

Temper Tamer's Handbook

Training School Psychologists to Be Experts in Evidence Based Practices
for Tertiary Students with Serious Emotional Disturbance/Behavior
Disorders

US Office of Education 84.325K

H325K80308

Temper Tamer's Handbook



How to go
from this

to this



Introduction

General and special education teachers struggle with behavior problems in the classroom. Excessive aggression, temper tantrums, and outbursts can stem from poor anger control and poor coping skills. The Temper Tamer's Handbook targets these abilities. This intervention utilizes a positive approach that emphasizes learning skills that are then reinforced with verbal praise and rewards. This intervention is designed for teachers and other school faculty as an individualized intervention. It can, however, be used in a small group as well. When the teacher is involved in teaching these skills, she can help support students throughout the day when they use appropriate coping skills.

Definition

The Temper Tamer's Handbook is an individualized intervention that aims to help children who are prone to outbursts and aggression to monitor, assess, and control their actions. Temper Tamer's stems from a cognitive-behavioral perspective and combines several evidence based techniques.

Reasons to use the Temper Tamer's Handbook

1. To reduce temper tantrums, anger outbursts, and aggression in the classroom.
2. To improve students' emotional regulation.
3. To provide students with coping skills to use in stressful situations in the classroom and beyond.
4. To increase home-school communication.
5. To decrease the need for negative consequences, class removal, and discipline referrals.
6. To increase positive student-teacher interactions.

Target Population

Temper Tamer's is designed for use within the classroom setting. It can easily be adapted for home use as well. While the basic concepts presented at all ages, the current format is design for children in Kindergarten through 4th grade. This intervention targets students who are quick to angry outbursts, with or without aggression.

Evidence Base

Temper Tamer's Handbook is not a marketed or published package. No research has been done on this intervention as a whole; however, there is evidence for the techniques that the handbook employs.

Relaxation

The relaxation techniques in Temper Tamer's involve deep breathing and a brief form of progressive muscle relaxation. Several studies show positive effects following the use of relaxation techniques. In 2001, Lohaus et al. examined the effects of relaxation techniques on 826 children ages seven through fourteen. Short term positive effects on physical measures (i.e. heart rate and body temperature) as well as student self-reports of mood. Dacey and colleagues (1997) taught middle-school children relaxation and visualization techniques. Teacher reports indicated that students increased use of these techniques when involved in stressful situations. Several other studies indicate positive effects from relaxation training (Heibert, 1989; Parrott, 1990).

Self-Monitoring

The use of self-monitoring and self-management has a wealth of evidence suggesting positive results from their use. The Temper Tamer's Handbook makes use of self-reflection sheets that encourage students to examine their own behaviors and effectiveness of their self-regulation techniques. The reflection sheets also include a student/teacher matching strategy to help improve student accuracy in their self-evaluations. A 2006 study (Peterson, et al.) used a similar technique and results showed increases in the targeted social skills. Many single-subject design studies use self-monitoring as a primary component of a more complex intervention aimed to reduce problem behavior. Overall these studies demonstrate increased rates of socially desirable behavior and improved accuracy of student self-monitoring (Cooger, Kehle, Bray, & Chafouleas, 2007; Clees, 1995; Davies & Witte, 2000).

Variable Reinforcement

There are a number of studies that support the use of variable reinforcement as more effective than providing reinforcers at predictable intervals. Providing reinforcers in this manner creates anticipation and, in effect, creates a more powerful reinforcement system. Another helpful

intervention, Mystery Motivator, makes use of random reinforcement schedules and creates even more anticipation by keeping the reward a secret until it is earned. This method can easily be integrated into the Temper Tamers intervention. Studies that use variable or random reinforcement schedules show positive results (Davies & Witt, 2000; Robinson & Sheridan, 2000; Jenson et al., 1982; Stage & Quiroz, 1997)

Materials Needed

Student Workbook Includes:

- Worksheets
- Reflection sheets
- Reminder cards
- Break tickets
- Change chart

Other materials required:

- Rewards
- Crayola Changeable Markers (optional, but recommended)

Steps to Implement Temper Tamer's

Step 1: Review the Temper Tamer's Handbook so you are familiar with the materials.

Step 2: Find time to meet with target student. Try to find a time that does not interfere with a desired activity (recess, gym class, lunch)

Step 3: Begin working through lessons with the student. Students may need help generating ideas and practicing techniques. Try to include real life examples in each lesson and involve in-vivo practice if possible.

Recognizing Temper Triggers (pg 1 of workbook)

Help student come up with ideas and be sure to include triggers you are aware he has but doesn't mention. As an example, some children do not realize they get angrier when they are hungry or tired.

