

Understanding Anger

- Anger is the reaction that energizes us to fight when things are not right
- Anger can be a rapidly triggered emotion
- It may start with a pre-anger vulnerability, hunger, tiredness, stress
- There are stages of anger that hijack the “thinking brain”
- Limbic system is first to react and activate energy systems
- Left brain contains approach functions – moving toward the trigger/stimulus
- Right brain is designed to withdraw or flee
- Behavioral component is an energized approach process, hard for children to control.
- Anger triggers commonly involve key people in a child’s life
- Angry children (and adults) tend to take more risks, focusing on action rather than introspection.
- Child’s thinking brain has limited ability to assert control over anger centers
- As children mature, they are more able to use cognitive strategies to control their temper