

Counseling Activities for Teaching Anger Management and Social Skills

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Counseling Activities for Teaching Anger Management and Social Skills

Overview

Summary

Students in our schools face continuous changes and challenges. Major changes caused by divorce, remarriage, moving, drug/physical/mental abuse, foster care, and unsupervised homes can have a large impact on the youth. These major changes as well as minor changes have increased the stress that our young people must learn to deal with. Because of this, many students do not come to school ready to learn. Basic resiliency and problem solving skills are often missing because parents lack time, commitment, or understanding of the importance of these skills. Many parents are unable to provide for basic needs and parenting that is needed, so, many children lack the knowledge and skills to deal effectively with the stressors in their lives. The following six lessons include activities to help students deal with the most common problems: Anger Management and Social Skills.

Big Picture

Everyone has a basic need to have friends and be liked. Even though many students do not acknowledge this, they are generally aware that they lack friends and want to gain more acceptances from their peers. When the facilitator presents it to students as a way for them to gain more friends and to function better as a team member, they generally are very eager to be involved.

Preparation for the Unit

This curriculum is designed to be taught to an entire classroom or small groups. Teachers need to determine the time line, gather materials, and prepare themselves. If the lessons are to be presented to a small group, parental support and permission is important prior to beginning these activities.

Overview

The table on the next page provides an overview of the tasks in the unit sections and shows how the activities in the different teaching areas are designed to be used throughout the elementary curriculum including reading, social studies, and health. The skills and competencies are taught in as realistic a way as possible so that the students will apply the skills in real life situations.

Curriculum Unit Summary (Unit's Title)

Anger Management	Social Skills
ALT 1 - Reading Students will learn how various people deal with anger.	ALT 1 - Reading Students will learn why it is important to get along with their peers.
ALT 2 – Social Studies Students will learn how to recognize and manage their anger.	ALT 2 – Social Studies Students will learn techniques to work and communicate effectively with their peers.
ALT 3 - Health Students will learn several ways to control their anger.	ALT 3 - Health Students will learn to handle conflict with their peers.
<u>Transfer or Culminating Activity or Project</u> Students will make a book titled “Look What I Have Learned” to showcase skills and techniques that they have learned throughout the unit. Then students will present their books to the class.	

This curriculum unit will cover the following subject areas:

- English/Communications/Language Arts
- Careers/Life Skills/Family & Consumer Science
- Social Studies/History/Economics/Marketing
- Health/Physical Education

Section One: Anger Management

ALT One: We are Responsible for Our Actions (Reading Curriculum)

Summary

Life is never perfect for anyone and everyone has bad days occasionally. The way each individual responds to the events of the day affects the outcome. We can choose a “good” day or a “bad” day and we are responsible for our choices.

Competencies

1. Students will learn that they can choose to make their day a good day or a bad day.
2. Students will learn that they are responsible for the choices they make.

Time

30 to 60 minutes.

Materials

Book: The Very Angry Day That Amy Didn't Have by Lawrence E. Shapiro, Charles Brena (Illustrator); Writing paper and pencils for each student.

Instructions

1. Take the students on a “picture walk” through the book: The Very Angry Day That Amy Didn't Have showing them the pictures on each page and asking the students to predict what they think the book is about and what might happen.
2. Read the book aloud to the students. During the reading, stop and ask the students to predict what they think will happen next and what choices the main character will make.
3. At the conclusion of the book, discuss with the students
 - the mistakes that first girl made
 - the correct choices that Amy made
 - ask them to explain why these choices affected the outcome of their days
 - ask the students to think of an example of times that they made good choices and the good things that resulted

Evaluation/Assessment of Student's Competency

Ask the students to think of times that they were very angry. Have them choose a time that they made a choice to control their anger and respond appropriately. Ask them to write a paragraph and illustrate the page. Have the students list positive things that happened because of their good choices.

Closure

Explain that not everything will always go the way that want, but that by choosing how we respond to this we can control the outcome of our day. Tell them that in the next two lessons they will learn more about controlling their anger and techniques they can use when they are feeling stressed.

