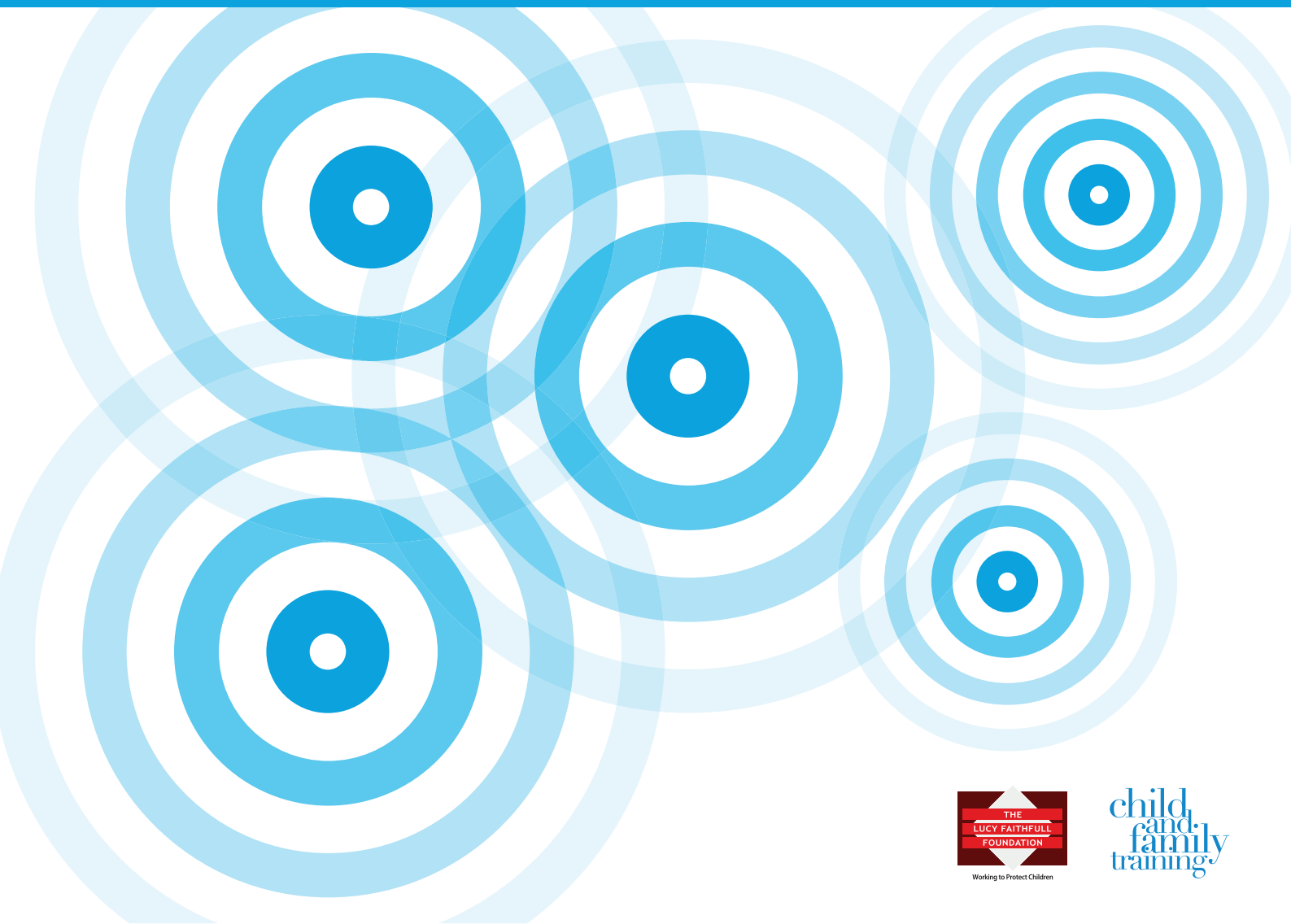


Hope for Children and Families
Building on strengths, overcoming difficulties

Intervention guide for practitioners

Working with children and young people: Addressing disruptive behaviour

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Main steps

Check on previous modules and practice, and establish an agenda.

Introduction to managing anger

Use Socratic and circular questions to look at the advantages and disadvantages of anger and disruption.



Let's talk about the last occasion when you really lost your temper. What was the consequence – did you gain or lose as a result? What triggered your response? How did you feel? What did you do? What was the effect on the person your anger was directed at? And what were the consequences?

Many children and young people find that being angry to the point of being out of control and aggressive – pushing, yelling and hitting – can lead to trouble with people you know and can also lead to trouble in how you feel about yourself. Does that apply to you? There will always be disagreement between people because we are different, but how much depends on how you or other people handle angry feelings?

You cannot always control situations or what other people say and do, so you need to control how you act when you get angry. It is OK to be angry, but not to lose control, and there are lots of things you can do rather than this.

