



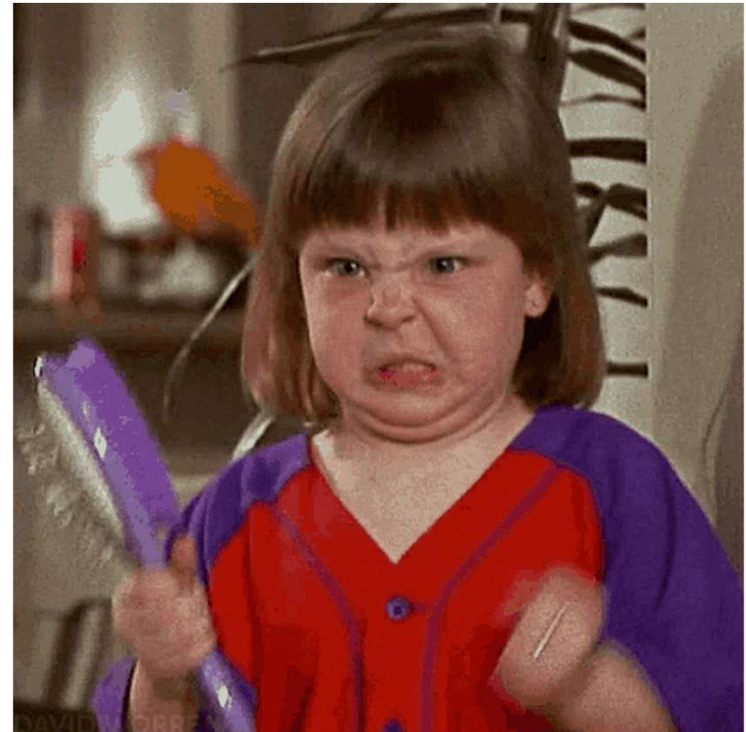
Helping children to manage anger

Becks Jackson
BCP Navigator

bcpcouncil.gov.uk

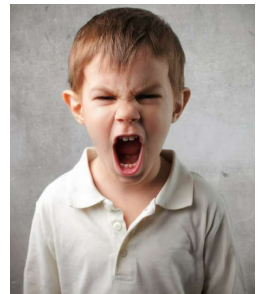
Today's Session

- What is anger?
- Why do children feel angry?
- What does anger look like?
- How do we talk about anger?
- Parent traps to be aware of.
- Dealing with anger.
- Top tips
- Signposting



What is anger?

- Anger is a **secondary** emotion. Typically, we experience a primary emotion like fear, loss or sadness first. Because these emotions create feelings of vulnerability and loss of control, they make us uncomfortable.
- One way of attempting to deal with these feelings is by subconsciously shifting into anger. Unlike fear and sadness, anger provides a surge of energy and makes us feel powerful and in charge rather than vulnerable and helpless.



