



Supporting Children to Manage Anger

We regularly have conversations with parents who are concerned that their child is struggling to manage their anger. With this in mind, we have compiled some tips and advice about how parents can try to support their children.

Anger is a "big" emotion, and young children can easily become overwhelmed by it. It is important to remember that it is a natural, healthy, and valid feeling. It helps us to signal when things do not feel safe, fair, or secure, and it is important that children learn that it is okay to feel angry.

It is common for children to react in an "angry way" when they are actually feeling other emotions (such as anxiety or fear) but struggling to express them. It is very important to speak to your child after a meltdown when they are quiet and calm, to try to unpick what triggered this behaviour.

You may become concerned about your child's anger if:

- They get angry often.
- Their anger seems out of control.
- They are hurting others or themselves.
- It is affecting their self-esteem.

Early Intervention and Triggers

Managing Triggers: Talk to your child and think about what triggers their anger. Are there any patterns you can notice? Consider factors such as tiredness, hunger, and sensory factors (noise, smells). If they are often angry when they get home from school, is this because they are hungry?

Recognising the Warning Signs: Early intervention is the most effective form of managing outbursts. If you (and your child) can start to recognise the physical signs of their anger, strategies can be used before a full meltdown:

- **Body Mapping:** Talk to your child about what it is like to feel angry—what happens to their body? Draw an outline of a person and ask them to colour the parts of their body where they feel angry (for many children this may be their head, hands, and feet). * Model Behaviour: Model suitable angry behaviour



yourself—children learn by copying. If a child sees adults shouting, using poor language, and slamming doors when they are angry, they will see this as appropriate behaviour.

Managing Angry Outbursts

When Your Child is Angry:

1. **Stay Calm:** Try to keep yourself calm and regulated so that you can support your child.
2. **Validate:** Name and validate the emotion: "I can understand that you are feeling angry because..."
3. **Ensure Safety:** Make sure that your child is safe and then allow space for them to calm down.
4. **Regulate:** Encourage them to regulate their breathing by taking slow, deep breaths in and out yourself. As they begin to calm, try using a breathing technique such as 5-finger breathing.
5. **No Discussion:** Do not look to engage in a discussion with your child about their behaviour until they are calm.
6. **Safe Space:** If necessary, allow your child to go to a safe space (e.g., their bedroom) until they are calm.

When Your Child is Calm:

1. **Talk and Reflect:** Talk through the incident with your child calmly. Try to identify what triggered their anger and what they could have done differently in this situation.
2. **Anger Rules and Consequences:** Discuss any negative behaviours which may require a consequence in line with your family's "anger rules." Ensure consequences are discussed calmly and applied only after the child is regulated.
3. **Praise Effort:** Equally, if your child was able to use strategies to manage their anger or reduce the level of their outburst, this should be praised and rewarded.
4. **Calm Down Box:** Create a "calm down box" with fiddle toys and sensory items they can use when angry.



Common Underlying Causes of Anger

Anger can be an outward sign of many other feelings and emotions that young children struggle to verbalise and express.

- **Anxiety:** Anxious children typically react in anger when they have bottled up their worries. If you feel this may be the case for your child, please see our dedicated guidance on Managing Worries & Anxiety on our website.
- **Fears:** Feeling scared about situations—from a small spelling test to a family breakup—can all lead to angry outbursts. Give your child opportunities to speak to you about their fears and share details of any change in circumstance with your child's class teacher so that we can support them.
- **Friendship Issues:** Disagreements or worries about friendships can cause children to feel unsettled. If you are concerned, speak to your child's class teacher.
- **Stress:** Feeling stressed about schoolwork, tests, or transitions can all be displayed as anger. Talk to your child about their day at school and support them with their learning.

Contact and Support

If you have concerns about your child's anger, please speak to your child's class teacher or a member of the Pastoral Team. For specialist advice and resources (including calming techniques and breathing exercises), please visit the [Wellbeing Support for Parents section](#) of our website.