We are going to help you with a module later, which will give you some tools to know how to assert yourself without losing your temper. Although it may be difficult to believe you can do without Temper, who can make you feel strong and not at risk of being hurt, children who have been through difficult experiences can manage to control Temper or angry feelings.

Understanding disruptive actions: Analysing what happened

This is about understanding situations that provoke anger, how anger can be handled and teaching a young person how to identify antecedents – that is, what led up to the behaviour (triggers), the behaviour itself and the consequences.

'Analysis of incidents of anger and aggressive behaviour' [WB-6] gives an indication of the triggers by setting out situations, feelings and thoughts which lead to angry behaviours and the consequences.

n Analysis of incidents of anger and aggressive behaviour

Let's look at your disruptive/angry behaviour in some detail - we may need to check this with your carer.

This diagram indicates the way it works for a lot of children and young people. We call it a 'functional analysis'. On the left are the antecedents - the trigger may be name-calling or someone being angry with you. Then there are the thoughts that are evoked - 'How dare you talk to me like that?'

Then there are the feelings that are evoked: humiliation, anger, upset - any of these. If you have been hurt yourself, these same feelings may be evoked.

Then there is the behaviour that follows: hitting you, shouting, getting really angry.

Then there are the consequences - someone gets hurt, you get into trouble, you get punished.

Could we fill in the top boxes with what has happened, thinking of the incident you described.

At the bottom - could we think of different sets of thoughts, feelings and behaviour, and consequences which might end positively, instead of the negative pattern which repeats itself as people learn to 'own' their own back.

Let's see if there is a pattern for what gets you angry and upset.

	Thoughts	Feelings	Behaviour	Consequences
Trigger				



Let's look at your disruptive/angry behaviour in some detail – we may need to check this with your parent/carer.

This diagram indicates the way it works for a lot of children and young people. On the left is what happened before – the trigger may be name-calling or someone being angry with you. Then there are the thoughts you had about that – for example, 'How dare you talk to me like that?'

Then there are the feelings you had – humiliation, anger, upset. If you have been hurt yourself you may have felt any of those same feelings.

Then there is the behaviour that follows – hitting out, shouting, getting really angry.

Then there are the consequences – someone gets hurt, you get into trouble, you get punished.

Could we fill in the top boxes with what has happened, thinking of the incident you described.

At the bottom, could we think of different sets of thoughts, feelings, behaviour and consequences which might end positively instead of the negative pattern which repeats itself as people want revenge, want their own back.

Let's see if there is a pattern for what gets you angry and upset.

Understanding my behaviour in the context of my life

Link this with 'Enhancing children's competence: Education, talent and the 'Good Life' [WB-M1] to understand what was happening at the time Temper started ruling the child's life.

Review:

- home life, past and present school life
- social life, peers
- experiences shared and those which have not been shared.

Types of thinking errors

Refer to 'Thinking which justifies angry behaviour: Exploring the *thinking* part of the incident analysis' [WB-7].

Assessing outside anger cues



Do people know you might explode?

Do people sometimes react angrily to you when you start getting worked up?

Finding solutions: Taming Temper

Finding solutions to a child's angry outbursts. This requires a combination of parents' management of the child's behaviour (e.g. using praise, rewards, time out, effective instruction) and the child's own solutions.

Finding a substitute – how to be stronger than Temper. Explain that substitution procedures mean the child finding a substitute for negative behaviours (e.g. learning what can be substituted for fighting so that instead of obeying Temper or Anger, a different course is taken).

Finding different ways of responding. It is helpful to combine this approach with a self-reward system for defeating Temper, reviewing each half-day – the child scoring themselves and Temper depending on who was the stronger in a particular situation. Linking with parents about this is essential.



- What could you tell yourself when Temper is getting strong and beginning to influence you?
- Can you remember a time when you had the strength to say 'Back off'? What did you tell yourself? What did you do?
- Some people find it helpful to listen to music, to distract themselves. Would that help you?
- Other people do relaxation exercises or press-ups, or go for a run to get the tension out. Might that help you?
- Some people find a friend to share how they feel.
- Others give a warning: 'Look I'm beginning to get cross. I don't want to lose my temper. Can we cool it?'



Analysis of incidents of anger and aggressive behaviour



- Let's look at your disruptive/angry behaviour in some detail – we may need to check this with your carer.
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- Then there are the *feelings* that are evoked: humiliation, anger, upset – any of these. If you have been hurt yourself, those same feelings may be evoked.
- Then there is the *behaviour* that follows: hitting out, shouting, getting really angry.
- Then there are the *consequences* – someone gets hurt, you get into trouble, you get punished.
- Could we fill in the top boxes with what has happened, thinking of the incident you described.
- At the bottom – could we think of different sets of thoughts, feelings and behaviour, and consequences which might end positively, instead of the negative pattern which repeats itself as people want revenge – want their own back.
- Let's see if there is a pattern for what gets you angry and upset.

