

C.A.G.E.

the Rage

Handling Your Anger

Teacher's Guide



Cambridge
Educational

Introduction

Calm down, Assess the situation, Gauge alternatives, and Empower yourself by choosing how to react: that's the way to safely C.A.G.E. the rage. By viewing this program, students will (1) see how to identify anger in themselves and those around them; (2) understand why mismanaged anger is so destructive; (3) discover how anger gets repressed, and the bodily and mental illnesses that may result from it; and (4) learn to release anger and express emotions in an acceptable and positive way using the C.A.G.E. method. Scenarios in which students model first unhealthy and then healthy behaviors make this video a particularly effective teaching tool. Candid interviews with experts and teens are also included.

Learning Objectives

After viewing the program, students will be able to:

- Identify anger in themselves and those around them in both a personal and school context
- Understand why anger can be destructive, both to themselves and to those around them, acquaintances and strangers alike
- Understand the ways in which anger is hidden, repressed, and denied' and the physical and/or psychological symptoms that may manifest as a result of repression
- Understand how to release anger and express emotions in an acceptable and positive way using accepted methodologies

Educational Standards

National FACS Standards

- Analyze the impact of the family as a system on individuals and society
- Demonstrate appreciation for diverse needs, perspectives, and characteristics of individuals and families
- Analyze functions and expectations of various types of relationships
- Analyze personal needs and characteristics and their impact on interpersonal relationships
- Demonstrate communication skills that contribute to positive relationships
- Evaluate effective conflict prevention and management techniques
- Demonstrate standards that guide behavior in interpersonal relationships
- Demonstrate teamwork and leadership skills in the family, workplace, and community

Program Overview

Columbine, Kip Kinkle... horrific school violence is increasingly in the news, with more schools installing metal detectors and adopting a zero tolerance weapons policy. We cannot escape conflict in life, so we must learn how to manage the frustration that arises in a conflict situation. The government is funding violence prevention to the tune of more than \$434 million for 2006 alone. What's more, there are new theories about the causes of school violence, and new medications and medical research studies to be addressed. (Kip Kinkle's violent rampage was thought by many to have been triggered by his use of Prozac.)

The program covers the impact of anger, along with providing anger management strategies and benefits. It explains how violence results from the combination of anger (a normal emotional response) and aggression (a chosen behavior).

Main Topics

Topic 1: What Is Anger? The opening section discusses anger as an emotion, a natural response to a threat. This section includes information on the physiological impacts of anger.

Topic 2: Anger in Teens This section defines the context of anger for teenagers—their experiences with it and the ways in which they respond to it as an emotion.

Topic 3: Expressing Anger The third section explores three ways to deal with anger. The first is to “stuff it” (although suppressing it this way can result in a later, worse eruption); the second is to “vent” (to instantly respond with an outward expression of anger); the third is to “manage it” (this is the healthiest option). This section also looks at relevant environmental factors, both at home and in society.

Topic 4: C.A.G.E.—A Response Strategy Defined C.A.G.E. is defined in this section as a four-step process for controlling the anger response: Calm down, Assess the situation, Gauge alternatives, and Empower yourself by choosing how to react. The program also reviews warning signs of poor anger management.

Fast Facts

- Everyone experiences anger. Anger can range from feeling annoyed by someone’s thoughtless behavior to being overwhelmingly furious due to personal rejection, troubles at home, or being bullied at school.
- There’s evidence that the teen brain has a tougher time handling anger than does the adult brain due to the physiological changes of adolescence. In addition, the unique pressures of modern life, and having less life experience than adults, can also make it harder for teens to handle anger.
- Anger is not always a bad thing—there are times when it is a healthy and appropriate response. What is important is how we choose to express or manage our anger.
- Anger produces physiological changes—increased heart rate, higher blood pressure, an adrenaline surge—that help the body to either “fight” or “flee” a perceived threat. But chronic exposure to these changes can also result in insomnia, depression, headaches, and possibly more serious health threats. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that the production of cortisol in the brain due to anger impacts the immune system and weakens its ability to resist infection.
- Teens with anger-management issues may carry weapons, write out plans for violence, or be involved with gangs and in physical fights. Some less obvious signs of a possible or potential anger problem include substance abuse, cruelty to animals, frequent loss of temper, trouble maintaining good grades, and an inability to acknowledge the feelings of others.

