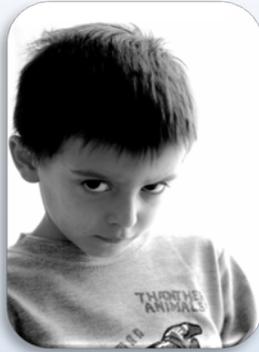


DEALING WITH THE EFFECTS OF DIVORCE ON KIDS

A Parent & Children's Worker's Guide to Dealing With Feelings of Anger

ANGER: a strong feeling of displeasure and belligerence aroused by a wrong; wrath; ire. (from dictionary.com)



Why Anger? Kids whose parents have gotten, or are getting, a divorce are undergoing tremendous upheaval in their lives. In addition to the loss of their intact family unit, many experience changes in schools, friends, homes and much more. Anger can be a natural reaction to all of these life changes that come with divorce and are outside of their control. Some children resent their parents for not keeping the family together. Many lash out in anger as a reaction to underlying feelings of fear and insecurity. Anger is one of the most common reactions to divorce in children and one you must be prepared to deal with.

Early Warning Signs:

- Tense Body
- Clenched Teeth
- Increased Volume
- Unkind Words
- Change of Tone
- Easily Provoked
- Restlessness
- Deep Breathing
- Rolling Eyes

IDEAS FOR HELPING AN ANGRY CHILD

- Stay calm.
- Teach appropriate ways to express anger.
- Teach children to recognize and name emotions.
- Listen to them without trying to fix it.
- Have them stop, breath and relax.
- Do breathing exercises (from the diaphragm).
- Walk out of the room (remove the audience).
- Go outside with them (walk, play, ride a bike).
- Give them physical activity (running, sports, etc.)
- Give them choices (empower them).
- Have them take long baths (water sooths).
- Find art activities for them to participate in.
- Set limits and boundaries and stick to them.

The Anger Mask

Anger often masks other emotions like:

- Anxiety
- Confusion
- Danger
- Depression
- Fear
- Grief
- Guilt
- Powerlessness
- Sadness
- Shame



Helping kids to talk about their anger is the first step in helping them to overcome it! Help children to talk about and name their emotions!

Scripture References About Anger

Ps. 4:4	Ecc. 7:9
Ps. 30:4-5	Mt. 5:22
Ps. 37:8	Eph 4:26-27
Ps. 145:8	Eph 4:31-32
Prov. 14:29	Col 3:8
Prov. 15:1	Jm 1:19-20
Prov. 16:32	



1. Anger is a process that needs to be worked through.
2. Don't look for ways to change a child. There is no quick fix!
3. Deal with your own anger issues first.
4. Get professional help when needed.

CHECK YOURSELF!!!

Many times when children exhibit anger after a divorce, it is because they are modeling or mimicking behavior that they have seen from one or both of their parents. It is perfectly normal for you and/or your ex to be angry about the divorce, but if you are seeing anger in your child, you both need to check your own attitudes to ensure that you are not exhibiting your own anger either through words or actions in front of your children.



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