



# Anger Management Techniques and Strategies

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Chelsea Spencer, Ph.D., LCMFT

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# Today's Presenter

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**Chelsea Spencer, Ph.D., LCMFT**





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# The Thrive Initiative

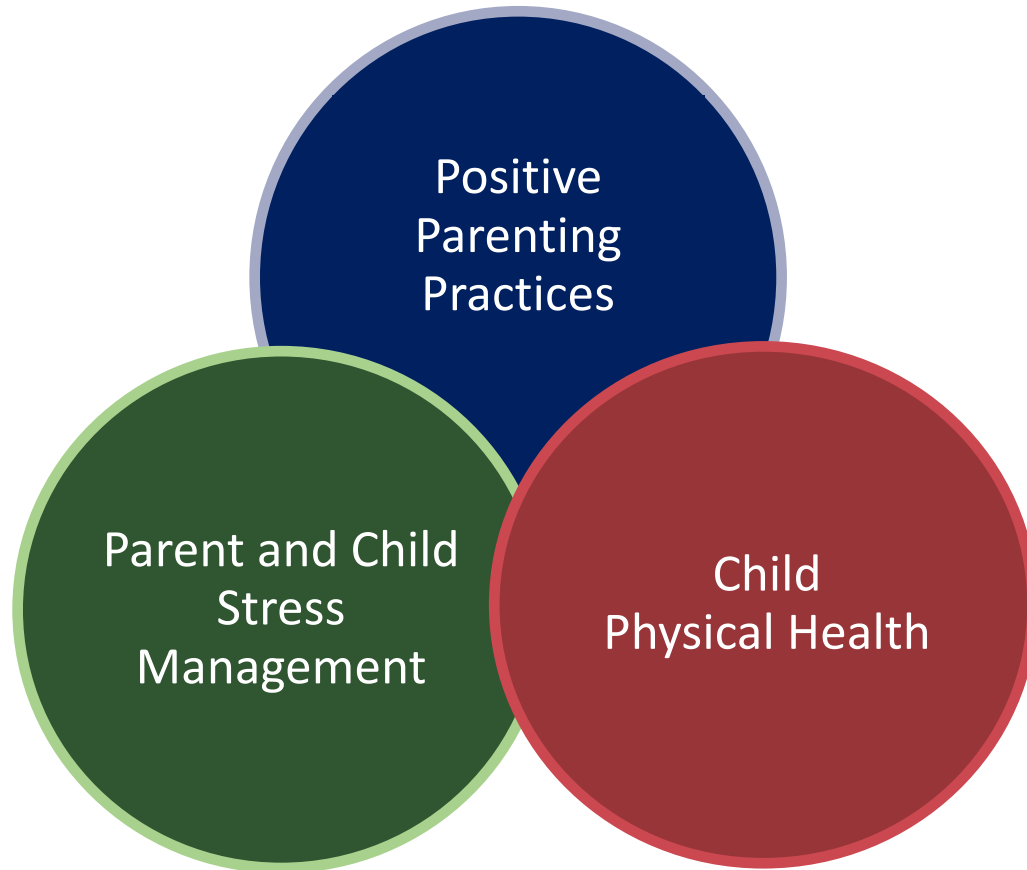


Thrive Initiative Program Areas			
Universal Parenting Programs			
Take Root	Sprout	Grow	Branch Out
Infants (0 to 6 months)	Preschool (3 to 5 years)	Grades K-5 (5 to 10 years)	Grades 6-12 (10 to 18 years)
Infants (6 to 12 months)			
Infants and Toddlers (1 to 3 years)			
Parenting Programs for High-Needs Populations			
Take Root Home Visitation		Grow Safe and Secure	
Infants and Toddlers (0 to 3 years)		Grades K-5 (5 to 10 years)	



