



Kinship Link

Volume 17, Issue 2

February 2021

Pro Kinship for Kids

Inside this issue:

| | |
|--|---|
| Dealing with a Child's Anger continued | 2 |
| Guidelines for Setting Consequences | 2 |

Pro Kinship for Kids
 Lower level Our Saviors
 Lutheran Church
 1400 S. State Street
 P.O. Box 666
 New Ulm, MN 56073
 Phone 359-2445 or
 1-800-642-5779
 Website:
www.prokinship.org

Newsletter by
 Kari Beran, Director



Dealing with a Child's Anger

What causes anger in young children? Anger is one of our feelings, and it is an okay feeling to have. Just as children have a right to be happy, sad, lonely, or bored, they also have a right to feel angry. Many parents find it difficult to deal with a child's anger. It's hard to know how best to respond, and anger takes a toll on parents, both physically and emotionally. Because anger is inevitable, parents need to help children learn how to deal with this often confusing and frightening feeling. Parents also need to learn how to handle an angry child, and how to manage their own anger to keep the relationship between parent and child safe and open. Children may feel angry if they: feel frustration, need attention, feel powerless, feel misunderstood, do not feel good about themselves, feel helpless, feel belittled or made fun of, do not have physical needs taken care of, have a parent take over instead of asking if he or she wants help, feel disappointed, have difficulty saying what they need, or are being punished.

How can parents keep children from getting angry? There are lots of ways that parents can work to keep their children from getting angry. Try these ideas:

- Catch children being good. Pay attention to the good things children do and tell them. For example, "I appreciate your hanging up your clothes, even though you

still wanted to play". We often tell children more about what is wrong than what is right about their behavior. When children hear good things about what they do, they feel better about themselves. They learn how to act in ways that please their parents.

- Make sure their physical needs are met. A child who needs exercise or is hungry, thirsty, tired, or sick is more likely to get angry when something doesn't go right.
- Plan the environment. Take a look at the places your child lives in. If there are too many objects she shouldn't touch, no place just for them, or not enough space to play, make some changes. Move objects out of reach and don't leave things she shouldn't have about. Child-proof the house.
- Show interest in your child's activities. Children will often try to get you involved in what they're doing, and sometimes you may act annoyed at the interruption. The results may be that your child will misbehave to get your attention. The best prevention is to balance your attention to your child's activities with your own needs. If you cannot give attention to what your child is doing at that time, explain why and promise to spend

time later with the child.

- Interpret situations. Explain to the child why a particular situation or behavior is causing a problem. For example, when another child is acting mean, explain that it could be because the child is tired. Even very young children can learn to understand the reasons for problems, and this helps children learn how to understand their own behavior better.
- Build a positive self-image. Help children see themselves as valued and valuable. Encourage them to do their best. Believe in them.
- Demonstrate appropriate behavior. Remember, you are a role model. The example you set will be reflected in your child's behavior, both good and bad.

What can parents do when a child starts getting angry? There are different ideas parents can use if they find their child is starting to get angry:

- ◆ Show affection. Sometimes all a child needs to help regain control when frustrated or anxious is a sudden hug or some other show of affection.
- ◆ Ignore minor misbehavior. Often children misbehave to get your attention. Ignoring behavior that both of you know is inappropriate is one good way to send

Dealing with a Child's Anger continued

your child a message that you don't approve. Make sure you don't ignore the child, just the behavior.

- Ease the tension through humor. Gently kidding a child out of a temper tantrum offers them the opportunity to save face. Be sure not to tease or be sarcastic.
- Appeal to the child's sense of right. Tell your child how you feel about a particular behavior and ask them to

consider your feelings. For example, if a child is making an annoying noise, ask him to stop it and explain how the noise is making your headache worse.

- ◆ Say no! Limits should be clearly defined for children. When a child breaks a rule, letting them know they have stepped over the line is important. This helps remind them of the rule and lets them know they are responsible for the consequences of

breaking the rule.

Your attitude is the key. Remember anger is a feeling we all have. It is normal for children to feel anger. And when they do, they often find it frightening. Parents need to help children learn how to manage their anger and how to channel it into positive action.



Guidelines for Setting Consequences

Reasonable consequences are tools to use when nurturing, prevention, and guiding don't work and your children misbehave. Consequences teach a child what not to do. Consequences alone, however, cannot teach children the values and skills that are important for self-worth, problem solving, and self-control.

Effective consequences need guidance to be effective. Guidance is the core of effective discipline. We teach children what is right and wrong. We help them learn how to take responsibility for their actions. Teaching them how to relate positively with others. Here are some guidelines for effective consequences:

- The consequences must occur close in time to the misbehavior.
- Children must be able to tell right from wrong.
- Children must realize that the unpleasant experience is the result of their own deliberate misbehavior, not their parents' anger.
- Consequences must be consistent.
- The consequences must make sense and not be more severe than the misbehavior.
- Respond in private.
- Use consequences rarely.

Non-violent consequences are an alternative to spanking. They must be used with nurturance, prevention, and guidance. For all ages these consequences are appropriate:

* **Allow natural consequences** - Let your child experience the natural results of his or her misbehavior. These results shouldn't be harmful to your child, but unpleasant enough to motivate your child to change.

* **Introduce logical consequences** - Impose a sanction that is reasonable and logically connected to the misbehavior. The child is "disciplined" by the consequence of their action. If Amy persistently leaves her toys in the yard after finishing play, place them in a bag and put it out of reach in the garage for a reasonable amount of time. When returned explain that this will happen again if she leaves them on the yard and doesn't put them away when done playing.

* **Express strong disappointment** - Describe your own honest feelings of discouragement or concern about your child's misbehavior. Children want to please their parents, your disappointment is a punishment.

For 3 - 13 year olds you can add this consequence

Use a time out - Time out is a way of correcting behavior by placing your child in a quiet place alone for a few minutes. After that time, talk about the problem. Time out is a short, boring time away from other people. The younger the child, the shorter the time out. A good rule is to use one minute for every year of the child's age. You

can use time out with children when they are noisy, fighting, or doing something so annoying you can't ignore it. It is best to approach time out as a way to calm everyone involved, not as a way to punish your child. Never send a child to a locked room, confined space, or other frightening location.

For 4 - 18 year olds you can add this consequence

Lose a privilege/Earn back a privilege - Loss of a privilege can be an effective tool. For example, if a child continues to ride his bike without a helmet, you could take the bike away for a period of time. Explain what you're taking away and why in a firm but friendly manner. Earn a privilege is done by making a bargain with your child. If there is something they want to do, find a way they can earn that privilege by correcting a misbehavior.

For 6 - 18 year olds you can add these consequences

Expect repayment - Insist that your child reimburse others for losses she caused. Help her make a plan for doing so.

Ground the child - If your child understands that he has misbehaved by missing a curfew or traveling into forbidden territory, limit him to home or yard for a reasonable length of time.

Now you have consequences to use in helping your children learn self-responsibility.

