

# STRONG TEENS

**Grades  
9–12**



## **A Social & Emotional Learning Curriculum**

by

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2-3  
minutes

## Review

*Note:* This lesson has a lot of information and examples. It is important that you adhere to the minimum time limit allotted for each section as this lesson has many components and will require you to teach at an efficient pace. If necessary, Practice and Application can be omitted. If you find it difficult to get through the important information on dealing with anger in one lesson, you may consider dividing this lesson into two sessions.

To activate prior knowledge, review and discuss previous topics and main ideas. Obtain 3–5 adequate ideas. Discuss with students their responses to last week's homework assignment.

### Sample Script

*Recently, we learned about comfortable and uncomfortable emotions. Can anyone give me an example of a comfortable and uncomfortable emotion? During our last meeting, we also discussed identifying and expressing our emotions. Raise your hand if you can tell me another important idea we learned in our last lesson.*

### Ideas discussed in Lesson 3

- How do you identify appropriate and inappropriate ways of expressing emotions?
- What are positive ways of showing emotions?
- How do you identify your own feelings for certain situations?

2-3  
minutes

## Introduction

Communicate the lesson's purpose and objectives clearly. Introduce concepts of appropriate and inappropriate ways of expressing anger and ways to cope with anger.

### Sample Script

*Today, we will talk about anger. Anger is a normal emotion that everyone experiences. We'll talk about what anger looks like and what causes it. Anger can be expressed both in appropriate and inappropriate ways. We will learn several ways to help us cope with our anger in appropriate ways.*

10-12  
minutes

## Name and Define Anger and Aggression

### Activity A

Use Supplement 4.1 as an overhead transparency and, if desired, as a reference handout for your students. Choose students to read the definitions. Facilitate brief discussions on each item.



### Sample Script

Here are some important ideas that we will be discussing.

- **Emotion**—A feeling that comes from something happening to you that is meant to tell you something about your situation. The purpose of this feeling is to give you the motivation and energy to do something about the situation.
- **Anger**—A powerful emotion of extreme unhappiness and dislike toward someone or something when you feel threatened or harmed
- **Aggression**—A behavior that takes place in the presence of anger and is intended to harm others or damage property
- **Anger management**—Choosing appropriate behaviors when you are angry

### Activity B

Convey the following main ideas to your students using your own words or the sample script.

- *All people have emotions.* Emotions are tools that help us understand and cope with a person or situation (just as our eyes and ears help us perceive the world).
- *Anger is a natural and necessary emotional reaction.* Anger signals us to take notice and respond to a situation. Without anger, we would be limited in our ability to understand and cope (i.e., protect ourselves) with people and situations (just as without our eyes and ears we would be limited in our ability to understand the world).
- *Aggression is one of many behaviors we can choose from to cope with situations and people when we are angry.*
- *Aggression is not the best way to deal with our anger* and often leads to harmful results. There are usually better ways to deal with our anger.

### Sample Script

*Just as we all have eyes and ears that help us navigate the road when we are driving, we also have emotions that help us understand and deal with situations and people. Emotions are like tools that help us understand our situations and deal with people and relationships. Anger is a powerful emotion that helps us protect ourselves when we feel something is going wrong. For example, it is natural to become angry when someone spreads vicious gossip about you or blames you for something that you didn't do. However, being physically or verbally aggressive isn't the best way to deal with your anger. There are other ways of dealing with it and solving the problem.*

Ask students for examples of when they have become angry and what it was that made them angry.

### Sample Script

*Raise your hand if you have an example of a time when you were angry, and describe what it was that made you angry.*



## Activity C

Explain that anger can be useful, but it doesn't have to lead to aggression. There are others ways of reacting to our anger.

### **Sample Script**

*If you did not become angry, you would not be motivated to protect yourself. However, anger does not have to lead to physical or verbal aggression to defend ourselves. In fact, rather than solving the problem, physical or verbal aggression often leads to many problems. Aggression is only one way that you can react to your anger. More effective ways of reacting to your anger include talking about your anger, problem solving, or taking a break.*

Ask students for strategies they use to handle their anger.

### **Sample Script**

*Raise your hand to describe ways you've used to handle your anger.*

## Activity D

Explain that anger is a normal, healthy emotion, but using aggression leads to problems.

