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# Accepting Consequences of Behavior

## Student: Aggressive

The aggressive student will often deny any wrong or verbally or physically attack the accuser.

### ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Determine if there are obstacles in the environment that prevent the student from accepting the consequences of his or her behavior. For example, are there environmental factors that influence whether or not the student is able to admit that he or she is wrong? Do other people in the environment accept the consequences of their behavior? Are students being taught to be honest and admit the things they do wrong and being reinforced for doing so? Removing classroom obstacles might involve specific structured lessons for all students in how to recognize the things they do wrong and accept the consequences of their mistakes or inappropriate behavior.

An environment where numerous aggressive behaviors occur among students should be analyzed to determine if more cooperative and non-aggressive interactions among students can and should be reinforced. An example of reducing environmental obstacles with aggressive children would be to initiate highly structured, supervised cooperative activities in the classroom where all members of the group are reinforced for knowing that they can be wrong, admitting their mistakes, and resolving their mistakes or misbehaviors. If the classroom or school environment tolerates or fosters competition, confrontation, and aggression among students, an aggressive student may be reinforced for his or her aggressive behavior.

After determining whether environmental obstacles prevent the student from accepting the consequences of his or her behavior, determine whether the student is not **able** to accept consequences of behavior or **chooses** not to accept consequences.

### INTERVENTIONS

#### Student CAN'T

If the student is not able to accept the consequences of behavior because he or she lacks the prerequisite skills or strategies, the focus of intervention will be on teaching the student strategies for doing so.

**Intervention 1:** Teach the student to identify alternative behaviors and strategies to use when he or she needs to admit to mistakes or inappropriate behavior and accept the consequences, including:

1. attending when confronted with an error or misbehavior;
2. listening to the consequences imposed by the teacher;
3. accepting fault if appropriate to do so;
4. admitting he or she was wrong and apologizing;
5. avoiding the situation in the future.

The aggressive student often fails to take the blame for mistakes he or she has made and refuses to accept the consequences for misbehaviors. He or she is likely to respond to accusations of misbehaviors or mistakes with verbal or physical aggression. The aggressive student should be taught alternative nonaggressive responses such as admitting to mistakes and taking the consequences imposed by the person involved in the situation. The student should learn to admit his or her mistakes, apologize, and avoid making the same mistake in the future.

**Intervention 2:** Provide models, either through teacher demonstration or small groups of selected peers, of the alternative behavior for accepting consequences. Provide opportunities for the student to see the teacher and/or peers accept the consequences for something they did wrong in simulated or real life situations. When real instances evolve within the school environment where a student or teacher appropriately accepts the consequences of his or her behavior, emphasize to the student these prosocial responses.

In order for the aggressive student to learn the strategies for accepting consequences, he or she must have the opportunity to see others doing the same thing. Provide the aggressive student with models in simulated small group training sessions who act out how to accept calmly the consequences for something they should not have done. In order to enhance the modeling effect, choose peer models who have high status for the aggressive student, provide short, clear examples of appropriate modeled behaviors, be sure the peer models are socially reinforced when they exhibit the appropriate behaviors, and be sure the aggressive student

is socially reinforced when he or she exhibits the same appropriate behavior.

**Intervention 3:** Provide the student with the opportunity to practice apologizing and accepting the consequences of behavior in nonthreatening role play or real life situations. Socially reinforce the student for demonstrating these behaviors.

Once the aggressive student has the opportunity to observe peer models demonstrate the nonaggressive accepting of consequences, provide the student with the opportunity to practice these prosocial responses in small group role play and real life settings. Again, be sure the aggressive student is socially reinforced when he or she initiates these alternative responses.

**Intervention 4:** Directly socially reinforce the student for appropriately accepting the consequences of behavior.

Provide social reinforcement to the aggressive student when he or she spontaneously accepts the consequences of his or her behavior (“Nathan, I’m glad that you told me that you took my pen off of my desk. Even though you lost recess for taking my pen without permission, it was nice of you to apologize and give it back to me. Thanks for being honest!”).

**Intervention 5:** Teach the student how to control, through self-monitoring, self-evaluating, and self-reinforcing, the use of alternative behaviors and strategies for accepting consequences of behavior in various school settings.

Have the aggressive student keep a record card (see Record Card U) of the number of mistakes and whether he or she apologized and accepted the consequences for these behaviors.

*Record Card U*

My Mistake	What were the consequences?	Did I apologize?
1.		Yes/No
2.		Yes/No

Once the aggressive student is successfully monitoring his or her behavior, the student can be taught to both self-evaluate the appropriateness of his or her behavior (“Was I wrong? Did I tell Julie I broke her pencil? Did I apologize to Julie for

breaking her pencil?”) and self-reinforce his or her appropriate responses (“I did apologize and I gave her a new pencil. I’m pleased I took responsibility for my mistake.”).

### **Student WON’T**

If the student has the skills necessary for accepting consequences, but chooses not to, the focus of intervention will be on providing motivation to the student for accepting consequences.

**Intervention 1:** Provide the student and his or her peers with a clear set of school rules and expectations that all students will appropriately accept the consequences of their behavior. Establish consequences throughout the school for failure to appropriately accept consequences.

When the aggressive student has the necessary skills to calmly and nonaggressively accept the consequences for behavior, but chooses not to use these skills, the teacher and other school personnel must establish clear, consistent, and immediate consequences for student aggression and failure to accept consequences. The quick and predictable loss of privileges should be instituted for instances of aggression (“Peter, you know you don’t swear when I tell you your work was not acceptable. That’s a warning. If it happens again, you’ll get a detention.”).

**Intervention 2:** Use the model teaching strategies (identify, model, practice, reinforce, and self-control) to review for the student the expected behaviors for accepting the consequences of behavior.

If the aggressive student continues to not accept consequences, he or she should: be retaught how to accept consequences, be given the opportunity to view models accepting consequences, practice appropriate apologizing, be reinforced by the teacher or other school personnel for displaying appropriate acceptance of consequences, and learn to self-monitor, self-evaluate, and self-reinforce the