# Positive Outcomes

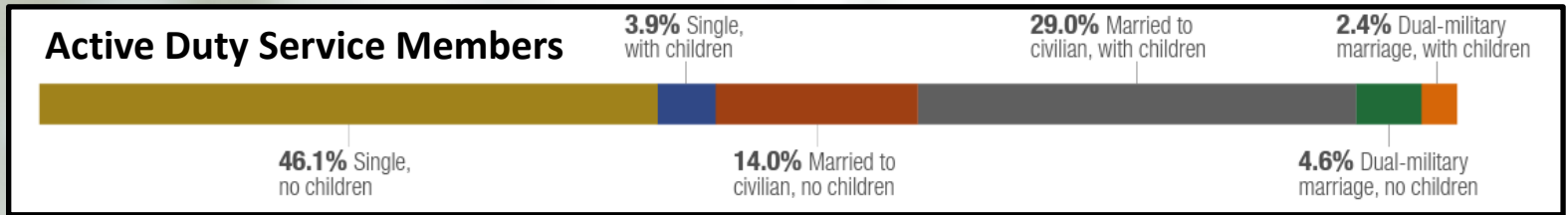
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# Military Family Stressors and Conflict

# Families of Active Duty Serve Too!



- 1,551,972 active duty family members and 61.3% of them are children
- The largest group of children is under 5 years (41%).
- 50% of active duty members are married; 90.5% of them are women with an average age of 32 years.

Visual and data are from the *2021 Demographics Profile of the Military Community* (Department of Defense) accessible on Military OneSource.

# Family Conflict and Family Violence

- 5,732 incidents of child abuse and neglect met criteria in FY 2021; this was an 8.5% increase over FY 2020 (5.9 vs. 6.4 per 1,000 children).
- In FY 2021, there were 14,299 reports of domestic abuse, of which 7,957 incidents met criteria (involved 6,306 unique victims).

Among domestic abuse met criteria incidents:

- physical abuse accounted for 71.35%;
- emotional abuse accounted for 23.46%; and
- sexual abuse accounted for 5.14%;
- neglect accounted for 0.05%.



Sources: United States Department of Defense [Report on Child Abuse and Neglect and Domestic Abuse in the Military for Fiscal Year 2021](#) (September 2022); a [hearing](#) before the 117<sup>th</sup> United States Congress on Keeping Our Service Members and Their Families Safe and Ready: The Military's Prevention and Response To Domestic Violence; and a Blue Star Families [blog post](#) on the congressional hearing





# Risks for Families

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- Frequent relocations
- Parental absence due to deployments
- Injuries or hostile deaths while in action
- Financial challenges
- Mental health conditions (e.g., PTSD)
- Substance use risks



# Impact on Families

- Physical absence and ambiguous loss
- Changes in roles
- Limited communication
- Marital and family satisfaction



# Risk Factor Caravan for Children

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Risks include poor parental well-being and functioning, poor family functioning, and military-specific factors like deployment characteristics (Briggs et al. 2019).

e.g., Deployments can:

- disrupt relationship stability and routines (Sheppard et al. 2010); and
- increase risks for child behavioral, emotional, and academic difficulties during and post deployment (Wilson et al. 2014; Chandra et al. 2011).



