

# Beacon Behaviour Support



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Sign up for our emails and Facebook group with ideas and tips for managing behaviour in school.

# Course aims

To consider:

- How to deal with angry parents safely
- How to reduce incidences of parental aggression

# Parents

No one prepares you for this, but:

- ... parents are most likely to make contact when something is wrong.
- ... incidents of aggression are becoming more common
- ... aggressive parents are a small (but growing) minority

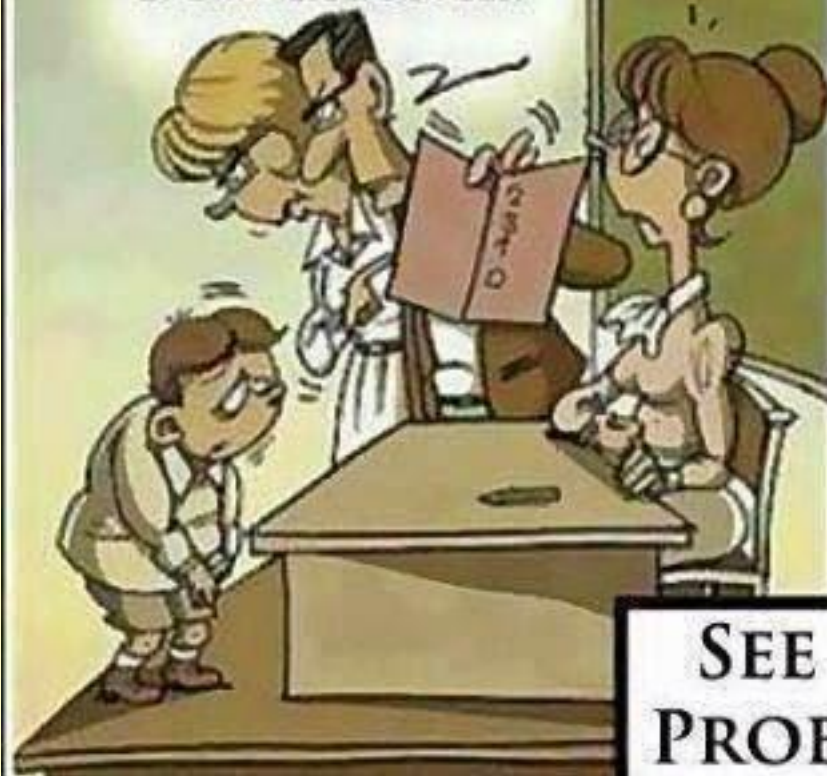
# Why do parents get angry?



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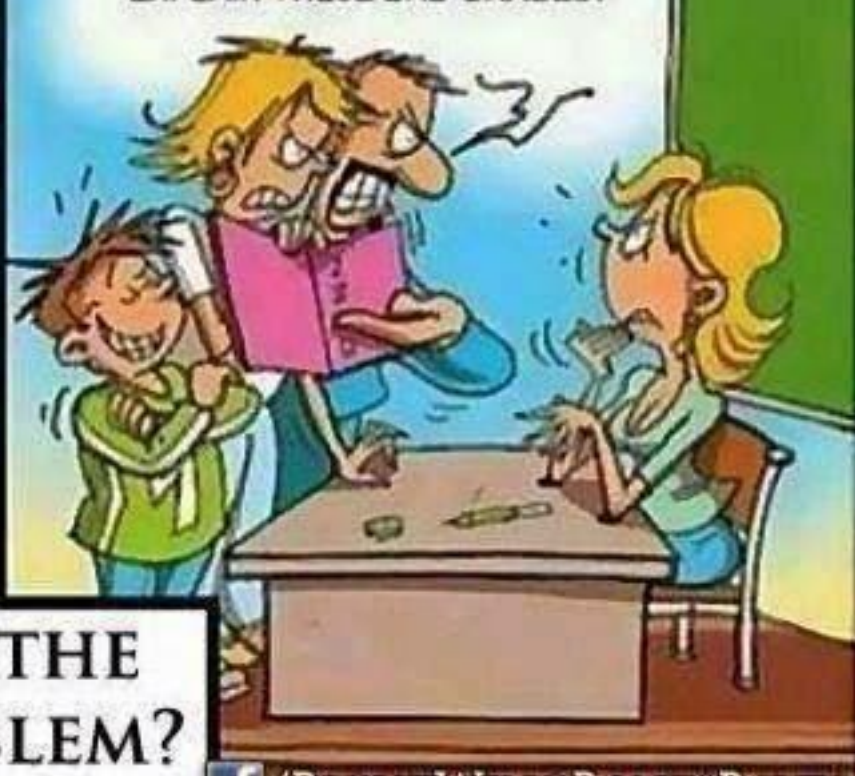
1969

EXPLAIN THESE BAD GRADES?



Today

EXPLAIN THESE BAD GRADES?



