



# Promise House helps family deal with anger

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By JUSTIN FARMER / WFAA-TV

Anxiety is normal. It's human. All of us have it. However, when anxieties start to make our kids aggressive and defiant, the situation can really take a toll on a family. There are ways to get things turned around, and sometimes the results are worth everything.

Ambria Iglehart, 15-years-old, now understands remorse, and is rebuilding a new chance for success. The majority of her life she struggled with controlling her anger. "I feel guilty, bad, about how I talked to those people. If I could apologize, I would," said Iglehart. She saw her peers as rude and she would lash out, fight, and find herself repeatedly kicked out of schools.

Her family was under stress. "I needed assistance, because I did what I could at home," said Clay Iglehart, Ambria's father. Finally a judge sentenced Ambria to the Promise House located south of downtown Dallas. It's a facility with experts ready to help families like the Iglehart's. "They gave us tips on how to control anger, counting, thinking about it and reacting so soon," said Clay Iglehart.

"A lot of times they would act out because they don't have the appropriate vocabulary for what the feeling states are," said Dr. Whitney McGee, Cook Children's Medical Center.

Dr. McGee says defining the trigger for a child's anger is key. If your family needs help, a doctor can help determine if your child is overly anxious, has a mood disorder worthy of medication, or if an environmental factor, like stressed parents, is causing aggressive behavior.

Whether families start with the help of a doctor, school counselor, or facility like Promise House, encouragement is a start. "Positive reinforcement for what you want them to do, praise for what you want, not so much focus on the punishment," said Dr. McGee.

For all the stories of lost children, consider real turnaround stories are real, like Ambria's. "...feel less aggressive, never mean, sweet, just my anger got the best of me," said Ambria.

Talk therapy is principally what works for Ambria. There are many avenues for success. The experts remind all parents to keep communication openly with your child, and don't give up. Help is there if you start looking.

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