



DESIGNS
FOR
FRIENDSHIP

About the Brain Injury Association of N.Y.S.

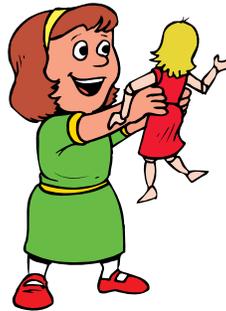
The Brain Injury Association of New York State (BIANYS) is a statewide non-profit membership organization that advocates on behalf of individuals with brain injury and their families, and promotes prevention. Established in 1982, BIANYS provides education, advocacy, and community support services that lead to improved outcomes for children and adults with brain injuries and their families. BIANYS also offers a toll free family Help Line, chapters and support groups throughout the state, prevention programs, mentoring programs, speakers bureau, a video library and a publications library. BIANYS plays a central role in the development of public policy on the state and local level.

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This booklet was developed by Elaine R. Cornelius, M.S.S. with funding support from the N.Y.S. Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities.

This booklet talks about the fantastic powers of the brain, and how important it is to keep your brain safe. One way to protect your brain is to learn about anger and what to do with it. There are safe ways to handle problems with others and to be a friend.



Your Brain

You have a great head on your shoulders!

Did you know that your brain is headquarters for your whole body? It's like a big computer telling the rest of your body what to do. It is a marvelous, fantastic thing!

Your brain sends messages to all parts of your body, telling your toes to wiggle, your nose to twitch, your eyes to blink. Your brain lets you laugh at a good joke, cry during a sad movie, get mad when someone hurts you.

Your brain lets you do all the things you love. What do you love to do? Circle them.

- run like the wind
- sing a catchy tune
- play soccer, baseball or basketball
- taste cold, sweet ice cream
- skate
- smell bread baking
- see tulips pop up in spring



- munch on pizza
- build a snowman
- draw a picture
- read a great book
- swim like a fish
- listen to the rain
- _____

Ways To Take Care of Your Brain

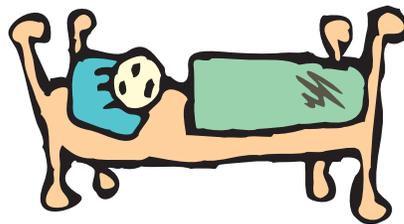
As you can see, your brain is very special. That is why it is so important for you to take good care of it

It may sound funny, the idea of taking care of your brain. You take care of your cat by feeding her. You take care of your teeth by brushing them. But how do you take care of your brain? You can't exactly take it out for a walk or give it a good bath. But how many of these things do you do? Circle them.

- wear a helmet when I ride my bike, skate or ski
- get lots of sleep at night
- eat healthy foods, like fruit and cheese and bread
- read every day
- listen to music
- wear my seat belt in the car
- do puzzles and play cards
- build models
- breathe fresh air outside
- _____

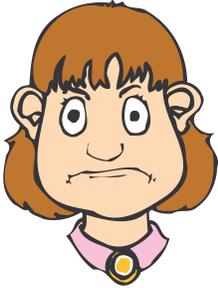


Those are all wonderful ways to take care of your brain. There is another important way to take care of your brain, one you may not have thought of before. It's something you can do to protect your brain from harm. It has to do with what you do with your anger and how you settle problems with others.



Anger

Everyone feels anger. Anger is a signal from your brain that something is not right. Many things make us angry. Sometimes we feel angry and don't even know why. What are some things that make you angry? Circle them.



- When someone takes something that is mine
- When I can't have something I really want
- When someone is mean or embarrasses me
 - When someone doesn't listen to me
 - When I make a mistake
- When someone disagrees with me or tells me I'm wrong
- _____

Anger is like fuel. When we feel it, we want to do something. What do you feel like doing when you are angry? Circle them.

- yelling at the top of my lungs
 - breaking something
 - crying
 - hitting someone
 - hiding
- _____

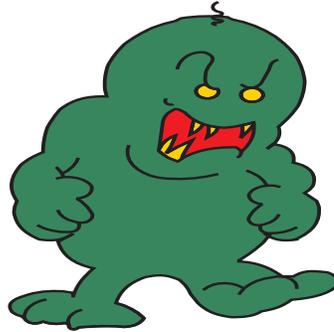


What To Do With Anger

One of our hardest jobs is to figure out what to do with our anger. What we want to do might not always be the best thing to do, especially when the anger feels so big and powerful it scares even ourselves! But it isn't good to pretend we don't feel anger or to trap it all inside. That can lead to a stomach ache or a head ache.

The trick is to figure out what to do with our anger so that we keep ourselves and others safe from harm. Choosing safe ways to let out our anger is a very important way to take care of our fantastic brains! Circle the ways you might choose to let your anger out:

- shout at the sky
- punch a pillow
- stomp my feet
- kick a ball from here to the North Pole
- write or draw
- _____



It is always dangerous to let anger out by hitting, punching, kicking or pushing others.

Conflict

Have you ever argued with a friend over whose turn it is, or who is right about something?

Has anyone ever grabbed something away from you or pushed you?

Have you ever been teased at school or on the bus?

When we have a problem with others, it is called a conflict. Everyone has conflicts, or problems with other people. Usually there are angry feelings involved.

Often, when we are angry we are secretly hurt inside and we might want someone else to feel hurt, too. Sometimes, we are secretly scared. It is at these times that it is extra important to stop and think about our choices. It's tricky to think clearly when you are really mad, so think about it now.

