

## **Alternative methods of dealing with Aggressive or Negative behaviour**

Children resort to aggressive behaviours because of a lack of wisdom and self-control. It is not a sign that a child is hateful or mean. Children are human beings and human beings will get angry; we can't prevent that. What we can do is teach our children how to handle their frustration and anger in appropriate ways. If a child uses these physical acts to express their feelings, use some of the following to change their behaviour.

### **Intercede before it happens**

Watch the child during playtime. When you see them becoming frustrated or angry-intervene? Coach them through the issue. Teach them what to do, or model what to say to them or if they seem too upset to learn, redirect their attention to another activity until their emotions level out.

### **Teach and explain**

It's one thing to tell a child what not to do or to step into an argument and solve it yourself. It's another thing entirely to teach them what to do in advance of the next problem. This can be done through role-play, discussion and reading a few children's books about angry emotions.

### **Examine hidden causes**

Is the child hungry, tired, sick, jealous, frustrated, bored or scared? If you can identify any feelings driving a child's actions, you can address those along with the aggressive behaviour.

### **Give more attention to the injured party**

Often the child who hits gets so much attention that the action becomes a way of gaining the spotlight. Instead, give more attention to the child who is hurt. After a brief statement, "No hitting!" turn and give attention to the child who was wronged, "Come here and we will read a book".

### **Teach positive physical touches**

Teach a few physical games, like add or what's the time Mr Wolf. Under direct supervision, children who are more physical can gain a positive outlet for their physical energy.

### **Teach the clapping method**

Tell a child to clap their hands whenever they feel the urge to hit. This gives them an immediate outlet for their emotions and helps them to learn to keep their hands to themselves. An alternative is to teach them to put their hands in their pockets. Reward praise anytime you see they are successful.

### **Give the child a time out**

To use Time Out when a child acts out aggressively, immediately and gently take the child by the shoulders, look them in the eye and say, "No hurting others, time out." Guide the child to a chair and tell them, "You may get up when you can play without hitting." By telling them that they can get up when ready, you let them know that they are responsible for controlling their own behaviour. If a child gets up and hits again, say, "You are not ready to get up yet," and direct them back to time out.

### **Avoid play hitting and wrestling**

Sometimes children who roughhouse with parents or siblings during play time might then use these same actions with other children. It can then be hard for them to draw the line during normal play. Once again after a brief statement take the child out of the situation and again read a book