

Abstract

Identifying and Addressing Aggressive Behaviours in Primary School Children - A Case Study in the St. George East Education District, Trinidad and Tobago

Aggression is described as antisocial behaviour which can cause physical injury or emotional harm to a person. It may also lead to damage or destruction of property. Students exhibit aggressive behaviours for different reasons, and as such their behaviours may be categorised as accidental, expressive, instrumental or hostile types of aggression. When these students exhibit aggressive behaviours at school, it becomes a source of frustration for adults who have to work with them. They are often viewed as a hindrance and a threat to themselves as well as to others. This is further exacerbated when the physical and temporal environments do not adequately deal with these problems. The results can be devastating. Can the school therefore effect the needed change to redirect these students to behave in an acceptable manner?

This qualitative evaluation case study used an entire primary school population of 332 boys and girls ages five to 14 to identify those particular students who were exhibiting aggressive behaviours, the types of aggression exhibited, and the triggers which provoked the behaviours. It looked at the impact that the intervention programme had on the eight participants. Phase One dealt with the introduction of the programme and included the entire school population. Phase Two focused on the eight participants.

Key findings such as a decrease in hostile aggression among students, increased parental support for children, a greater sense of belonging for students, more community

participation in school life, and tangible support from the Ministry of Education helped to foster a more caring temporal environment.

Keywords – Kathleen Warner-Lall; aggressive behaviours; young children.