

# BE A ROLE MODEL\*

## Bullying...No Way!

### Prevent your child from becoming a VICTIM:

- ◆ Instill self-confidence in your child.
- ◆ Help your child establish good social skills.
- ◆ Teach your child to speak out for him or herself.
- ◆ Teach your child to seek, if harassed, help from you and other caring adults.
- ◆ Try to meet with the bully to work things out. If the problem continues, call or meet with the parent of the bully.

### Prevent your child from becoming a BULLY:

- ◆ Present yourself as a model of nonviolent behavior.
- ◆ Clearly state that violence is not acceptable.
- ◆ Assist your child in finding nonviolent strategies for anger management and conflict resolution.
- ◆ Seek help from mental health/school counselors to help stop bullying and aggressive behavior.

### TEENS

- ◆ Don't insult, shout, walk out or away...SHOW RESPECT

### PARENTS

- ◆ Don't boss, preach, judge, or criticize...SHOW RESPECT

### FOR BOTH

- ◆ Spend more than 15 minutes each day together listening and talking.
- ◆ Don't have outside interruptions.
- ◆ Don't blame or try to defend anyone.
- ◆ DO MAKE one-on-one time SPECIAL.
- ◆ Warm family relationships protect children FROM violence and many other risky behaviors.
- ◆ Be aware that everything you do, your children see and do.

## HERE IS WHAT WE CAN ALL DO TO HELP KEEP OUR CHILDREN “VIOLENCE FREE”

Parents and caregivers are vital to the healthy development and growth of children. We all know this, but what can we do better to enrich our children? Helping children learn more about themselves and their environment can be a key step in preventing school and youth violence. Parents want children to be safe, and children want to feel and be safe. The following information will be both helpful to you as a parent and caregiver, as well as to your children. So take time to read and make time to share this with your children. Violence prevention begins with YOU. Remember to make time to listen, take time to talk...these can be precious moments.

### EMOTIONS

#### Understand –Don’t Take A Stand

Children who don’t know how to control their anger are more likely to fight. Teach children how to calm down and talk over their problems. Tips for keeping cool and solving a problem:

- Keep in mind that anger is real, but it usually goes away.
- To calm down, think about or do things you enjoy.
- Once you have calmed down, think about the problem with a clear head.
- Take steps to solve the problem.

### RESPECT

#### Find Out What It Means

Many youth fight because they feel disregarded and, as a result, feel angry, humiliated, or embarrassed.

- Give respect so you may get respect.
- Standup for yourself without putting yourself in danger.
- Discuss ways to solve problems without fighting.
- Respect is not gained by physical force or intimidation, but by the quality of your character.
- Fighting doesn’t solve a problem or get you respect.

How to get your way without fighting:

- Talk clearly and calmly. State the problem and your desire to solve it without fighting.
- Humor—Make fun of the problem.
- Compromise—Both give up something and get something.
- Avoid/ignore—Sometimes it’s not worth the bother.
- Remember, it takes more guts and self-respect to walk away from a fight than to fight.

## **GANGS are not Family**

Many youth join gangs looking for affection. Gangs only look out for their own interests and forget about yours. Gangs are violent. They intimidate, hurt, and kill people. Gangs lead to self-destruction.

## **GUNS...Are Not the Solution**

- The presence of guns can turn conflicts into violent confrontations resulting in serious injury or death.
- Guns are more likely to kill a friend or family member (unintentionally or through suicide) than an enemy.
- Parents—don't own a gun; but if you do, store it unloaded and uncocked in a locked place.
- Children should be taught not to touch or play with firearms.

## **SEEING VIOLENCE...Through a Child's Eyes**

Children who have seen violence are more likely to become involved in violence as victims or perpetrators. You can:

- Minimize your child's exposure to violence.
- Tell your child that media violence is not real—it is glamorized, misleading, and fails to depict the real pain and suffering of the victims.
- Talk to your child about violence he/she witnessed.
- If you see changes in your child after they've witnessed a violent act, talk to a mental health professional.
- Some warning signs of emotional distress related to witnessing violence include sleeplessness, lack of appetite, lack of attention, anxiety, and frequent thoughts of flashbacks of the event.
- Talk to them and, most important, listen to them.
- Spend valuable time with them that includes fun activities.
- Find out who their friends are and if they are a positive influence.
- Find out where they hang out and make sure it's safe.
- Let them know you disapprove of fighting.
- Keep your children "drug and violence-free."

**SUBSTANCE ABUSE...KEEP  
YOUR CHILD DRUG-FREE**

- Children who aren't interested in school, who have friends who use alcohol/drugs, and who are not bound by rules are more likely to use alcohol/drugs.
- Let your child know you disapprove of drug use, including alcohol, and WHY.
- Don't let your child associate with friend(s) who use drugs, including alcohol.