

Eyes on

# Aggressive behaviours (2)

When should we be worried?



PARENTS



CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE FOR CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING

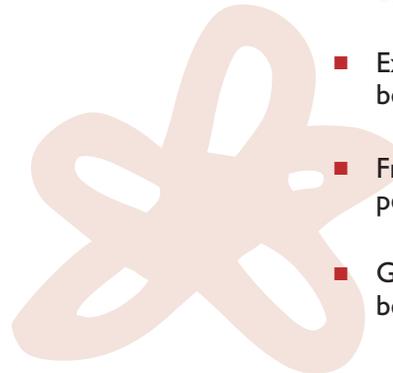
Early Childhood Development



***“Both the environment and a child’s parents play a crucial role in reducing the frequency of aggressive behaviours after the age of 3.”***

## What do we know?

- A mother’s stress, the use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco during pregnancy, and problems at birth of the baby can lead to antisocial behaviours.
- Both the environment and a child’s parents play a crucial role in reducing the frequency of aggressive behaviours after the age of 3.
- Persistent aggressiveness in early childhood (after 3-4 years) can mean chronic adjustment problems in adolescence.
- Aggressive behaviours are a chronic problem for a small number of children who use such behaviours (5 to 10%).
- The seriousness and frequency of aggression are what set apart children who behave normally from children with a chronic behaviour problem.
- Characteristics that you inherit from your parents can explain a lot about why certain children use more or less physical aggression in early childhood.
- Extreme or inconsistent punishment encourages aggressive behaviours as much as any lack of discipline.
- Friends’ rejection and problems with language contribute to the persistence of aggressive behaviours in children.
- Grouping together children who have problems only makes their behaviour worse.



Paying attention to...

What can be done?

... the frequency of aggressive behaviours.

- Check whether the frequency of the aggressive behaviours is normal given the age of the child. (see Aggressive behaviours 1)

... the disciplinary approach adopted.

- Avoid authoritarian and excessive punishments. (see Aggressive behaviours 1)
- Develop the child's sensitivity to others and his/her ability to control anger.

... the continuity of interventions made by different adults.

- Work with other adults to have the same expectations and use consistent discipline.

... the supervision provided by adults.

- Make sure there is enough supervision.

... the reactions of adults.

- Check to see if the use of aggression is encouraged, excused or tolerated in the child's environment.

... the reactions of other children.

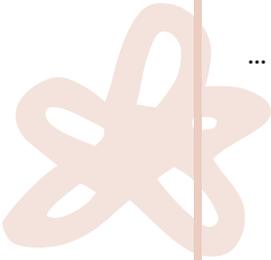
- Avoid putting children with behaviour problems in the same group.

... the organization of the living environment.

- Check that the living environment is adapted to the child.

... other problems presented by the child.

- See a professional in cases of language problems or rejection by friends or adults.





## Information

The Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development identifies and summarizes the best scientific work on the social and emotional development of young children. It disseminates this knowledge to a variety of audiences in formats and languages adapted to their needs.

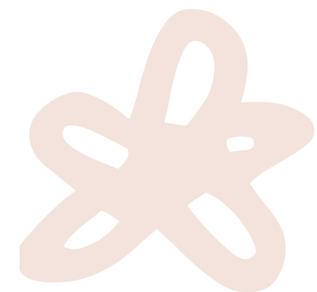
For a more in-depth understanding of aggression in early childhood, consult our experts' articles in the Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development, available free of charge at [www.child-encyclopedia.com](http://www.child-encyclopedia.com).

This information sheet is published by the Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development, one of four Centres of Excellence for Children's Well-Being. Funding for the Centres of Excellence for Children's Well-Being is provided by the Public Health Agency of Canada. The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors/researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official views of the Public Health Agency of Canada.

We are grateful to the Fondation Lucie et André Chagnon for its financial contribution to produce this information sheet.

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