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A Multi-Specialty Psychological Group

What Kids and Teens Can Do to Calm Down When They Are Mad

By Sally G. Hoyle, Ph.D.

- Take 3 deep breaths slowly and blow it out. Blow the angry feelings out of your body.
- Write about what makes you mad on a piece of paper, then tear it up.
- Punch a pillow.
- Get some kind of exercise.
- Talk to someone.
- Hit a punching bag.
- Go someplace to calm down.
- Count to ten.
- Listen to music.
- Draw a picture about what makes you angry.
- Imagine yourself doing something fun. This is called relaxation imagery.
- Talk to yourself, saying things like “Calm down,” “Take it easy,” “Cool it,” or “It will work out.”
- Stop and think. We don’t make good decisions when we are mad.

What Parents Can Do When Kids and Teens Are Mad

By Sally G. Hoyle, Ph.D.

- Set a good example in how you deal with feelings of anger.
- Stay calm.
- Treat your children with respect.
- Discuss your child's behavior privately, not in front of other people.
- Use time-out as a way for kids to get control of their own anger.
- Limit your child or teen's access to violent media influences.
- Always talk about a behavior problem when YOU are calm, and when your child has calmed him or herself.
- Avoid the use of profanity, even if your child uses it, and the words "never" and "always" as in "You never do what I ask you to do."
- Reduce stressors in your child's environment.
- Increase discussion of feelings. For example, "You are angry because you can't stay up later."
- Identify the warning signs of an anger outburst for your child, such as face reddening, talking louder, clenching fists, breathing faster, etc.