- A nationwide survey of high school students found that 33% had been in a physical fight at least once in the past twelve months, and 9% had been hit, slapped, or otherwise hurt by their romantic partner. In the 30 days preceding the survey, approximately 17% had carried a weapon at least once, and 6% had skipped school at least once because they felt unsafe either at school or on the way there; 30% of 6th to 10th graders had either been bullied or bullied someone else.
- Along with triggers such as sexual abuse and difficult family situations, professionals believe that emotional problems—fear, stress, rejection, social situations, sadness, and failure—are the cause of much teen anger.
- Regardless of what triggers anger, the presence of “anger enhancers” can cause the emotion to intensify. Anger enhancers include tension, worry, fatigue, hunger, sickness, and intoxication.
- It is possible to choose how we will react to anger triggers. We can choose to stay calm, assess the situation, and then explore alternatives to either lashing out or repressing the emotion.
- There are many ways to manage stress and anger so that they don’t erupt into violence or poor health. Music, reading, sports, spending time with friends, meditation and deep breathing, and talking it out with friends or a trusted adult are all ways to defuse a volatile emotion. Good communication skills are also an important part of anger management.

Vocabulary Terms

adrenaline: Also known as epinephrine, adrenaline is a hormone that is released into the bloodstream during times of stress. It causes increased heart rate and blood pressure, which opens up airways in the lungs and improves blood flow to major muscle groups, enabling the body to either fight or run when encountering a perceived threat.

anger enhancers: Physical or emotional conditions that contribute to heightened feelings of anger. Anger enhancers include stress, anxiety, tiredness, hunger, illness, and being under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.

anxiety: The outward sign of repressed negative feelings and inner conflict; worry.

C.A.G.E.: An anger management strategy: C = Calm down; A = Assess the situation; G = Gauge alternatives; E = Empower yourself by choosing the best way to respond.

cognitive: Pertaining to the mental processes of perception, memory, judgment, and reasoning, as opposed to emotional or non-intellectual processes.

primitive brain: The area of the brain where anger and other emotions originate.

redirect: To place attention elsewhere, away from the anger trigger or negative situation.

stuffing it: To bottle up or suppress your anger. Stuffing it can lead to explosive responses to anger in the future.

triggers: In the context of anger management, things or events that provoke anger, including fear, stress, abuse, and difficult social or family situations.

venting: Releasing anger in an uncontrolled and unconstructive way.

Pre-Program Discussion Questions

1. How does the general topic of school violence make you feel? Do you think it is important to discuss this topic? What can teachers and parents do to open up discussions on the topic?
2. What do you think are the primary reasons for anger in teenagers?
3. Have you experienced an anger response (your own or someone else's) that frightened or concerned you? What did you do about it?
4. When you read in the newspaper or hear on the news about an incidence of school violence, what impacts you most about the story?
5. Do you think that the school system (teachers and administrators) should focus more on preventing the big acts of school violence (multiple shootings, etc.) or the little acts (bullying, two-person fights, etc.)? Why?

Post-Program Discussion Questions

1. How did the images (photos, videos, and news clippings) at the beginning of the program make you feel?
2. What did you learn from or observe about Zach's comments?
3. Which of the brief role-play scenarios seemed familiar to you? Which seemed unrealistic, and how might those have played out?
4. The teenagers and the therapists in the program mentioned a number of factors that make anger even more difficult for teens to handle. Discuss other, similar factors you experience.
5. Which of the program's action steps do you think you can take to improve your own anger management skills?

Group Activities

School Violence as a Public Health Issue

Have students begin by researching the definition of "public health." Based on this definition, they should work with partners to gather health statistics and other information on school violence. They'll determine as a team whether or not their findings support the definition of school violence as a public health issue. The groups will then create a poster or Web site including charts, graphs, and other visuals to present their findings.

Design an Anger Management Forum

In small teams, have students sketch out a plan for an Anger Management Forum. The teams will discuss where the forum would be held and why, who should participate (both on the panel and as audience members), and which experts or public figures they would invite to speak. Groups should also define a list of topics to be discussed at their forum—they can include those covered in the program, but be encouraged to brainstorm ideas of their own. Finally, have the groups decide where they would advertise their forum in order to reach those who would benefit most. Have each group present its idea for an Anger Management Forum to the rest of the class.

Role Play

The program presented four role-play scenarios: “Going Out for the JV team,” “Cheating,” “Finding a Ride Home,” and “You are a Geek.” Divide the class into small groups and assign one of the scenarios to each. The groups will break down and analyze the situation, reviewing each character’s role, and the impact or appearance of anger. What are the options for solutions that each character has? Each group will share their insights and ideas with the rest of the class.

