

Supporting a Young Person who is Struggling with Anger: Parent/Carer Pack

Useful Links and resources

Young Minds parent's guide to anger: <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/anger/>

NHS Teen aggression and arguments <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/children-and-young-adults/advice-for-parents/teen-aggression-and-arguments/>

Family lives: Dealing with difficult behaviour video
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LMhunB9w2Aw&t=82s>

Beacon House: Parenting a child with a sensitive fight response: <https://beaconhouse.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Fight-response.pdf>

Useful Helplines



Young Minds Parent Helpline

0808 802 5544

from 9:30am – 4pm, Monday – Friday. Freephone.

For support around understanding your child's behaviour, and practical advice for the child or young person's main carer. If you need further help, they'll arrange an independent, experienced professional to call you for a 50-minute telephone consultation within seven days.

For more information <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-helpline-and-webchat/>

Extracts from Young Minds Parent's Guide to Anger

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/anger/>

Anger is a normal and healthy reaction when things don't go the way we expected, life feels unfair or people upset or hurt us. It can be a helpful thing - letting us know that something is wrong or not okay with us.

It's normal for children and young people to find it difficult to manage their angry feelings sometimes, and it's helpful to remember that the part of our brain that helps us do this doesn't fully develop until we're in our mid-20s.

How can I respond to my child when they get angry?



Try to separate your child's feelings from their behaviour, remembering that all feelings are okay, even though some behaviour is not.

Make it clear that you're not dismissing their anger by letting them know that it's okay to feel however they feel, and that it's normal to feel angry sometimes.



Try not to get angry yourself, as this will only escalate the situation.

Focus on staying as calm as you can – using a calm voice and open body language, for example by not folding your arms.



Avoid asking them lots of questions when they're feeling very angry or distressed.

Acknowledge that they're feeling angry, and let them know that you'd like to talk with them about what's going on when they feel ready.



If it feels appropriate, offer them some time and space to calm down.

Especially with older teenagers, sometimes just having half an hour to listen to some music, go for a walk or do an activity they enjoy can help them feel calmer – making it more possible to have a conversation about what's making them feel this way.



If you need to, explain why their behaviour is not okay so they understand – and hold consistent boundaries around consequences.

For example, you might say that while it's normal to feel angry, it's not okay when they shout at you. Remember that while your child might resist boundaries and consequences, they can actually help them to feel safe, contained and cared for.

6R activities can help young people to feel calmer, as they have been found to calm the part of the brain that sends us into fight/flight response.

When you see your child is beginning to struggle to manage their feelings, try suggesting an activity that is:

- **Rhythmic**
- **Repetitive**
- **Relational -something you can do together, or with someone else they feel safe with**
- **Relevant to their interests and age**
- **Rewarding - something they will enjoy**
- **Respectful**

Some examples are, going on a walk or run together, going for a drive together, doing some cooking or baking with actions like chopping and stirring, listening to music with a strong beat, singing, dancing, colouring, playing a musical instrument, trampolining....

How can I help my child manage their anger?

- ① Talk to your child about what's going on. ∨
- ① If your child doesn't want to talk, see if you can find other ways to communicate. ∨
- ① Help them to identify triggers. ∨
- ① Support them to find ways of channelling their anger, remembering that different things will work for different people. ∨
- ① Create a plan of action together. ∨
- ① Keep to the rules. ∨
- ① Model the behaviour you want to see. ∨
- ① Reassure your child and don't lose hope. ∨

