healthier ways. Talk about how to express angry feelings in healthy ways.

- Have the children use the back of their clock to write (1) two healthy ways to express angry feelings, and (2) the name of someone they can talk to when they are feeling bad.

2. *Thinking Positively*

Have the children suggest short, positive words or sentences that could be said, over and over, when they need to calm themselves down, or feel themselves getting to the boiling point. List them on the board. Ask the children to secretly choose their favorite positive thoughts and practice saying them “inside their head” 10 times. Start each day by asking each child to say their private calming thought for practice. Post either the simple STAR four-part model or the harder IDEAL five-part model on a wall chart and refer a student to it if you see the child struggling with self-control. Designate a “calming spot”—a place in the room where a student can go to calm down on his or her own and then rejoin the class. Encourage students to keep in touch with how they are feeling, recognize signs of frustration and anger, and self-regulate using the calming-down techniques or the calming spot, or both.

3. *Stereotypes Hurt*

Tell children that a stereotype is using the word “all” to describe a group of people. Examples of stereotypes: All red-headed people have tempers. All fat people are lazy. Girls are weak. Boys are strong. Girls are sissies. “Boys are brave.” Talk about

how stereotypes hurt people and are unfair. Ask the children to point out to you when they hear a stereotype. Explain that stereotypes can lead people to think they dislike or even hate others because of some stereotypes about people that aren’t even true. Stereotypes can lead to violence if people think that others are bad. Use these incidences as triggers for class discussions about stereotypes.

Closure: Next Steps

1. **Plan** a parent-caregiver workshop to help them learn how to teach children to manage anger and solve problems about strong feelings.
2. **Conduct** the workshop several times, once at school and once on the weekend in the community, to ensure that more people can attend. Solicit community volunteers to plan a special activity to be held concurrently for children of the parents and caregivers attending the workshop.
3. **Ask** that a staff committee be appointed to identify how the entire school can work together to teach children safe and fair ways to manage anger.
4. **Ask** the school librarian or a volunteer to develop a list of books that involve characters making good choices on how to behave when facing problems, dealing with strong feelings, showing empathy, looking at things from another person’s perspective, or negating stereotypes. Use these stories as springboards to reinforce the STAR model and teach positive social skills.

