

Parenting the Child and Adolescent with ADHD and Executive Functioning Issues: With Focus on Anger Management and Emotional Reactivity

This manual will assist parents in forming a deeper understanding of the neurological and behavioral components of ADHD and Executive Dysfunction that impact highly emotional behaviors that challenge parenting skills. The goal is provide strategies for managing emotionally charged situations as well as to formulate ways to create more positive interaction skills for both child and parent.

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Common Traits (not listed in any particular order)

Identify to what degree this trait is problematic for your child.

- **Inhibition:** This means that one generally considers consequences to actions or words prior to acting and reframes from doing or saying things that will have unsafe or negative consequences. This includes inhibition with physical activity level and emotions.

Small Degree

Moderate Degree

Large Degree

- **Accepting Responsibility:** An ability to perceive his/her own role in a series of events or situation and acknowledge that role. This includes accepting responsibility for following through with activities or tasks, following rules, acknowledging the impact of his/her behavior on someone else, and acknowledging if a rule(s) or expectation was violated without thinking or proclaiming it was another person's fault.

Small Degree

Moderate Degree

Large Degree

- **Perspective Taking:** An ability to perceive or understand situations from another person's or group's point of view. This includes perceiving one's own actions in relation to rules and expected behaviors, even if in a challenging situation or a situation where feeling wronged.

Small Degree

Moderate Degree

Large Degree

- **Frustration Tolerance:** Being able to manage mild to moderate levels of frustration by continuing to work on a task, exercise some degree of patience and/or problem solving, and exhibit some level of coping skills when frustrated.

Small Degree

Moderate Degree

Large Degree

- **Self-Monitoring:** A recognition of one's own behavior as it is happening or shortly thereafter. The ability to perceive how one's behavior may appear to others, if behavior is inattentive, inappropriate, or unfocused (i.e. 'that did not sound well, I should have said it another way'; 'I'm having a hard time calming down').

Small Degree

Moderate Degree

Large Degree

- **Transitions:** The ability to generally move from one activity or aspect of a routine to another, cease one activity and transition to another, and/or adapt to a change in the environment or change in circumstances.

Small Degree

Moderate Degree

Large Degree

- **Cognitive Shifting:** The mental ability to shift thinking and transition to another activity, situation, or environment with relative ease. In addition, being able to change thinking and adapt emotions in order to move on to another activity or situation.

Small Degree

Moderate Degree

Large Degree

- **Flexibility:** Thought processes and emotionality that allow for internal change and movement in situations. This includes an ability to think about situations or circumstances in more than one way, including when one is disappointed or emotionally upset.

Small Degree

Moderate Degree

Large Degree

- **Future Perspective:** Being able to think about what may occur in the future, what consequences will occur based upon decisions or actions, and realizing how choices being made now have future impact.

Small Degree

Moderate Degree

Large Degree

- **Sense of Time & Sense of Urgency:** Having an internal sense of time or an inner knowing that one will need to prepare or complete a task soon based upon time. This includes having an internal judgement about how long various tasks take or will take, and feeling some motivation or stress when something with consequence is about to occur that typically urges a person to act (i.e. 'I better start this paper because it is due in three days.'). This often leads to more emotional reactions because stress and pressure build due to weaknesses in this area.

Small Degree

Moderate Degree

Large Degree

Weaknesses in areas of the above skills are often observed in some of the following ways (what it often feels like to a parent):

- Frustration toward self and/or others to a degree or with frequency that is more intense than most other peers
- Feelings of being mistreated and wronged or feeling nagged
- Lack of insight into own emotions outside of anger or frustration as well as problem solving skills in these situations
- Defensiveness
- Quick to Frustration
- Sensitivity to perceived criticism
- Periods of underlying irritability or lowered mood
- Argumentativeness (some of which can be deflection, defensiveness, lack of perspective, and/or a patterned response)
- Negotiating to avoid transitions, shifting to non-preferred activities, and ceasing engagement with preferred activities, seemingly wanting to gain more control of situations
- Lack of acknowledgement of own role in situations; feels justified to react in a negative manner (i.e. 'it was her fault'; 'he started it'; 'but he yelled at me')