SEE THE  
PROBLEM?



# Anger Iceberg

Our emotions affect our thoughts, behaviors and the sensations we feel in our bodies. What changes do you notice?

When we are angry, there are often other emotions under the surface

Icebergs are giant floating pieces of ice found in the coldest parts of the ocean.

What you can see from above is just a tiny part. Most of the iceberg is hidden under the surface.

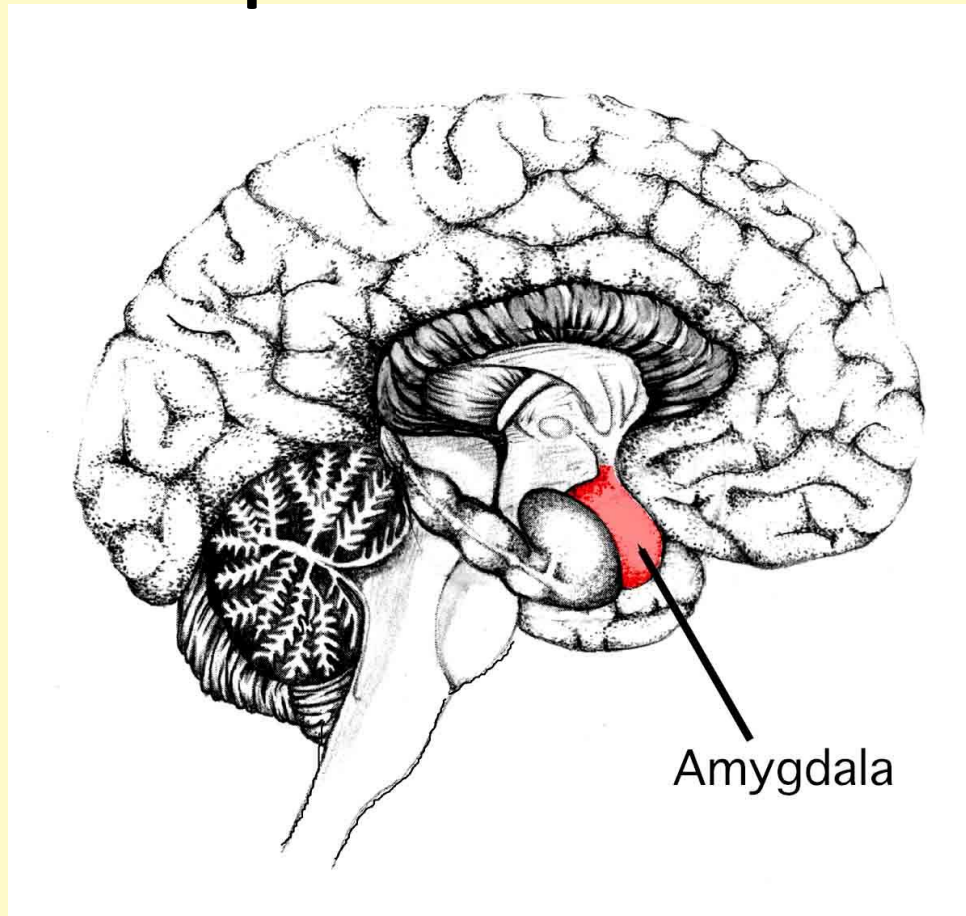


# How do angry parents present themselves?

List the **behaviours** that you might see and the **feelings** that might be driving those behaviours.

