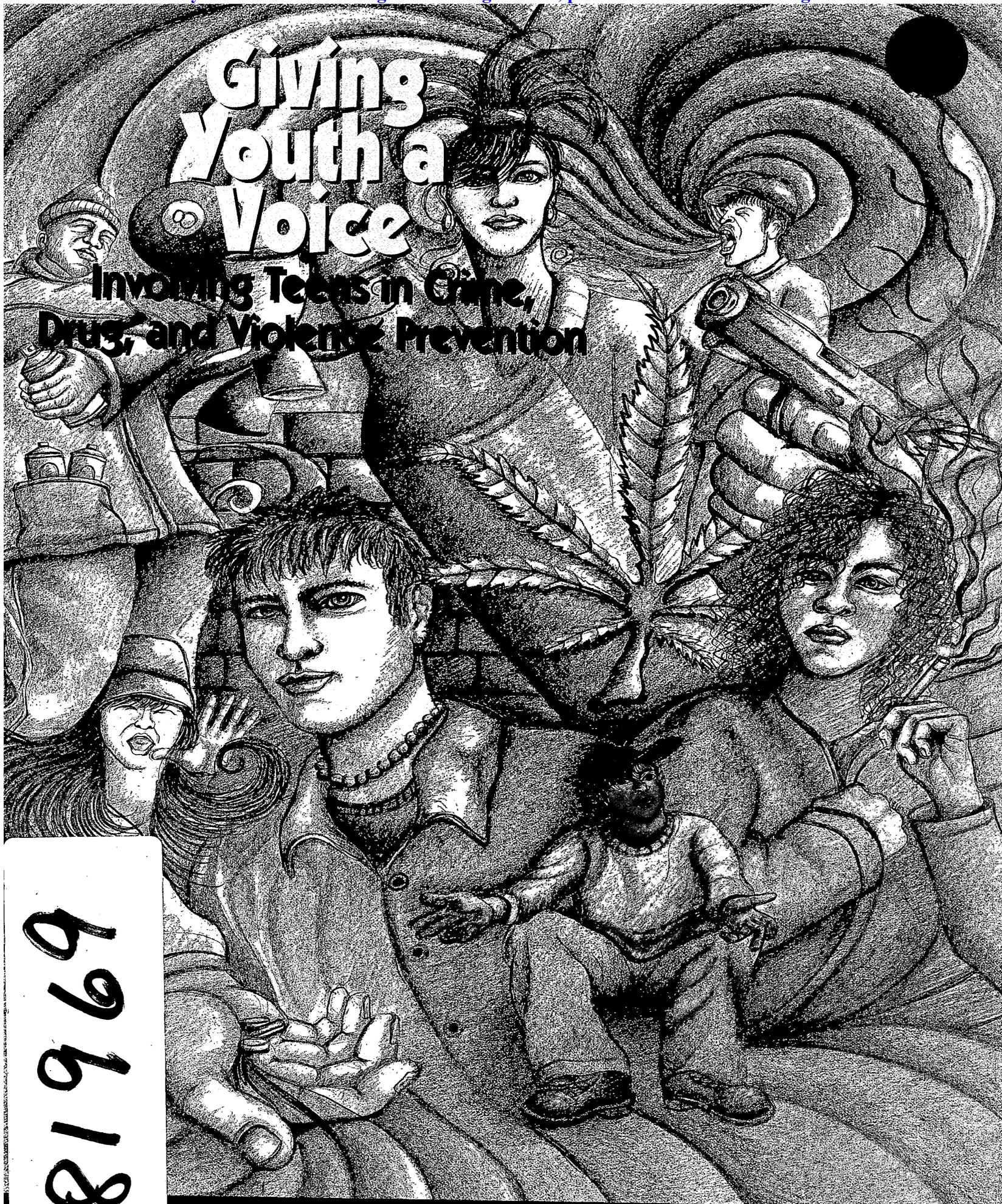


Giving Youth a Voice

Involving Teens in Crime, Drug, and Violence Prevention



181969



National Crime Prevention Council

Giving Youth a Voice

Involving Teens in Crime, Drug, and Violence Prevention



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If You Can't Work It Out ... Get Help

Mediation. Many schools offer programs that train students to act as mediators for their peers. Mediators do not make decisions for people—they help people make their own decisions. Mediators encourage dialog, provide guidance, and help the parties define areas of agreement and disagreement.

