

Sometimes My Mommy Gets Angry - Reading Guide

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Themes: parent with mental health disorder, safety plan

Lesson/Notes: Annie witnesses her mother's highs and lows dealing with Bipolar Disorder. This story can help normalize the feelings and concerns of a child going through a similar experience. It is intended for children whose parents struggle with emotional difficulties that may impact but not endanger their children; if you have reason to suspect a child is being abused or neglected, you should report it to your state's child abuse hotline for investigation. If danger is immediately present, call 911. In this story, Annie follows a safety plan set up with her trusted grandmother.

Discussion Questions

- *What did you notice in that story?*
- *How does Annie feel about her mom? (loves her and is scared/mad at times)*
- *What can Annie do if she feels scared or unsafe? (go to trusted neighbors)*
- *What does Annie do when her mom is upset? (calls grandma, eats her snack, gets ready for bed/school on her own, thinks positive thoughts)*
- *Does Annie's mom love her? (yes, but she struggles with her anger/emotions sometimes)*

Activity: Positive Jar

Suggested Supplies: jar (or cup, box, small bag, etc.), paper, pen

- Help the child cut a piece of paper into 10 equal pieces.
- On each piece of paper, encourage the child to write something positive or a reminder of something positive to do. Maybe:
 - a happy memory
 - names of people you trust
 - a funny joke
 - a quote you like
 - hug a favorite stuffed animal
 - read a book
 - draw a happy place
- Put all the papers into the jar. When the child (or your parent) is having a rough day, the child can draw a positive paper out of the jar to help him/her focus on positives.