Take a Break (pg 3)

The student may need help choosing appropriate ways to take a break, especially when in the classroom and in the school building. Make special arrangements if needed (i.e. allow for the student to use mp3 player in certain areas during school areas. Make sure other staff members understand these needs).

Cool Thoughts (pg. 4)

Recognizing the connection between thoughts, feelings, and actions is difficult for some children. Help children see the connection by providing examples of different perspectives. Emphasize positive interpretations of situations over negative interpretations.

Speed it Up (pg. 6)

Again, students may need help deciding what is helpful and appropriate for school use. Encourage actions that take the mind away from anger. For example, choose jumping jacks over punching a pillow or screaming silently.

Slow it Down (pg. 7)

This lesson teaches relaxation techniques and does require practices. Practice with the student and encourage practice at home, during stressful and non-stressful times. (hint: verbal praise and rewards can be given out for practicing if student is reluctant.)

Step 4: Place the carrying cards in areas that will be most helpful to the student. For example, if the student tends to have trouble in the lunchroom, the inside of her lunch box may be a good place. The student may keep

one in her pocket as a tangible reminder of the strategies she has learned to regulate anger.

Step 5: Discuss appropriate strategies that can be used without leaving the classroom (cool thoughts, breathing). Encourage the use of these techniques to limit time the student spends outside of class.

Step 6: Talk about the times students may be too overwhelmed and need to leave the classroom. This is the time to introduce the break tickets (pg. 11). These are an option for a student who has trouble asking for a break without being disruptive. These can be used when the student needs to remove himself from the situation in order to calm down. Be clear about how long of a break is appropriate and how often it can be used. It may be appropriate to provide examples of proper use of the tickets as well as provide examples of misuse of the break tickets. Help student plan what he will do when he takes a break (i.e. getting a drink, relaxation techniques).

Step 7: Introduce the reflection page (pg. 12). Make copies, because the student will use it more than once. Work through filling out at least one reflection paper with the

student so they have an example. Some students may require assistance on the first few reflection papers. Students will earn points when they try a method, when it works, and if they match their teacher's opinion of how well their method worked. If they had not outbursts or problems at all that day, they deserve all 3 points.

Step 9: Decide what reinforcers will be used. A variety of reinforcers rather than the same reinforcer over and over is best. Make a copy of the change chart (pg 13) or use your own. Place x's in circles randomly and at unequal intervals. This creates a variable reinforcement schedule. Use an invisible ink marker (Crayola Changeables) to create suspense and anticipation. For each point the student earns, he colors a circle. When the circle reveals an X, the student is rewarded.

Troubleshooting this Intervention

Potential Problems and Possible Solutions

1. The student uses break tickets more than necessary.

- Require student to use a method that he is able to do in the classroom

before he is able to use the break pass.

- Only give points for methods the student is able to use in class.
- Make leaving the classroom one of the rewards. When the student colors an X circle, they can have 10 minutes in the library or computer lab.

2. No reward is motivating.

- Examine where the X's are placed on the change chart. Are they too far apart? Waiting too long for a reward can decrease motivation.
- Consult with student and her parents about possible rewards.
- Consider unconventional rewards, such as skipping math problems on a homework assignment or sitting at the teacher's desk for 20 minutes.

3. The student requires more guidance than I can provide.

- Consider asking another staff member to help student through the techniques. When the student leaves for a break, try to arrange that he see a particular faculty member that can help.

- Involve the parents. Send the workbook home and ask them to emphasize using the techniques both when the student is in a tantrum and when the student is less stressed.

