

Managing Aggressive Behaviour

1 of 2

Some children will demonstrate aggressive behaviours. These may be verbal or non-verbal.

It is important to respond quickly to ensure the safety of the child, other children, staff and visitors. When responding to aggressive behaviours, we must aim to:

- Comfort the victim of the aggressive behaviour.
- Actively seek and educate on positive reactions to conflicts, rather than aggression.

Environmental Influences

Aggressive children are often provoked by stress factors such as lack of sleep or food, relationship and familial conflicts or circumstances such as poverty and domestic violence, separation anxiety, unfamiliarity with their surrounds or persons.

Such aspects increase the risks



of aggressive and challenging behaviours in children.

Managing Influences of Aggressive Behaviours

Observations of the child's skills and development should be carried out. If any concerns arise, family members should be invited to consult a relevant or referred specialist or children's professional. These may include dieticians, occupational therapists, speech pathologists etc.

Often, however, it will be difficult to resolve relationship and familial conflicts or issues. Therefore, it may be appropriate to recommend community or family agencies

that could assist all family members and ultimately the child.

Encourage the family members of children who exert aggressive behaviours to assist their child by using non-violent punishment, and exposing their child to other children in a play environment to develop their compassion.

The Service

There are various preventative techniques that can be implemented and controlled by educators that will help reduce the instances of aggressive behaviours.

This includes setting limits on the number of children playing with certain toys so



Managing Aggressive Behaviour

Z O I Z

competing for toys does not occur.

Investing time with children who often engage in aggressive behaviours will enable the child to avoid further aggressive behaviours. For example, invite the child to stay with you while you perform your daily duties, or stay with them while they play with toys or other children and observe their behaviour. It is important to take the time to build a close relationship with these children, as this will encourage trust.

From this, the child will learn, from staff members, to act accordingly in terms of language, patience, sharing, honesty and self control in a physical and emotional sense. It is important that all educators role model positive behaviour to children.

Teaching children about the effects of their aggression on other people will help develop their empathy skills. This may be as simple as inviting the child who engaged in



aggressive behaviours to apologise and take care of the victim and their injuries. In some cases, and when children do not respond to the Service's preventative and resolution strategies, it may be necessary to refer the child to a children's specialist. This measure should be suggested to family members.

Where this does not work, or family members are unwilling to help resolve their child's aggressive behaviours, it may be necessary to ask the family members to remove their child from the Service to ensure the safety of other children, staff and visitors at the Centre.



Biting



For some toddlers, biting is a frequent form of aggression.

For staff, biting outbursts can be highly stressful to deal with both at a children's level and a family member's level.

This is because biting is a particularly feared experience for children and family in terms of the transfer of infectious diseases and scarring.

It is most common for biting to occur in the toddler age range and may be associated with developmental issues such as limited speech and language development and skills, poor self control or a

lack of understanding of the consequences.

Managing Biting

Establish any reasons such as delayed speech, overtiredness, hunger, impatience etc.

Observe and discuss these concerns with family members to encourage a holistic approach. Perform preventative measures such as changing routines, removing the child from high risk situations and monitor food and sleep levels.

Coaching children will empower them in dealing with conflict in a more positive manner. For example, teach the victims

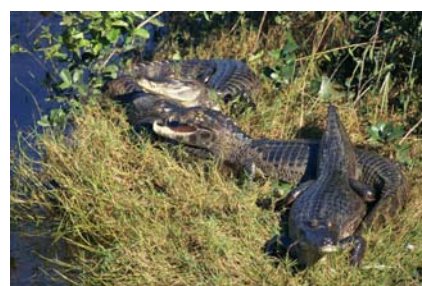
of biting to say "Stop" and immediately seek the help of an adult.

Praise and acknowledge successful social interactions.

Reprimanding, removing and firmly asserting "No biting" may be necessary.

Consistency amongst educators in this process is particularly important. This may include educating adults on how to react appropriately to instances of biting.

Where appropriate, and if reasonable attempts at the Service have not been successful, refer the child to relevant children's services professionals for assistance.



Bullying

Bullying can occur in numerous and various forms such as physical, verbal, gesture, extortion, exclusion and digital. It is important that staff respond to bullying in a swift and effective manner to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children at the Service. It is important not to label a child who bullies as a “Bully”.



Characteristics of Children

Who Bully

Children of all backgrounds can bully. Preconceived notions of children who bully should be avoided.

The child who bullies may also be the victim of bullying. The child who bullies will often think that they are innocent, and that the child being bullied is somehow deserving of this negative experience.

Recent research demonstrates that aggressive and bullying inclinations begin in some children as early as two years old, which highlights the importance of children’s services effectively responding to children who bully.

Characteristics of Victims of Bullying

Children of all backgrounds can fall victim to bullying.

Preconceived notions of children who fall victim to bullying should be avoided. Boys are victims of bullying more than girls.

Victims may have low self-esteem, confidence, lack social skills or viewed as unpopular. It is important to remember that victims are often sensitive and easily hurt, and feel incapable of preventing or stop such negative experiences.

Strategies to Overcome Bullying

- Practice all-encompassing and socially inclusive care. Daily programs should recognise value and reflect the social

and cultural diversity of our community.

- Role model and actively encourage appropriate behaviours.
- Form a close relationship with family members in order to work cooperatively to overcome instances of bullying.
- Empower children by giving them responsibilities as they will feel valued.
- Help children deal with their anger. This includes offering alternative dispute resolution techniques that are socially acceptable.
- Seek the support of children’s services professionals if necessary.

Managing Shy Children

Like adults, children need time to adapt to new environments, expectations and people.

Shyness is a common attribute of children who are new to the Service. As children develop confidence, a sense of security and trust, they will become more comfortable in the Service environment.

It is important to remember that some children may not be shy at home or with family friends or family members. Some children, however, may be shy in all or most instances, regardless of the environment or people present. Therefore, it is the Service's role to assist children in gaining confidence and shedding their shyness over time.

Indicators of Shyness

Observing, but not becoming involved in the activities and conversations of children or staff.

An unwillingness to communicate with other children and staff.

A reluctance to initiate activities, conversations or relationships.

Playing alone for extensive periods of time.

Management Strategies for Shyness

For children who are shy only in

- the Service environment, it is crucial that educators assist the child to develop a sense of security, trust and confidence. These may include engaging the
- child in frequent small group

activities, and moving onto larger groups as their confidence builds and shyness fades.

- Develop a close and trusting relationship with the child. This will help develop a sense of security and trust, which will in turn enhance their confidence.



- For children who are shy in all or most instances, regardless of the environment or people present, it is important to actively seek the assistance of family members.
- Encourage the family to prepare the child for attending the Service. Show and tell the child what the Service is like so that they know what to expect.
- Describe to the child the routine of drop off and pick up at the Service.
- Acknowledge and encourage the child, despite the perceived small scale of their steps.
- At the Service, staff should describe the daily routines and procedures.
- These may include engaging the child in frequent small group activities, and moving onto larger groups as their confidence builds

and shyness fades.

- Develop a close and trusting relationship with the child. This will help develop a sense of security and trust, which will in turn enhance their confidence.

Selective Mutism

- This is an extreme form of shyness, in which the attentiveness of staff members is crucial.
- It is particularly important to develop a positive relationship with the child's family members. Suggest that the family arranges play dates with other children from the Service as this will help enhance their confidence and sense of security.
- To overcome this, offer instances of small group play.
- Ask family members what their child is particularly interested in, and accommodate their interests at the Service. This may prompt verbal responses from the child.
- In severe cases, it may be appropriate to seek professional advice.