www.pinterest.org

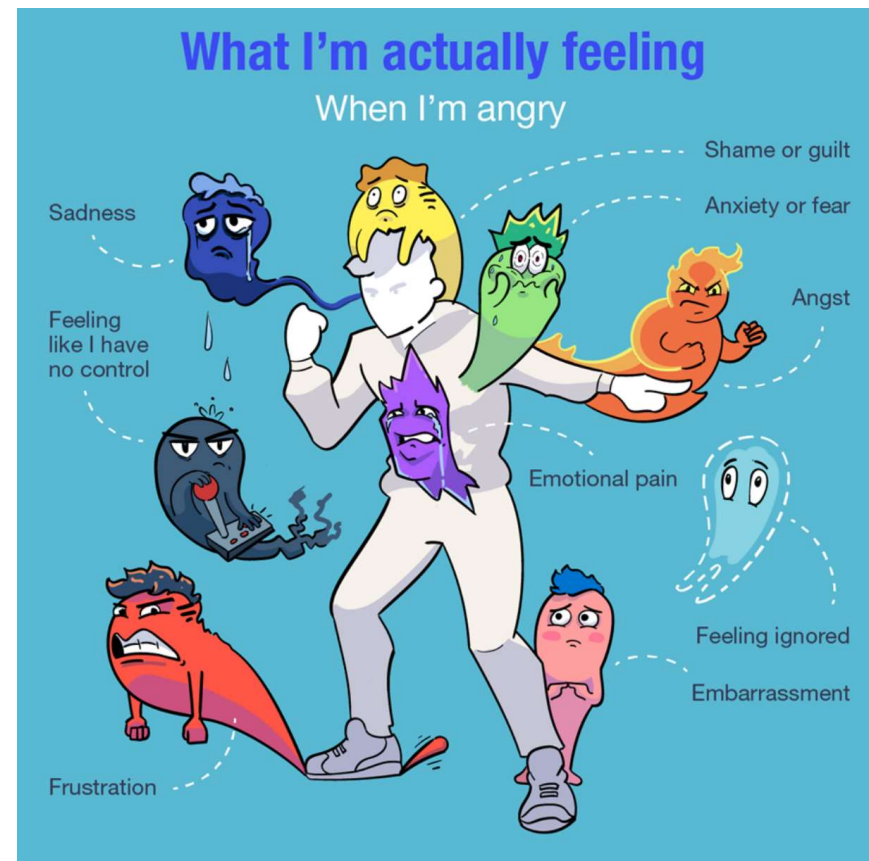


Why do children feel angry?



You could have a go at filling one of these in with your child.

What does anger look like?



www.au.reachout.com/articles/what-is-anger

Externalised angry behaviours

- Shouting or swearing
- Losing control
- Breaking or throwing things
- Emotionally or physically hurting others
- Being rude to others or getting into fights
- Trying to make others angry on purpose

Internalised angry behaviours

- Not dealing with your anger and blaming yourself
- Stopping yourself from getting the things you need, like food or sleep
- Stopping yourself from doing things you enjoy, like seeing friends
- Drinking alcohol or taking drugs
- Self-harming



How do we talk about anger?



- We all know the stereotype of an angry person: red-faced, sweating, shouting, swearing, out of control, aggressive, obnoxious. This doesn't lead us to think positively about anger.
- These stereotypes mean that we often view our children's anger as purely negative, and therefore have a lower tolerance for these behaviours.
- However, anger is a just another universal emotion—everyone feels it at different times and to varying degrees. Anger arises in many contexts and the experience ranges from mild irritation to all-consuming rage. Even boredom is a mild form of anger which represents dissatisfaction with whatever is currently happening.
- It is important to let your child know that it's okay to feel angry, but that it's not okay to be aggressive or violent.

Parent traps



- **The Escalation Trap**- the child learns that they only need to escalate their behaviour (get louder, more aggressive, have a tantrum) and the parent will give in to the child's demands. This is particularly hard when the behaviour is angry because the anger can trigger parents' discomfort even more than other types of behaviour.
- **The 'It's Just a Phase' Trap**- another trap that parents fall into is when you notice behaviour that's problematic, you hope (naturally) that it will go away on its own, and so you don't respond. You think, "*It's just a phase,*" minimising the behaviour so you won't have to address it.
- **The 'You Do This on Purpose' Trap**- this is interpreting a child's behaviour as something done intentionally to annoy. The danger here is that if you think a child is doing something intentionally to bother you or hurt you, you're going to respond a lot differently than if you see it as a behaviour that isn't about you.



www.childmind.org

Dealing with your child's anger proactively

- Praise appropriate behaviour- positive reinforcement
- Consequences/ reward systems
- Mindfulness, meditation and breathing
- Pick a 'frustration signal' your child can use to show when they're feeling overwhelmed
- Practise calm-down routines when your child is feeling calm and secure
- Think about antecedents to the anger
- Co-regulation of emotions
- Anger 'rules'
- Anger thermometer

Five Finger Breathing



ABC Chart

ABC (Antecedent, Behaviour, Consequence) Chart

Date/Time	Activity	Antecedent	Behavior	Consequence
Date/Time when the Behaviour occurred	What activity was going on when the Behaviour occurred	What happened right before the Behaviour that may have triggered the Behaviour	What the Behaviour looked like	What happened after the Behaviour, or as a result of the Behaviour