Student Courts. Many schools have implemented teen courts to help students solve disputes. Teens serve as judges, juries, prosecutors, and defenders in each case. Students caught fighting on campus can use the courts to settle arguments, and teen juries can “sentence” those students to detention or community service, rather than imposing suspension or expulsion.

Anger Management. How to recognize attitudes, actions, and circumstances that trigger an angry reaction and how to control that reaction are skills that many teens—and even some adults—have not learned. Anger management training helps individuals take command of their emotional reactions instead of allowing their emotions to take command of them.

Arbitration. In arbitration, a neutral third party determines an action. Disputing parties agree on an arbitrator who then hears evidence from all sides, asks questions, and hands down a decision.

Where To Find Help

- Schools (check on whether they have peer mediation programs), colleges, and universities.

- Community or neighborhood dispute resolution centers.
- Local government—family services.
- Private organizations listed in the telephone directory's Yellow Pages under “arbitration” or “mediation services.”
- Law school legal clinics.



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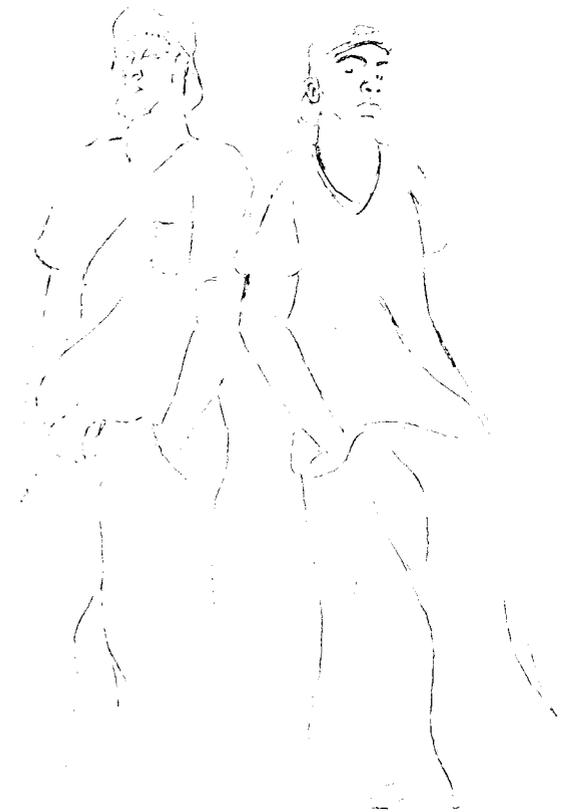
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Making Peace

Tips on Managing Conflict



**National Crime
Prevention Council**

Irritated? Frustrated?
Angry? Ready to
explode? You're not
alone. Whether it's an
argument with a friend,
aggravation because a
driver cut in front of you,
or rage because your
ex-girlfriend or -boyfriend
is going out with your
best friend—conflict is
part of everyday life.
Anger leads to conflict,
produces stress, hurts
friendships, and can lead
to violence. We can't
always avoid anger or
conflict, but we can
learn to manage it
without violence.

Steps To Managing Conflict

- *Understand your own feelings about conflict.* This means recognizing your triggers—words or actions that immediately cause an angry or other emotional response. Your trigger might be a facial expression, a tone of voice, a finger being pointed, a stereotype, or a certain phrase. Once you know your triggers, you can improve control over your reactions.
- *Practice active listening.* Go beyond hearing only words; look for tone, body language, and other clues to what the other person is saying. Pay attention instead of thinking about what you're going to say next. Demonstrate your concentration by using body language that says you are paying attention. Looking at the ground with your arms crossed says you're uninterested in what the other person is telling you. Look the other person in the eye, nod your head, and keep your body relaxed and your posture open.
- *Come up with your own suggestions for solving the problem.* Many people can think of only two ways to manage conflict—fighting or avoiding the problem. Get the facts straight. Use your imagination to think up ways that might help resolve the argument.

