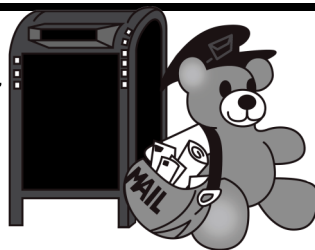


THE TEDDY BEAR POST



A NEWSLETTER FOR PARENTS OF PRESCHOOLERS

Taming Your Child's Wild Side

Spring in Hawaii means a lot of rainy days. With kids cooped up at home after school, boredom can lead to undesirable behaviors.

All kids play aggressively once in a while, but for their own safety, we should help them to come up with better ways of expressing themselves.

Toddlers may hit, kick, or bite when they feel frustrated. It may be because they can't get what they want or because they don't know how else to let us know how they are feeling.

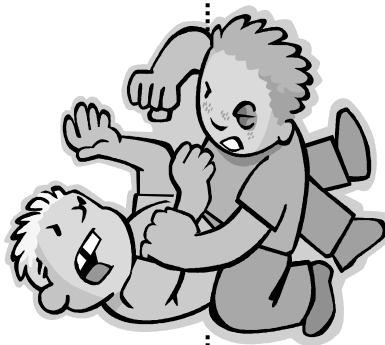
Here are some ways to help your children manage their emotions in a more productive and positive way.

Watch out for warning signs: Children get frustrated when they are tired or over stimulated. Any time your child hits, pushes, shoves, or otherwise hurts someone else, be sure to:

Act Promptly: As soon as you see your child act aggressively, correct the behavior by saying: No biting! Biting hurts! Or: No hitting! Your arms are made for hugging, not hitting! Older children are better able to understand cause and consequence. They should immediately be told to step away from the situation until they are calm enough to talk about and face the end result of their behavior.

Consider a Time-Out: A brief period of isolation can help your child calm down. A good rule for time-out is one minute per year of age. For example, a two-year-old should sit out for two minutes. For children older than eight, it may be more effective to remove a privilege such as TV time or phone.

Follow up: After a time out, allow your child the chance to apologize. If she refuses, explain that certain behaviors can hurt a person's body as well as their feelings and an apology can help them feel better.



Teach your child better ways to communicate: Talk to your child about appropriate ways to handle the situation next time. You might want to say: I know you were angry because Johnny took your toy.

Next time you must use your words and tell him that he can play with your ball when you are done with it.

Keep your expectations realistic: Asking a toddler to sit for long periods of time or an older child to do all his homework in one sitting is a tall order. If your child simply can't do what you're asking, he may resort to anger to express his frustration.

Watch your own temper: How do you react when you are frustrated? Do you shout and curse every time another driver cuts you off? Why shouldn't

your child do the same when he's upset?

And most importantly: NEVER bite your child back; it will only reinforce aggressive behavior. Your children are not always paying attention to what you say but they are always watching what you do!

Persistent aggressive behavior can be a sign that your child needs additional help dealing with negative feelings and emotions. Children who have a hard time speaking are often frustrated and can resort to inappropriate physical expression. A pediatrician and/or a speech therapist can help you to sort things out and help your child to better communicate.

Keep in mind that children are constantly learning and part of that process is to test their boundaries. Be very clear about what you expect of them and what the consequences will be if they disobey. Be patient but firm; stick with your rules. Eventually your hard work will pay off.

Article derived from: <http://www.parenting.com/article/Toddler/Behavior/Aggression>

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Please call The Parent Line at 526-1222

(for neighbor islands, 1-800-816-1222) to revise your count/address.

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Write to the Affirmation Action Officer at Box 3378, Honolulu, HI 96801 or call 586-4616 within 180 days of a problem.



"A PARENT ASKS"

Q: My family recently moved to Hawaii from the mainland. Although we love the beautiful weather, we miss the change of seasons with its great colors and traditions. How can I help my children adapt to "year long summer"?



A: Although our seasons are more subtle, we do experience changes that can be appreciated by you and your family. Between November and March, when the temperatures drop, the North Shore becomes home to some of the most amazing surf competitions and it is well worth watching the monster waves hit the shore. This is also the best time to watch for whales. Though we've never had a white Christmas, our island is beautiful during the holidays and you can take a carriage ride with your whole family to see the downtown lights. The Bishop Museum offers different exhibits on nature and science throughout the year and your children can explore different aspects of our islands that make us special. Learning about volcanoes and visiting one on the Big Island can be the highlight of Spring break. The museum offers kama'aina rates and is free for children under three. Adapting to new surroundings is a wonderful and valuable ability that your children will use throughout their lives.

SUGGESTED READING

Some excellent book available at the State Libraries:

- **Hands Are Not For Hitting**
By Martine Agassi
- **I Was So Mad**
By Mercer Mayer
- **Hopper Hunts For Spring**
By Marcus Pfister
- **Planting A Rainbow**
By Lois Ehlert
- **Bear Wants More**
By Karma Wilson
- **Mouse's First Spring**



SAFETY WORKS!

Teaching your child safety guidelines when encountering dogs is very important. Many dog bites are more than just nips, and some may even require hospitalization or surgery. Basic safety is important for all dogs, even small ones. Dogs that appear friendly or well-trained may also cause harm if startled or agitated by children. Be sure to always ask the owner if it's okay to approach the dog. Allow the dog to sniff you before petting it. If a dog that is unfamiliar approaches you, stay calm and do not run away. Do not look the dog directly in the eye. If a dog tries to bite you, use anything to put between you and the dog. If you are knocked over by a dog, cover your face and lie still. Tell your child to never squeeze dogs too tight or jump on them. Never tease dogs or pull their ears and tails. Do not disturb dogs while they are eating. Children should also never play tug of war with a dog or try to take away a toy. To help your child remember how to act appropriately around dogs, be sure to remind them of these tips every time they encounter a dog, familiar or unfamiliar.



Spring Activity:

Making Happy Memories and Keeping Them Safe

It seems that parents everywhere have fallen into two categories: the ones who take the time to print out pictures and end up with boxes full of miscellaneous shots of events they can no longer name, or the ones who have memory cards filled with digital images the size of postage stamps. Here are some economically friendly ways to organize your photos and spend a relaxing hour with your child.

You will need:

- A book for your pictures. It doesn't have to be an album or anything fancy. A large notebook will do the trick
- A shoe box with cute scraps of paper such as left over gift wrappers or old greeting cards
- Fun pens, glitter, popsicle sticks, recycled items make great decorations
- A good pair of scissors and acid-free glue (you will need these to keep your pictures from yellowing)

Let your child help you to crop and glue the pictures on your scrapbook. Younger children will need supervision when cutting but they can help by choosing the decorations. If you are working on pictures of a particular event, ask the child what their favorite part of that day was and write it down by the photo. One day your child will look back on all the things you did as a family and think of the fun they had creating their Memory Book. More importantly, they'll remember the time you spent together.

The Parent Line:

Free statewide phone line for parents and others caring for children. Call for support, encouragement, information, and ideas about handling behavior or about community resources.



Mon- Fri, 8:00am- 6:00pm and
Sat, 9:00am-1:00pm.
Oahu: **526-1222**.
Neighbor Islands toll-free:
1-800-816-1222

Jokes for Kids!

Knock, knock
Who's there?
Cow
Cow, who?
No they don't, they moo!

Q: Why are teddy bears never hungry?
A: Because they are always stuffed.

Q: Where do horses live?
A: In neighhhh-borhoods!

Q: Did you hear the story about the skunk?
A: Never mind, it stinks.

Knock, knock
Who's there
Boo
Boo, who?
Well don't cry, it's just a joke!