Individual Student Projects

Recent Incidents of School Violence

Using a variety of resources (local and national newspapers, weekly news magazines, the library, and the Internet), students will research incidents of school violence in the last few years. Their investigation should include the initial report of the incident, information about the perpetrators and the victims, how the incident affected individuals and the community, and the stated reasons for the incident. What role did anger play? What might have been positive alternatives to the incidents?

Your Own Anger Responses

Have students write a journal-type essay that describes their anger responses in a variety of situations. They should include assessments of their triggers, the biological effects of anger, how they responded to the anger, and the results (if any) of their anger. The essay should discuss anger management techniques they use or might adopt, and how the C.A.G.E. technique could help them with problematic situations.

Internet Activities

“Creating Alternatives to Violence”

The Constitutional Rights Foundation’s Web site features a lesson on alternatives to violence. Have students visit <http://www.crf-usa.org> and click on “Online Lessons,” then on “School Violence,” then on “Creating Alternatives to Violence” to read the article and the discussion questions that follow. Then, split the class into five groups and assign one of the questions to each. Give the groups time to consider, discuss, and debate; finish by having a representative from each group sum up the opinion—or opinions, if they couldn’t come to consensus—of their group.

Online Research on Violence Prevention Programs

The class will use the Internet to get information about Violence Prevention programs. They’ll then write a short paper on their findings. The papers should address the following questions:

- Does the information provided have student groups or adults as its audience?
- Does the program provide action steps for starting a program similar to this at your school?
- Does the program guide give estimated effort levels to create this program?

Assessment Questions

Q1: What is the name of the natural survival instinct we have when faced with a threat?

- a. Survival of the fittest
- b. Fight or flight
- c. Sink or swim
- d. C.A.G.E.

Q2: What is the primitive brain?

- a. The area of the brain where anger begins
- b. The brain of an infant
- c. The part of the brain where you develop muscle responses
- d. The brain of prehistoric humans

Q3: What are anger enhancers?

- a. Factors that change your response to anger
- b. Factors that increase the likelihood that you'll encounter an anger trigger
- c. Factors that contribute to heightened feelings of anger
- d. Factors that change your physiological response to anger

Q4: Violence = _____ + _____.

Q5: Name two short-term physiological effects of anger.

Q6: The anger emotion ranges from mild irritation (which might be a 1 on a scale of 1 to 10) to full-blown _____ (which is a 10).

Q7: A very important part of anger management is good _____ skills.

ESSAY QUESTIONS:

Q1: Discuss the four steps of C.A.G.E. in detail.

Q2: Discuss some of the environmental factors affecting teens today that impact anger.

Assessment Questions—Answer Key

Q1: What is the name of the natural survival instinct we have when faced with a threat?

A1: (b) Fight or flight. *This response is caused by the release of adrenaline in our brains, yet we can still decide whether to fight or to flee.*

Q2: What is the primitive brain?

A2: (a) The area of the brain where anger begins. *This area of the brain is where the adrenaline is released and the physiological impacts of the anger emotion begin.*

Q3: What are anger enhancers?

A3: (c) Factors that contribute to heightened feelings of anger. *Anger enhancers include stress, fatigue, anxiety, hunger, sickness, and drugs. These can all increase the level of anger you feel; in the presence of an anger enhancer you may feel angry when otherwise you might not have.*

Q4: Violence = _____ + _____.

A4: "Anger" and "aggression." *You do not have to be aggressive just because you are angry. The emotion of anger alone does not cause violence. The response of aggression is what, when combined with anger, leads to violence. Since you cannot always control your emotional response to something, except perhaps through avoiding or recognizing your anger triggers, it is the control of this aggressive response that can help you avoid violence.*

Q5: Name two short-term physiological effects of anger.

A5: *The answer should be any two of the top five listed in the program: a) increased heart rate; b) muscle tension; c) sweating; d) flushed face; e) shaking and trembling. Recognizing these physical responses in yourself or others can help you avoid a violent behavioral response.*

Q6: The anger emotion ranges from mild irritation (which might be a 1 on a scale of 1 to 10) to full-blown _____ (which is a 10).

A6: rage. *Your response to the feelings of anger may be impacted by the severity or mildness of your emotional response on this scale. One of the benefits of the C.A.G.E. method of anger response management is to allow yourself the opportunity to reduce the severity of your emotion on the anger scale. You can respond more rationally and calmly if your response is closer to a 1 than a 10.*

Q7: A very important part of anger management is good _____ skills.

