

Managing Anger

Construct D: Self-Awareness

Lesson Description:

This lesson is designed to help parents become aware of their anger, times they are angry, and healthy ways to manage their anger.

Lesson Competencies:

1. Parents can describe appropriate ways to express anger.
2. Parents can identify appropriate ways to teach children to express anger.
3. Parents practice appropriate anger management strategies.

Prerequisite Conditions, Knowledge and Skills:

Lesson 16: Recognizing and Understanding Our Feelings

Lesson 20: Developing Personal Power in Children and Adults

Lesson 40: Understanding and Handling Stress

Materials needed for Lesson 24:

Parent Handbook or Easy Reader Parent Handbook:

Chapter 41: Understanding and Expressing Your Anger

Chapter 42: Helping Your Children Express Their Anger

Family Nurturing Plan

Family Nurturing Journal

Lesson 42: Managing Anger

Teaching Goals:

- To empower parents to appropriately manage and handle their anger
- To empower parents to help their children manage and handle their anger.

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Procedures:

1. Welcome the parents to class. Mention that the focus of this lesson is on understanding and appropriately expressing anger.
2. **Check in** with the parents and see how things are going. Ask parents to share information from their **Family Nurturing Journal** about changes they've seen in themselves, their children, and their families this week.
3. Review the **Home Practice Assignment** in the Family Nurturing Journal for Lesson 41.
4. Begin by brainstorming with the parents a definition of anger. What is anger to them?
5. The program identifies several components of anger:
 - a. Anger is a feeling of discomfort.
 - b. Anger is the expression of past pain/hurt.
 - c. Anger is necessary for people to express so they do not carry around past hurt/pain.
6. Refer to **Chapters 41 the Parent Handbook or Easy Reader Parent Handbook** called, "**Understanding and Expressing Your Anger**" and review the information with the parents.
7. Mention that hurt and anger are related feelings of discomfort. When people do not express their hurt, the pain stays inside. When it comes out, it comes out as anger. Some points about anger:
 - a. Anger is not a bad feeling. It is how it is expressed that makes the feelings "bad."
 - b. Anger is yesterday's pain/hurt. When people express their pain/hurt when it occurs, less anger gets built up and stored inside.
 - c. Children do not learn how to express anger appropriately. As they grow older, they may struggle with anger all their lives.
 - d. Rage is anger that has taken over any form of logical thinking. Therefore, people act "out of control."
 - e. Children and adults watch models displayed on TV of adults who are angry doing violent things. Since behavior is partially learned through observation, the more we model violence, the more violence will be a social problem.
8. **Expressing Anger Energy.** Every feeling has energy and the energy needs expression. When we are in love, we date, write love letters, think about our loved one. When we are sad, we cry. When we are happy, we smile and laugh. These behaviors are ways of letting out the energy of each of these feelings. If we don't let out the energy, it builds up inside. Like a volcano, when anger energy builds up, people explode and raw emotion takes over logical thinking. This is when people become "out of control." The goal is to express the anger energy before it reaches volcanic proportions.

9. **There really isn't any way to avoid anger in life.** People can minimize anger by expressing their hurt when it occurs, but it's not realistic all the time to do this. Hence, anger will occur. But what parents can do is express their anger in such a manner that children will observe appropriate models. Brainstorm ways anger energy can be physically released. Some examples include: jogging, exercise, sit-ups, etc. Yelling and screaming are also ways to release energy in the privacy of a room. These may be good anger release strategies for some. Out in the open, yelling and screaming would not be a good strategy. Have each parent respond to the following:

One way I express my anger is _____

10. Encourage parents to examine what they like and dislike about the ways they and their children express their anger. Have parents respond to the following:

One way my children express their anger is _____.

11. Refer to **Chapter 42** in the **Parent Handbook or Easy Reader Parent Handbook** called, **"Helping Children Express Their Anger Appropriately"** and review the information with the parents.

12. Share the following information:

- a. Telling children not to express their anger is not a good idea. Teaching them how to express their anger is good, otherwise it will build up inside.
- b. Three rules about expressing anger:
Don't hurt yourself - respect yourself.
Don't hurt others - respect others.
Don't hurt your environment - respect the places around you.
- c. Fights, graffiti, gang murders, suicide, and drug use are examples of anger hurting self, others and the environment.
- d. Telling children to express their anger energy by hitting something only associates anger with violence. Hitting something easily transfers to hitting someone.

13. To express anger appropriately parents have to model and teach their children a two-step process:

Step 1 Express their anger energy.
Step 2 Talk about what happened.

A lot of people can talk and let their anger energy out at the same time. The talking serves as an energy release. However, the more energy there is, the louder the talk may be.

14. Other strategies to release anger include:

- a. Writing your angry thoughts down in a letter, but not mailing it.
- b. Keeping a journal of feelings where all feelings are kept.
- c. Having a discussion with the person imagining they are in front of you.
- d. Tape recording your thoughts, then listening to them a little later to gain an understanding of your anger.

Caution: Some parents teach their children to release their anger energy by hitting a pillow or punching a punching bag. This strategy has many limitations. The most negative is teaching children the association between being angry and hitting something. The more this "hitting something when angry" association is practiced; the more danger there is in hitting being the main release of anger energy. When angry at someone, hitting may be the means the energy is communicated.