

Evidence Based Practices in School Mental Health: Anger Management and Violence Prevention

There are many programs that are published and marketed to schools as curriculums for anger management training. Still more programs are advertised as aggression reduction or violence prevention program, that often contain anger management components. Given all of the possible combinations of intervention programs, how does a school practitioner decide which would be best for his/her school?

Background Information

Anger is expressed in many different ways, and children express anger differently than adults. The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) identifies the following signs of anger in children (2001):

- Behavioral outbursts, many times without an obvious cause.
- Sleep problems.
- Fights at school or at home.
- Physical attacks on others or animals, even among pre-schoolers.
- Disobedience from an otherwise well behaved child.
- Child states s/he is really sad and does not know why.
- Complaints of stomachaches and headaches; or vague aches and pains.

Oftentimes symptoms of anger can relate to internalizing disorders especially in young children; therefore, rule out all other potential causes before invoking an anger management intervention. When considering an anger management intervention, a practitioner should begin with a group intervention because “Clients best learn to express their angry feelings when others are available to support, empathize, provide feedback, and role-play

problematic conflicts in encounters” (Thomas, 2001).

Early intervention in relation to anger management and violence prevention is important in impeding the escalation of violence and has a positive impact on the child’s future adjustment. “Successful intervention with aggressive preadolescent children can have two important kinds of results on (a) the children’s immediate behavior and environment; and, (b) their future adjustment” (Lochman & Dunn, 1993).

Disclaimer

The information gathered for this evidence-based practice sheet is a summary of common practices and/or programs with a strong research base and definitions found in recent literature. This summary is by no means a comprehensive representation of all information, definitions, programs, and standards to be found. The listing of a specific program within this sheet does not constitute as an endorsement from CDE for the program.

Resources

U.S. Department of Education. (2003). *Identifying and implementing educational practices supported by rigorous evidence: A user friendly guide*. [Brochure]. Washington, D.C.: Author.

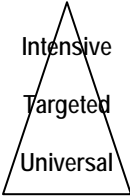
Promising Practices Network:

<http://www.promisingpractices.net/>

What Works Clearinghouse: <http://www.w-w-c.org/>

References

- Lochman, J.E. & Dunn, S.E. (1993). An intervention and consultation model from a social cognitive perspective: A description of the Anger Coping Program. *School Psychology Review*, 22(3).
- National Association of School Psychologists (2001). *A National Tragedy: Managing Anger and Other Strong Emotional Reactions Tips for Parents and Teachers*. Bethesda, MD: Author.
- Thomas, S.P. (2001). Teaching healthy anger management. *Perspectives in Psychiatric Care*, 37(2).

Program	Publisher	Level of Intervention 	Target Population	Type of research conducted (Stringent research-research design, random assignment; Research – mixed method, random sampling; Applied with Fidelity – outcome measures) *	Research Sample
Anger Replacement Training (ART) <i>Summary:</i> ART is designed to increase pro-social behaviors through modeling, role playing, and performance training. This program has three components: Skillstreaming, Anger Control Training, and Moral Reasoning.	International Center for Aggression Replacement Training: www.aggressionreplacementtraining.org	Targeted Intensive	Ages 11-19 years old	Stringent Research	Students from diverse backgrounds including urban and rural, ethnic, cultural, and SES.
Peacemakers Program <i>Summary:</i> This program is designed to teach interpersonal and skillful responses to conflict through a variety of activities designed to appeal to a variety of learning styles. The information is presented in a Teacher's Manual, Counselor's Manual and student workbooks. The program can be used school wide and also with individual students.	Applewood Centers: www.applewoodcenters.org	Universal Intensive	Grades 4-8	Research	Cleveland Public Schools
Positive Adolescent Choices Training (PACT) <i>Summary:</i> A culturally sensitive training program designed specifically for African American adolescents. PACT provides training in the areas of violence-risk education, anger management, and social skills.	Research Press: www.researchpress.com	Targeted	Middle and High School African American students	Applied with Fidelity	Dayton, Ohio Public Schools
Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS) <i>Summary:</i> This program has lessons focused on self control, emotional awareness, social problem-solving, critical thinking, positive values and attitudes, and respect. The lessons are designed to be taught by the classroom teacher three or more times a week for 20 minutes.	Channing-Bete Company: http://www.channing-bete.com	Universal Targeted	Grades K-6	Research	Regular education, special needs, deaf children
Second Step: A Violence Prevention Program <i>Summary:</i> This program is designed to teach social and emotional skills (empathy, impulse control, anger management, and problem solving) for violence prevention in 30 minute lessons once or twice a week.	Committee for Children: www.cfchildren.org	Universal	Preschool – Grade 9	Research	Urban and suburban schools in the Pacific Northwest United States

* See Fast Facts: Introduction to Evidence Based Practice

Program References

- Dwyer, K. & Osher, D. (2000). *Safeguarding our children: An action guide*. Washington, DC: US Department of Education.
- Frey, K.S., Hirschstein, M.K., Guzzo, B.A. (2000). Second Step: Preventing aggression by promoting social competence. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*. 8 (2).
- Glick, B. & Goldstein, A.P. (1987). Aggression replacement training. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 65.
- General Accounting Office, Washington, DC. Heath, Education, and Human Services Division (1995). *School Safety: Promising Initiatives for Addressing School Violence*. Gaithersburg, MD: Author.
- Osher, D., Dwyer, K., & Jackson, S. (2004). *Safe, Supportive and Successful Schools Step by Step*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.
- Shapiro, J.P. (1997). The Peacemakers Program: Effective violence prevention for early adolescent youth. *NASP Communique*, 27(6).
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