The Importance of Anger Management in Elementary Schools

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What is Anger?

- Universal emotion
- “Strong feeling of annoyance, displeasure, or hostility” (Oxford)
- Healthy and natural
Negative Effects of Anger

- Hypertension
- Cardiovascular disease
- Asthma
- Headaches
- Chronic pain
- Obesity
- Substance abuse
- Academic difficulty
- Depression
- Suicide
What causes anger in children?

- Marital conflicts between parents
- Rejection by siblings or peers
- Excessive television viewing
- Playing violent video games
- Emotional, physical, or sexual abuse
- Other traumatic experiences
- Disorders such as: ADHD, ODD, Bipolar Disorder, Mood Disorder, and learning disabilities (Ex: Dyslexia)
How do children respond to anger?

- Processing
- Suppressing
- Venting
Seven Stages of Anger

1. The child is calm, goal oriented and following the rules.

2. The trigger, or antecedent, which is either a denial of something the child needs or a negative infliction on the child, causes a problem.

3. The child becomes agitated, unfocused and begins to withdraw from surrounding group.

4. **Acceleration Stage:** the child tries to engage and provoke others, particularly the individual who upset him or her. The child is noncompliant, verbally abusive, whining and intimidating.
5. Peak Stage: the child is out of control and displays physical assault, self-abuse, screaming, running and violence.

6. De-escalation Stage: the child withdraws, becomes confused, sleeps, blames others and avoids discussing the problems.

7. Recovery Stage: child will show independence and eagerness for work, but will avoid the problem or debriefing.
What is Anger Management?

- “Process of learning how to recognize signs of anger and taking action to calm down and deal with a situation in a positive way.”
  (Mayo Clinic)
- Facilitated by school social worker, psychologist, or counselor
Purpose in Elementary Schools?

Three Objectives:

1. Teach the students the cognitive and behavioral components of anger. The students will learn that anger is a normal emotion.

2. Students will be taught cognitive and behavioral techniques to manage anger.

3. Students will practice using these newly acquired techniques, such as relaxation, assertiveness, anticipation, self-instruction, self evaluation, role-play and problem solving.
Why is Anger Management Important?

According to the Learning First Alliance, 15% of students are only able to fit into an academic environment if they are provided with moderate assistance in school, such as anger management, conflict resolution, and social skills training.
Creating an Anger Management Group

1. Identify students that would benefit from anger management. (Functional Analysis Interview)
2. Ask the parents of the students for consent to have their children participate in anger management.
3. Find a time once a week during the school day for the group to meet for 45 minutes.
4. Find an anger management curriculum that is age appropriate for the students.
5. Create incentives for the students to participate in lessons.
Typical Anger Management Session

- Icebreaker
- Follow up questions
- Lesson
- Hands on activity
- Reflection
- Relaxation
Techniques Taught in Anger Management

- Take a deep breath
- Stop activity and count to ten
- Squeeze a stress ball
- Go for a walk
- Check In Check Out
Benefits of Anger Management

- Improves academic performance, social skills, and ability to solve problems
- Builds self-confidence
- Improves mental, physical, and emotional health
- More likely to succeed later in life
References


