

# Anger, Personality Development, & Violence:

## Some additional things to keep in mind:

- Most kids who become violent hurt others **because of** hurt, anger, feeling overwhelmed, feeling powerless, feeling hopeless, not knowing what else to do, fear, and even self-hatred.
- On the other hand, some kids have gotten to a point where they actually fantasize about hurting or killing others. These kids often have trauma histories of their own, feel rejected, feel isolated, feel hopeless, and can't see any of these problems getting better. In these cases, yes, parents must do all they can to protect others in the home and in public while making sure their child is in therapy and has little or no periods of not being supervised. So, what can parents do besides "play defense" and "act like a police officer in my own home"?
- Read the book by Howard Glasser, *Transforming the Difficult Child*. Learn **The Nurtured Heart Approach** and use it every day.
- **Wean them off of** all violent, gory, horror, and other similar forms of antisocial "entertainment" media.
- Get your child into **therapy**. If your child has experienced trauma, find out about **EMDR** treatment.
- Work with **AutismCincy.org** to get your child hooked up with same-age peers with Autism. Check out their "**Teen Connections**" **opportunities** for teens ages 13 – 17. Increase your child's pro-social activities.
- Talk with the **Linden Grove School** for Autism about possible attendance: **513.984.2272**; [info@lindengroveschool.org](mailto:info@lindengroveschool.org). It's possible that **mentoring** opportunities might exist through them, too.
- Go to **TACA.org** and see about what kinds of local **parent support groups** are available.
- Talk with **KidPower** in Milford, Ohio, to see what kinds of **socializing opportunities** parents of other Autistic children are having their ASD kiddos engaging in. **KidPower** can be a great place to **network**.
- You don't condone their hurtful words or behaviors, but even while dealing with these things, communicate **unconditional love and support** every day.
- Discover their **interests and strengths**, then use these things to develop fun social connections, etc.

- Address **other mental health concerns** that might be present. Sometimes **medication** is helpful or needed.
- Go to <https://clermontcountyohio.gov/Clermont-county-juvenile-community-resource-center> and then go down to where all the links for the class handouts are listed. One of those handouts is a **recipe** for probiotic yogurt that reintroduces the healthy bacteria, *Lactobacillus Reuteri*, to one's gut flora. This yogurt can be made at home, and can be sweetened-up with fruit and/or honey. The idea here is that improved gut health directly correlates with improved mood, less irritability, and fewer and/or less intense meltdowns. In other words, restored gut health reduces many negative mental health symptoms. Other probiotic supplements may be helpful as well.
- Go to <https://beacons.ai/allforthechunky> and learn about **heavy metal detoxing** and **parasite cleanses**. These supplements do require some financial expenditure, but there are likely other websites that teach you how to use natural herbs for the same purposes. Go to the **curriculum link** found at the Resource Center's webpage, listed above, and then go to the sections of the curriculum entitled, *Understanding the Brain-Gut Connection in Autism* and *Can Autism be Cured, Healed, or be Made Less Severe?* in order to do some more of your own research. Use the curriculum's *Success Stories* section as a starting point for inviting your child to do some research on adults with Autism who have crafted adult lives that are full of meaning, purpose, connection, and joy. Help them to discover an adult with Autism who can be their **role model** and who can, perhaps, even become their hero.
- If your child is highly skilled with English/writing, see if they can **start their own** writing club through one of the organizations listed above; or a Math club. Clubs should have at least one healthy and positive adult mentor/leader.
- **Remind your child every day** that they are not "broken," "disordered," "bad," "defective," "weird," or "damaged" but that the world needs their gifts, and your desire is to help them develop those gifts so that everyone, including your child, can celebrate them!

- If your child hurts someone at home or elsewhere, or if they are holding the entire family hostage through intimidation with their threats to hurt or kill family members, you must be willing to **press charges and follow through**. It is better for your child to deal with the Juvenile legal system now instead of waiting and seeing them ending up in the adult legal system.
- **Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy (i.e., Hippotherapy)** or **Equine Assisted Learning** – through Redemption Ranch in Goshen, or Cincinnati Therapeutic Riding and Horsemanship in Milford – can be a wonderful resource. Many troubled and struggling kids have found healing through these incredible interactions with horses. There may be other facilities in the area offering EAP and/or EAL services.
- **Gradually replace excessive screen time** with more prosocial activities and interests that don't involve playing games with other people online – “But Mom, I'm playing this game with Jimmy in California!” doesn't count as social interaction. Possibly check out the “**Mightier**” social-skills-development games listed in this curriculum as a possible form of electronics that has a social skills payoff.
- Is there a **form of art** that they do enjoy or might enjoy? The sky's the limit!
- Engage in a **daily “Huddle”** with your child where they know they have, for 15 minutes or longer, your undivided attention. Use this time to make sure they feel heard and, as much as possible, understood and validated. You can't validate unhealthy or toxic things, but there's a lot you can validate, even if it's just their (imperfect) efforts to feel better, problem-solve, deal with stress, etc.
- Help them to **develop expertise in something**, and to then start using to benefit others ... free of charge.
- **Partial Day Treatment programs** (such as through Children's Hospital's Eastgate location) might help to provide your child with some therapeutic benefits over a 4-6 week period.
- Don't talk about making sure your child can be “independent” by age 18, rather, focus on **skill-development and readiness, with ongoing support**. Most kids balk at the idea of learning new skills that, to them, are boring ... which is why even teenagers need to learn new skills in the context of having fun. Talk with other parents and therapists to get ideas and, most of all ... **NEVER GIVE UP!**

This list is not exhaustive, however, I do hope that it provides you with some good suggestions that help to take you and your child to the next level of health, healing, and growth. And always remember: You know your child best. Not every suggestion is going to be a good fit for every parent or every child with Autism. The key is to keep exploring, keep seeking-out support, keep an open mind for new ideas and solutions, and most of all, to be that source of unconditional love that your child needs. You're not alone!