Household Rules / Family Values and Expectations

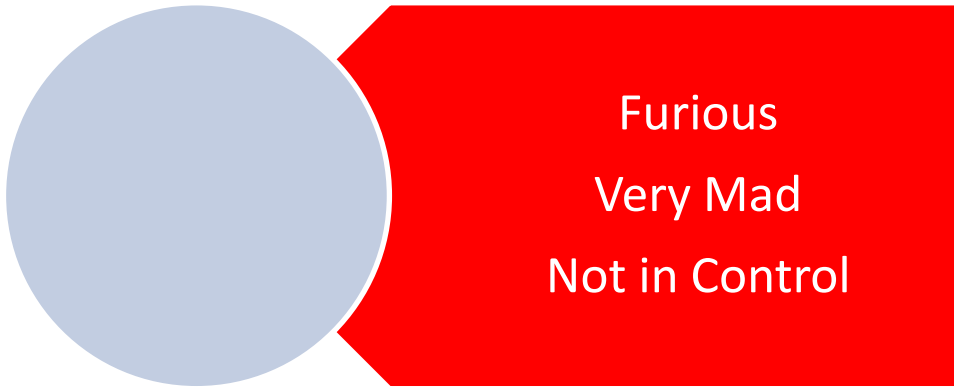
Household rules should be aligned with family values and expectations. When children or adolescents need discipline, correction, or guidance, it is more effective if these values or expectations are referenced. In other words, it is more than “because I said so”; I am asking this or implementing consequences because the behavior is not aligned with these values. For example, brushing your teeth is valued because we take care of ourselves and keep our bodies healthy; keeping a structured bedtime routine and bedtime is important for maintaining physical health, emotional health, and brain health (all of these are significantly impacted by sleep); talking to others with respect is valued as feelings may be hurt, it can damage or harm relationships, and it is an ineffective way of managing your own emotions.

Examples of Household Values / Rules:

1. Kind and respectful words
2. Kind and respectful actions
3. Respect for property
4. Consideration of others in words and actions
5. Use problem solving and/or safe actions and language when there is conflict
6. Honesty

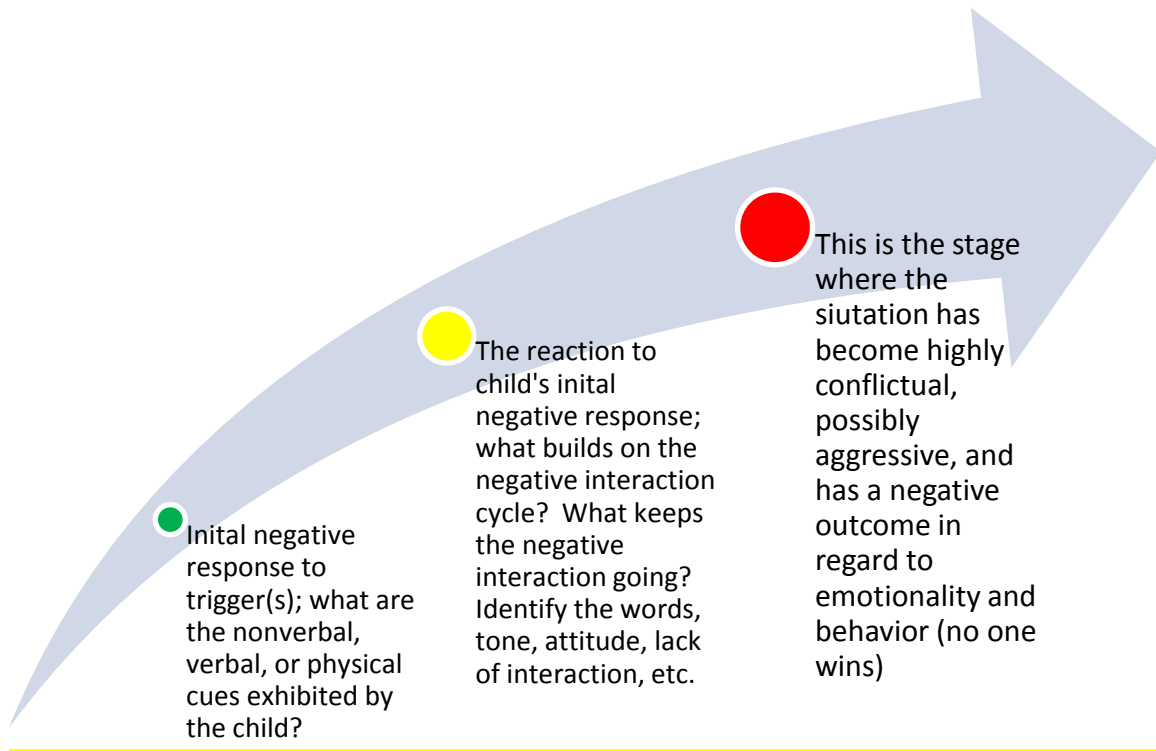
Emotional Temperature

(Use circles to draw matching faces for insert matching emotional faces; can also refer to emotional state as “red”, “yellow”, or “green” such as “I am at yellow right now.”)



Chain of Events

Identify the typical course of behaviors and interaction patterns when emotions are heightened



Common Triggers for Emotional Reactivity

1. Request or demand placed on child or adolescent
2. Tone of voice that is frustrated or perceived as nagging
3. In middle of an activity that child does not want to end or stop
4. Changing the routine or what the child expected to have happened
5. Being told "no"
6. Being physically or mentally tired and/or hungry
7. Irritable mood state
8. Initiating or working on a challenging activity such as homework
9. Over stimulating environment for the child or adolescent
10. Circumstances that increase anxiety levels or already in an anxious state
11. Negative mindset in general or about the situation

Common Interaction Patterns that Maintain Cycle of Escalation

1. Harsh tone, yelling, or signs of frustration and/or anger
2. Threats as opposed to warnings for established consequences
3. "You" statements or stating negative comments about the other (i.e. 'you never get this done on time'; 'you are such a jerk', etc.)

