

CALM-DOWN TOOLS: 70 Ways to Handle Anger in the Moment **By Judy Arnall**

Children need an adult's help to calm down. Placing them in Time-out and isolating them is not the best way to teach children to calm-down. Sometimes the time they need us the most, when they are experiencing strong emotions like anger and frustration, is the time we choose to be with them the least. Here are some ways to help your child calm-down. Be with them and use some of these tools. Create a Time-In place with some of these tools available and go use them with your child. Do it with your child in the heat of the moment and then talk about it after he has calmed down. Teach him the tools. If you are also angry, make sure that you've used them first to calm yourself down enough to be a helper to your child!

Auditory/Verbal Neutralizers

- Listen to music
- Sing
- Dance
- Blast the radio in the car
- Positive self-talk
- Do a three-minute silent scream
- Yell in the shower
- Talk to a friend
- Count to 10 while drinking a glass of water
- Count to 10 forwards or backwards
- Cry
- Shssshhhing sound
- Hiss

Visual Neutralizers

- Watch an aquarium
- Read a book
- Draw pictures
- Scribble
- Doodle
- Imagine feelings floating away
- Visualize yourself in a calm place or meditate
- Watch a video or DVD
- Play a video or computer game

Creative Neutralizers

- Write in a journal
- Make a poster
- Draw a picture
- Write poetry
- Write a letter or email but don't send
- Knit

Make a model
Play Lego
Play guitar or piano

Self Nurturing Neutralizers

Get a hug
Bubble bath
Drink from a water bottle
Make a calm-down room just for you
Eat a healthy snack (not the ice cream bucket)
Go out with other people
Be alone (The Traditional Time-Out)
Meditate

Physical Neutralizers

Silent scream or scream into a pillow
Take a plastic baseball bat and bang a thick pillow
Squeeze stress or hackey sack balls
Play play-dough
Take a shower, lock the door and sing
Play Lego or K'nex
Clean room, closet, or yard
Knead bread, weed garden, vacuum
Take the children in a stroller and go for a walk
Dance, roller blade, bike, throw ball, and walk
Shake off feelings
Breathe in calmness, and breathe out slowly
Stomp, Run, or Jump
Have a cup of tea on the front porch or back deck
Blow in an anger tube (an empty paper towel roll)
Drum
Hug
Shred paper
Clear out the recycling
Use a fuss box (a cardboard box you can go and kick the sides out of)
Make faces at the wall
Have a bath
Mow the lawn
Stamp feet in one place
Hang laundry on a rack
Wring towels
Blow balloons
Clean up clutter
Play with toys

Humour Neutralizers

Make a joke out of the situation
Read a funny book or sites on the Internet
Watch funny videos

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