## Anger Management Techniques & Strategies



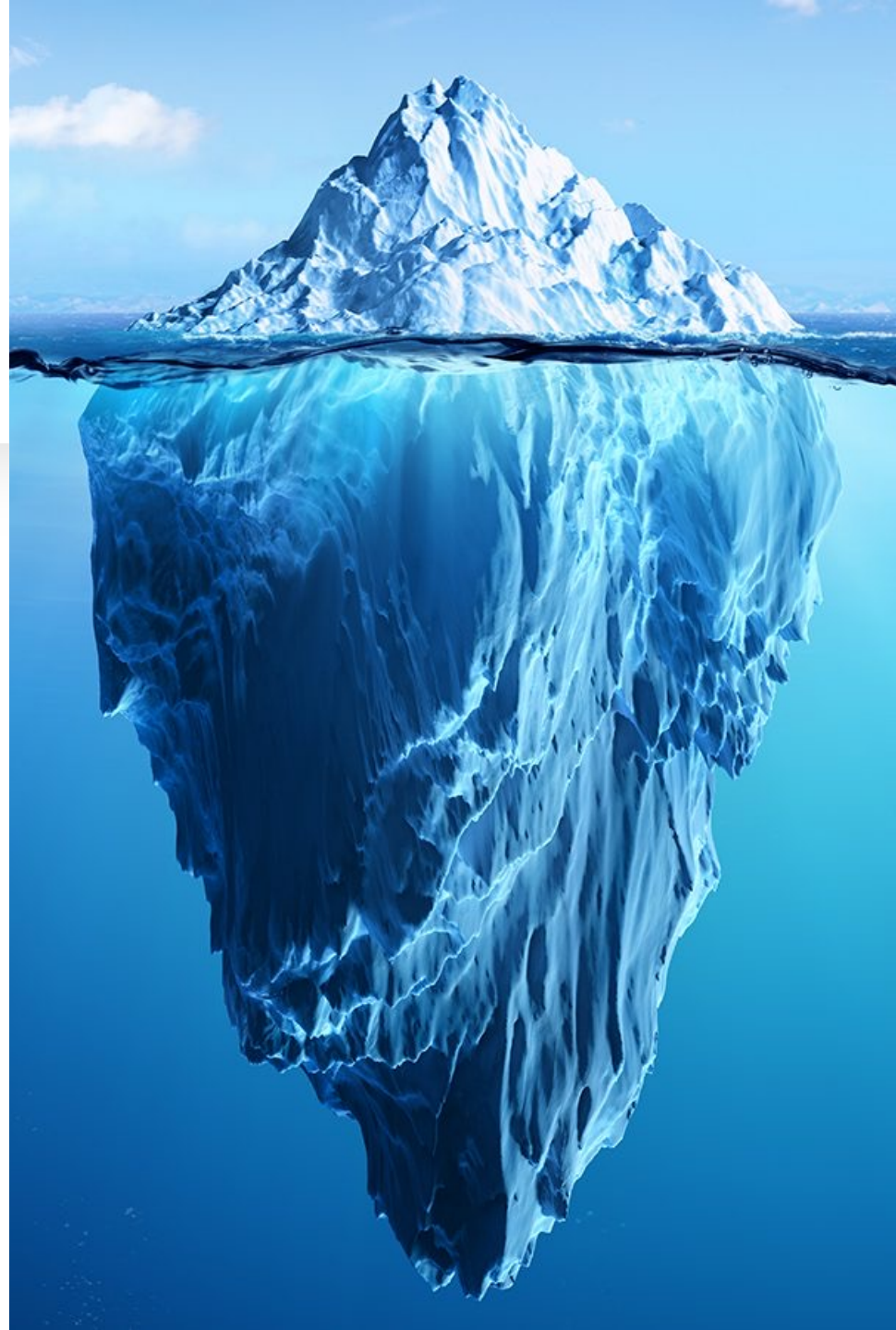
## Introduction to Anger

- Anger is a normal part of life, but how we *handle* feelings of anger makes the difference
- Anger can lead to:
  - Physical health consequences
  - Mental health consequences
  - Relationship consequences
  - Other consequences

