



San Diego Unified School District

Fact Sheet

A Dozen Things Parents Can Do To Stop School Violence

The National Crime Prevention Council wants to help stop school violence with this starter list of ideas. Some require only individual action; some require concerted effort. Some address immediate issues. Others address the problems that cause violence. Consider this a launching pad – there is much more that can be done.

1. Recognize that keeping firearms in your home may put you at legal risk as well as expose you and your family to physical risk. In many states, parents can be held liable for their children's actions, including inappropriate use of firearms. If you do choose to keep firearms at home, ensure that they are securely locked, that ammunition is locked and stored separately, and that children know weapons are never to be touched without your express permission and supervision.

2. Take an active role in your children's schools. Talk regularly with teachers and staff. Volunteer in the classroom or library, or in after-school activities. Work with parent-teacher-student organizations.

3. Act as role models. Settle your own conflicts peaceably and manage anger without violence.

4. Listen to and talk with your children regularly. Find out what they're thinking on all kinds of topics. Create an opportunity for two-way conversation, which may mean forgoing judgments or pronouncements. This kind of communication should be a daily habit, not a reaction to crisis.

5. Set clear limits on behaviors in advance. Discuss punishments and rewards in advance, too. Disciplining with framework and consistency helps teach self-discipline, a skill your children can use for the rest of their lives.

6. Communicate clearly on the violence issue. Explain that you don't accept and won't tolerate violent behavior. Discuss what violence is and is not. Answer questions thoughtfully. Listen to children's ideas and concerns. They may bring up small problems that can easily be solved now, problems that could become worse if allowed to fester.

7. Help your children learn how to examine and find solutions to problems. Kids who know how to approach a problem and resolve it effectively are less likely to be angry, frustrated, or violent. Take advantage of "teachable moments" to help your child understand and apply these and other skills.

8. Discourage name-calling, teasing and bullying. These behaviors often escalate into fistfights (or worse). Whether the teaser is violent or not, the victim may see violence as the only way to stop it.

9. Insist on knowing your children's friends, whereabouts, and activities. It's your right. Make your home an inviting and pleasant place for your children and their friends; it's easier to know what they're up to when they're around. Know how to spot signs of troubling behavior in kids—yours and others.

10. Work with other parents to develop standards for school-related events, acceptable out-of-school activities and places, and required adult supervision. Support each other in enforcing these standards.

SUMMARY

- ❖ If you must have firearms in your home, make sure they are locked and stored separately from ammunition
- ❖ Take an active role in your student's schools
- ❖ Act as role models
- ❖ Listen to and talk with your children regularly
- ❖ Set clear limits on behavior in advance
- ❖ Do not accept or tolerate violent behavior
- ❖ Help find solutions to resolve violence and frustration
- ❖ Discourage name-calling, teasing and bullying
- ❖ Insist on knowing your children's friends, whereabouts and activities
- ❖ Support other parents with adult supervision at school-related activities
- ❖ Support your school's policies
- ❖ Join community groups to discuss concerns and issues related to violence

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11. Make it clear that you support school policies and rules that help create and sustain a safe place for all students to learn. If your child feels a rule is wrong, discuss his or her reasons and what rule might work better.
12. Join up with other parents, through school and neighborhood associations, religious organizations, civic groups, and youth activity groups. Talk with each other about violence problems, concerns about youth in the community, sources of help to strengthen and sharpen parenting skills, and similar issues.

Contact Information: Police Services Department: Administration - (619) 725-7000
 Dispatch - (619) 291-7678

www.sandi.net
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