Moving Toward Agreement

- Agree to sit down together in a neutral place to discuss the problem.
- Come to the discussion with a sincere willingness to settle the problem.
- State your needs—what results are important to you—and define the

problem. Talk about the issues without insulting or blaming the other person.

- Discuss various ways of meeting needs or solving the problem. Be flexible and open-minded.
- Decide who will be responsible for specific actions after reaching agreement on a plan. Write the agreement down and give both people a copy.

Confronting the Issue

Good communication skills are a necessity throughout our lives. They allow us to resolve issues before they become problems and help keep us from getting angry. When talking to people, especially those who are acting confrontational,

- look and feel relaxed
- keep your voice calm
- be direct and specific about what's bothering you. Use "I" statements—statements that emphasize how you feel, rather than blaming the other person. Instead of yelling, "You always interrupt me! You don't care what I think," try saying "I feel frustrated when I can't finish making my point. I feel as though my opinions don't matter."
- ask—don't demand. Instead of saying, "Get away from me," try asking, "Would you please leave me alone right now? I am trying to talk to my friends."
- make your statement once, then give it a rest. Don't repeat your point endlessly.

- be courteous while waiting by keeping a polite distance from the person ahead of you. Allow the person to finish his or her business before approaching the machine
- remove the cash as soon as the machine releases it. Put the money in your pocket and wait until you are in a secure location before counting it. Never leave the receipt at the site.

Protecting Your Credit Cards

Having a credit card is a big responsibility. If you don't have your own card, a parent may lend you one for certain purchases. Whether the card is yours or your parents', here are a few tips to keep it safe.

- Give your credit card account number out to make a purchase or reservation only when you have initiated the call. Never give this information over a cellular phone.
- Never give your credit card for someone to use on your behalf.
- Watch your card when giving it to store clerks to protect against extra imprints being made.
- Destroy any carbon papers from receipts. Tear them up—don't toss them into the trash at the purchase counter. Keep the actual charge slips in a safe place.
- Save all receipts and compare them to your monthly statement. Report any differences immediately.
- Keep a master list of all your card numbers in a secure place, preferably with

your parents or another trusted adult, with all account numbers and phone numbers for reporting stolen or lost cards.

- Immediately report lost or stolen cards to the issuing company and to the police.



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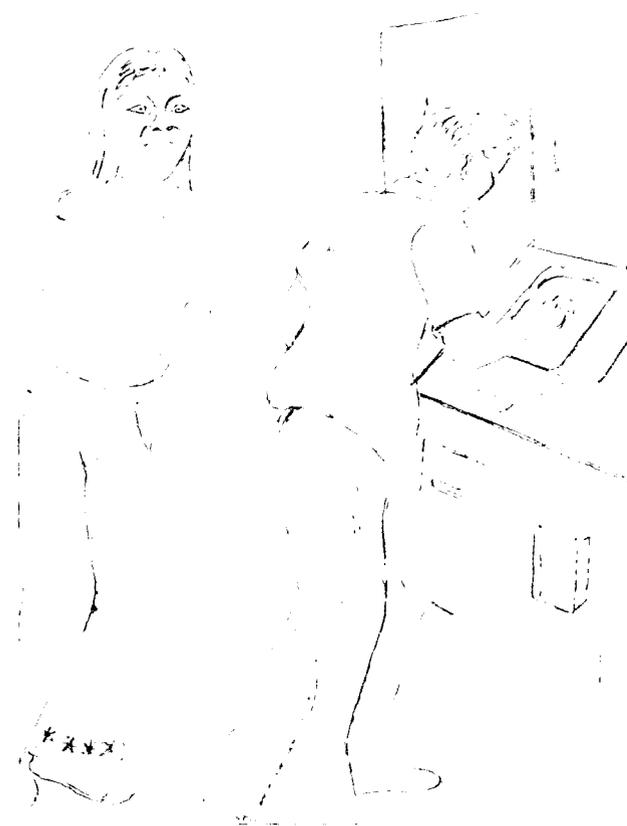


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Safe and Secure in an Electronic World



**National Crime
Prevention Council**

Enterprising criminals can gather enough information about you through the debris of everyday electronic transactions to pretend that they are you. Once this happens, they can gain access to all your financial information.

