
UNIT 4 CONDUCT PROBLEMS

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4.1 INTRODUCTION

We come across children who behave in peculiar ways. They beat and bully others; hurt themselves and also others; lie down on the floor and scream; stay away from school as well as home without informing anyone, sometimes even tell lies and steal things and so on. Of course, in most cases, all these socially undesirable behaviours wear off as children grow up. Like many other problems, these can also be difficulties of a passing phase of development. It is only if such behaviours persist, threatening to have harmful consequence on the growth and development of the child, that one has to feel concerned. What can be the reasons for such behaviours? Can we help such children, avoid such unacceptable behaviour and help them channelise their energy in a more constructive way? What would that mean for parents and teachers? The present Unit deals with the questions raised above, mainly focusing on the patterns of aggressive and truant behaviour among children, and the roles and responsibilities of parents and teachers in helping such children.

4.2 OBJECTIVES

You have already learnt in the previous Unit about the nature of socio-emotional problems of adjustment faced by children and the accompanying patterns of behaviour. In this Unit we shall discuss two common problems of adjustment that teachers and parents come across in dealing with young children, namely, aggression and truancy.

After going through this Unit you will be able to:

- identify behaviour patterns associated with such adjustment problems among young children as aggression, defiance, and truancy;
- find out various factors causing aggression and truancy; and
- suggest appropriate strategies and activities to help children cope with these problems of adjustment.

4.3 AGGRESSION

Let us first try to understand the term aggression. The meaning of the term aggression has been interpreted in many ways. **Aggression is considered as a typical adjustment mechanism used as an attempt to hurt or destroy the source of frustration.** Children exhibit aggression by beating and bullying others, hitting, kicking, screaming and throwing things or being, verbally aggressive through shouting, yelling or ridiculing. The consequences of such behaviour can cause pain and injury to another person or to oneself.

To understand aggression, one has to consider the apparent intention or motive of the child acting aggressively. In the play ground, for instance, it may be impossible to judge whether one child strikes another intentionally or accidentally. One even has to find out whether the aggression is situational or general. Some children will behave aggressively only under very specific conditions. For example, Gauri has taken Nita's pen without asking her. Nita rebukes her and snatches back her pen from Gauri's hands. **Children show aggression when they are deprived of their possessions or are teased and the like.** In contrast, some children behave aggressively across a wide variety of settings, in whatever situations they are - in the play ground, in school, and at home.

4.3.1 Assertion

It is difficult to define an act as aggressive when it is aimed at achieving a desirable goal. For example, when a child tries to win a prize in competition with others, or to gain power over another person, although it may cause some harm to others. Such behaviour can more appropriately be termed as assertiveness, which is aimed at achieving desired outcomes which are not socially unacceptable. **Assertive behaviour is different from aggression in that assertiveness needs positive adaptive efforts on the part of the child to achieve the goal whereas an aggressive act is associated with painful and destructive consequences.** A boy who is a leader in his class and is able to get others to follow his instructions is assertive and not hostile. Being assertive means being firm in putting across ideas, views and to act according to certain commonly accepted norms of behaviour.

4.3.2 Defiance

Defiance is another form of aggression. Children may exhibit this behaviour through their overt gestures and actions; it is normally shown verbally or otherwise disobeying elders, doing the opposite of what has been asked, and answering back. They become verbally rather than physically aggressive. As children grow older, they acquire greater skill in language and communication. This enables them to display their refusal to accept authority in the form of criticism, ridicule and other more sophisticated and perhaps, socially more acceptable means of verbal expression.

In general aggression is harmful especially when it is in its extreme form, but the points presented above indicate that aggression also has positive aspects. Certain amount of aggression is required in the individual to cope with social conflicts. Moreover, different cultures prescribe different norms with regard to the expression of aggressive behaviour to be allowed in different situations. For example, in India girls are expected to control the expression of overt aggression in public, while boys are encouraged to be aggressive.

Before labelling any child aggressive, what criteria would you use in assessing the conduct of the child? List the criteria in the space given below.

