

Calming Terrific Toddlers: Evidence-based Strategies that Reduce Aggression and **Promote Self-Regulation**



Course Objective: Label effective, evidence-based adult 🔌 🗠 responses to toddler aggression that will promote a toddler's self-regulation skills and emotional intelligence.



"Anybody can become angry - that is easy, but to be angry with the right person and to the right degree, and at the right time, and for the right purpose, and in the right way - that is not within everybody's power and is not easy." -Aristotle

Triggers



A toddler may exhibit aggressive acts because they: (Check all that apply)

- Want a toy someone else has
- Feel overwhelmed
- O Do not have enough space
- Need to express strong feelings
- Lack communication skills

- Feel pain or discomfort
- O Are experiencing a rise in stress hormone
- O They have a lack of self-regulation skills
- Feel an aggressive impulse
- Have a master plan to frustrate caregivers

Three Major Triggers



Typical toddler development

- Mostly focused on own needs
- Driven to do and own
- Cannot perspective-take
- Learning to separate thoughts, feelings, and actions



Elevated Stress Hormones

- Stress changes behavior
- Aggression is much more likely when stress hormones are elevated



Lack skills: When experiencing strong feelings, toddlers cannot

- Use their words
- Perspective-take
- Anticipate the results
- Control their impulses Express emotions "appropriately"
 - Keep themselves safe
 - "Share"

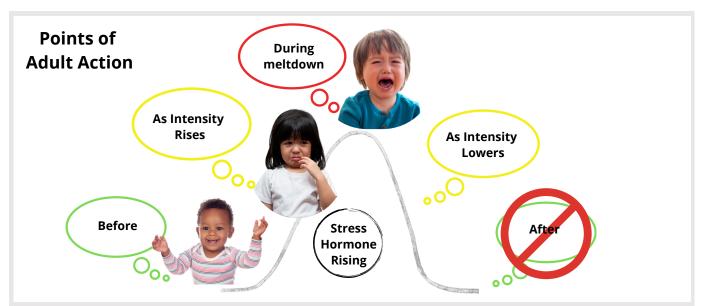
Aggression is NOT: A well thought out plan designed to "get" you or manipulate others



Aggression is common.



Aggression needs to stop.



*Labeling *Biting back *Getting angry, yelling, or shaming *Giving too much attention to biter **Avoid unhelpful strategies:** *Forcing a children to apologize or insisting they play together





Calming the Storm: Addressing Toddler Aggression and Reducing Future Aggressive Acts

HELP! Model E liminate distractions ave a plan _abel feelings Have a plan Avoid the "Power" Approach Respond calmly with "Influence" Threatening stance Non-threatening Making eye contact Avoid eye contact Loud "Paplic" voice • Quiet "Private" voice Many words • Few words Eliminate Distractions *Move down to the child's level and set things aside Label Feelings *Tune in, identify the emotion, and help the children communicate

Prompt "Sounds like. 'Turn please"

> "Sounds like 'I'm mad!" "Sounds like 'No!"

"Sounds like, 'Help"

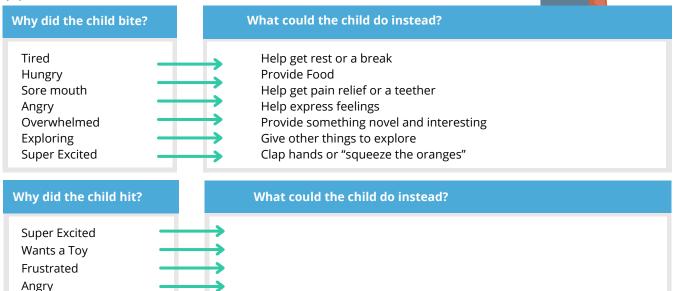
"Sounds like, 'That's mine.""

"Sounds like, 'Can I have some?"



Prompt

Top Tip: Match the Prompt to the "Why"!



Video Analysis

Overwhelmed Other?

Which strategies do you see? What is not helpful about what this adult is doing?



Objective Review: What is one effective, evidence-based adult response to toddler aggression that will promote a toddler's self-regulation skills?