Section One: Anger Management

ALT Two: Understanding Anger (Social Studies Curriculum)

Summary

Anger is a normal human emotion and different people become angry about different things. Difficulties result when anger is not managed.

Competencies

1. Students will learn to recognize why they become angry.
2. Students will learn ways to let anger out without hurting themselves or others.

Time

30 – 60 minutes

Materials

Chalkboard and chalk or chart paper and marker, drawing paper, crayons or markers, “Behavior” (Handout One) copy for each student “Anger Control” (Handout Two).

Instructions

1. Have students brainstorm what makes them angry. List on chalkboard or chart paper as the students name the causes.
2. Distribute drawing paper and crayons or markers and ask students to draw a picture of their body when they are angry. Color in red the parts of the body where they feel anger.
3. Ask students to complete the handout “Behavior”.
4. Brainstorm ideas for preventing or handling anger in positive and negative ways. Draw two columns on chalkboard: “Helpful Ideas” and “Not Helpful Ideas”. List all ideas in the appropriate column with the students help. (See Anger Control Techniques Handout Two)

Evaluation/Assessment of Student’s Competency

Students will make a poster of at least three pictures of appropriate/helpful things they will do next time they get angry.

Closure

Explain that everyone gets angry. Anger is OK as long as they manage it. But, when they act inappropriately by choosing “not helpful ideas”, they get in trouble and lose privileges. Tell them that the next lesson will also help them to manage their anger.

Section One: Anger Management

ALT Three: Relaxation Techniques (Health Curriculum)

Summary

Stress results from worry, frustration, feelings of hurt and fear. Although anger may be used to discharge tension, it is generally ineffective for more than a few minutes and leads to additional stress. Relaxation techniques are often effective in reducing stress and are socially much more acceptable.

Competencies

1. Students will learn to recognize stress.
2. Students will practice techniques to reduce stress.

Time

30 to 60 minutes

Materials

Chalkboard and chalk or chart paper and marker, construction paper, pencil, and crayons or markers for each student, “Relaxation Techniques” Handout One.

Instructions

1. Explain that many problems can develop if we don't learn to relax and handle the stress that we must all face each day. Give examples of physical discomforts such as headaches and stomachaches. Give other examples of social problems that arise when anger is used to let out tension.
2. Ask the students to describe how they “chill.” Write their ideas on the chalkboard.
3. When the list is complete, review the seven ideas on Handout One: “Relaxation Techniques”.
4. Have the students make their own booklets. Distribute a piece of construction paper, a pencil, and crayons or markers to each student. Have the students fold the paper in half and then in half again to form a booklet. On the front of the booklet, have the students design a cover. For example, a student might draw a picture of him/herself

and call the book “How I Chill”. On each page of the booklet, have students write a word or two about ways to relax and illustrate the words they choose.

Evaluation/Assessment of Student’s Competency

Students will be able to describe at least two stress-reducing techniques that they will use. The teacher will encourage the use of appropriate techniques and monitor progress.

Closure

Encourage the students to take the booklets home and share them with their families. Tell the students that these same ideas work for everyone including grown-ups. Remind them that stress is a part of everyday activities and anger is a normal human emotion. Explain that if they use stress-reducing activities and learn to manage their anger, they will have more friends and be better able to get along with their families, peers and adults.

Section Two: Social Skills

ALT One: Making Friends (Reading Curriculum)

Summary

Social skills are an important part of life and children need to learn these skills in order to get along and work with others in various settings.

Competencies

1. Students will learn what social skills are and why they are important.
2. The students will listen to Making Friends by Kate Petty and discuss how the children got along together and made friends in the story.
3. The students will write about how they make friends.

