

***“Dealing With It!”:
Helping Your Children to Improve Anger Management,
Frustration Tolerance, and Coping Mechanisms***

Karen Williamson, PhD

4 Typical Trigger Situations:

1. Not getting something or getting to do something that you want (disappointment)
2. Things don't happen as expected, or unexpected things happen (anxiety)
3. Having to do something that you don't want to or can't do (frustration)
4. Having to stop doing a pleasurable activity (anger, difficulty transitioning)

---Lead to “meltdown,” out of control, upset or angry behavior---

What Parents can do:

1. Be proactive--- Identify the trigger beforehand and diffuse the situation before it escalates.
2. Set up clear and consistent expectations and consequences ahead of time
3. Help them to identify their feelings, and show empathy
4. Help them to calm down
 - a. counting
 - b. deep breathing
 - c. alone, quiet time (not a punitive “time out”)
 - d. music
5. Help them with distraction—find another activity to re-focus on
6. Help them with problem solving
 - a. Identify the problem
 - b. Brainstorm possible solutions
 - c. How to implement the chosen solution
 - d. Practice, role play