- i)
- ii)
- iii)

4.4 PATTERNS OF AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR AMONG CHILDREN

Let us try to analyse the following cases to understand the patterns of aggressive behaviour among children.

1. Lakshmi and Rani are playing together in the dolls corner. They are dressing up their dolls. Lakshmi likes Rani's doll. She wants to play with the same doll. Both of them start quarrelling. Lakshmi snatches away the doll and hits Rani.
2. Sam is playing in the sand. He makes a beautiful house of sand. His sister comes and breaks the house he built. Sam gets upset, he starts screaming and rolls on the sand with anger.
3. Raminder is not very good in studies. However, his brother always gets good marks. Raminder's father often compares him with his brother. Raminder has become envious of his brother. He waits for suitable opportunities and hits his brother.
4. Rehman is a quiet boy in the class. At home his father and mother fight often and his mother cries for hours. Rehman feels helpless and punishes himself by not eating properly. He avoids participating in any joyful activity. He does not mix with others at home or school as he used to.

You might have had similar experiences. Describe some of them briefly in the space given below.

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From the cases given above and from what you have listed from your experiences, we can identify the patterns of aggressive behaviour among children. If we analyse the responses of Lakshmi, Sam, Raminder and Rehman,

We find that some of them try to hurt or punish themselves, while others are aggressive towards others. It will be interesting to analyse their responses under two headings, viz, aggression to external objects and individuals, and aggression on self.

4.4.1 Aggression to External Objects and Individuals

In these responses the individual is aggressive towards other persons or things. It may be a physical attack or a verbal expression. Since children are not allowed to show aggression towards persons in authority, their aggression is transferred to objects or animals. You might have come across people who are sarcastic. They hurt others by their comments. This is also another form of external aggression.

4.4.2 Aggression on Self

In these responses the child attributes the source of frustration to him/herself. He/she is critical of and inflicts physical or psychological punishment to him/herself. We may find children not eating because they are unhappy about something. They do not participate in any fun. They deprive themselves of enjoyment.

4.5 CAUSES OF AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

The above discussion clarifies the patterns of aggressive behaviour in children. Mere identification of this behaviour will not help. We must find out the causes for such aggressive behaviour. It may not be due to a single cause; a combination of a variety of causes can lead to such aggression in children. The cases presented below will help us understand the common causes for aggression in children.

The Case of Rahim

Rahim used to bully others in the class. He was physically quite strong. He used to snatch away things from others, pick up fights with others. If others did not listen to him, he would beat them up. His mother's complaint was that he was like his father. Rahim's mother and father had strained relations and were constantly fighting with each other. Both of them were short tempered. If Rahim's father scolded him, his mother would take Rahim's side and if his mother scolded him, his father would take his side. Both of them would punish Rahim inconsistently.

The Case of Julie

Julie had gone to her uncle's house for summer vacation. When she returned home from her vacation, there was a small baby in her mother's lap who she said was her newborn brother. She tried to play with him but her mother would stop her, saying that she would hurt the child. Julie had to listen to constant nagging from her mother. As a reaction, Julie developed a dislike for her little brother and tried to hurt him. She asked her mother, "Why don't you throw him out of the window?" Julie had earlier been considered as a well behaved child in the school. But now she started picking up fights with other children. Julie's changed behaviour puzzled the teacher.

The Case of Ravi

Ravi studies in class IV. His teachers are fed up with him. All the time, they criticise him and punish him for his destructive behaviour. Ravi's parents also complain about his behaviour at home. He sometimes throws sleepers at his parents, bites his sister and locks her up in the bathroom. At home, Ravi is left entirely under the care of an old maid who does not play with him and behaves strictly. His mother does not spend adequate time with him. Most of the time his father stays away from home on business. Whenever the mother is irritated with Ravi, she slaps him.

