



# Understanding Aggression: Coping with Aggressive Behavior in the Classroom

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## Introduction

This course is about violence in America, about the aggression in our schools, classrooms, streets, homes and elsewhere. The course speaks to the hate, the fights, the anger, the crimes committed and the victims in our schools and society. It is a course about students, children, teenagers, adults and neighbors, all of us.

The course will consider the many forms of aggression, both criminal and otherwise; its costs and motivation; its perpetrators and targets; its likely and unlikely locations; its impact on our schools, the children; and, most especially, its several causes and promising solutions.

Topics of interest will include violence and the challenge of raising and working with children; aggression in our classrooms; American youth gangs and their influence; past and future sports violence; "hot spot" locations of frequent violence; and the aggression-promoting role of alcohol, temperature, driving, television and other features of modern life. The course also will answer questions such as: Is aggression always bad? How do aggressive thoughts lead to aggressive actions? Is aggression, at least for some people, an addiction? Does the victim contribute to being attacked? Is dating a dangerous proposition? How are the acts of aggression dealt with in other countries, and are there any lessons for America?

The goal of this course is to help educators and adults in general better understand how aggression affects our lives and the lives of children. Hopefully such greater understanding and more skilled efforts at prevention will substantially reduce the aggression and violence that has become all too common in America's schools.

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## Course Materials

Software Title: *Understanding Aggression: Coping with Aggressive Behavior in the Classroom*

Author: Dr. Arnold P. Goldstein

Instructor: Mick Jackson

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**There is a \$25 replacement fee for CD-ROMs.**

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## **Academic Integrity Statement**

The structure and format of most distance-learning courses presume a high level of personal and academic integrity in completion and submission of coursework. Individuals enrolled in a CBI distance-learning course are expected to adhere to the following standards of academic conduct.

## **Academic Work**

Academic work submitted by the individual (such as papers, assignments, reports, tests) shall be the student's own work or appropriately attributed, in part or in whole, to its correct source. Submission of commercially prepared (or group prepared) materials as if they are one's own work is unacceptable.

## **Aiding Honesty in Others**

The individual will encourage honesty in others by refraining from providing materials or information to another person with knowledge that these materials or information will be used improperly.

*Violations of these academic standards may result in the assignment of a failing grade and subsequent loss of credit for the course.*

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## **Level of Application**

This course is designed to be an informational course with application to work or work-related settings. The intervention strategies are designed to be used with students having high aggression and violent tendencies, ranging in age from approximately three to eighteen years of age.

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## **Course Objectives**

- 1) To review the history of aggression and how society came to be such an aggressive place
- 2) To identify the causes of aggressive behavior, both internal and external
- 3) To explain how aggression is expressed in various social settings such as schoolyards, classrooms, sports, homes, etc.
- 4) To identify perpetrators and victims of aggression and violence
- 5) To identify locations of high aggression and violence
- 6) To provide solutions for reducing aggression and violence in classroom and other school settings
- 7) To provide information on how educators can help students/children reduce feelings of aggression and violent tendencies

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## **Course Description**

The course, *Understanding Aggression*, has been divided into four chapters and five to ten exercises within each chapter. The first chapter reviews the history of aggression in America. It explains how we (the country) got to where we are in terms of aggression and violence. The chapter discusses the cost of aggression. It asks the question: Is America Safe? It discusses whether aggression is always bad. The chapter concludes with odds and ends and aggression in general.

The second chapter deals with how we have learned to be aggressive. It discusses how aggressive thoughts many times become aggressive actions. The course reviews the "us versus them" side of aggression and violence. Chapter 2 also deals with how alcohol, temperature and driving can increase aggression and violence. The chapter reviews the role of television and how TV may be a tutor for violent behavior. Is high aggression often found in people who tend to have low empathy? This chapter will discuss this issue. The chapter will also cover how words and teasing can be expressions and forms of aggression.