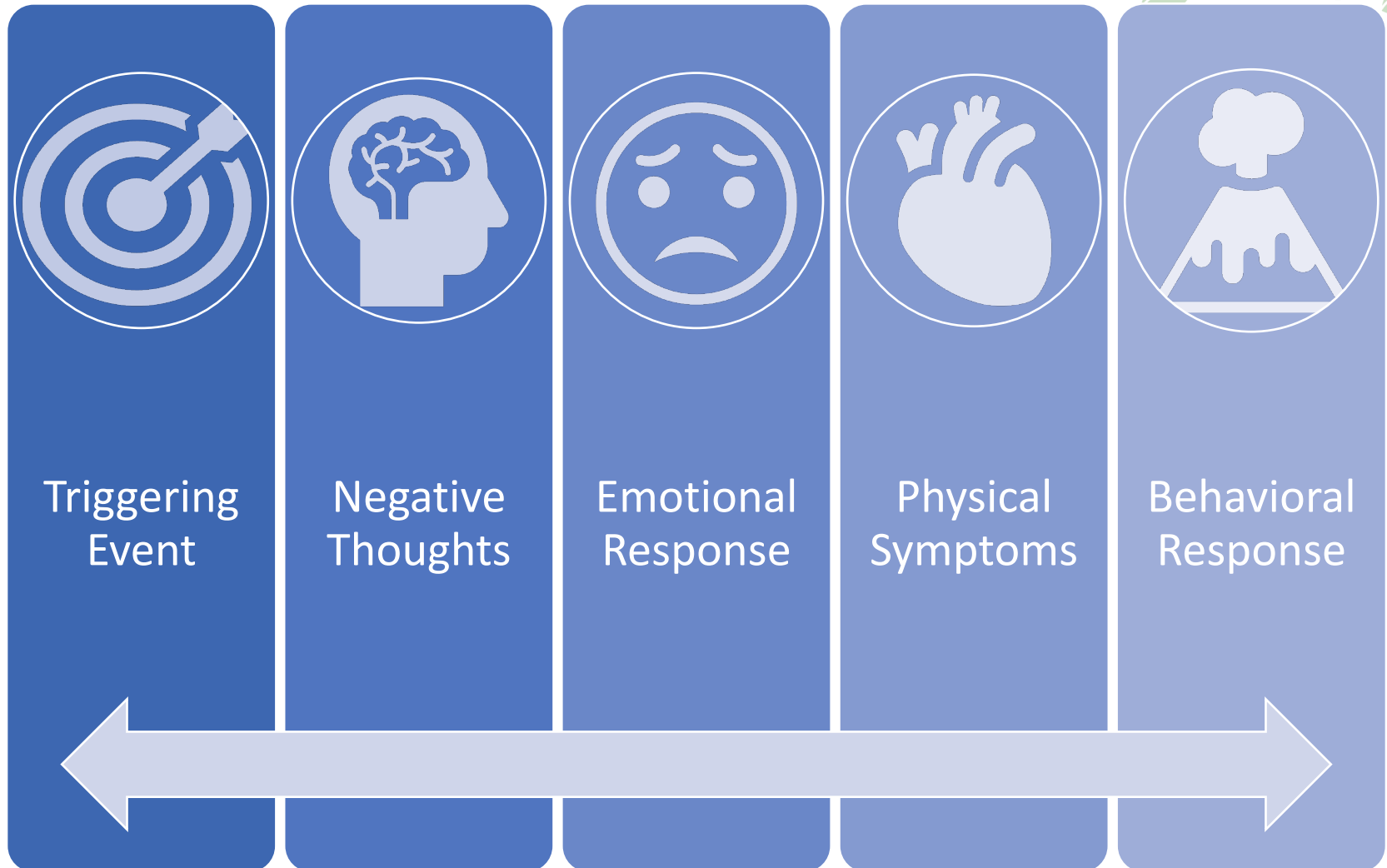


# Anger as a Secondary Emotion

- Iceberg metaphor
- Identify underlying emotions to anger
  - Fear
  - Rejection
  - Embarrassed
  - Disrespected
  - Helpless
  - Insecure
  - Anxious



# The Anger Cycle



# Identifying Triggers

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- Everyone has different anger triggers. Knowing what your triggers are can help you to:
  - (1) Avoid situations or experiences that will trigger your anger and will not be beneficial for you.
  - (2) Prepare yourself for situations in which you may experience an anger trigger.





