

*For as soon as a child is confronted with a life problem, s/he will reveal, as if under examination, whether or not s/he has been "rightly" prepared. S/he will show, in other words, whether s/he has social feeling, courage, understanding, and, in general, a useful goal.*

(based on the writings of Alfred Adler)

## Violence Prevention

### **Tips For Parents & Teachers of Young Children**

For too many people, violence is an ordinary way to be entertained, settle arguments and gain control. One out of four households experiences violence each year, often from members of their own family, while students worry about harassment or assault from classmates. There have been too many young lives lost, and there are too many communities frozen by fear. Never before has the presence of caring adults been more important in the lives of young children and critical to the building of peaceful communities. Conflict and anger are normal parts of everyday life. We, as teachers, parents and concerned adults, can teach children that there are nonviolent ways to settle disagreements, express anger and frustration, and get what we want and need.

### **To Prevent Violent Behavior in Children YOU CAN:**

#### **PROVIDE A SAFE, NURTURING ENVIRONMENT**

- ▶ show unconditional love
- ▶ build a relationship based on trust and mutual respect
- ▶ listen to children, encourage them to express thoughts and feelings
- ▶ help them to explore their interests, follow their lead

#### **TEACH SOCIAL SKILLS**

- ▶ invite children to talk about their anger, not lash out at someone or something
  - ▶ guide children to problem solve, to compromise and negotiate
- ▶ involve children in decisions, give choices, use family and class meetings
  - ▶ model cooperation

#### **INVOLVE CHILDREN IN CARING ABOUT OTHERS**

- ▶ treat all people as equals
- ▶ make gifts, send thank-you cards
- ▶ share household chores

## TURN OFF THE TV

- ▶ encourage non-violent, imaginative play:
  - save old clothes for dress-up
  - use a box to make a "rocket ship"
  - use milk cartons to build a hiding place
  - make art with crayons, glue and scraps of fabric
  - read books in which diversity is valued, and problems are solved in peaceful ways

## GIVE CHILDREN OUTLETS FOR THEIR ENERGY

- ▶ run, jump, slide and swing at the park
  - ▶ go swimming
- ▶ walk around the block, ride bikes
- ▶ play basketball, throw a frisbee

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### **Additional Recommended Reading**

A Parents Guide to Understanding and Motivating Children. Lew, Amy and Bettner, Betty Lou. Connexions Press, Newton Centre, MA (Fax 617/332-7863); and Media, PA.(Fax 610/566-1004), 1996.

Maintaining Sanity in the Classroom, second edition. Dreikurs, Rudolf; Grunwald, Bernice Bronia and Pepper, Floy C. Accelerated Development, Washington, D.C., 1998.

Positive Discipline in the Classroom: How to Effectively Use Class Meetings. Nelsen, Jane; Lott, Lynn; and Glenn, H. Stephen. Prima Publishing, Rockin, CA, 1993

Raising Kids Who Can. Lew, Amy and Bettner, Betty Lou. Connexions Press, Newton Centre, MA, 1990

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#### **NASAP**

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