

## About this book

This book will help children and adults work together to understand and manage anger. It teaches healthy concepts while encouraging communication and bonding.

The book is designed for children ages six through twelve to illustrate with pictures they choose to draw. Younger children may need help understanding some of the words and concepts in this book, but do not offer too many suggestions. This is their book; encourage them to make their own decisions about what to draw or write.

Children like to illustrate books because images often come more naturally to them than words. I recommend that a child be given a small box of new crayons to draw with. While many children enjoy drawing with markers, crayons often encourage greater self-expression. Older children may prefer to use colored pencils and use words with their illustrations.

As you and the child work through the book together, focus on ideas and expression rather than drawing ability. The art process promotes self-awareness and communication, so invite the child to talk about his or her work.

When the book is completed, encourage the child to share his or her work with another adult for review and continued learning. Save the book as a keepsake of childhood memories.

This book can be used individually or with a group. Group facilitators should be supportive adults who are educated to accept feelings and encourage communication.

# Adults can help children manage anger

Like adults, children suffer anxiety and stress. In addition to family crises—including illness, death, divorce, moving, and other life changes—children struggle with their self-esteem and sense of belonging. Many are teased or put down. They feel pressured to conform and succeed, and they often have a hard time accepting differences in themselves and others. When we add world terror, natural disasters, and adult personal problems, it's no wonder that children get angry.

Anger can be healthy. After all, everyone gets angry from time to time, and angry feelings are O.K. as long as they're expressed in appropriate ways. Many children, however, display explosive, violent anger, or they hold their feelings inside, thinking that anger is wrong or bad. Some children become angry when they don't get their way. Others use aggressive behavior to mask pain or fear related to abandonment, rejection, grief, loss, or depression. Unless these children learn to understand and manage their anger, they will cause unnecessary damage to themselves and others.

While children may learn some aggressive behaviors from friends, books, movies, TV, and video games, their primary influence is the family. Children learn how to express feelings by watching their parents. If parents do not express anger in positive ways, chances are their children won't, either.

This book can help families develop an awareness of anger-management problems and a commitment to change. Both children and adults are given an opportunity to learn how to calm their angry impulses while developing communication and problem-solving skills.

For example, parents must learn to be patient, express anger in direct and nonaggressive ways, and apologize for inappropriate behavior. Children

should never have to witness adult rage or violent arguments. If it becomes necessary to punish a child, the punishment should always relate to the child's behavior, and it should be delivered in a calm and reasonable manner. Corporal punishment often causes children to rebel, which puts them at risk for delinquency when they are older.

When dealing with children's anger, adults can help children explore the roots of their feelings and learn to solve problems without aggression. Art, for example, is a safe outlet for angry feelings. It enables children to express emotions that are too difficult to put into words, and no one gets hurt. Encourage children to use the art process in this book, completing four of five pages at a time.

In addition to artwork, children can release stress through active play, exercise, and sports. Give them opportunities to gain positive recognition and increase self-esteem. Praise them when they find ways to use brain power instead of muscle power. And remember, some children—as well as some adults—have more problems managing anger than others. Don't hesitate to seek professional help.

This book is intended to help children:

- |             |   |              |
|-------------|---|--------------|
| <b>I.</b>   | <b>Understand angry feelings</b>                        | <b>1-5</b>   |
|             | Realize that everyone has angry feelings                |              |
|             | Recognize words used to identify anger                  |              |
|             | Understand the fight-or-flight reaction                 |              |
|             | Acknowledge the power of anger                          |              |
| <b>II.</b>  | <b>Recognize personal feelings of anger</b>             | <b>6-11</b>  |
|             | Assess anger-management skills                          |              |
|             | Recognize early signs of anger                          |              |
|             | Identify personal triggers for anger                    |              |
|             | Discover the relationship between feelings and behavior |              |
| <b>III.</b> | <b>Identify problems caused by anger</b>                | <b>12-17</b> |
|             | Learn that anger can be destructive                     |              |
|             | Acknowledge personal problems caused by anger           |              |
|             | Understand other problems associated with anger         |              |
|             | Recognize the need for anger management                 |              |
| <b>IV.</b>  | <b>Learn to manage angry impulses</b>                   | <b>18-21</b> |
|             | Understand the power of self-talk                       |              |
|             | Practice relaxation techniques                          |              |
|             | Learn to tolerate frustration                           |              |
|             | Take control of angry feelings                          |              |

- V. **Express anger in appropriate ways** 22-26  
Identify aches and pains caused by repressed anger  
Learn to communicate effectively  
Develop problem-solving skills  
Find acceptable ways to express anger
- VI. **Learn to cope with the anger of others** 27-32  
Identify personal insecurities  
Recognize bullies and victims  
Develop confident behavior  
Increase self-esteem

## To children

This is your book. You will make it different from all other books by drawing your own thoughts and feelings. You do not need any special skills to illustrate the pages. Just use lines, shapes, and colors to draw the pictures that come into your head as you read the words on each page.

Begin with the first page and do the pages in order. Ask an adult for help with words or pages you do not understand. When you have done a few pages, stop and share your work with an adult who cares about you.

I hope you will have fun with this book. As you share your thoughts and problems with others, you will learn to understand anger and develop healthy anger-management skills.

Adults get angry, children get angry,  
and I get angry.

(Draw some angry people.)

Everyone feels angry at times. It is natural to feel angry when you are afraid, or when you lose something or someone important. Most anger is not violent or hard to control, like the anger you see in movies or on TV.

People use different words for anger, like "mad," "furious," "annoyed," "irritated," and "ticked off."

(Write the words you use when you feel angry.)

You can feel a little or a lot of anger. These are normal feelings. Feelings are neither good nor bad.



Some people want to fight when they are angry.  
Children may want to hit, kick, bite, or yell.

(Draw what would happen if you were to hit, kick, bite,  
or yell.)

Unmanaged anger brings problems!

Some people want to run away when they are angry, or they try to hide their anger.

(Draw a picture of someone hiding their anger.)

Anger does not feel good, and many people hope it will just go away. But if anger stays stuffed inside, it can turn into depression. Or, it might build up to a big explosion of angry feelings.

Many things can bring an outburst of anger.

(Draw a volcano erupting.)



You can learn to let anger go without hurting yourself or others.

I get angry:

(Check ✓ what is true for you.)

never \_\_\_ sometimes \_\_\_ often \_\_\_

I am able to control my anger:

always \_\_\_ sometimes \_\_\_ never \_\_\_

Sometimes I get angry at \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (name)

because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Some people get angry more easily than others. They may get frustrated easily. Or they may have grown up in a family with poor anger-management skills. They have to work hard to manage their feelings and behaviors.

I know I am beginning to feel angry when:

(Check ✓ the things that happen to you.)

- My breathing changes.
- My muscles feel tight.
- My heart begins to pound.
- My body feels warm or shaky.
- I clench my mouth, teeth, or fists.
- I want to yell, kick, or hit.
- I want to cry.
- My head feels like it will explode.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

As soon as you begin to feel angry, you can start to control it.