**Anger**

Many young children seem to have feelings of frustration and anger right now. Anger is a big emotion, and children need empathy and support to be able to deal with such a big feeling.

**Strategies**

* Label feelings. Tell your child “I can tell that you feel angry right now” Labelling feelings makes them easier to begin to understand and deal with. And tell them it’s ok to be angry, because it is! Anger is an emotion we all feel.
* Talk about anger and how it makes us feel-like we want to explode/cry. Like we want to cry/scream/shout.
* Validate feelings. Try not to dismiss feelings as “silly”. If something has made your child angry, go there with them! Tell them “that would make me feel angry too!”
* Give them strategies to cope with their anger. When they get angry they could stamp their feet, shout, count to 10, take deep breaths. Talk about things which make you cross and tell them what you do.
* Recognise when they’re becoming angry and tell them “I can see you’re getting angry, why don’t you…” (go outside, count to 10, leave the room, play something else” etc.
* If you know things which trigger their anger, give them lots of warnings about these things happening. Many children get frustrated when asked to come off phones or games consoles give them 10 then 5 minute warnings.

**Physical aggression**

Sometimes anger causes children to lash out and become physical.

* Children need to know that it is ok to be angry, it’s NOT ok to hurt people. If a child gets to the point where they are in full melt down and lashing out:

-get down on their level and stay calm. If you get angry things will escalate very quickly. Try to model calm behaviour.

 -try not to speak. This could make things worse.

-try not to cajole, bribe, threaten or ask them why whilst they are in full melt down. They have lost the ability to reason. Giving them ultimatums such as “If you don’t stop I will…” won’t tend to work at this point.

-try to keep your body language and face neutral. Frowning and wagging fingers could tend to make things worse.

-if it’s safe to leave them then do so.

-if it’s safe to hold/hug them then this could help them to calm.

**After a meltdown, once your child is completely calm**

* Talk about the incident. Talk about what they could do instead of lashing out eg deep breaths etc.
* Ask your child to tidy up any mess. If they have hurt someone ask them how they can make them feel better. Decide on an appropriate consequence.
* Talk about feelings. Ask them how it feels to be angry. Ask them what you can do to help-they may come up with ideas of their own, especially older children eg “you could leave me alone”

If your child calms themselves down using the strategies you have talked about, praise them. Tell them “well done for calming down so well. Now you are calm we can…”

Ensure your child has access to things which they enjoy, which promote their sense of well-being.

Websites

**NHS**

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/dealing-with-angry-child/>

**Very Well Family**

<https://www.verywellfamily.com/ways-to-help-an-angry-child-1094976>