References

- Clees, T.J. (1994). Self-recording of students' daily schedules of teacher's expectancies: Perspectives on reactivity, stimulus control, and generalization. *Exceptionality, 5*, 113-119.
- Coogan, B.A., Kehle, T.J., Bray, M.A., & Chafouleas, S.M. (2007). Group contingencies randomization of reinforcers, and criteria for reinforcement, self-monitoring, and peer feedback on reducing inappropriate classroom behavior. *School Psychology Quarterly, 22*, 540-556.
- Dacey, J. (1997). The results of teaching middle school students two relaxation techniques as part of a conflict prevention program. *Research in Middle Level Education Quarterly, 20*, 91-102.
- Davies, S. & Witte, R. (2000). Self-management & peer monitoring within a group contingency to decrease uncontrolled verbalizations of children with attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder. *Psychology in the Schools, 37*, 137-147.
- Freeland, J.T., & Noell, G.H. (1999). Maintaining accurate math responses in elementary school students: The effects of delayed intermittent reinforcement and programming common stimuli, *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 32*, 211-215.
- Heibert, B., Kirby, B., & Jaknanorian, A. (1989). School based relaxation: Attempting primary prevention. *Canadian Journal of Counseling, 23*, 273-287.
- Jenson, W.R., Neville, M; Sloane, H.N, & Morgan, D. (1982). Spinners and chartmoves: A contingency management system for school and home. *Child & Family Behavior Therapy, 4*, 81-85.
- Lohaus, A. & Klein-Hessling, J. (2003). Relaxation in children: Effects of extended and intensified training. *Psychology and Health, 18*, 237-249.
- Lohaus, A., Klein-Hessling, J., Voegelle, C., & Kuhn-Henninghausen, C. (2001). Relaxation in children: Effects on physiological measures. *British Journal of Health Psychology, 6*, 197-206.
- Parrott, L., (1990). Helping children manage stress: Some preliminary observations. *Child and Family Behavior Therapy, 12*, 69-73.
- Peterson, L.D., Young, R.K., Salzberg, C.L., West, R.P., & Hill, M. (2006). Use of self-management procedures to improve classroom social skills in multiple general education settings. *Education and Treatment of Children, 29*, 1-21.

Scully, P. (2003). Time out from tension: Teaching young children how to relax. *Journal of Early Education and Family Review*, 10, 22-29.

Stage, S.A. & Quiroz, D. R. (1997). A meta-analysis of interventions to decrease disruptive classroom behavior in public education settings. *School Psychology Review*, 26, 333-368.

Temper Tamer's Handbook



How to go
from this

to this



Recognizing Temper Triggers

Most people have certain things that make them angry. These things are temper triggers. Below is a list of triggers that lots of kids have. Are yours the same? What other triggers do you have?

- ➔ losing a game
- ➔ hard assignments and tests
- ➔ going to bed
- ➔ someone calls me a name
- ➔ other kids are making too much noise in class
- ➔ _____
- ➔ _____
- ➔ _____
- ➔ _____

My biggest temper trigger is



Top Five Temper Taming Tricks

Take a break

Think cool thoughts

Speed it up

Slow it down

Temper Taming Trick #1

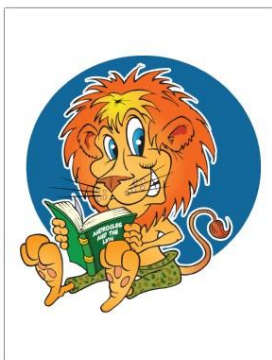
Take a Break

Sometimes we all need to take a break. Sometimes when you are feeling like you are going to explode, taking a break can help you feel more in control.

There are many ways to take a break. Here is a list of some. Can you think of more?

- getting a drink
- taking a walk
- find a quiet spot
-
-
-
-

My favorite way to take a break is



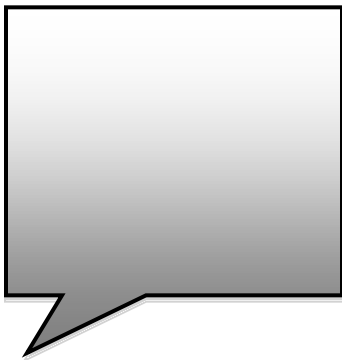
Temper Taming Trick #2

Cool thoughts

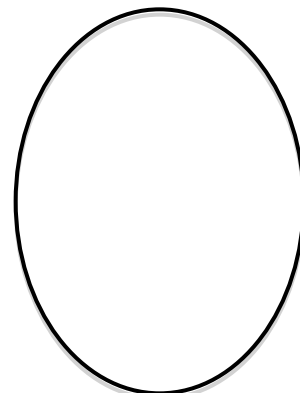
When people get angry, they often have mad thoughts too. Mad thoughts sound like this . .



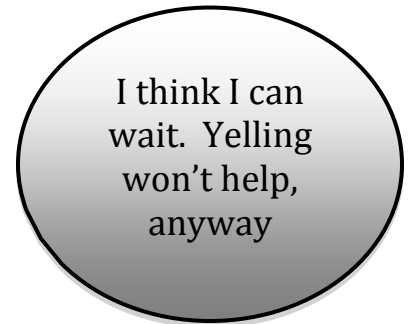
Can you think of other mad thoughts?



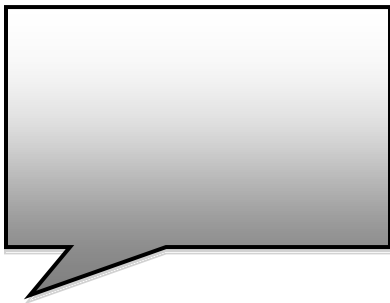
How do mad thoughts make us feel? Fill in the face to show that feeling.



