

Encourage your child to protect her rights and express her needs with words. With your help, your child can learn to use words rather than physical acts to satisfy her needs and rights.



Why this is important

Your child needs to learn to protect her rights and feelings with words rather than actions. Although she may occasionally use physical aggression because of her limited vocabulary, she eventually will stand up for herself instead of hitting. Your child can learn to express herself in appropriately assertive ways by simply and clearly saying what she needs or wants.

What you do

- Help your child practice using words instead of actions to express her needs. For example:

A personal choice

I want a ...(banana).

An ordinary need

I need my...(potty).

An alternative to physical aggression

That's my...(doll).

A self-protective statement

I don't like...(to be hit).

- Observe your child carefully so that you can recognize the need for these expressive statements and specifically encourage her to use them: *Thank you for telling me that was your car. I'm sorry she took it away from you. Or, You used words to tell her you don't like to be hit. Now she knows how you feel.*

Another idea

Help your child anticipate the need for using clear statements by role-playing different situations with her. You can create scenarios involving various emotions or physical needs.