

“As soon as I feel the anger, I put my hands up in front of me and say *Stop!* Then I walk away and shake the anger out of my hands.”

- Damon, age 7

Damon started therapy at **WestCoast Children’s Clinic** after being suspended five times from first grade.

Quick to anger, he repeatedly got into fights during recess.

Sometimes his teacher locked him out of the classroom. She didn’t know what to do.

In his foster home, Damon started locking himself in the bathroom.

Because that’s what he thought he was supposed to do when he was mad.

Sometimes Damon wished he didn’t exist at all.

When Damon’s therapist, Kevin, tried to connect with him,

Damon didn’t know how to respond.

He felt afraid. Mad. Ashamed. And sad.

It took time, but Damon began to trust Kevin.

In therapy he wrote a story about a lonely tiger that had to stay in a cage

because all the kids and grownups were afraid of him.

Kevin has helped Damon understand where his feelings come from,

and what he can do when he starts to feel like the tiger.

**Shake the anger out of his hands.**

WestCoast sees 1,500 kids every year.

Children who don’t feel good about themselves and don’t know why.

We help them understand the connection between their feelings and their behavior.

And teach them the coping skills they need to stay in school, stay safe, and ultimately manage their world.

At WestCoast Children’s Clinic we offer kids a safe space with adults who know how to listen and give their full attention. Without giving up. Kids begin to see themselves differently. And the adults in their lives do too.

**Healing happens from the inside out.**

Kevin works with Damon’s teacher, foster parents, and social workers to help them support Damon when he gets mad.

He stops getting in fights. Makes friends. Attends school without getting suspended.

We don’t stop there.

Informed by the experiences of the youth and families we serve, we teach thousands of social workers, parents, and caregivers to understand the impact of trauma and how to support youth in their care.

We publish research that shows how outside events affect the inner worlds of children.

And we change California policy to make it easier for kids to get help.

Damon recently told Kevin he wants to change his story.

“I’m writing a new ending,” he said. “The tiger felt sad because he didn’t get to say goodbye to his friends and family, but now he knows what to do when he’s angry. He’s happy now.”

Helping children feel seen is not magic. But it is transformational.

**WESTCOAST CHILDREN’S CLINIC**

**BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS FROM THE INSIDE OUT.**





## WESTCOAST CHILDREN'S CLINIC



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