If we take the case of Rahim, the possible reasons of aggressive behaviour can be:

- i) His parents had strained relationship with each other.
- ii) They used to constantly fight among themselves.
- iii) Being short tempered, they used to frequently get angry with Rahim.
- iv) Rahim could not develop confidence or trust in his parents due to their inconsistent behaviour.

v) Both the parents used to beat Rahim.

You please write down the probable causes of aggressive behaviours in these cases.

Julie

- i)
- ii)
- iii)
- iv)

Ravi

- i)
- ii)
- iii)
- iv)
- v)

The causes identified above can be classified into four broad categories:

Physiological - Deprivation of satisfaction of physiological needs such as hunger, lack of proper sleep and rest, discomfort and so on.

Socio-emotional - Lack of love and warmth, sense of insecurity, lack of proper recognition, rejection by parents and so on.

Environmental - Environment prevalent at home and outside, parents' attitude towards the child, parental favouritism, too strict or permissive handling, comparison between siblings.

Mass media - Influence of mass media such as T.V. and films which show extreme violence as well as the aggressive behaviour of characters whom children identify with.

How can we help children control their aggression?

For this, first of all one should examine the child's behaviour in terms of the context and its effects upon others as well as on the individual displaying it. Aggressive behaviour which takes the form of socially unacceptable behaviour such as hostile attitude and hurting others presents serious problems. But aggression in a socially approved form such as competitiveness, standing up for one's right, or social reform can make useful contributions to the society. Hence the implication is that certain amount of aggressiveness is necessary for a balanced personality.

From the above discussion we understand that we should help children control their aggression, keeping in view the situations in which they become aggressive. For example, many children throw tantrums when their demands are not fulfilled. How do we deal with such behaviour?

We can divert their attention by engaging them in some other activities. If they are old enough and are able to comprehend, tell them in a simple language that such

behaviour is not acceptable. We have to reason out with them that every demand of their's cannot be fulfilled. We have to ignore them when they are at the height of their temper. We may leave them alone. However, do not provide a model of aggressive behaviour to the child.

From your experience what will you suggest for children who become angry easily. Write in the space given below.

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Check Your Progress

- Notes: a) Write your answers in the space given below.
b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the Block.

1. Distinguish between assertion and defiance.

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2. What are the causes of aggression in children?

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4.6 TRUANCY

Truancy is another adjustment problem observed among some of the school going children. **It means running away. Truant children exhibit such behaviour as not attending school, instead they spend their time roaming around or sometimes indulging in socially undesirable activities such as stealing.** Take the case of Kanu; he used to run away from school during recess and play with marbles along with his friends. This kind of behaviour is considered truant behaviour. **Even running away from home without informing anybody is called playing truant.** This problem is found to be more common among boys than girls.

Children with truant behaviour are often found to develop other undesirable behaviours such as lying and stealing. Let us look at the following case in which truant behaviour turned into lying and stealing.

The Case of Nalin

Nalin comes from a family where both his parents were working. Instead of going

to school, Nalin spent time in the market. He and his friends played at a place near the market. When it was time for the school to be over Nalin would go home. After some time, he started stealing money to play cards, and often told lies to his mother that his teacher had asked them to bring money to buy maps or paper, etc.

The following cases illustrate two other examples of truant behaviour.

Case 1: Raghu found studies difficult. He was often punished in the class and rebuked by the teacher. Gradually he started hating school. He used to leave for school at the right time in the morning and return home alongwith his school friends. He would spend time sitting in a park or roaming around.

Case 2: Rima felt neglected once her mother became ill. Her father was an alcoholic and used to ill-treat her mother quite often. Rima was fed up of the constant fights between her parents. She decided to go to her aunt's house that was a few kilometers away. One day she left home without informing her parents.

Below you may write about a child's truancy that you might have come across.

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If we try to analyse the reasons for truant behaviour in the case of Raghu, it was his inability to cope with studies and punishments in school that led to truancy. Truancy, perhaps, provided him with a mechanism to avoid punishment which used to affect his self-esteem. It may also have provided him with a false feeling of achievement that he had been able to fool his teachers and parents who used to punish him.