### **Sample Script**

*The ability to understand our anger and manage our behavior is a very important skill that we all need throughout our lives. Anger is a normal, healthy emotion that all of us will feel many times in our lives. Being angry with someone or over something is not wrong, but being aggressive when we're angry usually leads to a lot of problems.*

Ask students for examples of situations when they have used or seen aggressive behaviors used in response to feeling angry or have done these things themselves.

### **Sample Script**

*Raise your hand to describe when you or someone else has used aggressive behaviors to deal with anger.*

## Activity E

Describe short- and long-term problems for being angry and aggressive.

### **Sample Script**

*People who are often angry and aggressive can develop cardiovascular disease, have poor friendships and romantic relationships, have problems holding onto a job, and earn less income. Although aggression can get you what you want in the moment, over the long term it can cause you many more problems.*

2–5  
minutes

## Introduce the Anger Model and Definitions



Use Supplement 4.2 as an overhead transparency to define the Anger Model. Briefly discuss each item and the definitions.

- *Trigger*—any situation that results in your feeling angry
- *Interpretation*—the process of thinking about what has happened to you and deciding what it means
- *Emotional reaction (anger)*—what you feel after interpreting a situation or trigger
- *Decision*—making a choice about the action you will take
- *Behavior*—acting out the decision that you made
- *Consequence*—the direct results of your behavior

8  
minutes

## Integrate and Illustrate the Anger Model



### Activity A

Use Supplement 4.3 as an overhead transparency. Two options, A and B, are provided to give you a range of examples to choose from. Have students volunteer to read each step of the Anger Model and the corresponding script that illustrates each step. (Option A is provided below. If you choose Option B, refer to Supplement 4.3, Option B, at the end of this lesson or on the accompanying CD-ROM.)

Steps of the Anger Model	Script for situation
1. Trigger	Two days ago, you were really struggling with some personal issues that you felt you could not talk to anybody about because you were afraid others might find out. Your best friend convinced you to talk about it and promised to keep it secret. You just overheard two people talking about your problem.
2. Interpretation	You begin wondering how they found out and who told them. As you think about it, you realize that the only person you told was your best friend.
3. Emotional reaction	As you realize that your best friend must have told others, a bad feeling comes over you. You feel betrayed by your best friend. As you think about what will happen to your reputation now that your secret is known, you become furious.
4. Decision	In the heat of the moment, you decide you have to do something about this now. You are so angry that you decide you are going to yell at and beat up your friend.
5. Behavior	You see your best friend in the hall. You run toward your friend and slam him or her into a locker. Then, you take a swing at your friend, and a fight begins.
6. Consequence	You and your friend are both suspended from school for fighting, and your best friend becomes your enemy.



## Activity B

After reviewing each step in the Anger Model and the corresponding script on page 63, discuss with the class the following main points.

- A *trigger* is any situation that results in your feeling angry. It could be someone doing something to you that resulted in your feeling angry, or you yourself doing something that results in your feeling angry, or certain life situations that result in your feeling angry.
- *Interpretation* is an automatic and active process that is based on a number of factors including past experiences, situational circumstances, and mood. When the student overheard two people talking about a problem that he or she thought was a secret, the student could have automatically begun to think about the meaning of it. The student could have interpreted the event in one of two ways: 1) the best friend disclosed the secret to other people or 2) other people already knew about the problem.
- The student's interpretation will determine his or her *emotional reaction* (e.g., anger, indifference, fear), which will in turn influence the student's decision-making process in selecting a behavioral response.
- A student's behavioral response to his or her anger is the product of a *decision*. This decision often occurs so quickly that students are unaware that they are making a decision; however, it is important that students recognize that they do make a decision in how to respond to their anger.
- A student's behavior produces both short- and long-term *consequences*. Many of these consequences are obvious (e.g., disciplinary referral, getting what you want) but many are less obvious (e.g., peer rejection, poor student–teacher relationships). It is important that students be aware of the consequences of their behaviors.

5  
minutes

## Introduce Anger Control Skills



Use Supplement 4.4 as an overhead transparency to introduce skills used to cope with anger.

### Sample Script

*Here are several examples of things that you can do to help you cope with your anger. Although you can use all of these skills any time you are angry, they work best when you use them in the right stage of the Anger Model. First, we will describe each skill. Then, we will talk about when it is best to use that skill and apply that skill to an example.*

Briefly go through each example with your students.