Recognize Red Flags that Often Initiate a Power Struggle between Child and Parent (power struggles typically end in high conflict)

1. "But..."
2. "You said..."
3. "No"
4. Purposeful ignoring when a response is expected
5. Acting as if do not care
6. Any sarcastic comment that has a connotation of anger or resentment

Strategies in the Moment to Help change the Negative Pattern

1. Work to continually assess what is happening in the situation such as:
 - a. Is your child tired or hungry?
 - b. What skill deficit is at play in this situation?
 - c. What do I want to coach, model, or emphasize? (it may be remaining calmer, using problem solving language, etc.)
 - d. Recognize my own mood state and my ability to tolerate this challenging situation with my child or adolescent; take a break if needed ('I am going to go into my room in order to calm down because I am very frustrated')
 - e. Stay focused on the goal of the situation (i.e. I want to help child calm down in a reasonable timeframe, work on shifting from emotionality to problem solving, use effective communication for what my child feeling and be able to shift mind states when they are calm enough to do so, gain more compliance if he/she is just choosing to resist due to negative mind set and emotionality)
2. Minimize oral language as it often escalates a situation. Talk in one short sentence if possible. Also, consider utilizing visual tools such as the emotional thermometer.
3. Refer to the value or goal in situation (i.e. 'even though we are mad, we treat each other with respect').
4. Label emotions or the situation in form of a question or potential explanation (i.e. 'you seem frustrated...', 'I am thinking you are upset because...'). This strategy is helping the child label the

emotions and situation in a manner that shifts away from a solely behavioral reaction and develops self-awareness for what is happening internally.

5. Having a plan for walking away or removing yourself from a situation before it escalates into a disrespectful or nonproductive interchange.
6. Ignoring emotionally reactive behaviors if the goal is to help the child or adolescent calm themselves or if the power struggle is continued by maintaining interaction
7. Providing encouragement as appropriate or tolerated by the child.
8. Have established consequences for behaviors that need a consequence such as aggression. It is recommended that consultation with a child psychologist or therapist is a part of this plan.

Additional Tips

1. Recognize that negative responses are likely patterned and very practiced responses. Therefore, changing them will take some time and effort, depending on how long it has been an established pattern and how many positive replacement behavior skills need to be taught and practiced.
2. Recognize that when changing an interaction with your child, it will create frustration for them as they do not understand this pattern and do not have an immediate or easy response.
3. Discuss goal(s) of what you are trying to accomplish with your child and other parent(s) or caregivers outside of conflict. Prepare your child and the adults for what will be tried differently and hopefully gain their cooperation with this effort.
4. Consider a wider range of consequences such as practicing the skills you are trying to address. For example, if child calls a person “stupid”, then they have to list x number of adjectives to describe the person that are positive and replace “stupid”; no other desired activity is able to be completed until that occurs. This list must be genuine. Another example would be to describe or act out three appropriate responses for managing frustration other than throwing papers on the floor. Remember that these cannot be done if the child or adolescent is highly escalated. You do not want to increase the power struggle, but rather practice positive behavior skills that can be productive in the future.
5. **Seek professional help as needed.

INTERVENTION WORKSHEET

<p>What skill or ability do I need to teach, practice, reinforce, and model for my child or adolescent? What skill is deficit in this situation? (Refer to Common Traits)?</p>	<p>How is the lack of skill impacting moments of emotional escalation? How can I coach or model this skill in these moments?</p>	<p>Do I need other resources or training? Where can I get that? Do I need other supports? Does my child need other supports?</p>	<p>Behaviors, words, or actions that I will cease doing as they are maintaining a negative interaction pattern. What will I say or do instead? When and how do I need to implement a consequence? This is a very important question*</p>

Additional Resources: Books / Experts

ADDitude Magazine (www.additudemag.com)

Barkley, Russell (www.russellbarkley.org)

Greene, Ross (www.ccps.info)

Hansen, Sharon

The Executive Functioning Workbook for Teens: Help for Unprepared, Late, and Scattered Teens

Huebner, Dawn (www.dawnheubnerphd.com)

What to do when your temper flares

Kazdin, Alan (www.alankazdin.com)

Levy, Ray, O'Hanlon, Bill, & Goode, Tyler

Try and Make Me! Strategies that turn off the tantrums and create cooperation

Parent Training information (www.cebc4cw.org/topic/parent-training)

Rabiner, Daniel (www.helpforadd.com)

Riley, Douglas (www.drdouglasriley.com)

Winner-Garcia, Michelle (www.socialthinking.com)

Zones of Regulation; A 5 is Against the Law; You are a Social Detective, etc.