# Identifying Triggers

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Triggers for anger can involve:

People

Places

Conversations

Situations



# Anger Warning Signs

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Negative Thoughts



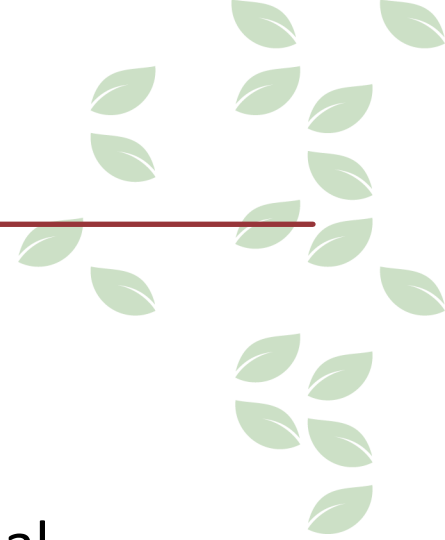
Emotional Responses



Physical Symptoms



Behavioral Responses



# Anger Management Strategies

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- Challenge Negative Thoughts
- Mindfulness
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- Deep Breathing Exercises
- Guided Imagery
- Practicing Gratitude
- Behavioral Changes



# Challenging Negative Thoughts

- All or Nothing Thinking
- Catastrophizing and Minimizing
- Disqualifying the Positive
- Fortune Telling
- Labeling
- Mind Reading
- Overgeneralizing





## Mindfulness Practices

- **Hearing:** Listen to your favorite music. Listen to the birds chirping outside. Listen to the sounds of nature.
- **Sight:** Look at artwork. Go out in nature and look at the views; pay attention to everything you see. Look at something you find delightful and appreciate the beauty around you.
- **Taste:** Eat something you enjoy, but make sure you pay attention to the taste and textures of the object (this will require you to eat slowly – this is also called “mindful eating”). Chew gum and focus on the taste and texture.
- **Smell:** Surround yourself with a scent you enjoy. You can light a candle, use essential oils, or put on a scented lotion you enjoy.
- **Touch:** Find a soothing sensation. Pet your dog or cat, take a bubble bath, or snuggle on the couch with your favorite blanket. Notice the different textures of objects in your home or in nature.



# Calming Exercises

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Deep Breathing Exercises



Progressive Muscle Relaxation



Guided Imagery



## Practicing Gratitude

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Practicing gratitude means that you are making deliberate choices to focus on things you are grateful for in your life.

- Keep a Gratitude Journal
- Write Gratitude Letters
- Weekly Displays of Gratitude

# Behavioral Changes

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Engage in activities that cause you to feel at peace. Suggestions include the following:

- Time in nature;
- Gardening;
- Yoga;
- Exercise; or
- Time with pets, friends, or family.



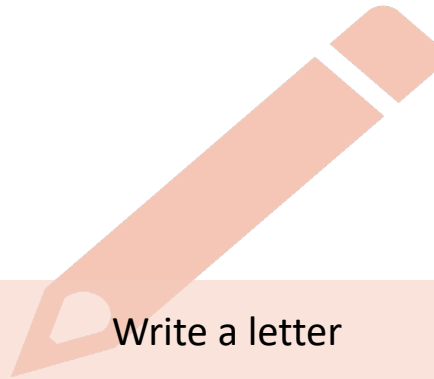


# Behavioral Changes in Conflict

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Wait to talk in person



Write a letter



Communicate about issues before they grow



Identify and express your underlying emotions



Apologize when warranted



Therapy

# Your Questions



# Q & A



## New supplemental module on anger management!

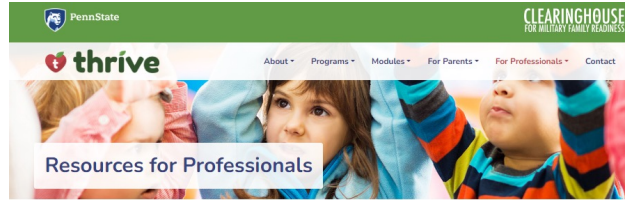


 **anger management**  
Family Conflict: Mindfully Creating Positivity

A supplemental parent-education module that is designed to help parents and caregivers understand and reduce anger and conflict in everyday moments and situations.