In the case of Rima, the environment prevailing at home characterised by constant fights between the parents made her feel highly neglected. She felt that nobody at home had any concern for her. This, perhaps, made her run away from home and possibly draw the attention of her parents, towards her.

Apart from these, **there are many other reasons for truant behaviour. The main causes may lie with home, the school or peer group.** Parents' and teachers' unsympathetic attitude towards the child can cause negative attitude in the child and this may cause truant behaviour.

The school often becomes the reason for trauncy in children who are weak in studies or who find the classroom very oppressive. This means that the teacher and other persons in authority are not sympathetic to their needs and the children feel disturbed. Some children may find the whole process of school work meaningless and unrelated to their own environment and expectations. This is known to be the cause of truancy in many cases.

4.7 FACTORS RELATED TO AGGRESSION AND TRUANCY

Let us try to sum up our analysis and identify certain broad factors that are related to socio-emotional problems such as aggression and truancy.

1. Children with such emotional problems are likely to be from families where there is discord among family members. In case of Rahim, it is the constant fights and strained relations between his parents which might have caused him to adopt that particular type of behaviour, if you recall, his parents used to beat him frequently. The child seems to be accepting this behaviour of parents as the model for his own. The parent who uses physical punishment to curb a child's aggression is actually encouraging it, without realising that he is providing for his child a model of aggressive, destructive



behaviour that the child is likely to repeat. In Julie's case, continuous nagging by her mother seems to have prompted her to develop the attitude of constant defiance. Of course, parents are not the only models for children. They learn to behave aggressively during interaction with brothers and sisters as well as peers who may provoke aggressive reactions by teasing or hitting. Children who are very unhappy at home or school and who feel neglected are likely to become truant.

2. It has also been found that children with aggressive behaviour come from families with a single parent, usually the lone mother. The behaviour is more likely to occur if they live in poverty and are facing financial difficulties. Sometimes such children run away from home in search of a better livelihood.
3. One of the most common observations made about children with truant behaviour is their educational backwardness. It seems that in some children repeated educational failure leads to frustration and resentment which may lead to aggression and truant behaviour.

4. In certain communities aggression is associated with masculinity. It is quite acceptable for boys to be aggressive and at times even to defy social norms of behaviour. While similar behaviour on the part of girls is not encouraged. Boys seem to be more aggressive than girls as far as direct physical responses are concerned.
5. Sometimes, the influence of mass media can lead to aggressive and truant behaviour in children. Television has a great impact on children. It is often found to provide children with models for acquiring such undesirable behaviour patterns. Some T.V. programmes which show violence can affect children's attitude and lead them to view violence as an acceptable way to resolve their conflicts. However, it is not necessary that seeing violence on television will always cause aggressive behaviour in a child. Television violence affects children differently at different age depending upon many other factors.
6. With regard to children with such behavioural problems, a common parental behaviour observed is rejection of the child. This could be for a variety of reasons. It can be that the child is physically or mentally handicapped, is not good looking or may not be good in studies.
7. Another cause can be deprivation of love and warmth leading to anxiety in children. Anxiety in turn causes frustration often resulting in aggression. If children's socio-emotional needs are adequately satisfied they are more likely to have a pleasant disposition.
8. Many a time, we tend to take out on our children our own tensions, worries and frustrations. They become victims of our inconsistent behaviour. This creates confusion in them and they rebel against such kind of adult behaviour.

4.8 SUGGESTED STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

Introspection by parents and other adults would help identify the need for modifying adult behaviour. There is need to develop an insight into children's needs, feelings, and ways of thinking. As parents, if only we become a little more conscious of our own behaviour towards children, our comments to them, we can help them overcome their anxieties and frustrations and finally overcome their unduly aggressive and truant behaviour.

Similarly, teachers also play an important role in influencing children's behaviour. Sometimes comparison between two children in the classroom causes hostility between them. Although we talk about all round development of children that includes physical, social, emotional, and cognitive dimensions, we as teachers and parents, consciously or unconsciously, emphasise the cognitive aspects more than other aspects of development. The illustration should help clarify the point.