The most common way thieves go about getting this information is by stealing your wallet. However, other ways include looking over your shoulder at ATMs and phone booths to capture your PIN number; stealing mail from your mailbox; digging through your discarded trash; and fraudulently ordering a copy of your credit record. And before you think, “I don’t have a credit record,” think again. As soon as you open a bank account, get a credit card or a loan, or start a store account, you’ve got a credit record.

To prevent this from happening to you,

- don’t give out your social security number. If your state allows it, use a number other than your social security number on your driver’s license.
- tear into small pieces all credit card offers, ATM receipts, bank statements, credit card statements, and other printed materials that have your account numbers on them. Use a paper shredder if possible.
- don’t send personal information over the Internet, through e-mail, or over cellular phones.
- don’t use passwords that are obvious—names (yours or those of your friends, relatives, or pets), birth date, even street addresses. The best passwords mix numbers with upper and lowercase letters. A password that is not found in the dictionary is even better because there are programs that will try every word in the dictionary in an effort to crack your code.
- avoid break-ins by changing your password regularly and memorizing it. If you have several, set up a system for

remembering them. Don’t write your password on your notebook or stick it on a Post-it® note in your locker.

Pay Particular Attention When Using ATM Cards and Credit Cards

One of many conveniences of a checking account is the debit or automated teller machine (ATM) card. This card allows you to get money from your account through a machine 24 hours a day. A money machine is useful, but there are a few precautions you should take.

Protecting Your Personal Identification Number (PIN)

Just like passwords on the computers, a PIN is a confidential code issued to you that lets you have access to your account. Memorize your PIN, and don’t give it to anyone, not even family members or bank employees. The fewer people who have access to your PIN, the better.

Never write your PIN on your ATM card or write it on a piece of paper and place it in your wallet. If your wallet and card are lost or stolen, someone will have everything they need to take all the money from your account.

Using the ATM Safely

An ATM card should be treated like cash. When using the ATM machine, select one that’s code-door or double-door secured and visible to street traffic. Use when others are around. Also,

- be aware of others waiting behind you
- position yourself in front of the keyboard to prevent anyone from seeing your PIN

Shoplifting

- Teens who shoplift may also cause problems for their friends and classmates who want to shop or get jobs. Because some store owners see teens as people who are likely to steal, they may not want teens in their stores.
- Teen shoplifting puts a strain on relationships between all other teens and store owners. Some stores have policies that restrict the number of teenagers who can enter the store at one time.
- Some people in the community may hold a negative opinion about teens in general because of incidents of teen shoplifting they hear about.

What Happens in Your Community

- A neighborhood store closes because the owner loses too much money to shoplifting. (Thirty percent of business failures in the United States are due to shoplifting and employee theft.)
- A store victimized by shoplifting has to lay off employees because revenue is very low.
- The neighborhood store's customers may have to travel farther to shop after the store closes.
- If the store stays in business, the owner may raise prices to pay for extra security equipment or guards.

Take Action

- If you see anybody in a store take something without paying, report it to a salesperson, security guards, or a cashier. The person is really stealing from you.

- For a class project, interview the security managers of department stores or malls to find out how much shoplifting costs them. Ask about what they do to prevent it.
- Copy and pass out this brochure to teens at your local mall or downtown shopping district.



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When you and your friends are shopping, do you get irritated or angry because you can only take three pairs of jeans into the dressing room? The ring you wanted to look at is locked in a case? You have to check all your packages at the door? Sales clerks watch you and your friends suspiciously as you look around?

Shoplifting is an expensive problem that everybody pays the price for. It hurts you in several ways — prices keep going up as store owners try to recover some of their losses. A big department store can spend millions a year on security, but it may lose as much as \$2,000 a day to shoplifters. And shoplifters give teenagers a bad name.