Thoughts are special because WE control them. Sometimes, we can't change what happens, but we can change how we think about it. We can choose to have COOL thoughts.

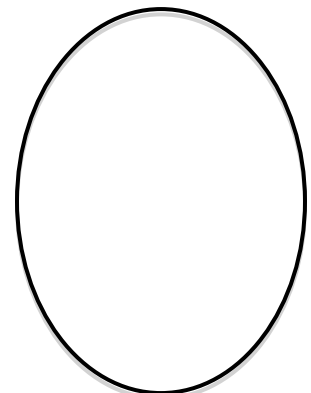


Fill in your own COOL thoughts.



If you are thinking cool thoughts, what feelings will you have? Complete the face to show your feelings when you are thinking cool thoughts.

Do you feel differently than when you think mad thoughts?



Temper Taming Trick #3

Speed It Up

When we are full of angry energy, it might help to burn off that energy. Many kids feel better after they do something active. Activities that have nothing to do with why we are mad are the best ones to burn off energy. Here are some ideas, and come up with your own too!

- do 30 jumping jacks
- jump rope as many times as you can, try to beat your record
-
-
-
-



Decide with your teacher what your top two Speed it Up plans will be and circle them.

Temper Taming Trick #4

Slow it Down

Sometimes we get angry in places that we can't Speed it Up. Sometimes it just feels better to relax slowly than try to burn off energy. These are times when we can use the Slow it Down method. These things helps our bodies and our minds relax. Practice these as we read about them.

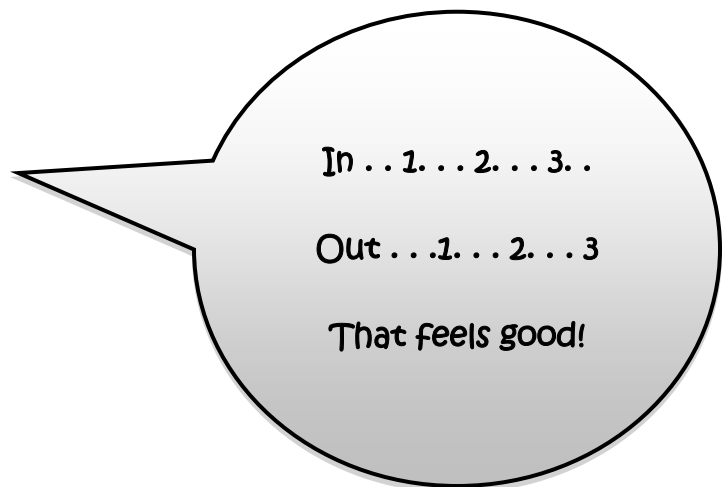


Breathing is an important part of all ways to

Slow it Down. Try these steps and share how they feel.

1. Take deep breath in through your nose and count to 3 slowly in your head.
2. Breath out through your nose, and count slowly to 4 in your head.

Imagination can be fun to use too. You can imagine that you are breathing out all angry and negative thoughts. When you breath in, you can imagine you are smelling your favorite smell or breathing in happy, COOL thoughts.



Tightening and Relaxing

can really

help your body feel better. Get into a comfortable position. Start with your toes: scrunch them together and hold for while you breathe in for 3 seconds. Relax your toes for several seconds. Then tighten your calves while you breath for 3 seconds. Move all the way up your body going from your legs to your tummy to your hands to arm to your shoulders and neck. Tighten one area at a time for 3 seconds as you breath in. Then relax that area. End with all the muscles in your face. Scrunch them really tight and then release them.

Doing these relaxing exercises takes practice. Your teacher or parent can help! Try to do them even when you aren't angry. You'll probably feel even better! Remember to do slow breathing when you use your imagination or tighten and relax your muscles.

These cards can help you remember the temper taming tricks you learned. Cut them out and carry them with you to help during lunch and recess. Place them on your desk, in your pencil box, or in your planner!