Time

45-60 minutes

Materials

Book: **Making Friends** by Kate Petty, writing paper and a pencil for each student

Instructions

1. Begin instruction by having several students tell what they believe social skills are and why they might be important. Then explain that social skills are skills that everyone uses in order to get along with others. Explain that social skills are needed in order for people to make friends, to work together and to get along with one other.
2. Tell the class that you will read the story Making Friends and that we will discuss what skills the characters in the story used to make friends.
3. Start off by reading the title, author and the illustrator of the book. Then take a “picture walk” through the story by turning the pages to look at the illustrations and allow the students to predict what will happen.
4. Begin reading the book and guiding comprehension by asking questions throughout the reading to make sure that students understand what is going on in the story. Allow students to share whether their predictions were right.
5. After you finish the book, have the students explain what social skills (sharing, being friendly and respectful, cooperating, etc.) the characters in the story used to make friends.
6. Using the paper and pencils, have the students write about how they make friends.

Evaluation/Assessment of Student's Competency

The instructor should evaluate the students on whether they understand what social skills are and why people use them. Continue to reinforce the importance of social skills throughout the unit to aid students in their comprehension.

Closure

Allow the students to read their story to the class. Review what social skills are (things that we do to get along with people). Explain to the students that social skills are skills that we will need throughout our lives to make friends and work peacefully with others. Tell the students that cooperation is a skill that we will learn about in the next lesson.

Section Two: Social Skills

ALT Two: Cooperation is The Key (Social Studies Curriculum)

Summary

In order for students to show proper social skills they must learn techniques to help them play, work and communicate effectively with their peers.

Competencies

1. Students will learn how to work as a group and cooperate with their peers.
2. Students will practice cooperating with their peers in a group setting.

Time

60 minutes

Materials

8 large sheets of paper and 8 crayons or markers (one of each for every group)

Instructions

1. Begin by splitting the students up into four groups. Then give each group one large sheet of paper and two crayons or markers. Explain that each group has 10 minutes to draw two large objects (house, airplane, car, building, etc.) on the paper and everyone in the group has to help draw at least one object. Explain that they cannot ask you any questions about the activity then direct the students to start.
2. Walk around and observe some of the behaviors in the group i.e. (how the students worked together, did they communicate well, which groups did well/did not do well).
3. After 10 minutes, have everyone stop and respond to the following: Raise your hand if – 1) you think your team worked well together 2) your team did not work well together 3) group members were being nice to each other 4) group members were not being nice to each other 5) everyone in the group had a chance to help draw the object.
4. Point out the groups that did well and completed the task. Have them respond to the following:
 - a. How did group members agree on what to draw?
 - b. Did everyone in the group help draw? How?
 - c. Was there a leader in the group? How was the leader chosen?

- d. How were disagreements handled?
5. Allow students from the groups that did not work well together explain what went wrong. (Examples: They were not listening to each other, everyone wanted his/her own way, being rude and arguing about who would go first, etc.)
6. Explain that in order for a group of people to work peacefully together they must cooperate and be respectful. Everyone in a group will not always get their way, but agreeing or compromising on something that the majority of the group likes will make the task easier. Point out that the group members that did a good job completing the task were the ones that were willing to listen, encourage and support each other.
7. Have the students think of a setting where cooperation is important and have them share that with a partner next to them. Explain to the students that whenever you are playing or working with someone, it is important that you are respectful and cooperative so that everyone will get along better.
8. Give examples of how people need to cooperate in the classroom, in a work setting, at home and in community organizations such as boy/girl scouts, sports teams, etc. Allow students to give examples as well.

Evaluation/Assessment of Student's Competency

The students should complete the same activity as stated above, but this time they will just have one crayon and draw only one object. Monitor the students to assess whether they cooperate with each other and work together peacefully to complete the activity.

Closure

Summarize the importance of cooperating with peers. Allow the students to share one thing that they learned during this activity with a partner next to them. Remind the students that when this is done, everyone is able to get along and enjoy the activity. Explain that the next session will focus on how to handle conflict with your peers.

Section Two: Social Skills

ALT Three: Peer Conflict (Health Curriculum)

Summary

The students will learn how to handle conflict through proper communication.

Competencies

1. Students will learn how to handle conflict through proper communication.
2. Students will practice proper communication through skits.
3. Students will take a quiz on how to handle conflict with peers.

