

What can you do when a child is angry?

Try not to join in the child's anger, this will escalate the situation and teach them poor ways of resolving conflict.

Try not to explain another point of view until the anger has been expressed and acknowledged.

Try not to force children to apologise. You may be forcing them to bury their anger and be teaching them to be hypocritical.

Do lead by example and model the behaviour you want a child to learn.

Do let them know you understand how they are feeling, "I can see how angry you are," or, "It seems like you're really mad about that".

Do ask what they would like to do to improve things.

Do acknowledge what they say. Reaffirm the feelings, then help them to look at the options, e.g. "What might happen if you did that?"

Respond to anger with a calm, slow, quiet voice. In a low tone use phrases such as:-

"I can see that you are angry. Can you tell me about it?"

"Are you feeling a bit cross today? Let's see if we can make things better."

"I would like to be able to help, if you can tell me what has happened?"

"It would be good if you can help me understand what has made you angry."

"I need to understand what has happened. Can you help me out with this?"

Ten self-calming tips:

Count to ten, walk away, pretend to be somewhere else, hide behind an imaginary shield, let off steam, (Run, play football etc.) Listen to music, breathe deeply and slowly, clench your fists and then relax them slowly, talk yourself into feeling calm, repeat to yourself a catchphrase ie: "Don't panic!" or "Calm down."

Support available: School, Family Worker drop-ins, Parenting courses, Young People Cornwall, GP.

Books:

What to Do When Your Temper Flares by Dawn Huebner

Volcano in your Tummy by Warwick Pudney and Éliane Whitehouse

When I feel angry by Cornelia Spelman

Mad isn't bad by Michaelene Mundy

When Sophie Gets Angry--Really, Really Angry...by Molly Bang

Cool Down and Work Through Anger by Cheri J Meiners

Angry Octopus: A Relaxation Story by Lori Lite

Hands Are Not for Hitting by Martine Agassi

Teeth Are Not for Biting by Elizabeth Verdick

The Explosive Child by Ross W. Greene

Anh's Anger by Gail Silver

When Miles Got Mad by Abbie Schiller and Samantha Counter

What Angry Kids Need: Parenting Your Angry Child Without Going Mad by Jennifer Anne Brown and Pam Provonsha Hopkins

For teachers: All About Anger