The third chapter centers on aggression and violence as crimes. It explores arson, assault and crimes of fear. The chapter also will discuss vigilante justice and/or injustice. Along with criminal aggression the chapter takes a look at guns and gangs in America's schools; how bullying affects our schools and classrooms; how dress can affect acts of aggression and violence in schools and society. The chapter speaks to sexual harassment and the aggression involved with acts of harassment. There are also several sections on aggression and violence in the home, parental fighting and how this affects children in the home.

Chapter 4 speaks to working with and raising children to resist violence. It gives suggestions to educators and parents on how to deal with and counteract aggressive or violent behavior. This chapter deals with dating, and how it can be impacted by aggressive behavior and date violence. It speaks to how television affects the aggressive behavior of our children. The chapter reviews child tantrums, and what to do about them. Chapter 4 is summarized with several exercises on win-win scenarios for remediation and effective problem solving techniques.

The chapters and exercises are sequential and, although it is not required, they should be completed in the order in which they are presented in the program. After completing these four chapters you should have a framework for understanding and working with aggressive behavior. This also may help you understand why students with high aggression are a challenge in a regular education setting.

After you complete each chapter of the course, an examination will be used to evaluate your knowledge and ability to apply what you've learned. An explanation of the examinations will be given later in this syllabus.

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### **Student Expectations**

As a student you will be expected to:

- 1) Complete all information chapters covering aggression, showing a competent understanding of the material presented.
- 2) Complete all examinations, showing a competent understanding of the material presented.
- 3) Complete a review of any chapter on which your examination score was below 70%.
- 4) Retake any chapter examination, after completing an information review, to increase that examination score to a minimum of 70% (**maximum of three attempts**).
- 5) Complete all course journal article and essay writing assignments with the minimum word count shown for each writing assignment.
- 6) Complete a course evaluation form at the end of the course.

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### **Chapter Topics**

#### **Chapter 1**

- Introduction
- How Did We Get Here?
- The Costs of Aggression
- Is Aggression Always Bad?
- America, the Safe

#### **Chapter 2**

- Learning to be Aggressive
- Us Versus Them
- Aggressive Thoughts and Aggressive Actions
- Low Empathy, High Aggression
- Television as a Tutor: Aggression 101
- Alcohol and Aggression: Courage in a Bottle
- Does the Victim Help Cause Violence?
- Words that Hurt
- Hot Days, Hot Tempers
- Auto Aggression
- Jump! Jump! The Suicide-Baiting Crowd

#### **Chapter 3**

- The Journey to Crime
- Other Acts of Aggression
- Vigilante Injustice
- Fear of Crime
- The Home and Family
- Sports Violence: Past, Present and Future

- Play Fighting and Real Fighting – Is there a Connection?
- The Ride to and Through School: Safe or Scary?
- Teaching Pro-social Behavior to Antisocial Youth
- A Short Course on Gangs

#### **Chapter 4**

- Raising Children to Resist Violence
  - Tantrums
  - Nonaggressive Children from Aggressive Environments
  - Dating as a Dangerous Game
  - Let's Both Calm Down, Then We'll Talk
  - Take my Wife, Please
  - Why is Aggression so Hard to Change?
  - Downsizing Deviance
  - Complex Problems Demand Complex Solutions
  - A Look to the Future
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#### **Examinations**

At the end of each course chapter, you will be expected to complete an examination designed to assess your knowledge. You may take these exams a total of three times. After your third attempt, each examination will lock and not allow further access. Your final grade for this course will be determined by calculating an average score of all exams. This score will be printed on your final certificate. As this is a self-paced computerized instruction program, you may review course information as often as necessary. You will not be able to exit any examinations until you have answered all questions. If you try to exit the exam before you complete all questions, your information will be lost. You are expected to complete the entire exam in one sitting.

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#### **Writing Assignments**

This course has two required writing components:

#### **TO SAVE YOUR ESSAYS:**

**Macintosh:** When you select the question or article you wish to write on, simple text or text edit will automatically be launched. When you are finished, simply click on FILE>SAVE. **Do not select SAVE AS.** You do not need to give the document a name before saving. When you are done, select FILE>QUIT. **You must quit before you write another essay.**

**Windows:** When you select the question or article, notepad will automatically launch. When you are finished, click on FILE>SAVE. **Do not select SAVE AS.** You do not need to give the document a name before saving.

