

## Unit 4

## Text Handout

### Guidance in Setting up Groupwork on Anger Management for Children and Young People

#### Working with Young People

It is not the purpose of this training pack to be prescriptive about groupwork sessions. Wide experience of groupwork leads the authors to conclude that no matter how good a particular course or package, individual teachers or group leaders will always want or need to change the materials to suit their own purposes. However a general outline for six groupwork sessions is attached as a guide.

The general aim of groupwork for anger management is to teach some cognitive behavioural skills to the pupils and to allow them the opportunity to practise these skills in a safe and supportive environment. These skills are outlined in Handouts 1 and 5.

Before starting any group or individual work, the following points are worth noting:

1. The young people must be willing to participate and fully aware of what it is they are joining. Groupwork on anger management will not work with unwilling individuals. The first step in anger management is recognising that there is a problem. Young people who do not see their anger as a problem will jeopardise the success of any groupwork. *One* way of identifying young people for groupwork is to give out a questionnaire to all pupils in a selected yeargroup.
2. Cognitive behavioural work is most successful with people who are within the mainstream range for ability. Young people with learning difficulties may find some of the techniques over-complex. They are unlikely to experience sufficient success within six sessions of groupwork and may need more intensive work, possibly on a one-to-one basis.
3. Once you have identified pupils who are willing and able, think carefully about the composition of the group. Avoid difficult combinations such as two individuals who habitually wind each other up. The size of the group is important. More than eight people will be less likely to 'gel' as a group. Age and gender should also be considered: it is usually better to stick with single sex groups and groups of approximately the same age.

4. Staff in the school should be informed that a young person has agreed to groupwork and should be given an outline of the techniques that the young person will be taught. They should recognise that the young person has a problem which they have started to acknowledge, and make allowances accordingly.
  
5. Young people can often have difficulty in generalising skills learned to everyday life. Role-play can help, as can debriefing after an angry outburst, once the young person has calmed down. It is also important to note the need for follow up sessions to reinforce techniques and give feedback to the young person on how they are progressing.