See report card of a class III student.

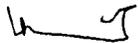
As you can see, Ila has received her annual school report. She has done quite well in most subjects and is a talented child as she excels in music and art. Her conduct is also positive. However, Ila's father tells her that he is not happy because she has not done well enough in English and Maths. He says, "Don't spend so much time and energy in Music and Art, I want you to study harder to do better next time in English and Maths."

So far, we have identified the patterns of aggressive and truant behaviour among children and the factors causing such behaviour among them. We must also involve them in activities which help reduce such undesirable behaviours. A few approaches have been suggested here. These approaches can be in the form of different play



situations, painting, creative writing, dramatisation, puppetry and so on. It may even be a well - directed interaction among children, the teachers and parents. All these approaches and activities should be integrated with the regular classroom activities for the all-round development of children so that children get opportunities for expressing their conflicts and confusions. This will also help prevent emotional and behavioural disorders that may otherwise take place. These approaches should be used in the form of activities depending on the age of children, their socio-economic background, their interests, their school and home background and the most important, patterns of their aggressive behaviour. These activities will help them channelise their energies in a more constructive manner.

ReportCard

Name: ILA Gupta		Class: III B
Year: 1999		Teacher: Ms. U. Verma
Subjects	Grade	Remarks
English	B	Fair
Hindi	A	Good
Maths	B	Fair
E.V.S.	A	Good
Music	A	Good
Art	A+	V. Good
Overall Grade	B+	
Social Conduct		
With Peer	-	she is friendly, has a few friends.
With teachers	-	is a little shy.
Discipline	-	is quite obedient, her uniform is neat.
General remark: A good student should improve in Maths and English. Promoted to Class IV		
 Principal		 Teacher

Let us design an activity involving a play situation.

Doll Play

In this type of play, you allow the child to play with dolls and other miniature household objects. Generally there should be mother doll, father doll, child doll, brother, sister and baby dolls and peer dolls. The child is allowed to play with them. Very soon young children get involved in make belief play. An aggressive child may use expression such as "You have become very naughty. I will punish you". Situations involving separation anxiety, rivalry between siblings, interpersonal stresses with classmates at school, parental aggression or punishment, rejection experiences at home and school and among peer group that lead to aggression in the child's life

can find an outlet in such play activities.

As mentioned earlier, these approaches should be used, depending on the points which have been mentioned regarding the patterns of aggressive behaviour and their causes. Write down below the strategies that can help aggressive and truant children.

- i)
- ii)
- iii)
- iv)
- v)

In the space given below, formulate two activities for children who may be aggressive and become truant.

Activity 1

- a)

Activity 2

- b)

Check Your Progress

- Notes:**
- a) Write your answers in the space given below.
 - b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the Block.

- 4. What steps would you take to deal with a child who exhibits excessive aggressive behaviour?

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4.9 LET US SUM UP

This Unit deals with various aspects of aggression and truant behaviour among children. It begins with a brief discussion on the meaning of the term aggression, and patterns of aggressive behaviour among children. Various factors that cause aggression and truancy among children such as physiological, socio-emotional and

environmental have been analysed with the help of specific cases. Different approaches have also been suggested to use activities depending on children's age, interest, patterns of aggressive behaviour, and home and school background. It has also been emphasised that the behaviour of teachers and parents can sometimes, lead to aggressive and truant behaviour in children. An attempt has been made, through case profiles to highlight the need for introspection by teachers and parents of their own behaviours in order to help children overcome their problems of adjustment.

4.10 UNIT-END EXERCISES

1. From your neighbourhood or a nearby school, study a child who displays aggressive behaviour. Contrast it with another child who remains normal in similar situations. What are the significant differences in their behaviour? What could be the reasons for these differences?
2. Tick the appropriate behaviour of the parents from the following case.