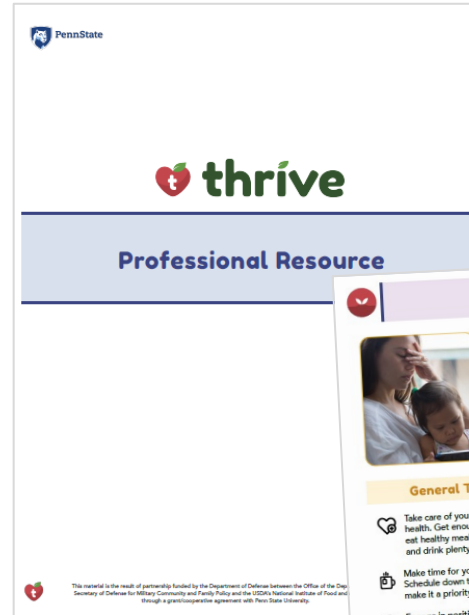
<https://thrive.psu.edu>

# Professional Resources



These resources are intended to provide support to professionals who work with children, youth, and families. Some of our resources require your email address before you can access the download link. We are collecting your information so that we may gauge which resources professionals are downloading for use and so we can continue to provide useful resources.

- Professional Resources
- Hybrid Manuals
- Handouts
- Training Modules
- Thrive Educational Series Presentations



Stress Management
3-5 years



### Stress Management

Stress is a feeling that can arise when you deal with situations that you feel are positive or negative. Stress is individual and unique — circumstances that cause stress in one person may not cause stress in another. Small stressful events can also compound and create more intense feelings of stress.

You can help your child manage stress by:

- Remem...

#### General Tips for

- ☑ Take care of your physical health. Get enough sleep, eat healthy meals, exercise, and drink plenty of water.
- ☑ Make time for you. Schedule down time, and make it a priority.
- ☑ Engage in positive self-talk and look at things from a positive point of view.



Remem relax y slowi in thro through



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Additional resources, see Thrive Initiative program

Conflict Resolution
3-5 years



### Conflict Resolution

Conflict is a normal part of life and something that children will experience with siblings, peers, parents, and other adults. As parents, we can help support our children when they experience conflict and teach them the skills they can use to resolve conflict, now and in the future. Below are some tips to help you coach your child through a resolution process.

#### Learn to Identify and Manage Emotions

If your child is experiencing a conflict with someone, be prepared to help them manage strong emotions. When working with your child to identify feelings, you should recognize and name feelings and teach them it is okay to say how they feel. Children ages 3-5 years old need help linking the emotion they are feeling with feeling words. In addition, you should teach your child that it is not okay to hit, kick, or use physical force against themselves or anyone else.



#### Listen to Understand

Check in with your child and ask them, "What happened?" Listen to your child. Help them understand that when they express themselves in an appropriate way, they will be heard and understood. Practice good listening techniques. For example, eliminate other distractions, and look at your child when they are talking to you.



#### Problem Solve Together

Children ages 3-5 years old may need help finding possible solutions to the problems they are experiencing. Ask your child how they would like to solve the problem and then role-play potential scenarios. If your child has a hard time coming up with strategies to solve the issue, offer possible positive solutions. The key is to foster positive communication and joint problem-solving. Taking time to encourage these thinking skills now will help your child use this strategy in the future.

#### Empathy

Remember, the emotions your child is experiencing are very real. Be empathetic with your child when they are sharing their feelings. When your child is sharing their feelings, take the opportunity to teach them to be empathetic and ask them how others involved in the situation may feel. Remember the age and stage of your child. Looking at situations from another's point of view may be challenging for some children ages 3 to 5 years old.

Additional resources, skills, and strategies for parents are available at no cost through the online Thrive Initiative programming. Visit the Thrive website <https://thrive.psu.edu>, and sign up today!

<https://thrive.psu.edu>



# Office Hours



Upcoming Dates:

November 20<sup>th</sup> and December 18<sup>th</sup> at 1500.