Time

50-60 minutes

Materials

Puppet

Role play cards (Handout 1)

Peer Conflict Quiz (Handout 2)

Instructions

1. Begin the lesson by asking students if they have ever been in an argument or a fight before. Have two or three students briefly share their experience. Tell the students that those are examples of conflict. Explain conflict as a problem between one or more people.
2. Explain that this lesson will be about learning ways to handle conflict or disagreements with others without arguing and fighting. Use the following example:
“What if you were sitting in your chair and someone came over to you and told you to give them their pencil back. You politely told them that you did not have their pencil and that the one you had was yours. That person then began yelling and screaming at you to give them their pencil back. What would you do?” Take responses from students.
3. Tell the students that the best way to handle issues like that are to stay calm, make eye contact with the person, use a normal tone and say what you need to say. The instructor will model the following situation with a puppet:

Instructor: That’s an ugly shirt you have on.

Puppet: (Look at the person straight in the eyes) Please leave me alone.

Instructor: I don't have to leave you alone if I don't want to.

Puppet: Please, (person's name), I would appreciate it if you would leave me alone.

Instructor: Forget you then! (Walk away)

4. Choose two volunteers to act out the next situation.

Student 1: (Grab the hat off of the other students head) - "Give me this hat."

Student 2: (Look Student 1 in the eye, stand up straight) - "Please give me my hat back. I don't feel like playing, students name."

Student 1: "You're such a cry baby!"

Student 2: "Just give me my hat back please or I'm going to tell the teacher."

Student 1: "I was just playing with you." (Throw the hat back to Student 2).

Student 2: Thanks! (Walk away).

5. Explain to the students that they will practice role playing various situations to get a feel for how to react to conflict. Put each student with a partner and give each pair a copy of the Role Play Cards (Handout 1). Give the students 10-15 minutes to practice role playing.
6. Tell the students that they will take a short quiz to assess whether they understand the proper way to handle peer conflict. Pass out the Peer Conflict Quiz (Handout 2) and have the students complete it. Answer key to the quiz is in the Appendix.

Evaluation/Assessment of Student's Competency

Students will take a short quiz to assess their knowledge on how to react to conflict.

Closure

Review the importance of not picking with people and how to handle a situation when someone is picking on you. Look the person in the eye, stay calm, use a normal tone and politely tell them what you want. Tell the students to go home and share what they've learned with someone they live with.

Transfer, or Culminating, Activity

“LOOK WHAT I HAVE LEARNED”

Summary

The lessons presented will provide students with opportunities to learn anger management techniques and improve social skills. Having these skills will help students adjust and grow with the changes in their lives. The goal of this curriculum is to help the students develop positive choices and to realize the self-affirming effects of making such choices. It is hoped that this will help them to build more successful relationships throughout their lives.

Competencies

1. Students will demonstrate the techniques that they have learned.
2. Students will write about the skills that they have learned.

Time

Six sessions of 15 to 20 minutes each to write and illustrate the pages of the books.
30 minutes session for small group presentations.

Materials

Six pages for each student prepared in advance with the “Story Starters” listed below.

Instructions

1. Students will write and illustrate books to show what they have learned. Teachers will provide students with pages using the following “Story Starters”.
 - Next time things don’t go my way, instead of getting angry I will...
 - Next time I get very angry, instead of losing my temper I will...
 - Next time I get very stressed, in order to calm myself down I will...
 - I will make friends by...
 - It is important to work with others because...
 - In order to solve a conflict with my friend I will...

Teachers may provide one page each day and allow 15-20 minutes to write and illustrate each page. After all pages have been completed they can be compiled into books for each student.

2. Divided students into small groups to individually present what they learned.

APPENDIX

Section One: Anger Management

ALT Two: Understanding Anger Handout One

BEHAVIOR

Directions: mark all behaviors that you usually do when you get angry.