Who shoplifts?

- Teens—About 24 percent of apprehended shoplifters are teens between 13 and 17 years old.
- Amateurs make up the largest number, not professional thieves. These are “everyday” people who steal on impulse, because they see an item they greatly desire, or for a thrill. They tend to believe they won’t get caught or sent to jail.
- Most are customers who steal frequently from places where they regularly shop.
- Some are professional thieves who make their living by stealing and selling goods, but this is a much smaller group than the amateurs.
- Drug addicts steal to support their habit.
- Desperate people steal because they need food—but they make up only a very small number of shoplifters.
- Kleptomaniacs, a tiny minority of shoplifters who have a mental disorder that makes it difficult to overcome their urge to steal.

Why Do People Shoplift?

Many want to see if they can get away with it. Some use the excuses, “This is a big store, they can afford it,” “I don’t have enough money,” or “Stores just write it off as a business expense.” Many teens shoplift on a dare, thinking their friends will call them “chicken” if they don’t go along with the dare. Other teens are just looking for excitement.

Costs for the Individual Teen Who Shoplifts

- When salespeople or security officers catch shoplifters, they call the police, who then arrest the suspects and take them to the police station.
- Children and teens may be released into their parents’ custody if it’s their first offense.
- The case may be referred to a juvenile office, which can recommend an appropriate punishment, or sent directly to the juvenile court where a judge decides the penalty.
- Everyone will find out about the arrest because police or court officers will interview the shoplifter’s parents, neighbors, and school while they’re writing the report on the crime.
- If teens are caught shoplifting, their juvenile police records are supposed to be confidential and unavailable to future employers, but sometimes that information does get out.

Costs for Teenagers in General

- They are affected by the higher prices caused by shoplifters. A store owner loses money every time an item is stolen and has to raise prices to compensate for that loss. Store owners also have to spend additional money for special security measures, such as security guards and electronic monitoring.
- There may be fewer jobs available to teens if store owners lose money to shoplifters—owners won’t generate enough profit to pay employees.

- Plan and rehearse what you will do if he or she becomes abusive.

How To Be a Friend to a Victim of Dating Violence

Most teens talk to other teens about their problems. If a friend tells you things that sound like his or her relationship is abusive, here are some suggestions on ways to help.

- Don't ignore signs of abuse. Talk to your friend.
- Express your concerns. Tell your friend you're worried. Support, don't judge.
- Point out your friend's strengths—many people in abusive relationships are no longer capable of seeing their own abilities and gifts.
- Encourage your friend to confide in a trusted adult. Offer to go with the friend for professional help.
- Find out what laws in your state may protect your friend from the abuser.
- Never put yourself in a dangerous situation with the victim's partner. Don't try to mediate or otherwise get involved directly.
- Call the police if you witness an assault. Tell an adult—school principal, parent, guidance counselor, or school resource officer—if you suspect the abuse but don't witness it.

Take Action

- Educate teens and adults in your community. Start a peer education program on teen dating violence.
- Encourage your school or a community organization to start a program to help abusers conquer their behavior. Teaching them how to be in a relationship

without resorting to violence will help break the cycle.

- Read up on healthy relationships and dating violence. Ask your school library to purchase books about living without violence and the cycle of domestic violence.
- Inquire about having health, social studies, contemporary living, and other classes incorporate discussions of teen dating violence and its prevention.