<https://militaryfamilies.psu.edu/open-office-hours/>



# Identify More Supports



PennState CLEARINGHOUSE FOR MILITARY FAMILY READINESS

CONTINUUM OF EVIDENCE Home Search About Request Fact Sheet Update Submit a Program Contact Us

## Search

To find a program, type keywords into the search bar and press the Enter key or click the Search button. For additional instructions or help, please contact the Technical Assistance Team by phone 1-877-382-9165, email [clearinghouse@psu.edu](mailto:clearinghouse@psu.edu), or initiate a live chat by clicking on the box that appears on the bottom right of the screen.

anger management SEARCH

You can use the filter options below to refine your search. Click on the Apply Filter button after making your selections to update your search.

### SEARCH OPTIONS

Show only items that match keyword

### FILTER OPTIONS

Show only items that match all filters

Placement +

Topic +

Target Population +

Sector +

Military Use +

Facilitator Training +

Implementation +

Availability +

APPLY FILTER CLEAR

1 - 10 of 59 results  
Sort By: Placement (High-Low)

**Promising**  
**Alternatives for Families: A Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (AF-CBT)**  
Topic: Child Abuse, Parenting, Behavioral Problems, Trauma  
Target Population: Families  
Sector: Community-Based  
Alternatives for Families: A Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (AF-CBT), a community-based family program, addresses persistent family conflict, defiant behavior, verbal and/or physical hostility, and seeks to strengthen caregiver-child relationships.

**Promising**  
**Assisting in Rehabilitating Kids (ARK)**  
Topic: Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco, STI, Reproductive Health  
Target Population: Adolescents  
Sector: Community-Based  
Assisting in Rehabilitating Kids (ARK), a community-based program, is designed to promote and eliminate or reduce sex risk behaviors among participants.

**Promising**  
**Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) for Late-Life Depression**  
Topic: Depression  
Target Population: Older Adults  
Sector: Community-Based  
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) for Late-Life Depression, a community-based treatment program, is designed to reduce depressive symptoms in participants.

**Promising**  
**Coping Power**  
Topic: Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco, Antisocial Behavior, Parenting, Emotional Competency  
Target Population: Adolescents, Middle Childhood, Parents  
Sector: Community-Based, School-Based  
Coping Power, a school- or community-based targeted prevention program, is designed to prevent substance use and subsequent delinquency in youth by enhancing their social skills, improving their self-control, strengthening their connections within school, and encouraging positive parental engagement.

**Promising**  
**Forever Free**  
Topic: Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco, Parenting, STI, Emotional Competency

PennState CLEARINGHOUSE FOR MILITARY FAMILY READINESS

CONTINUUM OF EVIDENCE Search About Submit a Program Request Fact Sheet Update Contact Us

## Welcome to the Continuum of Evidence

Military families face unique challenges every day. Many programs exist that intend to address the diverse issues military families encounter and seek to enhance military family readiness and resilience. However, the sheer number of programs available make the process of identifying effective programs difficult.

The Clearinghouse serves as a resource for professionals who work with military individuals and families by providing its Continuum of Evidence (Continuum). The Continuum is a repository of programs that have been reviewed by Clearinghouse research and evaluation scientists. Programs are placed on the Continuum with descriptions to help individuals who serve military families make informed decisions regarding how to best serve these unique and valuable families.

GET STARTED

Do you have a question?



# Presentation Survey

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We want to hear from you!  
Please share your interests for future topics.

**We Value Your Response!**

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<https://bit.ly/Thriveanger>



# Professional Development

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The Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness at Penn State is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor one hour of continuing education for participation in today's training.

- Attendance has been tracked.
- Within one month, certificates of completion will be sent to those who indicated a desire to receive credits at registration.
- For more information, contact Kristi Brawley: [kkb18@psu.edu](mailto:kkb18@psu.edu).

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## One Hour of Credit





## Topic: Harmful Behaviors



January 17, 2024  
12:00 p.m. EST

Presented by Ginger Welch

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<https://bit.ly/Thrive2024Session1>

# Contact Us



## Contact Us



[thrive.psu.edu](http://thrive.psu.edu)



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1.814.865.7412



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