Ramiya had gone to the market with her mother. She saw a beautiful toy. She asked her mother to buy it for her. Her mother refused saying that she had enough toys at home and did not need another one. Ramiya got angry she threw herself on the floor and started screaming. The mother -

- a) shouted at her and told her to keep quiet.
- b) just ignored her.
- c) diverted her attention by showing her other things.
- d) appreciated the toy and reasoned out with Ramiya that she already has many toys at home and , may be they could buy it later on.

ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Unit 1

1. i) the task appears during a certain period of life,
ii) successful achievement of the task leads to happiness,
iii) the tasks are related to success in later tasks.
2. Any three from 1 to 10 on pp. 10-11.
3. i) b, ii) c, iii) d, iv) a
4. He may request his mother to drop him to the venue; may ask his friends to talk to his mother; request his friends to shift the venue near his residence; any other you think seems to be appropriate.
5. i) T; ii) T; iii) F; iv) F
6. i) 5, ii) 3, iii) 1, iv) 2 v) 4
7. There could be factors like the following:
 - a) transfer of a parent
 - b) death of a parent
 - c) outbreak of a war.

8. i) 2, ii) 3, iii) 4, iv) 1
9. i), ii), iv), vii), ix), x) False
iii), v), vi), viii) True
10. Events in life (the transfer of her father) due to which she lost her friends and a sense of belongingness.
 - i) Prejudice in children against rural people which kept them away from interacting with Ganga.
 - ii) Lack of social skills on Ganga's part to relate appropriately with others.
11. Integrate them with peers with adult help.
12. The teacher can listen empathetically Ganga's feelings and discuss with her the probable cause of the condition. The teacher can talk to Ganga's mother about her apprehensions and the changing social conditions; give her some ideas about interacting with the children of late childhood. The teacher can arrange a climate of acceptance in the class by making Ganga collect the class assignments from others, making her dramatise a sequence in the lesson and assigning her an initiative role in the group activities of the class. The teacher can also undertake the following:

Give reassurance to Ganga to the effect that she is an accepted member of the class through actions such as pats, smiles and verbal messages. Enable Ganga appreciate the performance of a few of the classmates in the same way.

Unit 2

1. Children use symptoms like headaches, stomach pain, etc. to avoid a painful experience. Before coming to a decision regarding a child's headache we should take the opinion of a doctor to rule out the organic causes.
2. Most children exhibit problematic behaviour at sometime or the other. When this problematic behaviour is persistent over a time or when the problematic behaviour is too intense, then we decide that the problem is serious enough to warrant professional guidance.
3. Physical - Physical handicap like being blind or epileptic etc.
Behavioural - aggressiveness, restlessness, masturbation.
Environmental - home-parental disharmony; School- specific difficulty in particular subjects, bullying by other students.
4. When faced with stress, some children become anxious, withdrawn, fearful, cry easily and develop physical problems like stomach pain and headache. When they manifest such problems of unhappiness and misery and internalise the symptoms, it is known as emotional disorder. Other children act out their problems by being aggressive, fighting, stealing, telling lies and these are known as conduct disorders.
5. The child who has a bed-wetting problem has to be trained in bladder control. Refer sub-section 2.5.4 regarding how this has to be done?
6. Neglected and abused children appear to be untidy and may have unexplained injuries.

1. Fear is for known situations. Anxiety is aroused when the consequences of any event or situation are not known and phobia is an irrational fear which is based on reality.

Fear - I lost my new pen. Fear is aroused about the reprimand I would receive from my father.

Anxiety - An adolescent is going to appear for an exam, he/she feels anxious because he/she doesn't know how he/she is going to perform.

Phobia - Fear of a lizard - in spite of knowing that it is harmless.

2. Anxiety elicits maladaptive behaviour patterns because of its intensity, duration and inappropriate response to situations. It has adaptive functions as it can prevent undesirable situations from happening and prepare a child to meet challenges in life. Elaborate with illustrations.
3. The major difference is that behavioural psychologists consider conditioning important in developing fear and anxiety whereas the cognitive theorists focus on thinking (irrational) which generates fear and anxiety. You could elaborate your answer further.
4. A persistent fear of some object or situation which actually presents no danger to the child is called a phobia reaction. The common symptoms are anxiety due to the thought of that particular object/situation, excessive perspiration, rapid breathing, trembling, vomiting, tightness in chest and dizzy spells.
5. Can mention any three out of the 13 listed.