If you show your anger by hitting or pushing someone, you and that other person will become even more angry. The other person might hit you back. When would it stop? Feelings are already hurt. Now there's a chance someone's body could be hurt. In the end, everyone will probably still feel angry and maybe even sorry and scared because someone is bleeding or can't get up.

Hitting, punching, kicking and pushing lead to more angry feelings and could hurt that wonderful brain that does so many great things for us. If you are having a problem with someone, there are safe ways to work it out.



Make Friends, Not Fists

What should you do when you are so angry you want to make a fist and start fighting? Here are three kinds of problems and safe ways to handle them:



When someone does something you don't like...

Name Your Feelings -

Tell the other person how you are feeling and why.

"I feel angry when you take the ball from me because I need to practice for my soccer game."

Ask -

ask or what you want in a firm and clear voice:

"Please give me the ball back."

"Please don't touch me."

When you have a problem with a friend...

Listen

Put yourself in your friend's shoes. Wait, don't swap sneakers! Pretend you are standing in her sneakers for a minute. What is she trying to say? How does she feel at this moment? Let your friend know what you think she is trying to say. She will appreciate it. Tell her how you feel, and ask her to try and understand.

Compromise

Figure out a way you can both get some of what you want; if you both give in a little, that's called a compromise. Some ways to compromise are:

take turns

flip a coin

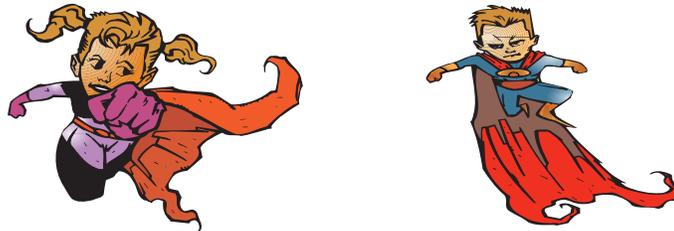
share

Agree To Disagree

No one has to be "right" - sometimes people see things differently and that's okay. If you can't work things out, let it go for awhile.

Humor

Don't forget your sense of humor. Try to lighten up by laughing at the situation, but not at your friend.



When someone picks on you or puts you down...

Shield Yourself

Think of things that your friends and family love about you, things that make you special.

Imagine the mean words bouncing off of you like rubber-don't let them inside.
(Think : *I am rubber, you are glue, Whatever you say bounces off me and sticks to you!*)

Turn Away

Turn away from people who are not being friends, and find someone who is. It is a brave thing to do, and shows you are strong inside. Remember, when people feel good about themselves, they don't need to put others down.

Get Help

Get help if you are afraid someone is going to hurt you. It is smart to protect yourself.

Those are all tools to help you solve problems with others. Here's a handy trick to remember in all situations, especially when you are so mad you can't see straight:

Be C.A.L.M.:

- C - Cool down and count to 10
- A - Accept responsibility for your actions
- L - Listen to all sides
- M - Make friends, or Move on



Three Stories

Here are three stories about kids having conflicts. Have you ever been in situations like these? How can these kids “make friends, not fists?”

David's Colorful Hat

One morning David gets on the bus wearing his favorite colorful hat. Most of the other kids have plain blue or green hats, but his hat has all the colors in the rainbow. It came from his family's village in Peru. Lisa notices that David's hat is different, and starts to giggle. Ben tells David that his hat looks goofy and a bunch of kids start to laugh. David makes a fist and is ready to hit Ben right there on the bus. How do you think David is feeling? Circle the feelings:

embarrassed

angry

scared

lonely



What can David do instead of hitting?

Hoop Hassles

Tina is outside playing basketball. Her sister Rosa comes along and starts getting in her way so that she can't make the baskets. Rosa steals the ball away and starts to play herself. Tina yells at Rosa to give her the ball back. When Rosa doesn't give her the ball back, Tina starts to punch her.

How do you think Tina feels? Circle the feelings:

frustrated

mad

scared



What can Tina do instead of punching her sister?

Club Conflict

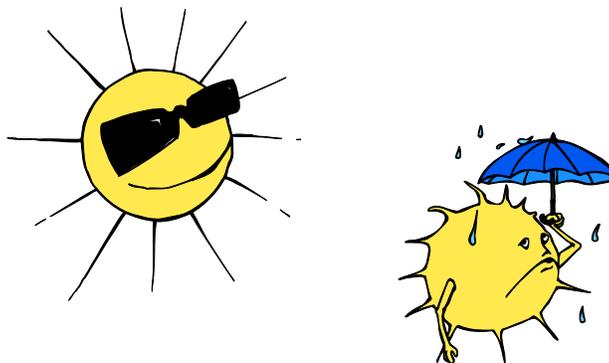
Dexter and James are best friends. One summer afternoon, they decide to start a club. Dexter says he will be the president of the club, but James thinks he can do a better job. They start to argue. James tells Dexter he is bossy and always has to have his way. Dexter says James is a big baby. James pushes Dexter. Dexter pushes back. Soon they are on the ground, punching and kicking.

How are the boys feeling?

jealous

angry

hurt



How can they settle their differences without fists?

Designs For Friendship

- * Be kind-always treat others as you would like them to treat you
- * Avoid put downs, teasing and name calling
- * If someone is teasing a friend, stand up for your friend
- * Listen to other people's point of view and let them know you understand what they are saying, even if you don't agree
- * Take responsibility for your actions; if you are sorry, say so
- * Keep your sense of humor, but don't laugh at others