- Pretend that I'm not angry
- Use the silent treatment
- Call people names
- Tease or make fun of others
- Insult and make smart remarks
- Talk behind someone's back
- Yell or scream
- Push, shove, kick, or hit
- Bite
- Curse
- Threaten to harm others
- Threaten to harm yourself
- Slam doors
- Throw things
- Run away or hide
- Cry

Section One: Anger ManagementALT Two: Understanding Anger
Handout Two**ANGER CONTROL TECHNIQUES****Helpful Ideas**

Talk it out with someone

Count to 50 by 5's

Take a deep breath

Find a place to be alone

Listen to music

Punch a pillow

Clean or organize your room

Scream

Walk, jog, or run

Write about what made you mad

Talk to yourself

Play with clay or PlayDoh

Draw your feeling

Play a sport

Not Helpful Ideas

Eat a lot more (or less)

Fight

Threaten to hurt someone

Hurt yourself

Withdraw from everyone

Blame it on someone else

Take it out on an animal

Destroy property

Start a rumor

Run away from home

Laugh at the person

Yell at the person

Curse

Throw thing

Section One: Anger Management

ALT Two: Relaxation Techniques

Handout One

Relaxation Techniques**1. Relaxation**

- Breathe deeply from the diaphragm. Breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth. Using a bubble wand to demonstrate blowing out softly may be helpful.
- Say a calming word over and over
- Tense muscles throughout your body, and then loosen them. (Using the example of standing like a toy soldier and relaxing like a Raggedy Ann/Andy doll may be helpful).
- Sit back and looking at a peaceful scene or imagine one.

1. Positive thinking and visualization

- Think thoughts such as: “I can do this” and picture yourself succeeding.

2. Stay healthy

- Eat healthy foods and get plenty of rest

3. Exercise

- Exercise is very important, not just for general health, but because when we exercise our bodies release endorphins that are calming hormones.

4. Recreation

- Having fun is important. Develop hobbies that you can pursue now and can continue to enjoy when you are older. Look beyond TV and video games!

5. Change what you can!

- Reduce stress by setting goals, using time wisely, and problem solving.
- Make changes to reduce the stress within you. For example, if you are always nervous because you lose things, set a goal to become organized.

7. Express your feelings

- Talk to others and tell them what you need and how you feel.
- Express yourself through writing in journals, art and music. A pet can be a great listener, too!

Section Two: Social Skills

ALT Two: Cooperation is the Key
Handout One

Role Play Cards

Someone steps on your foot and starts laughing in your face.	Someone calls you a name.
Someone takes something out of your desk without asking.	Someone blamed something on you that you did not do.
Someone takes the toy you were playing with at recess.	Someone jumps in front of you in line.
Someone keeps making fun of you in front of other people.	Someone throws balled up paper at you while you are doing your work.

Section Two: Social SkillsALT Three: Peer Conflict
Handout One**Peer Conflict Quiz**

Circle the correct response for each question.

- 1) If someone calls you a name you should:
 - a) Call them a name back
 - b) Politely ask them to not call you names
- 2) If someone pushes you in line you should:
 - a) Slap them in the face
 - b) Look them in the eye, stay calm and tell them not to push you again
- 3) If someone laughs at you for getting a bad grade you should:
 - a) Ask them to please leave you alone
 - b) Call them ugly and stupid
- 4) If someone grabs something out of your hand you should:
 - a) Punch them in the face and get it back
 - b) Stay calm, look them in the eye and tell them to please give it back to you
- 5) If someone wants to fight you for no reason you should:
 - a) Start the fight by hitting them first
 - b) Calmly tell them to leave you alone or you will tell an adult.

Section Two: Social Skills

ALT Three: Peer Conflict

Peer Conflict Quiz Answer Key

- 1) If someone calls you a name you should:
 - a) Call them a name back
 - b) Politely ask them to not call you names**
- 2) If someone pushes you in line you should:
 - a) Slap them in the face
 - b) Look them in the eye, stay calm and tell them not to push you again**
- 3) If someone laughs at you for getting a bad grade you should:
 - a) Ask them to please leave you alone**
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- 4) If someone grabs something out of your hand you should:
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 - a) Start the fight by hitting them first
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