

Teens get help with anger management

by **Katie Russie**

Associate Editor

Northwest Youth & Family Services in Shoreview offers an eight-week session for teens struggling with anger.

The first group meeting is next Wednesday, Jan. 18, followed by seven Monday evening sessions.

Mental Health Manager Rachel Cain said the classes help teens understand the root of anger and how best to handle it. Topics include recognizing anger triggers, identifying underlying causes of anger and building skills to express anger in healthy ways.

"Anger is a really normal reaction to a lot of things in life but then the class focuses on how do you handle the anger appropriately when you get that feeling," she

said. The class offers teens strategies to use their anger effectively rather than destructively.

The class also delves deeper into why teens might experience an unusual amount of anger.

"Although we do these groups for anger management we also try to take a look at what's underlying the anger because there may be a number of different things," Cain said.

She said most anger problems stem from other issues. Frustrations with family or peer problems, depression, abuse or on occasion, mental illness, can cause a child to react in unhealthy anger.

"Most of the time what we find is that the anger is in relation to specific relationships, whether it's that kid's relationship with their parents or peer relationships,"

Cain said.

Cain said teens taking the classes often are already clients of other NYFS programs. Some who aren't clients become clients when issues raised in class point to other areas where the teen needs help.

Cain didn't know if teen violence is actually increasing or if the public is simply more aware of teen violence and therefore perceives it as increasing.

"Recent school violence, I would say, has just kind of brought that issue to the forefront so that I think people are more aware of it," she said.

Cain said school districts and parents often request anger management classes for teens. She said the class usually draws five to eight teens, and Northwest Youth & Family Services offers the

Controlling Anger

1. Stop. Calm down. Think before speaking.
2. Once calm, explain the problem and how you feel.
3. Think up possible solutions.
4. Explain the best solution and put it into action.

— From www.kidshealth.org

class two or three times a year.

To register for either the boys' or girls' class call Judy Baldwin at 651-379-3431. Cost is \$80; limited scholarships available.

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