Unit 4

1. Assertion is a firm statement of ideas, views and acts whereas defiance is refusal to obey authority by overt action and verbal aggression. Elaborate your answer.
2. Causes of aggression are as follows:

Physiological: Deprivation of satisfaction of physiological needs such as hunger, discomfort, lack of proper sleep and rest.

Socio-emotional: Lack of love and warmth, sense of insecurity, rejection by parents and others at home.

Environmental: Environment prevalent at home, constant quarreling, alcoholic father, violent father or elder siblings. Other factors could be

- parental favouritism
- severe physical punishment
- over indulgent home atmosphere
- viewing violent movies
- exposure to peer group violence.

It is also important to note that when behaviours are reinforced by others, those behaviours tend to occur more often. For example, a boy hits his younger brother to get a doll, mother immediately gives the doll to the older boy. Now his violent behaviour is reinforced and such behaviour will occur more often in future.

3. The following factors lead to truant behaviour:

- i) Backwardness in studies.
- ii) Lack of motivation - the child may be from low socio-economic group and the value of education is not stressed at home.
- iii) Punitive teacher - the child may be frightened of the teacher, specially if the child is unable to do the home work and receives no help at home.
- iv) The child may be in a peer group which exhibit such behaviour and encourages others to do the same.
- v) It can be part of other general conduct problems. The child is aggressive, tell lies, steals and is also truant.
- vi) He may be bullied by others in the class, hence frightened to go to school.

There could be many other reasons for truancy depending on the individual cases.

4. The following are some of the suggestions to handle excessive aggression:

- i) Try to remove the model: If there is someone who is aggressive at home, whose behaviour the child imitates, it will be better that the person concerned changes his behaviour or doesn't show such behaviour in front of the child.
- ii) If the boy is old enough and is able to comprehend, tell him in a simple language that such behaviour is not acceptable. Tell him that every demand of his cannot be met.
- iii) Don't reinforce the aggressive behaviour by yielding to the demands of the child.
- iv) Provide him with outlets to express his aggression. Encourage him to spend sometime in games and sports everyday.
- v) Discourage him from associating with peers who are very aggressive.
- vi) Discourage him from watching violent TV and Video programmes.

GLOSSARY

1. **Behavioural problems** : Any type of abnormal behaviour which is not due to physical illness or to any psychotic condition, but which is assumed to be in response to environmental factors. At the simplest and most common level it includes nail-biting, thumb sucking, etc. and at the more extreme level includes vandalism, alcoholism, and persistent delinquency.
2. **Cognitive theorists** : Thinkers who stress the role of thought processes.
3. **Desensitisation** : Decreased responsiveness, also the removal of a mental problem after therapy.
4. **Maladaptive behaviour** : Failure of an individual to adjust to the pressures and problems which arise in his/her life.
5. **Motor skill** : Any ability, generally assumed to have been learned, to perform a complex task involving psychomotor coordination with ease, speed and accuracy.
6. **Phobia** : An extreme, irrational and more or less uncontrollable fear of an object, living thing or situation.
7. **Positive reinforcement** : The process in which the frequency of response increases because it is followed by a pleasant stimulus.
8. **Repression** : Ego defense mechanisms in which the anxiety processes are suppressed from consciousness.
9. **Role identification** : The adoption of another's role, or the acting out of one's own role. This is used in group therapy, where patients help each other identify the essence of their problems by defining and adopting each other's roles.
10. **Sarcasm** : Type of speech which has irony.
11. **Self-esteem** : We need to feel good about ourselves as we learn skills, pursue tasks and deal with people.
12. **Therapeutic intervention** : Administration of therapeutic techniques for behavioural or psychophysical disorders.