- *Counting backwards* means that you count backwards from 10. You can either do this quietly or do it in your head. It is best used when you first notice that you are angry (Emotional Reaction stage). It gives you time to think about the situation and what you are going to do and calms you down.

- *If-then statements* mean that you ask yourself what might happen if you do something. They are best used when you are deciding what to do about a situation or problem (Decision stage). If-then statements help you make better choices by helping you understand the consequences of your actions.
- *Self-talk* means that you say to yourself the things that a good friend would say to calm you down, such as, “Calm down,” “Take it easy,” or “Let it go.” It is best used when you first notice that you are angry (Emotional Reaction stage). Its purpose is to help calm you down.
- *Self-evaluation* means that you think about what you want to get out of the situation and how best to get it. It is best used when you are deciding what to do about a situation or problem (Decision stage). Its purpose is to help you get what you want out of a situation.

8–10  
minutes

## Application of Anger Control Skills



Use Supplement 4.5 as an in-class handout to demonstrate the next activity. Using your own example or the suggested example, illustrate the appropriate use of the Anger Model. Read the negative example, and explicitly state that students are not using the anger control skills.

### **Negative example**

*You have been standing in a long line for about an hour waiting to buy tickets. Someone walks up to the person in front of you and begins talking to him. As the line moves forward, the person slips into the line ahead of you and continues to talk (Trigger). You wonder if the person is just talking to a friend and will leave or if he is being sneaky and deliberately cutting in line so that he doesn't have to go all the way to the end of the line. You believe that he is cutting in line (Interpretation) and become angry (Emotional Reaction). You say to yourself, “I have been waiting for an hour, and he thinks he can just cut in?” You think about what to do and decide to yell at him (Decision). You tap the guy on his shoulder and tell him, “No cuts, Idiot! Go to the end of the line!” (Behavior). He yells back, and heated words are exchanged. You shove him, and the two of you get into a fight. Security is called, and both of you are removed from the line and told to leave the premises. You waited in line for more than an hour and never got a ticket (Consequences).*

Ask the following discussion questions:

- How did this turn out?
- What went wrong?

After discussing the negative example, discuss the positive example using the anger control skills.

### **Sample Script**

*Now, we will repeat the situation and this time include the anger control skills that we learned. I will model the appropriate use of the anger control skills for you.*



### Positive Example

*You have been standing in a long line for about an hour waiting to buy tickets. Someone walks up to the person in front of you and begins talking to him. As the line moves forward, the person slips into the line ahead of you and continues to talk (Trigger). You wonder if the person is just talking to a friend and will leave or if he is being sneaky and deliberately cutting in line so that he doesn't have to go all the way to the end of the line. You believe that he is cutting in line (Interpretation) and become angry (Emotional Reaction). You say to yourself, "I have been waiting for an hour, and he thinks he can just cut in?" To calm down, you quietly count backwards from 10 (Count Backwards). After counting backwards, you tell yourself, "Play it cool, and take it easy. Maybe he's just talking to his friend and not cutting in line" (Self-Talk). You think about what you should do. You come up with several options such as telling him to get his butt out of the line or asking him whether he realizes that he has cut in line. You ask yourself what might happen if you do each approach (If-Then Statements). Next, you ask yourself what you want to get out of the situation (you want to buy a ticket, but you don't want someone cutting in line) and pick the option that will get you what you want (Self-Evaluation). You decide to say something but want to avoid a fight (Decision). You calmly approach the guy and ask, "Are you in line or just talking to your friend?" He responds, "I am doing both." You say, "That's not fair for those of us who have been waiting in line. I think that you should go to the back the line" (Behavior). He sneers at you but goes to the back of the line. You got what you wanted—you bought a ticket, avoided a confrontation, and no one cut in front of you (Consequences).*

Ask the following discussion questions:

- What if the person had refused?
- How did this turn out?
- Why did it turn out this way?
- What was different from the last example?

8–10  
minutes

## Practice and Application

### Student Role Plays

Organize the students into small groups of 2–3 students. Present students with one or two situations you have developed or have students develop their own. Instruct students to label their situations using the Anger Model.

