

# Managing Your Child's Anger: 9 Possible Triggers and Solutions for Coping

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Has your child thrown a tantrum lately, thrown toys across the room or hit a sibling? Odds are that s/he has!

Children's anger can be exacerbating for parents. After all, many adults still struggle with healthy expression of anger, so dealing with a child's anger can be doubly frustrating.

When your child gets angry, take a step back and try to figure out what may have triggered the angry outburst? Many times, believe it or not, there may be a good explanation.

Listed below are nine common triggers for a child's anger outbursts and possible solutions to help your child calm down. The solutions may also provide ways to prevent the next meltdown.

**1. Time of Day**- Many children express more anger between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m., right when you get home from work and want to make dinner. Document what time of day is most troubling for your child.

**Parenting Advice:** Take 15 minutes to sit down with your child and talk over his/her day before you begin making dinner. Give your child something relaxing to do while you make dinner. A healthy snack may also tide them over until dinner.

**2. Abrupt Changes**- Children crave routine and structure. They don't like curve balls.

**Parenting Advice:** At the start of the day, outline the day's activities. Five to ten minutes before a change of activity will take place, tell the child what the change will be. i.e. "In five minutes, you'll need to put the toys away and go take a bath." When it's time to leave you can take the child by the hand to get to the next activity.

**3. Too much stimulation**- Children may get over-stimulated from too many activities in one day or too much of one activity at a time.

**Parenting Advice:** Try not to over-schedule. Plan down-time in every day. Avoid certain activities if your child is sensitive to stimulation.

**4. Overtired**- Most children need 10-12 hours of sleep a day to function best.

**Parenting Advice:** Make sure your child is getting enough sleep. Develop a bedtime routine to prepare the child for bed. Allow for quiet times, even if your child doesn't sleep.

## **5. Hurt Feelings**

**Parenting Advice:** Help the child identify the feelings and talk with you or another person about them. Teach the child to ask for what they need from other people.

## **6. Jealous Feelings**

**Parenting Advice:** Acknowledge that feeling jealous sometimes is perfectly normal and show your understanding. Try to focus on the strengths your child has and never compare siblings. Try to spend some time alone every day (or week) with each child.

## **7. Child Doesn't Get Own Way**

**Parenting Advice:** Pick your battles. If it's important to you (or to your child's safety), stick to your guns. Apply a consequence if your child doesn't comply and follow through. You can also allow the child two choices s/he can select from. This allows the child to feel some sense of control. If it's not that important to you, let the child have what they want sometimes. You're demonstrating to the child that s/he is a responsible person whom you can trust.

**8. Not Sharing-** This is a skill that takes years to master. Hang in there!

**Parenting Advice:** Have your child put his/her favorite toy somewhere that others can't reach, thereby avoiding arguments. Assigning an equal amount of time that each child can play with a toy can help, too. Giving the toy a time out so that neither child can play with it if they argue, can also work.

## **9. Too much energy**

**Parenting Advice:** Allow your child time each day to run and jump and let off steam in a positive way.

Remember that expressing anger is healthy and normal, even for children. You can't shield them from hurt feelings, but you can help by finding predictable patterns in your child's outbursts and making adjustments that will cause fewer outbursts.

**Byline:** Toni Schutta is a Parent Coach and Licensed Psychologist with 17 years experience helping families find solutions that work. To receive the **free report "The 7 Worst Mistakes Parents Make (and How to Avoid Them!)"** visit

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