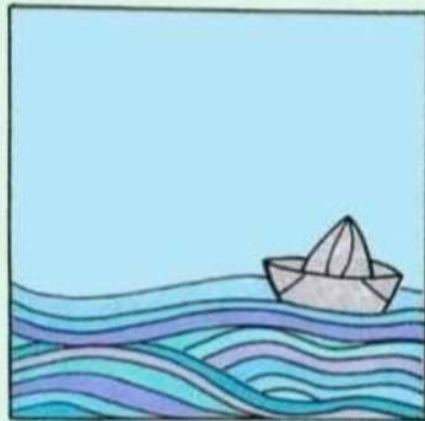
Co-regulation of emotions



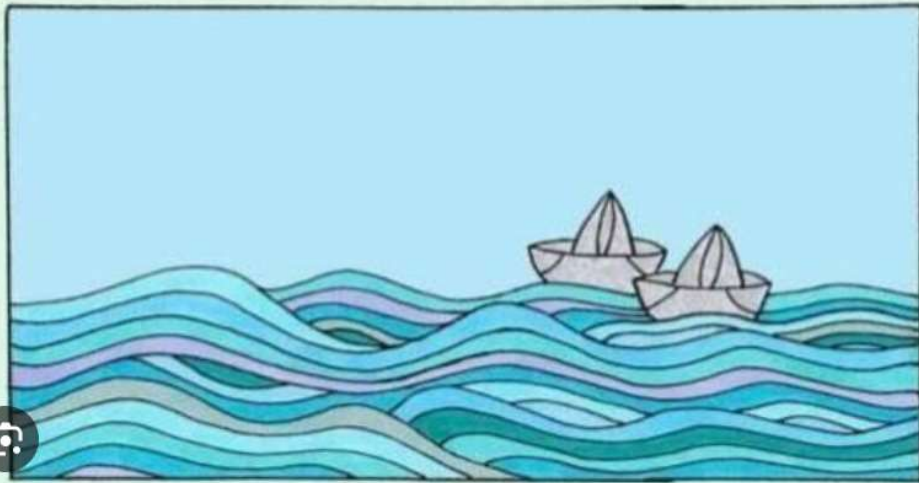
- Co-regulation is the process through which children develop the ability to soothe and manage distressing emotions and sensations, through connection with nurturing and reliable caregivers.
- Children eventually learn to self-regulate their emotional distress but initially need support to do this.
- The caregiver's support can include:
 - a warm, calm presence;
 - modelling of calming behaviours such as deep breathing;
 - acknowledging the child's distress;
 - a structured environment that provides safety;
 - regulating their own emotions.

WHEN THEIR STORM

MEETS OUR CALM

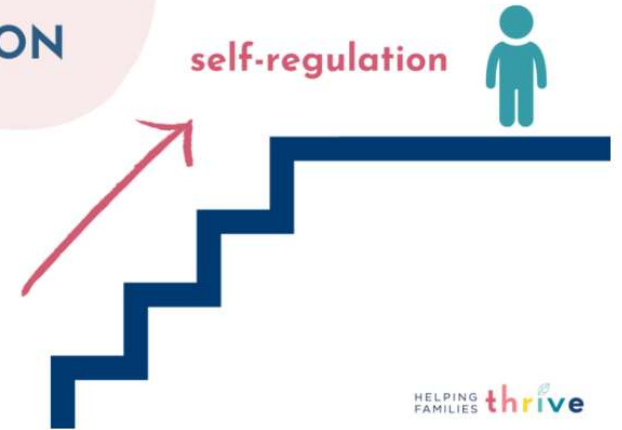


CO - REGULATION OCCURS



@kwiens62

building self-regulation
starts with
CO-REGULATION



Anger Rules

- These are rules about what is acceptable when your child is angry and what is not.
- Almost like an 'anger menu' of options that they are allowed to use.
- What is acceptable for you may not be acceptable for your partner or other family members, so it's important that you discuss this altogether, in a calm moment.
- Ensure these are accessible to your child.



