

Teaching Emotions and 10 Ideas to Help Calm

Teaching children with an ASD, ADHD, ODD etc about emotions is a very important part of their behaviour programme. A core characteristic of ASD is "there can be problems with understanding, expression, regulation and repair of emotions, there can also be problems with confidence to respond appropriately." (Dr Tony Attwood, *The Complete Guide to Asperger's Syndrome* pg 135). As a result we need to teach about their emotions, other people's emotions and how to respond. For example, I know a little boy who cries if a teacher raises their voice at another student. I also know a girl who laughs when people get cross with her. I know many children who do not know how to 'repair emotions' this means when they are getting angry they can't calm themselves to stop it escalating to a meltdown.

Helping children identify what makes them feel angry, and which calming strategies work for them is a very important skill to teach. Below is an example from my new book *Developing Social Skills*, which has a great range of activities to help children learn about emotions (pgs 79-92).

Things that make me feel angry	How I can feel happy again
I feel angry when someone breaks my toys. I feel angry when other children tease me. I feel angry when Mum says "No more T.V."	I can take some deep breaths. I can go for a run. I can jump on the trampoline. I can play with the things in my Happiness or Treasure Box.

10 Top Ideas to Help Calm: Each child will like different ones

1. Give the child something they love to do (for a child who loves Thomas a picture of Thomas).
2. Use sensory tools, create a 'Calming Box' and include these sensory tools in it.
3. Go to a quiet table.
4. Exercise: go for a walk, run, jump on trampoline.
5. Listen to your favourite Music.
6. Read a book, story etc.
7. Look at a Liquid Timer.
8. Counting to 10, 50, 100.
9. Repetitive actions (sorting counters, colouring in etc).
10. Watch 3 minute Liquid Timer.

CREATE A CALMING BOX



A GREAT RESOURCE TEACHING ALL CHILDREN ABOUT MANAGING THEIR ANGER



See short youtube Video I made explaining these strategies on the website

THE RED BEAST: CONTROLLING ANGER IN CHILDREN WITH ASPERGER'S SYNDROME

|by K.I. Ghani

|Code: B37 | \$35

This is a beautiful book to share with any child. Deep inside everyone, a red beast lies sleeping. When it is asleep, the red beast is quite small, but when it wakes up, it begins to grow and grow. This is the story of a red beast that was awakened. Rufus is in the school playground when his friend John kicks a ball that hit him in the stomach, and wakes up the sleeping red beast: 'I hate you – I'm gonna sort you out!'. The red beast doesn't hear the teacher asking if he's okay. It doesn't see that John is sorry – how can Rufus tame the red beast?

This vibrant, fully illustrated children's storybook is written for children aged 5+, and is an accessible, fun way to talk about anger, with useful tips about how to 'tame the red beast' and guidance for parents on how anger affects children with Asperger's Syndrome.

Class/Family Discussion

These activities are great to do as a group/family so children can see different people get angry for different reasons.

- Look at the front cover and discuss when you felt like this?
- Why do you think the front cover is RED?
- When have you been angry? Has your RED BEAST ever woken up?
- What were you doing? What did your mind tell you?
- What helped you to calm? How did you feel after the Beast went away?

More teaching tips and ideas available at www.suelarkey.com