



10 Ways to Neutralize Your Child's Anger

Anger is a natural human emotion; it is not inherently bad. In fact, teaching your child to express his anger productively — and then let it go — is a critical step on the road to emotional maturity. Get started with these 10 strategies.

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1. Exercise away hostility.

One potent tonic for the brain is physical exercise. It promotes healthy brain function, including the ability to control aggression.

2. Put feelings into words.

Children lose control when they're unable to articulate frustration. Just saying, "I'm really angry" can stop anger from turning into violence.

3. Curb electronics.

Screen time precludes more useful exercise and face-to-face social interactions. Some electronic use is fine, but avoid excess at all costs.

4. Teach that anger is a signal, not an outcome.

Stopping and asking, "Why am I angry?" makes it easier to control that feeling — and ask for help.

5. Practice compromise and negotiation.

Collaborative problem solving — with your child's input — will help her feel heard, understood, and less likely to explode.

6. Look for comorbid conditions.

Mental and physical issues — like conduct disorder or seizure disorders — can manifest as uncontrollable anger.

7. Keep notes.

Take a few minutes every day to document your child's anger. Documentation may help to identify a pattern that suggests effective interventions.

8. Skip physical punishment.

The days of spanking are long gone. Physical punishment will only worsen a child's anger.

9. Be the boss.

That doesn't mean you should run your family like the Marine Corps. But children do better knowing that parents are in charge.

10. Talk it out.

If none of these suggestions help, talk to people you trust or find an ADHD support group for parents. It can work wonders.