

Recognizing Violence Warning Signs in Others

Some people think that making others fear them through violence or threats of violence will solve their problems or earn them respect. This isn't true.

People who behave violently lose respect. They find themselves isolated or disliked, and they still feel angry and frustrated.

If you see these warning signs, violence is a serious possibility.

- loss of temper on a daily basis
- frequent physical fighting
- significant vandalism or property damage
- increase in use of drugs or alcohol
- increase in risk-taking behavior
- making detailed plans to commit acts of violence
- announcing threats or plans for hurting others
- enjoying hurting animals
- carrying a weapon

If you notice the following signs over a period of time, the potential for violence exists.

- a history of violent or aggressive behavior
- serious drug or alcohol use
- gang membership or strong desire to be in a gang
- access to or fascination with weapons, especially guns
- threatening others regularly
- trouble controlling feelings like anger
- withdrawal from friends and usual activities
- feeling rejected or alone
- having been a victim of bullying
- poor school performance

- history of discipline problems or frequent run-ins with authority
- feeling constantly disrespected
- failing to acknowledge the feelings or rights of others

What you can do if someone you know shows violence warning signs.

When you see these violence warning signs in someone else, there are things you can do.

Hoping that someone else will deal with the situation is the easy way out.

- Above all, be safe. Don't spend time alone with people who show warning signs. If possible without putting yourself in danger, remove the person from the situation that's setting them off.
- Tell someone you trust and respect about your concerns and ask for help. This could be a family member, guidance counselor, teacher, school psychologist, coach, clergy, school resource officer or friend.
- If you are worried about being a victim of violence, get someone in authority to protect you.
- The key to preventing violent behavior is asking an experienced professional for help. The most important thing to remember is don't go it alone.

Adapted from The American Psychological Association Help Center:

<http://helping.apa.org/index.html> 🐾



Save your Vocal Chords Getting Through to Your Youth by Simply Listening

Do you need to climb on the kitchen table and shout through a speaker in order to get your teenager's attention? Some days it might feel like that. There is another approach that may be better. It's called listening.

Curiously enough, one of the best ways to get through to your child is to really listen to him or her. By listening to our children we communicate to them that they are valuable — worthy of our time and efforts to understand who they really are. 🐾

Teaching Your Children to be Humane

The American Humane Association suggests ways for children to learn how to treat animals.

What Parents can Teach Preschool Children:

- Animals have many of the same needs as people.
- They can get hurt and feel pain.
- They need food, water, and shelter, as well as shots and visits to the doctor to stay healthy.
- Some pets, like dogs and cats, like to play, but they don't always want to.
- Pets need gentle care and handling and lots of affection. They are not toys.

What Parents Can Teach Children in Elementary School:

- Each animal has a special place in the web of life, even those that people think are scary or ugly.
- Being too rough towards animals can cause them fear, pain, and suffering.
- Nature is the home of wild animals, and you are a guest there.
- Many people and their pets share a special relationship; they love and care for each other no matter what.

What Parents Can Teach Middle & High School Children:

- Laws protect animals from cruelty; even from their owners.
- Talk about the difference between fair treatment and abuse or neglect.
- Talk about how society uses animals and the difference between humane and inhuman treatment of animals.
- Discuss complex issues, such as euthanasia of unwanted pets, endangered species, and the use of animals in scientific experiments.
- Teach the concept of charity, such as donating your time or part of your allowance to a good cause.

For more information check out the American Humane Association web site at: www.americanhumane.org

Teasing

Parents frequently ask how to help their child deal with teasing from other children. Children who tease other children usually come from homes where sarcasm and hostility are used constantly.

A parent's presence is a way to keep older children in line. When trouble starts, the parent can redirect the children to some other form of play.

Children learn from their parents. If parents do not appear to be upset, the child will more likely remain calm. If parents become angry in front of their child, these experiences may stick in the child's mind. This tends to reinforce the child's feelings of fear.

When parents are overprotective, they try to "rescue" their child. This teaches the child that the only defense is the parent's presence. Over-

protective parents may inhibit their child's self-confidence and positive self-esteem. It is important for parents to maintain a balance between watchful concern and unnecessary intrusion.

So what can you do to help your child with teasing and its effects?

- (1) Stop teasing in your own behavior.
- (2) Be present but out of the way when your child is playing with other children.
- (3) Let your child deal with problems without your immediate intervention.
- (4) Keep cool when your child tells you about how he was teased.
- (5) Avoid discussing the episode with others in your child's presence.
- (6) Maintain a sense of humor.

Courtesy of Growing Child
www.growingchild.com

Preventing School Violence Challenge is Getting Students to Report Suspicious

The statewide "Save a Friend" line is an anonymous tip line for students to call when they fear that a classmate is planning a violent school act.

The biggest struggle is changing the perception of tattling. "You have to help them understand the consequences are irreversible. If it's a suicide, if it's a shooting, those circumstances are irreversible and there are times when you should share a secret," Anderson says.

Kids can report teasing, bullying, questionable suggestions or invitations. A crucial tool for fighting school violence has been created - toll-free confidential hotline.

Save a Friend!

*Students can report
suspicious behavior,
threats, or
harassment at
1-888-960-9600.*

