

Exactly How to Handle Aggressive Behaviors in the Moment

10 MIN · YOUTUBE · [HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=AIETIPU6PLE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AIETIPU6PLE)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aiEtipU6p1E>

SUMMARY

The speaker discusses effective strategies for managing aggressive behaviors in children, emphasizing the importance of remaining calm and quiet rather than reacting with anger or excessive talking. The focus is on creating a safe environment for the child while addressing their emotional needs and fostering better coping skills outside of high-stress moments.

- When children exhibit aggressive behaviors, parents should respond with calmness and limit verbal communication.*
- Actions should speak louder than words; parents should physically guide children to a safer space if necessary.*
- Staying regulated and connected is crucial; parents must be aware of their own emotional triggers.*
- The bulk of behavioral work occurs outside of crisis moments, where parents can process events and teach coping strategies.*
- Utilizing children's books and open-ended play can help children understand and manage their feelings.*
- Ongoing conversations about emotions and choices are essential for long-term behavioral change.*
- Parents should circle back to intense episodes to reinforce learning and connection with their child.*
- A free ebook is available to help parents understand and manage their child's anger and aggression effectively.*

we are triggered and so we think we need to use all of our words and explaining and asking questions and lecturing as a way to affect change and actually it's the opposite. When our child gets loud, we get quiet. So step number one, now I know when it comes to aggressive behaviors, it's tempting to over complicate things by reacting emotionally in the moment and getting angry ourselves and yelling and punishing and threatening, do you want to lose your ice cream for today? Or we might try to use logic and reasoning and overexplain ourselves and why, you know, things have to be a certain way or why our boundaries are this and not that or like knee-jerk reaction. Ask them questions that are really rhetorical and don't really move the needle forward like what are you doing or why are you doing that? Or we might try to lecture them into better behavior. Or maybe we just shut down and ignore it altogether and we're just like didn't see that anyways. And really what these things do is they over complicate our lives. They actually end up adding fuel to the fire without meaning to. And trust me, I'm guilty. I've been there before. And I know that anger and aggression is really triggering as parents. And so I want to help be the voice of reason and actually make your life easier. I feel like sometimes in the parenting world, we're kind of over complicating things. Things don't really need to be that complicated. And so I just want to give you a simple stepbystep plan when your child gets aggressive, okay? So that you walk into this moment like, "Hey, I've talked about this before. I've thought about it. I have a plan. This is how it's going to go." An overall premise of this plan is that when our child gets loud, when their behavior gets big, we get quiet. We get more intentional and we actually let our actions speak louder than our words. Okay? Because often, like I

said, we are triggered and so we think we need to use all of our words and explaining and asking questions and lecturing as a way to affect change. And actually, it's the opposite. When our child gets loud, we get quiet. So, step number one is to get quiet. The first step is to limit your words. Okay? Next step is to focus on making your actions louder than your words. Right? making your actions speak for you. So often times when our child is very disregulated, all they need from us is to be their calm, confident leader who comes in and ushers them towards safety.

Now, every situation is a nuanced, every situation and context is different. So this might look like physically moving your body away if they're getting aggressive. This might look like bringing your child to another room, not to exclude them, but to come with them to a more quiet, secluded area. This might look like removing an object from their hand if they're about to throw it. This could look like a variety of things depending on the context, but the overall idea here is I want you to be more focused on allowing your actions to speak for you in the heat of the moment.

I think it's easy as parents to feel like we're not being effective. We're not doing enough if we're not talking. But I call BS. I think we're actually more intentional, more regulated, and more effective when we actually get quiet and get very intentional with the choices that we make. Which brings me to step number three, which is to stay regulated and connected. Now, all these steps, step one and two, allows us to be more intentional about regulating our nervous system because we're quiet.

We're tuning in. We're going more inward. We're taking our deep breaths so that we can stay connected. That's really all your child needs in the heat of the moment when they're losing their ish, they're getting aggressive, they're very disregulated, they really just need us to be a safe place for them and to essentially keep them safe, right? keep them safe from themselves. Your biggest goal when your child is disregulated and getting aggressive is to keep everybody safe and to stay as regulated as you possibly can. Now, it's not about being a calm parent all of the time. It's about being more aware of the emotions that you're feeling when you're getting triggered, right? Because again, aggressive behaviors are going to trigger even the most calm, zen parent out there. I don't care what they say.

