

Autism Community Connection

Autismcc Yahoo Group Responds!

Our group is comprised of parents, educators and professionals in the autism community. We welcome parents to ask questions so that together we may share our wealth of collected knowledge and insight.

www.autismcommunityconnection.com - <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/autismcc/>

Subject: Aggressive Behavior

Karen has a 6-year-old son who lately is doing a lot of hitting, scratching, pinching. He has sudden outbursts of anger and will also hit as a way of play. Her son takes Risperdal for sleeping and won't take his smaller dose in the morning. She was looking for advice. Here were some ideas that worked for one family:

1. Get a good handle on the **ABCs of the behavior(s)** - What happens just before the behavior (**antecedent**), what is the **behavior** and what does it look/sound/feel and then what happens right **AFTER** your son displays the aggressive behavior (the **consequence**). It's a good place to start to get some clues as to how often he's doing it, when, with whom, and how long it lasts etc. It may also give you some clues as to **WHY** he might be doing it and what communicative purpose the behavior is serving. What is he trying to communicate thru the behavior?
2. Let's say, you find that he's hitting the most when he seems to want to get the attention of or initiate play with a peer or sib. Now comes the fun part. What do you want him to do **INSTEAD** of the behavior/hitting? Do you want him to go up to a peer and say something like, 'Do you want to play?' or communicate that in some other appropriate way? Then that's what you teach him to do **INSTEAD** of the hitting.
3. I used to do that 'quiet hands' thing a LOT with my daughter when she was little, not for hitting but for stimming. After about 6 months of me pulling my hair out and her continuing to stim with her hands, we did an 'ABC' and realized she mostly did it in situations where she was overwhelmed and this was her way of calming or entertaining herself with a visual stim. So instead of just telling her what **NOT TO DO**, we started teaching some acceptable alternatives that she **COULD DO**...and guess what? It worked!!