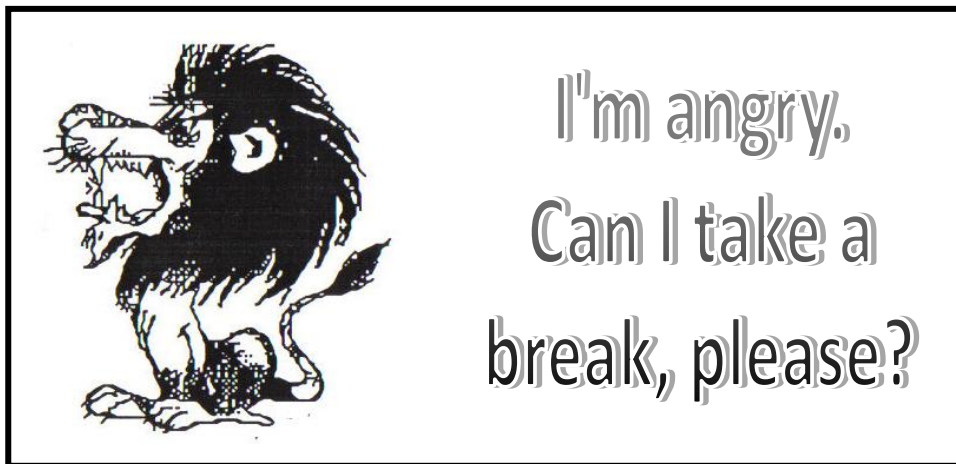
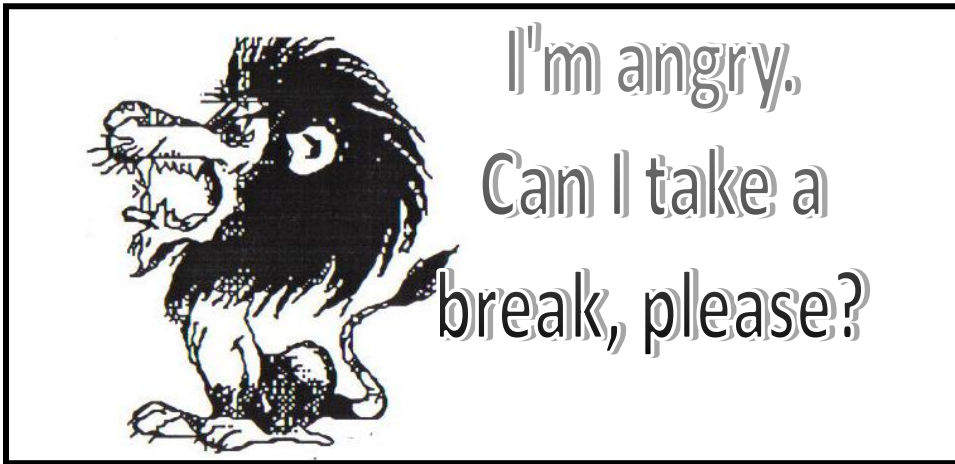
<p><i>Temper Tamer's Carrying Card</i> What should I do?</p> <p>Take a break Cool</p> <p>Thoughts</p> <p>Speed it Up Slow it Down</p>	<p><i>Temper Tamer's Carrying Card</i> What should I do?</p> <p>Take a break Cool</p> <p>Thoughts</p> <p>Speed it Up Slow it Down</p>
<p><i>Temper Tamer's Carrying Card</i> What should I do?</p> <p>Take a break Cool</p> <p>Thoughts</p> <p>Speed it Up Slow it Down</p>	<p><i>Temper Tamer's Carrying Card</i> What should I do?</p> <p>Take a break Cool</p> <p>Thoughts</p> <p>Speed it Up Slow it Down</p>

These are cards to help you tell your teacher about your needs. Before you can use these, together, your teacher and you must decide:

How long can I have a break? _____

What temper taming tricks will I use? _____

How many times a day can I use my break cards? _____



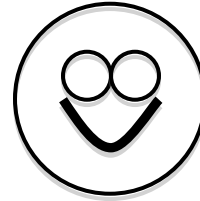
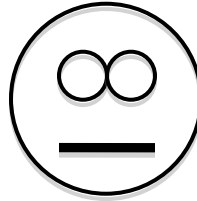
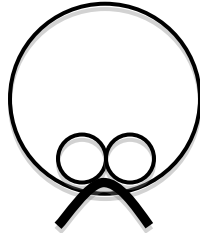
Name: _____

Date: _____

Today I got mad when (trigger) _____

The temper taming trick I tried (+ 1 for trying) _____

Did it work?



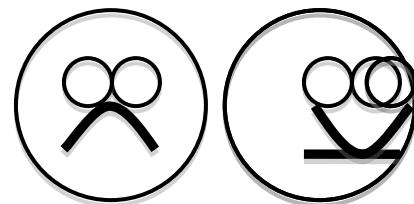
(+ 1 if it worked)

If it didn't work, what else did I try? _____

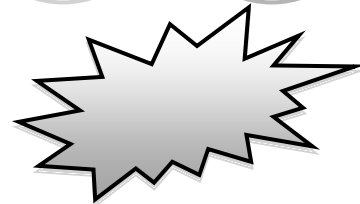
How did my teacher think it worked? Did we match?

1 point for a match

How did my teacher



Points for today



Start →