A7: communication. *Using words is very important to controlling your anger. Using words first can help you avoid "stuffing" your anger (which could lead later to an explosive, pent-up response) and can help diffuse the situation so that a more appropriate and safe behavior can resolve the issue. However, you may need to read signals from the other party in the situation in case they are not "available" to respond to verbal communication due to their anger response.*

ESSAY QUESTIONS:

Q1: Discuss the four steps of C.A.G.E. in detail.

A1: *(This question should have a lengthy response and should elicit the student's own interpretations of each step as well as the definitions from the program.)*

C = Calm. Ways to calm yourself include: a) deep breathing; b) thinking peaceful thoughts; c) saying reassuring things to yourself. You need to calm down so you can think clearly before reacting to a situation.

A = Assess. Assess the situation, find your trigger, then acknowledge that the feeling of anger is OK.

G = Gauge. Determine possible courses of action and the consequences of each before you act. Have a plan and know what it might cause or resolve.

E = Empowerment. You control the outcome of the situation and you have power over your own life and your own behavior. It is OK to share your feelings in words. It is also OK to walk away, particularly if the other person is not open to communicating.

Q2: Discuss some of the environmental factors affecting teens today that impact anger.

A2: *The psychiatrist and teens in the program focused on issues such as physical and emotional changes for teenagers, parents not understanding them, a feeling of lack of control over their own lives, peer pressure, the important decisions they make all the time, and how society seems to want them to grow up quickly.*

Additional Resources

Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration

(US Department of Health and Human Services)

www.samhsa.gov

School Violence Prevention

<http://nmhicstore.samhsa.gov/safeschools/pubs.aspx>

Controlling Anger—Before It Controls You

(American Psychological Ass'n)

www.apa.org/topics/controlanger.html

Anger Management

(Nat'l Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center)

www.safeyouth.org/scripts/teens/anger.asp

How Can I Deal With My Anger?

www.kidshealth.org/teen/question/emotions/deal_with_anger.html

Teen Violence

(MedlinePlus)

www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/teenviolence.html

National Institute of Mental Health

www.nimh.nih.gov

School shootings map

(School Violence Resource Center)

www.svrc.net/ShootingsMap.htm

Center for the Prevention of School Violence

www.cpsv.org

BOOKS

Student Aggression: Prevention, Management, and Replacement Training

by Arnold P. Goldstein, Berj Harootunian, and Jane Close Conoley

The Guilford Press, 1994.

ISBN: 0898622468

The Respectful School: How Educators and Students Can Conquer Hate and Harassment

by Stephen Wessler and William Preble

Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development, 2003

ISBN: 0871207834

Violence Goes to School

by Sally Spencer-Thomas

National Educational Service, 2002

ISBN: 1879639882

Kids Working It Out: Stories and Strategies for Making Peace in Our Schools

by Tricia S. Jones
Jossey-Bass, 2002
ISBN: 0787963798

Additional Resources at www.filmsmediagroup.com

Available from Films Media Group • www.filmsmediagroup.com • 1-800-257-5126

XS Stress: Teens Taking Control

- VHS/DVD/Digital On-Demand
- Preview clip online
- Close captioned
- Correlates to educational standards
- Bronze Plaque, Columbus International Film & Video Festival
- "This program is current and will maintain teen viewers' interest.... A good addition to both high school and public libraries."—*School Library Journal*
- Item # 34809

Depression, anxiety, and an overbooked calendar may be hallmarks of adulthood, but they're familiar to many young people as well. This video gathers together the voices of teenagers as they reflect on personal frustrations and challenges. In an edgy, expressive flow of words, images, and music, three high school students—an ambitious male cheerleader raised by a single mother, a pierced and tattooed deejay who used to cut herself, and a dyslexic student wrestling with her anger at the school system—articulate their fascinating perspectives, along with a chorus of others. The result is sure to generate heartfelt class discussions about peer pressure, tolerance, and the future. (Available only in the US.) (29 minutes) © 2004.

Taking a Stand: The Bully Prevention Series

- VHS/DVD
- Preview clip online
- Close captioned
- Correlates to educational standards
- Recommended by *School Library Journal*.
- Includes viewable/printable teacher's guide and 15-minute bonus video
- Item # 35205

This three-part series helps students and teachers identify bullying activity, confront the instigators of it, and assist the victims—with the ultimate goal of preventing bullying in all its forms. Behavior and tactics specific to boy bullies, girl bullies, and cyberbullies are discussed at length in each of the respective videos, addressing the complexity of the issues with dramatized scenarios and peer discussions. Includes a 15-minute bonus video, *A Teacher's Guide to Bullying Prevention*, that will help educators implement the overall program. A Meridian Production. Recommended for grades 7-12. Series includes *Bullies*; *Cyberbullies*; *Bully Girls*. (18-20 minutes each) © 2006.