Use Supplement 4.2 as an overhead transparency for students to reference the steps in the Anger Model.

Pass out Supplement 4.4 as an in-class handout for students to reference anger control skills they can use. Have students discuss in their groups what anger control skills they would use in their example. Ask them to role-play a positive example using the anger control skills.



## Discussion

After students have completed the role plays, select one of the groups' examples for discussion. Have the students present their example, labeled with the steps of the Anger Model. Ask the following discussion questions:

- How did this turn out?
- Why did it turn out this way?
- What skills did you use?

2–3  
minutes

## Closure

Gather your students together, and review the lesson's main points.

- How do you define *emotion*, *anger*, *aggression*, and *anger management*?
- All people have emotions.
- Anger is a necessary and natural reaction.
- Aggression is not the best way to deal with anger.
- There are other ways to react to anger.
- What are the long-term problems to being angry and aggressive?
- What are the steps of the Anger Model?
- What are anger control skills?

### Sample Script

*Today, we learned about a six-step Anger Model, which included the steps: 1) trigger, 2) interpretation, 3) emotional reaction, 4) decision, 5) behavior, and 6) consequence. We also learned four simple but effective skills for dealing with our anger. The skills included 1) counting backwards, 2) if-then statements, 3) self-talk, and 4) self-evaluation.*

2–3  
minutes

## Homework Handout



Pass out the homework handout, Supplement 4.6, Anger Management Worksheet, and explain the instructions. Students are to describe a recent event where someone was angry and apply that situation to the Anger Model. Then, discuss anger control skills that could be used. Students may find it useful to use Supplement 4.4 when doing this assignment.

## Tips for Transfer Training

### Precorrect

Tell your students to use their anger control skills (count backwards, if-then statements, self-talk, and self-evaluation) if they feel as if they are getting angry. Lunch and physical education periods are particularly good for this lesson's precorrection.

**Remind**

If you find students who are not dealing with their anger properly, ask them whether or not they *interpreted* their *emotional reaction* and made the best *decision*. Remind them of the *consequences* of their reactions, and prompt them to use the anger control skills.

**Reinforce**

If you happen to see your students using any anger control skills or providing evidence that they used the steps of the Anger Model appropriately, give them praise or reinforcement. For example, students could be rewarded for talking out their conflicts or reacting calmly to an aversive situation (an anger trigger).



# Definitions

## **Emotion**

A feeling that comes from something happening to you that is meant to tell you something about your situation. The purpose of this feeling is to give you motivation and energy to do something about the situation.

## **Anger**

A powerful emotion of extreme unhappiness and dislike toward someone or something when you feel threatened or harmed

## **Aggression**

A behavior that takes place in the presence of anger and is intended to harm others or damage property

## **Anger management**

Choosing appropriate behaviors when you are angry



# Definitions of the Anger Model

## **Trigger**

Any situation that results in your feeling angry

## **Interpretation**

The process of thinking about what has happened to you and deciding what it means

## **Emotional reaction (anger)**

What you feel after interpreting a situation or trigger

## **Decision**

Making a choice about the action you will take

## **Behavior**

Acting out the decision that you made

## **Consequence**

The direct results of your behavior



# The Anger Model (Negative Example)

## Trigger

Two days ago, you were really struggling with some personal issues that you felt you could not talk to anybody about because you were afraid others might find out. Your best friend convinced you to talk about it and promised to keep it secret. You just overheard two people talking about your problem.

## Interpretation

You begin wondering how they found out and who told them. As you think about it, you realize that the only person you told was your best friend.

## Emotional reaction (anger)

As you realize that your best friend must have told others, a bad feeling comes over you. You feel betrayed by your best friend. As you think about what will happen to your reputation now that your secret is known, you become furious.

## Decision

In the heat of the moment, you decide you have to do something about this now. You are so angry that you decide you are going to yell at and beat up your friend.

## Behavior

You see your best friend in the hall. You run toward your friend and slam him or her into a locker. Then, you take a swing at your friend, and a fight begins.

## Consequence

You and your friend are both suspended from school for fighting, and your best friend becomes your enemy.



# The Anger Model (Negative Example)

## Trigger

You are standing in a long line for about an hour waiting to buy tickets. Someone walks up to a person in front of you and begins talking to him. As the line moves forward, the person slips into the line ahead of you and continues to talk.