#### **1) *Essay Requirement: Critical Thinking Questions***

There is a *critical thinking question* for each chapter or section. You will do research on the question and write a brief essay upon relating it to the course content (and your personal experiences when possible). To view the questions, click on ESSAY REQ, then on CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS. You will see the questions, one for each chapter or section. Click on the question you would like to work on; this will bring up a screen where you can enter your essay. You must write a minimum of 500 words per essay.

#### **2) *Essay Requirement: Journal Articles***

This task requires you to write a review of three journal articles of your choice on a topic related to this course. You may choose journal articles outside the instructor's selected list, provided the content of the article relates to the course and you provide the journal name, volume, date and critical information so that the instructor can access and review that article. You must write a minimum of 200 words for each essay. To view the instructor list of journal articles and write your essays, click on ESSAY REQ. The VIEW ARTICLE button will lead you to a document, listing articles the instructor recommends for your research. In the dialog box below that, click on JOURNAL ARTICLE ASSIGNMENT; this will expand the folder, which contains links to the screens where you can write your

reviews. When you are ready to stop, click on FILE>SAVE. You may go back at any point to edit your essays. For more information on the features of this assignment, please consult the HELP menu.

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### **Author Description**

Arnold P. Goldstein, Ph.D., had over 30 years of experience in the study of aggression and violence in children and adolescents. He was the Director of the Center for Research on Aggression at Syracuse University in the State of New York. Dr. Goldstein was also the Director of the New York State Task Force on Juvenile Gangs. He has authored 50 books and written over 100 journal articles on aggression and violence. Some additional related books of Dr. Goldstein's are [Helping People Change](#), [Skill Streaming the Elementary Age Child](#) and [Skill Streaming the Adolescent](#).

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### **Instructor Description**

*Understanding Aggression* was written by Dr. Arnold P. Goldstein, the former head of the Aggression Institute in New York City. Mick Jackson, the instructor of record, is a Behavioral Intervention Specialist with a Master's Degree in Special Education with an emphasis on Behavioral Theory. He has 15 years of combined experience in self-contained special education classrooms, resource rooms and a hospital day treatment setting with K-12 students. Mr. Jackson also has eight years of experience teaching post secondary distance education courses. He has conducted oral seminars on various exceptional education topics and issues, presenting to school districts, teacher groups and at educational conferences.

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### **Contacting the Instructor**

You may contact the instructor by emailing [mick@virtualeduc.com](mailto:mick@virtualeduc.com) or by calling (509) 891-7219 Monday through Thursday. When calling during office hours messages will be answered within 24 hours. Phone conferences will be limited to ten minutes per student, per day, given that this is a self-paced instructional program. Please do not contact the instructor about technical problems, course glitches or other issues that involve the operation of the course.

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### **Technical Questions**

If you have questions or problems related to the operation of this course CD, please try everything twice. If the problem persists please check our support pages for FAQs and known issues at [www.virtualeduc.com](http://www.virtualeduc.com) and also the Help section on your course disk.

If you need personal assistance then email [support@virtualeduc.com](mailto:support@virtualeduc.com) or call (509) 891-7219. When contacting technical support, please know your course version number, it is printed on the CD label, your operating system and be seated in front of the computer at the time of your call.

### **Minimum Requirements**

#### *Macintosh Operating Systems*

Mac OS 9.x or OS 10.x, 256MB of RAM and 5MB of free hard disk space, 15" or larger color monitor with a minimum resolution of 800x600, CD driver 4x minimum speed and a printer connected to your computer.

#### *Windows Operating Systems*

Windows 2000, XP Home, Professional or newer, 256MB of RAM and 5MB of free hard disk space; 15" or larger color monitor with a minimum resolution of 800x600, CD driver 4x minimum speed and a printer connected to your computer.

Please contact VESi if you have any questions about the compatibility of these systems.

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***Refer to the addendum included with your software package regarding Grading Criteria, Course Completion Information, Items to be Submitted, and where to send your completed information.***

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