



# Mental Health Mondays

Aggression  
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## What do we know about aggression?

Aggression is not a diagnosis; it is a **category of behavior** that occurs **in response to the environment**. Environment is defined as not only the individual's current setting, but their **medical, physical, social, and historical background**.

The approach to management of aggression or self-injurious behavior in a person with a dual diagnosis involves consideration of the person's functional communication and coping skills. The treatment approach should assist the person in developing skills for each situation in which aggression occurs, and caregivers should reward use of these skills.

## From the MOADD App

The MOADD mobile app provides clinicians with best practice guidelines and approaches in supporting individuals with co-occurring intellectual, developmental, and behavioral health diagnoses.

Follow the links below to download the app from Google Play or iTunes.

[Google Play Store](#)

[iTunes Store](#)

## Recognition

A wide range of physical and communicative actions might be characterized as aggressive, including: cursing, name calling, threat-making, posting violent images online, hitting, kicking, or other actions to injure, head banging, picking, biting, cutting, or other self-harm, etc.

Behaviors are characterized as aggressive when they result in (or demonstrate risk of) physical and/or emotional harm to self, others, or property, whether intentional or not.

Neuro-psychiatric conditions such as ADHD, ODD/CD, Bipolar Disorder, Anxiety, Mood Disorders or SUDs can all involve aggression as a symptom and screening should occur to get the person the correct treatment options.

## Biological Factors

A medical evaluation and treatment is a mandatory first step when addressing aggressive behavior. Untreated medical conditions in individuals with dual diagnosis may result in increased problem behaviors.

**Most people with developmental disabilities (DD) are not any more violent or aggressive than someone without a DD diagnosis.**

However, some people might feel a lot of frustration related to their developmental disability and this is sometimes shown through aggression or self-harming behavior. See the CDC for more information by [clicking here](#).

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