

# Aggression

Narrator:

What is aggression? Is it a physical attack on another person? Is it saying something to hurt someone's feelings? Yes. Saying something mean and physically attacking someone are both acts of aggression.

**Aggression** is physical or verbal behavior that is intended to hurt someone. Aggression is **deliberate**. There are many examples of aggressive behavior.

**Physical aggression** is behavior that is meant to physically hurt another person.

**Social** (or **relational**) **aggression** is behavior that is meant to harm another person's social status, relationships, and, often, self-esteem.

Why do people act aggressively? There are different reasons for aggressive behavior. Sometimes it is a reaction to a threat. Sometimes anger is the reason. Sometimes it is to achieve a specific goal.

**Hostile aggression** is meant to cause injury to another person. Hostile aggression is usually impulsive and stems from anger. Hostile aggression can be social or physical.

For example, Tom exploded with anger when he heard that his co-worker Vic had flirted with his girlfriend. He was so mad that he punched Vic in the face!

**Instrumental aggression** involves physical harm, but occurs in the pursuit of another goal. Unlike hostile aggression, which is often impulsive, instrumental aggression may be planned in advance.

For example, Martin tripped Jorge, a player on the opposing team. Martin's intention was not to hurt Jorge, but to get the ball back and win the game for his team.

## Recap: Aggression

- **Aggression** refers to physical or verbal behavior that is meant to harm another person.
  - **Physical aggression** is intended to physically hurt another person.
  - **Social, or relational, aggression** is a deliberate attempt to harm another person's social status, relationships, and often, self-esteem.
  - **Hostile aggression** is behavior that stems from anger.
  - **Instrumental aggression** is intended to achieve a specific result by injuring someone.