



... "bite size" news from your Region 10 Behavior Specialist



# OH, Behave!

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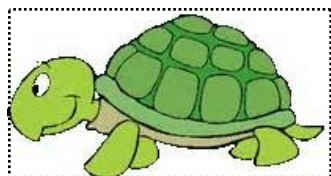
## Anger and The Young Child

### Behavior Tip of the Month:

Children need to know adults get angry too. When something frustrates you, don't shield your feelings. Talk about it and express your emotions.

### In every exciting issue:

- Ask The Behavior Specialist
- Behavior Tip of the Month
- Calming Choice Card
- Social/Emotional Book Nook



This is a special two-part issue on the topic of anger and the young child. In this second part, we will share some more ideas for helping young children learn to appropriately handle their anger and frustration. These are ideas that can make a positive difference in your classroom and in the lives of the children you care for daily.

One of our most favorite ways to help young children learn to handle anger and frustration is through the "turtle technique". The basic steps of the turtle technique are:

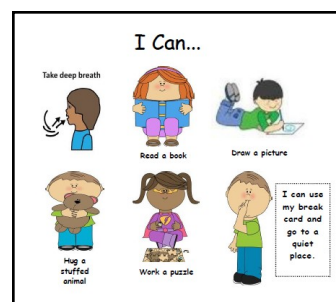
1. Recognizing that you feel angry
2. Thinking "stop"
3. Going into your "shell" and taking three deep breaths and thinking calming, coping thoughts, "It was an accident. I can calm down and think of good solutions. I am a good problem solver."
4. Coming out of your "shell" when calm and think of some solutions to the problem.

To download the story "Tucker Turtle Takes Time to Tuck and Think", click [here](#) (Under Scripted Stories for Social Situations).

Remember, the time to teach children appropriate ways to manage their anger and frustration is prior to them getting upset. Talk about what a child can do when they get upset during small or large group times. If you know a child struggles

with anger management, talk to him or her individually when they are not raging. When a child is in a tantrum state, they are not able to receive your instruction. In fact, it may very well make it worse. Instead, wait until the child has calmed down and then talk with him or her about what can be done differently next time.

Have each child create a visual aid they can refer to when they need it. As you brainstorm with the class about appropriate ways to get the anger out, have the children make a poster or a book of ideas. This can even be done on an index card such as the example below:



### Side 2

Deep breathing is a very effective way to calm down; however, children need to be taught how to truly breathe deeply. A wonderful way to help children do this is to use a pinwheel. With pinwheel in hand, instruct a child to take a slow, deep breath while you count out loud to two. Then, have them release their breath blowing on the pinwheel. Children can practice "belly breathing" by doing this understanding the deeper the breath the faster the pinwheel moves.

Pinwheels can be bought or easily made. Here are instructions on how to make pinwheels in the preschool classroom. Click [here](#).



### Break Card



I am feeling upset. I need to calm down. What can I do?

### Side 1

Check out the video from Sesame Street: Common and Colbie Caillat - "Belly Breathe" with Elmo by clicking [here](#).



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## How to create an “It’s-Okay-To-Be-Mad” Center

Anger is an emotion that causes great physical tension, so having a special place in the room where children can go to express anger appropriately can be helpful. Children don’t have to be angry to use the materials in this “express yourself” center, but they certainly lend themselves to calming down big emotions. Consider including materials such as:

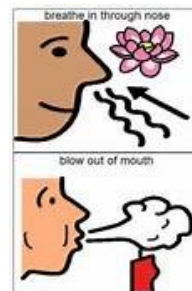
- Things to punch such as large pillows or punching balls so children can release their physical tension.
- Tactile play materials that tend to be soothing and comforting such as water; cool, moist potter’s clay; or fine, smooth sand.
- Things to pound such as small wooden mallets to pound playdough, clay, or Styrofoam. Pounding golf tees into a block of Styrofoam with a wooden mallet also has a great appeal.
- Set up an easel with bright, bold colors (including black and red) of creamy tempera paint to encourage the children’s creative expression. Especially with a child in crisis, let her make painting after painting rather than stopping her after one painting so that others get a turn.
- Add art materials such as bright marking pens, crayons, colored pencils, collage materials, glue and paper to invite children to make marks that express how they feel. Having pages of blank faces for children to draw how they see themselves when they are upset or angry is also a great technique to help put them in touch with their feelings.
- Things to tear like old newspapers and old magazines to cut. Fabric to rip is a great way to release tension.
- Soft balls to squeeze.
- An unbreakable mirror for making angry faces.
- Noise makers such as shakers, cookie sheets to bang with wooden spoons, etc.
- Put a target on the wall and let children throw beanbags against it as hard as they can.
- Bubbles for reducing stress and to soothe angry feelings.
- A yelling box can be created which allows the children to yell or roar like a lion when they need to let off some steam.
- Puppets that will allow children to act out their feelings.
- Teddy bears to hug or tell their problems to.
- Books about feelings which talk about anger or having a bad day.

Keep in mind that all of these activities are not intended to get rid of the feeling of anger, but to acknowledge it, express it and learn to deal with it in a healthy and constructive way. These are all aerotherapeutic activities. They are beneficial in and of themselves and do not need adult interpretation or mediation to make them effective.

In each issue you will find a new card to help you build your very own “Calming Choices” Card Set for your classroom.

When I am upset, I can...

TAKE A DEEP BREATH



For durability and repetitive use, print on cardstock paper and laminate.

when little people  
are overwhelmed by  
big emotions, it's our job  
to share our calm,  
not to join their chaos.  
-L. Knest

©hannahdove

Questions or Comments?

**email me**

and I'll probably email you back. I'm nice like that.

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Do you have a question you would like to see answered in our monthly column?

Feel free to fax your question to 336-761-5107.

You can remain anonymous if you prefer, but please put your question to the attention of “Ask The Behavior Specialist”.

