

CONNECT TO THE CLASSROOM

Hitting/Kicking/Pinching Others

In this part of the module, you learned that even though we would like toddlers to "use their words" when interacting with each other, they are still learning to talk and to control their impulses enough to resolve conflicts peacefully. Toddlers may use aggressive behaviors to communicate feelings and thoughts such as "Stop," "I don't like that," "You're in my way," or "I'm mad at you because you took my toy." This section talked about preventing or minimizing aggressive situations and ways to help children work through conflicts without using Time Out.

Over your next few teaching days, pay special attention to every incident of aggressive behavior and reflect on the questions below. You might even want to take a few notes during the day to remind yourself of what happened and of the time and place of each incident.

Use your observations and interactions throughout the day to respond to the following questions:

1

Did you notice any patterns in children's behaviors during the day? For example, was there a place in your classroom where more of the aggressive behaviors happened? Was there a particular activity or time of day during which more aggressive behaviors happened?

2

Take a look at your classroom. Is there enough space for activities that children need to do in each area? For example, they may need to move around in the dramatic play area. What could you do to make more space or limit the number of children in this area?

3

If you noticed that there were more aggressive behaviors during specific activities, what could you change about these activities that might help? For example, could you:

- Increase the number of toys or supplies so everyone has enough?
- Change the seating arrangement so that children have more personal space around them?
- Sit with children during this activity so you can help them negotiate conflicts before children turn to aggressive behaviors?

4

Focus on providing words for children to use in place of aggressive actions? When you see aggressive behavior, get close, protect children from harm, and tell them what words to say instead, such as "My turn," "Stop," "Wait," "Move please," or "Don't touch." What words can you model and prompt for the children in your classroom?

