

Teach These Children

Fivefold enrichment

Punching Clay



Teaching children how to manage their emotions begins with an understanding that stress takes a physical toll on the body. Releasing this stress means finding ways to release a great deal of energy. Instead of yelling or screaming, teach children how to control their words and release their emotions through using their strength for constructive outlets.

Activity

It's okay, even healthy to acknowledge children's anger and the physical effect it can take on their bodies. Children may ball up their fists when they are angry, kick a door, the car, or even a friend. While it is important for children to learn that hurting someone is unacceptable, it is important to recognize their big emotions. Acknowledge that anger can make us feel like we are going to burst. Or, use your own descriptive word and ask them how anger makes them feel. Resist the urge to judge or condemn whatever they say. In other words, if they say they feel like punching sister Sally, you can say, "since we don't hit the people we love, can you think about something that would be okay for you to hit?" A punching bag, cookie dough or molding clay are all perfectly appropriate answers. If possible, have them on hand to try out. Or, ask which they think would be helpful. Make it a point to show them how they can do this appropriately before they are actually angry. Yes, demonstrating while they are calm is okay. The last thing you want is for a child to use the materials inappropriately when they are angry. Talk them through the process. Ask them to pay attention to their bodies and emotions during this process. After all, letting off steam is only step one. Now it's time to talk about and process feelings to complete the process.

TIPS

When it's time to process feelings, be sure that children are calm and able to discuss what feeling the anger masked- was it hurt or sadness or something else? Be sure to help them recognize and process these emotions.

Child's belief
about self...



I am balanced

Family supports
development of...

Toolset

Focus area:
Sensory for
balance

GOAL

Help children recognize their physical responses to anger and how to process it appropriately.

LEVEL

3