My ANGER Thermometer

What I look like

What I can do

- Yelling
- Throwing things

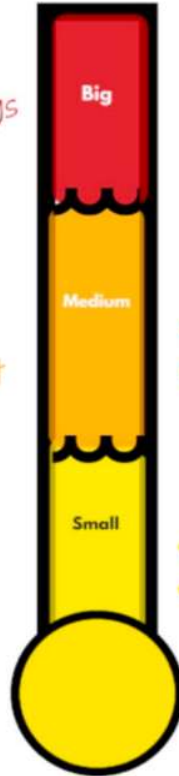
- Take a break
- Shred paper

- Loud voice
- Stomping foot

- Exercise
- Take deep breaths

- Sigh loudly
- Growl

- Get a drink of water
- Squeeze play dough



Dealing with your child's meltdown in the moment



- Co-regulation
- Stay calm and confident
- Keep the boundaries secure
- Give your child space (if safe to do so)
- Physical touch (if your child likes it)
- Acknowledge emotions
- Offer a cold drink
- Encourage physical movement- pushing, squeezing etc.
- Distract with humour (if appropriate)
- Calm-down box
- Allowing them be angry within the 'anger rules'



Quick ways to help children express their anger

- Roar, growl, hiss!
- Rip paper
- Pop bubble wrap
- Squish playdough
- Wrap your arms around yourself and squeeze
- Write a letter to someone
- Jump on a trampoline
- Do wall push-ups
- Write down what's bothering you and rip it up
- Squeeze a stress ball
- Do a 'hookup'
- Scribble on paper and crumple it up
- Do jumping jacks
- Put the palms of your hands together, push and release

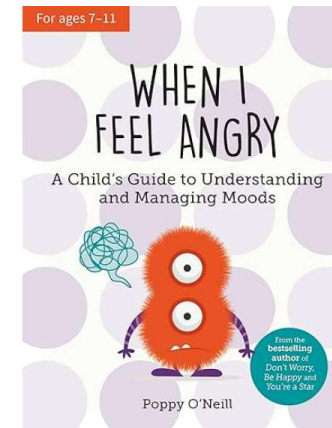
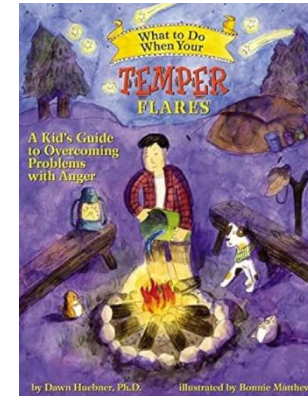
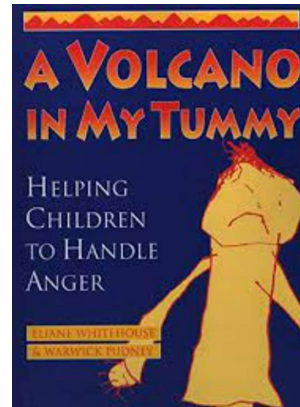
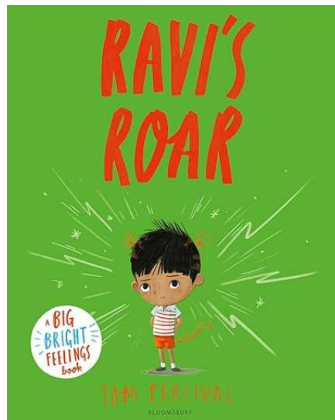
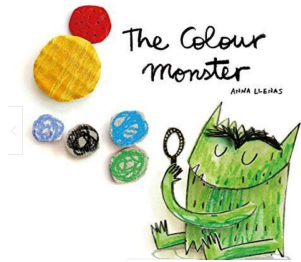


Signposting Information



- **BPSP School website has lots of wellbeing information, including tips on handling anger. Go to: Home - Parents - Wellbeing**
- **Young Minds**
- **Child Mind Institute**
- **NHS**
- **Anna Freud**
- **Mental Health Support Teams in Schools (MHSTs). Go to: Useful Information- Resources for Children, Young People and Families**
- **BCP FID (Family Information Directory). This has information on the programmes we run, which may be helpful to you. Please come and chat to me if this is something you might be interested in**

Useful Books



Remember....



**Thank you for listening. Please ask if
you have any questions.**

