Classroom Activity: Mad Feelings & Fast, Slow, Then Stop

Before children can think clearly enough to deal constructively with their angry feelings, they need to develop self-control in order to slow down and calm down. Just as Daniel Tiger uses music to help him calm down, you can use music and movement to help children practice slowing down and controlling their actions.

**Children Are Working On**
- Developing self-control
- Listening carefully

**Materials**
- 11 ½ minute episode: “Katerina Gets Mad”

**Set Up the Topic**
- Today we’re going to talk about what makes us mad and what we do when we’re mad.
- Let’s watch a video of DANIEL TIGER’S NEIGHBORHOOD when his friend, Katerina, gets mad.

**Watch**
Watch the episode “Katerina Gets Mad.”

**Talk About It**
After watching the video, you could ask the children the following questions:
- Do you ever get mad?
- What makes you get mad?
- What do you do with the mad that you feel?
- Does it help you to feel better? What happens?
- What did Katerina do?
- Let’s see if it helps us too.

Sing the Strategy Song:

\[\text{When you feel so mad that you want to roar, take a deep breath and count to four... 1, 2, 3, 4.}\]
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Play & Explore

• Each day acknowledge when children have been able to control themselves. You could say, “K, you did a great job stopping yourself before you hit.”

• For a gross motor activity, play music with varying rhythm. Have children move their bodies to the music.
  • Start by playing slow music and giving children verbal cues that the music is going to stop. Explain that they should “freeze” when the music stops.
  • After the children understand the game, continue with the slow music, but don’t give the verbal reminders.
  • Once the children have mastered slow music, switch the game to fast music and let the children see how hard it can be to stop when they are doing something fast.
  • After playing several rounds of the game, end with some slow music so the children can calm down and get ready to transition to a new activity.

• If there is no music available, you can practice self-control with a simple clapping game, asking the children to clap or roll their hands slowly, then even more slowly, then quickly, then even more quickly.