## Interpretation

You wonder if the person is just talking to a friend and will leave or if he is being sneaky and deliberately cutting in line so that he doesn't have to go all the way to the end of the line. You believe that he is cutting in line.

## Emotional reaction (anger)

You become angry. You say to yourself, "I have been waiting for an hour, and he thinks he can just cut in?"

## Decision

You think about what you should do and decide to yell at him.

## Behavior

You tap the guy on the shoulder and tell him, "No cuts, Idiot! Go to the back of the line!"

## Consequence

He yells back, and heated words are exchanged. You shove him, and the two of you get into a fight. Security is called, and both of you are removed from the line and told to leave the premises. You waited in line for more than an hour and never got a ticket.



# Anger Control Skills

Skill	Description	When to use
Count backwards	Quietly count backwards from 10 in your mind.	When you first notice that you are angry ( <i>emotional reaction</i> )
If-then statements	As you are deciding what to do, ask yourself, "If I do [blank], then what will happen to me?"	When you are deciding what to do ( <i>decision</i> )
Self-talk	Tell yourself, "Calm down," "Take it easy," "Ignore it," or "Let it go."	When you notice that you are angry, to calm yourself down ( <i>emotional reaction</i> )
Self-evaluation	Decide what you want to get out of the situation and how best to get it.	When deciding what you want to accomplish in the situation and what the best way is to do this ( <i>decision</i> )



# Negative and Positive Examples

## Negative Example

You are standing in a long line for about an hour waiting to buy tickets. Someone comes up to a person in front of you and begins talking to him. As the line moves forward, the person slips into the line ahead of you and continues to talk (**trigger**). You wonder if the person is just talking to a friend and will leave or if he is being sneaky and deliberately cutting in line so that he doesn't have to go all the way to the end of the line. You believe that he is cutting in line (**interpretation**) and become angry (**emotional reaction**). You say to yourself, "I have been waiting for an hour, and he thinks he can just cut in?" You think about what you should do and decide to yell at him (**decision**). You tap the guy on his shoulder and tell him, "No cuts, Idiot! Go to the end of the line!" (**behavior**). He yells back, and heated words are exchanged. You shove him, and the two of you get into a fight. Security is called, and both of you are removed from the line and told to leave the premises. You waited in line for more than an hour and never got a ticket (**consequences**).

## Positive Example

You are standing in a long line for about an hour waiting to buy tickets. Someone comes up to a person in front of you and begins talking to him. As the line moves forward, the person slips into the line ahead of you and continues to talk (**trigger**). You wonder if the person is just talking to a friend and will leave or if he is being sneaky and deliberately cutting in line so that he doesn't have to go all the way to the end of the line. You believe that he is cutting in line (**interpretation**) and become angry (**emotional reaction**). You say to yourself, "I have been waiting for an hour, and he thinks he can just cut in?" To calm down, you quietly count backwards from 10 (**count backwards**). After counting backwards, you tell yourself, "Play it cool, and take it easy. Maybe he's just talking to his friend and not cutting in line" (**self-talk**). You think about what you should do. You come up with several options such as telling him to get his butt out of line or asking him whether he realizes he has cut in line. You ask yourself what will happen if you do each approach (**if-then statements**). Next, you ask yourself what you want to get out of the situation (you want to buy a ticket, but you don't want someone cutting in line) and pick the option that will get you what you want (**self-evaluation**). You decide to say something but want to avoid a fight (**decision**). You calmly approach the guy and ask, "Are you in line or just talking to your friend?" He responds, "I am doing both." You say, "That's not fair for those of us who have been waiting in line. I think that you should go to the back of the line" (**behavior**). He sneers at you but goes to the back of the line. You got what you wanted—you bought a ticket, avoided a confrontation, and no one cut in front of you (**consequences**).



# Anger Management Worksheet

Name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Describe a recent situation that you might have witnessed or been a part of that involved someone becoming angry. Be sure to include each step of the Anger Model in your description.

Trigger \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Interpretation \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Emotional reaction \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Decision \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Behavior \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Consequence \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Using the anger control skills you have learned, indicate the skills that could have been used in the situation you described and discuss how they could have been used. (Use Supplement 4.4 as a guide for identifying skills you can use.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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