# Anger in four walls

*Anger is an emotion that accompanies us every day. At the same time, it is a feeling that we cannot quite cope with, or event we often do not want to feel it. It may seem to us that anger is "bad" and destroys relationships. Things get even more complicated when we see our child getting angry. It is worth remembering, however, that it is good to make room for anger in your life and in your child's life. With proper direction, this emotion can enrich us and deepen our understanding of our own internal states.*

### 1.  When does a child feel angry?

Anger like any emotion gives a child information about what is happening to him at the moment. It shows that its needs or desires have been frustrated. It may also appear if the child feels that his boundaries have been violated. What's more, this feeling carries a huge load of energy that we can use to change the situation.

### 2.  Why is anger important?

It is very important to accept anger as part of a person's emotional life and feel it is needed. It's often the wrong way of expressing anger what causes trouble. That is why, instead of punishing for the emotion itself, it is so important to show a child how this feeling can be expressed. By not accepting the anger, we deprive ourselves of access to a lot of information about what is happening to us.

### 3.  What hides under anger?

It is worth remembering that very often children shows anger but underneath other emotions are "hidden". Let's observe and talk to children how they feel. A small child does not yet have to name his feelings correctly. It is worth adding that we often feel more than one emotion at a time. The role of an adult is to be emotionally present and have conversation with a child, e.g. "I think that what you feel is anger / sadness etc". You can use an example from your life or share how you would feel in a child's situation. Tell a child what you feel and how you are trying to deal with it.

### 4.  Anger at Home

Staying at home all the time, combining online work with online learning, isolation from friends and school bring a lot of frustration. Another difficulty is the inability to react to emotions in the open air. The lack of existing tasks and routines as well as the excess of new duties can make children angry. The inaccessibility of an adult who has to deal with other matters can be frustrating. It is worth noting that staying with the same people in a limited space can also be frustrating.

## 5. Why is the child angry?

In order to deal with the angry child, it is necessary first and foremost to search for the cause and diagnose the situation. The next steps and the conscious choice of response depend on an adequate and quick assessment of the situation. Below are three types of situations where a child may feel angry:

- **When something doesn't work out.** It is frustrating, child wants to give up, so it reacts impulsively to get out of an uncomfortable situation.
- **When it is forced to do something.** It disagrees with something and the only tool he has is anger at something or on someone.
- **When he wants to get something and forces it with anger or crying.**

## 6. What not to do?

When talking about how to deal with a child's anger in four walls, you should also pay attention to what we should not do when the child is angry.

- **Don't react right away.** Often the source of rapid reactions is emotion-level actions. This, in turn, may also make you react with anger to your child for being angry. Observe what happens to you under the influence of your child's anger.
- **Don't make a child angry.** You reinforce the pattern in it: "getting angry is bad". Teach your child that it has the right to express anger.
- **Do not ignore. Observe.** Let your child know that you see that it is angry. Don't ignore the signals it gives you prior the situation that caused anger.
- **Don't try to immediately calm it down.** Instead, ask: What's going on? Tell about your intentions: "I'm trying to understand what you feel" Don't judge your child's behavior.

## 7. Ways to get angry in four walls

The smaller the children, the greater the need to respond to emotions through the body, through movement. In the current situation, however, this is hampered by many possibilities. 5 of them underneath:

1. **Count to 10, instead of hitting the pillow.** Research shows that hitting the pillow or stamping does not calm down, but causes a further increase in adrenaline levels, causing even more anger. Instead, it is **better to count to 10** – or 100 if you need to. You can count with your child, it will help him calm down.
2. **Calming space.** Try to create a place where the child will feel safe and will be able to calm the emotions down – e.g. a comfortable pillow in a room where he can sit on or lie down or watch a picture book with you.
3. **Draw anger.** Suggest your child paint the feeling that overwhelms them when they lose control of themselves. Encourage them to tell you what they are going through during their work.
4. **Hug the child and show empathy.** A child may be afraid of the intensity of the emotions experienced during the outbreak of anger – to take it in the arms and holding it in a hug can help him calm down.
5. **Give your child space.** Not all children want to be touched during a tantrum – they break out and fight. This must be respected and you must not hold such a child against its will. Just make sure that nothing threatens its safety. Remember not to force your child to be isolated!

*Source: Own picture; Illustration of the anger created by students during pedagogical therapy classes*

1. **Book suggestions that can be a incentive to talk about anger:**

1. *Billy is angry*,  Birgitta Stenberg, Mati Lepp
2. *Franklin has a bad day,*  Paulette Bourgeois
3. *Lotta from Rowdy Street*,  Astrid Lindgren
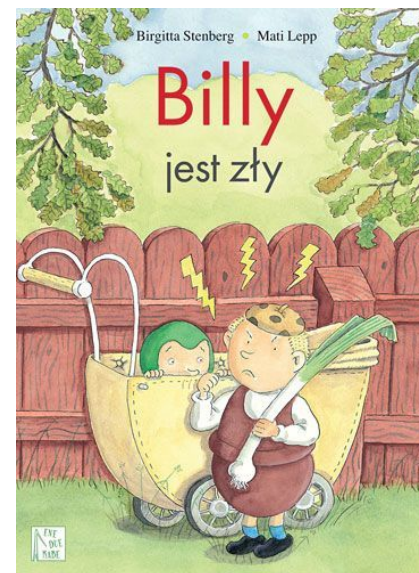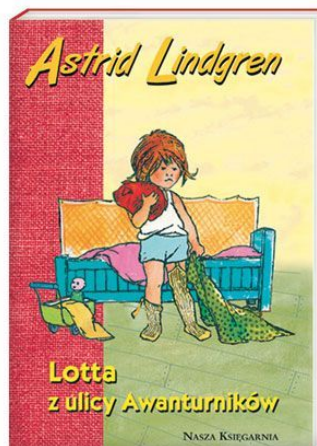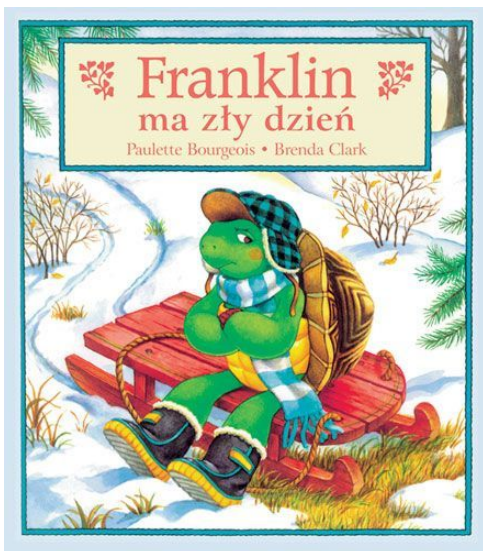


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