It is what it is, right? Even I get disregulated when my child gets angry or frustrated or aggressive. So your ultimate goal when your child gets aggressive is to stay aware of your emotions so that you can respond more intentionally. The other thing I want you to remember is that when your child gets aggressive, it's not the time to use logic. It's not the time to lecture them and ask them questions. It's basically really not the time to talk.

Even though your mind is going to want to go there and tell you that to be an effective parent, you need to be talking and lecturing your child, but that's not true. It's really a time for going within and staying regulated ourselves so that we can respond intentionally. And remember, when our child's emotional brain is activated, they can't register language very well, and it's likely to disregulate them even further. What I also want you to remember is that a lot of the work when it comes to aggressive behaviors is done outside of the moment.

Okay? So, it's not that we just focus on staying calm, don't say anything, assert our boundaries, and then move

on with our life. No, no, no, no. Don't do that. That's a surefire way to see these things come up again and again and again and again and again. So a lot of the work is done outside of the moment when we take time to circle back to that moment. You know, tell the story, understand what they were going through so that you can essentially problem solve for next time. Assert your boundaries. Let them know, hey, this is something we're going to work on. It's not okay to use our bodies. I don't care how upset you're feeling. send them the message again that this is something that you take seriously and that you're going to help them learn better ways to cope with their anger, anxiety, frustration, etc. And so in the moment, yes, you want to send the message that this is not acceptable, that you're going to keep everybody safe and you see them, you hear them, etc., etc. But again, the bulk of the work happens outside of the moment. when you circle back to these intense episodes and make a plan for next time. So, three very practical ways to circle back and teach these things outside of the moment when everybody is connected and calm is to use children's books, which I have a couple videos that I'll link down in this description if you are watching on YouTube. I have a couple videos of book hauls on teaching kids about feelings and aggression and anger specifically, but using children's books and children's media to circle back to these concepts and practice coping skills and talk about feelings. Also using open-ended play to model how we cope with really intense feelings. Play is one of the best ways children learn, especially if you have a young kiddo under seven. And also, like I said earlier, use conversations, especially if you have an older child, five and up, to circle back, process what happened.

You know, this is a wonderful way to reconnect with our children and let them know, hey, we had a hard time. That doesn't change how much I love you. I'm here for you. We're going to work as a team. It's okay that we're struggling with this right now, but I'm going to help. I'm not sweeping this under the rug and acting like this isn't happening, but this is also something that we need to work through and I'm going to help you basically is what you're sending those messages in those conversations. So, this is not a conversation to lecture them and oh, you know, you hit me and that's not okay and you need to think about what you did and etc. Like, that's not what I'm talking about when I say circle back. I'm saying actually hear from your child's perspective what it was like for them to have that feeling. You know, even taking it a step further to ask them, you know, did you feel anything in your body, using that time to educate them about feelings and also sending them the message they always have the power to choose? Let's think through our choices.

What other choices could we have made in that moment? How can I help you make better choices, etc., etc., etc. These are ongoing conversations. And until you are circling back in a consistent way when it comes to anger and aggression, you're not going to see changes in the behavior. So be sure to as best as you can, of course, you don't need to circle back to every mishap. I would be exhausted. But you know those very intense episodes where you're like, "Wow, woo, we were way off track." Make sure you circle back. That can be an hour later. That could be hours later.

That could be a day later. It just depends. Every situation is different. But circling back is a huge way to curb aggressive behaviors overall. All right, so let's take this conversation a little bit further. Let me know down in the comments if you're watching on YouTube, what commonly triggers your child's anger and aggressive behaviors so that I can keep making helpful resources for you. Let me know if you have any questions about anything that I mentioned in this episode. And if you haven't already, be sure to check out my new ebook, all on helping our child through anger and aggressive behavior.

So, it walks you through the psychology of anger, how to understand and detect your child's level of emotional dysregulation, which is really important to being effective in the moment. It matters how dysregulated your child is. And then I give you a three-step plan on how to approach their anger and aggression just depending on their level of dysregulation. I also give you helpful mindset shifts because this is so important because often times, like I said in the beginning, we get triggered.

We feel very anxious and flustered in the face of their intense emotions. So, I help you rework your mindset so that you can show up more intentional, present, and a little bit more patient. That's always the goal, right? So, you can go to the momsychologist.com/ebook to download your free ebook. All right, that is it for this episode. I'll see you in the next one. Bye. [Music]