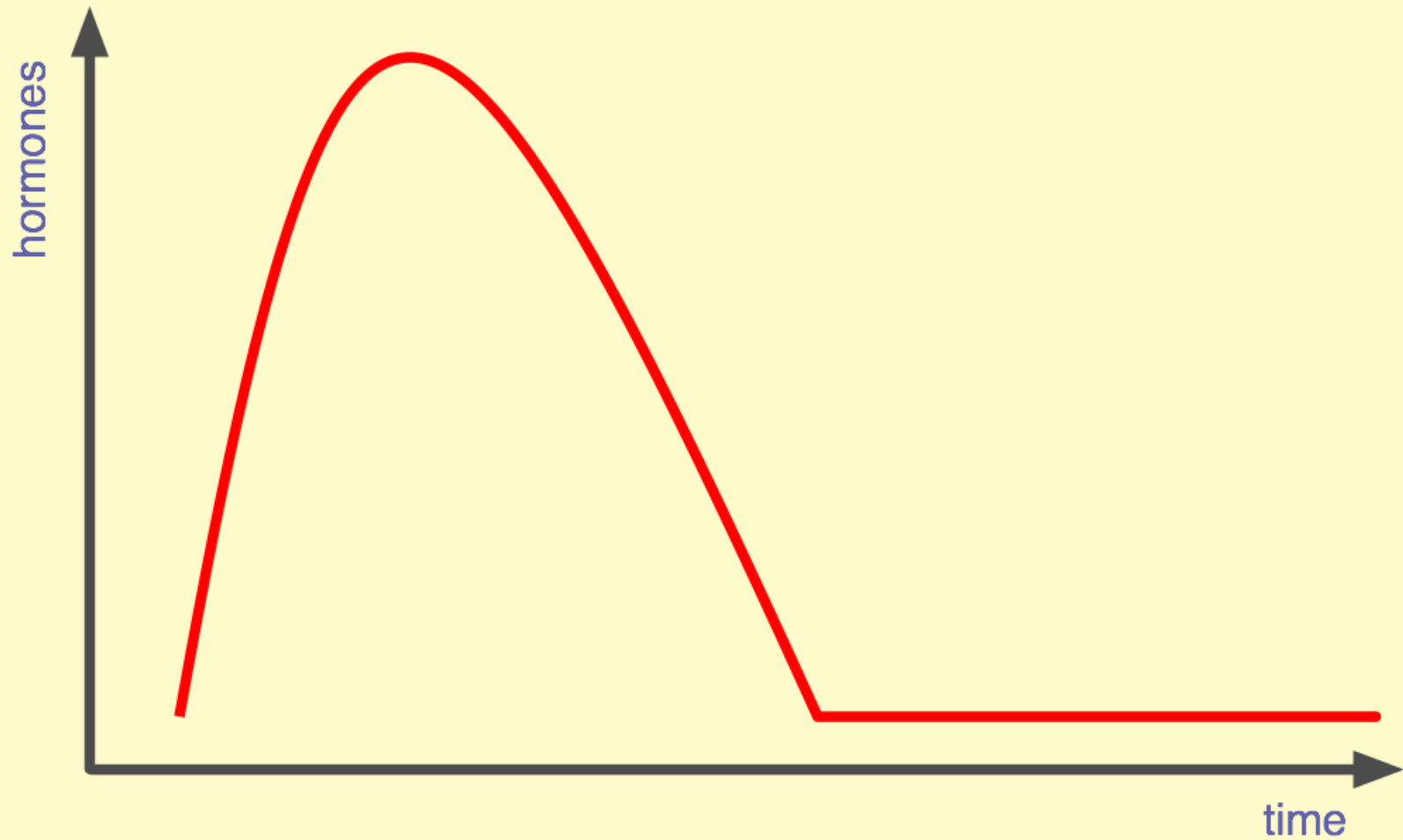


# The primitive brain





# The anger cycle



# What would you use?



water



petrol

# How can we **avoid** angry parents?

- Pre-empt an angry situation
- Establish very clear systems for how parents can access staff
- Hide!
- Planned meetings
- Build rapport

# Pre-empt the situation

Be the **first** person the parent hears from:

- Make a phone call home to inform them what has happened and what you have done about it
- Offer reassurance that the situation is in hand / give a deadline to get back to them
- Make sure information is passed on to team members – don't leave them in the lurch!

# Have established systems in place

- Inform **all parents** frequently about the channels of communication

e.g. 1. make an appointment with class teacher between these times

2. If you are not satisfied, make an appointment with SMT

3. If you are still not satisfied, make an appointment with HT

**Ensure policy reflects practice**



# Hide!

- It might sometimes be necessary for a member of staff to be unavailable / in a meeting / dealing with an incident.
- Work as a team to support each other
- Try to avoid getting 'caught on the hop'.
- Aim for a planned meeting instead

# Planned meeting

Formula for success:

- Sit them down and make them wait (offer drink)
- Think about furniture set up
- Set a time limit ?
- Ask another member of staff to be present, especially if parent has history of aggression
- Let them offload – **actively listen**, do not interrupt, other than to agree or ask the occasional question (for clarification only)
- Take notes – this implies it is serious

# Planned meetings

## Formula for success:

- Keep your own body language in check
- Do not argue – this prolongs the argument
- Sum up what they've said. "Let me check I've got this right. You're saying that..."
- Thank them for coming to see you about this
- Tell them you'll get back to them [tomorrow]
- Follow up with feedback for all **if appropriate**

# How to de-escalate

Safety is paramount

Say 'I can see that you are angry, I think it would be best if we talk about this tomorrow, when everyone is calm.'

'I'm wondering if we should have this conversation in (the library), where I can really listen to your concerns.'

# How to exit a situation

‘Thank you for sharing your concerns, I’m going inside now. We’ll talk tomorrow.’

‘I need to find out more about what happened, I’ll call you in the morning.’

Stay calm (on the outside!) and walk away.



# Role play

One person to be the angry parent, agitated because their son told them that another boy kicked him and the teacher 'didn't do nothing.'

One person to attempt to de-escalate the situation.



# Build rapport

Building positive relationships from the very start, helps to minimise aggressive outbursts in the future.

Aim to build a culture of mutual respect with every parent, as you do with their children.



Remember:

- Never take it personally – especially when they mean it personally.



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