Cutting: Addicted to Self-Injury

- VHS/DVD/Digital On-Demand
- Preview clip online
- Close captioned
- Item # 36249

Like most addictions, this one starts as a way of coping with emotional pain. But cutting—the habit of self-injury on the rise among teenagers, especially girls—is a sign of deep-seated anxiety and self-hatred that no one can cope with alone. This video examines the distressing, ritualized behavior and explores how parents, friends, guidance counselors, and those who cut themselves can work together to stop it. The program goes inside a support group for young women struggling with the habit, showing them engaging in group discussions, self-expression exercises, and role-play that helps them let go of negative emotions and confront the “demon” of addiction. (10 minutes) © 2006.

Preventing School Violence

- VHS/DVD/Digital On-Demand
- Preview clip online
- Correlates to educational standards
- Bronze Plaque, Columbus International Film & Video Festival
- Item # 29969

With bullying, sexual harassment, and credible death threats on the rise, school is becoming less about learning and more about fear. This program from *The Doctor Is In* thoroughly examines violence among children and teens of both sexes. Innovative preventive measures yielding impressive results at Bartle Elementary in New Jersey and Lebanon Junior High in New Hampshire are featured. In addition, psychologist Daniel Goleman, author of *Emotional Intelligence*, presents his theories on improving the school environment and James Garbarino, author of *Lost Boys*, talks about the pressures that can lead to extreme acts of violence at school—even murder. A Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center Production. (29 minutes) © 2001.

Warning Signs: A Look at Teenage Violence

- VHS/DVD/Digital On-Demand
- Preview clip online
- Correlates to educational standards
- Awards Portfolio 2000 Winner, *What's New* magazine
- Item # 11000

This fast-paced, edgy video brings together experts, victims, and offenders to help viewers identify and detect the warning signs surrounding a violent situation. Victims explore the emotions of fear and helplessness while perpetrators expose the mayhem behind their emotions and offer ways to identify and deal with teens who may be most likely to strike. Experts who work with troubled teens share critical insight into the minds and behaviors of potentially violent individuals. Viewers will be given not only specific warning signs, but also an effective plan of action against a possibly volatile situation. A Meridian Production. (24 minutes) © 2000.

Exposed: Observing Human Behavior

- VHS/DVD
- Close captioned
- Item # 36535

Joy, sadness, fear, anger—sometimes they hide behind a calm, sociable façade. In other cases, the more we try to conceal them, the more visible they become. This four-part series illuminates connections between the physical and psychological aspects of human behavior. Viewers will gain an understanding of the importance of body language, facial expression, and tone of voice, in relation to key concepts such as empathy, aggression, and territorial instinct. Hosted by noted psychologist John Marsden, each program explores—through humorous, poignant, and sometimes frightening examples—the interrelationship of human emotion and action. Original BBCW broadcast title: *Exposed*. Series includes *Liars*; *Heartbreak*; *Persuaders*; *Urban Survival*. (60 minutes each) © 2006.

Rage: A Social Analysis

- VHS/DVD/Digital On-Demand
- Preview clip online
- Close captioned
- Correlates to educational standards
- Item # 35831

Obscenities, screaming matches, fistfights, shootings—these have become almost standard forms of public expression. Why? Can society's violent downward spiral be reversed? This program explores the emotional causes and social dangers of short fuses, linking the pressures of a hard-driving, high-tech world to the prevalence of an easily threatened, easily angered point of view. Breaking its analysis into three parts, the program examines road rage, workplace aggression, and violence among sports spectators, with observations from police officers, anger management counselors, athletes, and recovering "ragers." Nonviolent ways to assert needs and grievances are highlighted. (48 minutes) © 2004.

Rage: On the Road, In the Air, and at Home

- VHS/DVD/Digital On-Demand
- Preview clip online
- Close captioned
- Correlates to educational standards
- Item # 33236

This *48 Hours* report uses a pair of violent incidents to challenge assumptions about road rage and air rage. A highway encounter between two middle-aged women that ends in a conviction of manslaughter: road rage or self-defense? An incident in which a young man tries to force the cockpit door of an airliner in flight, only to be brutally subdued by passengers—a trauma that leads to his death: air rage, a drug-induced frenzy, or a panic attack? Also included is a profile of a marriage in rage-related crisis, to demonstrate nonviolent remediation through immersive anger management therapy. Produced by CBS NEWS. (44 minutes) © 2001.



For information on other programs

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