Just Cool It!

Keys for Helping Children Deal with Anger

1. **Anger is a natural emotion**
   Let children know that it's okay to feel angry, but it's not okay to hurt someone because you are angry.

2. **Teach children to use their words**
   Young children may not have the words to express how they feel. Help children learn how to express their anger using words.

3. **Acknowledge your child's anger**
   Let your child know that you understand his or her anger or frustration. Use SPEAK/HEAR skills to let your child know that you understand his or her feelings.

4. **Encourage your child to share feelings**
   Teach your child to recognize and talk about angry feelings in a positive way. Give your child your full attention.

5. **Be a good role model**
   Show your child appropriate ways to deal with anger through your own behaviors. What you do may be more important than what you say.

6. **Help your child to calm down**
   Teach your child some ways to calm down when angry. For a young child, re-direct his or her attention to another activity. For older children, try having them draw or write down their feelings.

7. **Set clear limits**
   Let your child know what is acceptable behavior when he or she is angry, and what behaviors are not acceptable.

8. **Focus on good behaviors**
   Reward your child with attention when your child deals with anger in a positive way.

9. **Use empathy**
   Think about how your child may be thinking and feeling and look at the situation from your child’s point of view. If your child’s anger has to do with another person, teach empathy to your child by pointing out how the other person might be feeling.

10. **Teach through books**
    Read children’s books to your child on dealing with angry feelings. Visit your local library to find out about books you can check out.

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