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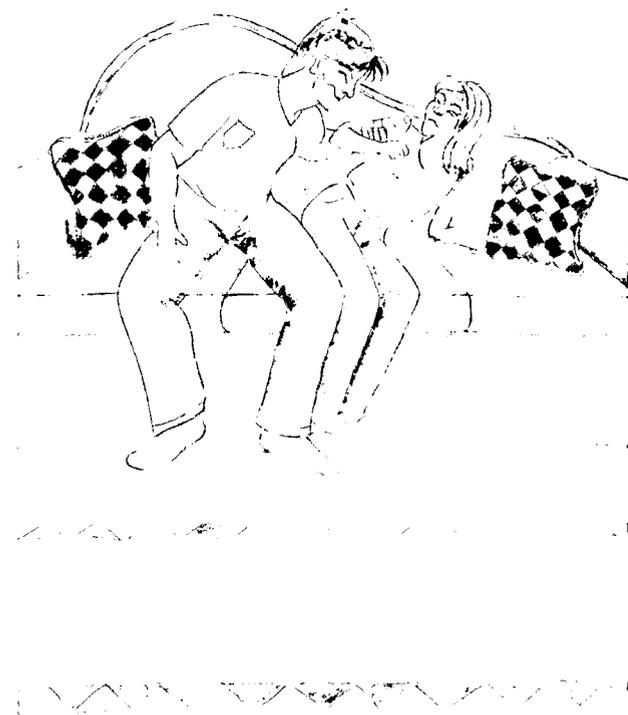


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Teen Dating Violence



**National Crime
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Dating violence or abuse affects one in four teens. Abuse isn't just hitting. It's yelling, threatening, name calling, saying "I'll kill myself if you leave me," obsessive phone calling or paging, and extreme possessiveness.

Are you going out with someone who ...

- is jealous and possessive, won't let you have friends, checks up on you or won't accept breaking up?
- tries to control you by being bossy, giving orders, making all the decisions or not taking your opinion seriously?
- puts you down in front of friends or tells you that you would be nothing without him or her?
- scares you? Makes you worry about reactions to things you say or do? Threatens you? Uses or owns weapons?
- is violent? Has a history of fighting, loses his or her temper quickly, brags about mistreating others? Grabs, pushes, shoves, or hits you?
- pressures you for sex or is forceful or scary about sex? Gets too serious about the relationship too fast?
- abuses alcohol or other drugs and pressures you to use them?
- has a history of failed relationships and always blames the other person for all of the problems?
- believes that he or she should be in control of the relationship?
- makes your family and friends uneasy and concerned for your safety?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you could be a victim of dating abuse. Both males and females can be victims of dating violence, as can partners in heterosexual and homosexual relationships.

What if Your Partner Is Abusing You and You Want Out?

- Don't put up with abuse. You deserve better.
- Know that you are not alone. Teens from all different backgrounds across the country are involved in or have been involved in a violent relationship.
- Understand that you have done nothing wrong. It is not your fault.
- Know that the longer you stay in the abusive relationship, the more intense the violence will become.
- Recognize that being drunk is not an excuse for someone to become abusive.
- Talk with your parents, a friend, a counselor, a faith leader or spiritual leader, or someone else you trust. The more isolated you are from friends and family, the more control the abuser has over you.
- Know that you can get help from professionals at rape crisis centers, health services, counseling centers, or your family's health care provider.
- Alert a school counselor or security officer about the abuse.
- Keep a daily log of the abuse for evidence.
- Remember that no one is justified in attacking you just because he or she is angry.
- Do not meet him or her alone. Do not let him or her in your home or car when you are alone.
- Avoid being alone at school, your job, or on the way to and from places.
- Always tell someone where you are going and when you plan to be back.

Once you are in a gang, it's not easy getting out. You may risk your life if you leave a gang.

Take Action

- If you are threatened by gang members, don't overreact. Stay cool and try not to act scared.
- Ignore their threats and tell them you have no argument with them.
- If threats from gangs continue, tell your parents, the police, or school officials.
- Don't be a "wannabe" by dressing or acting like you want to be in a gang.
- Hang out with kids who are not involved and don't want to be in a gang.
- Get involved in activities that are not gang-related, such as organized sports, summer jobs, community organizations, volunteer groups, faith groups, or arts and drama groups.

Start showing gangs you have zero tolerance for their activities. You can

- start a graffiti clean-up program in your community
- start a youth group or club whose purpose is to improve the neighborhood or school.



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The Reality of Gangs



**National Crime
Prevention Council**

What's the Deal With Gangs?

Gangs are neither just a big city or inner city problem, nor are they a problem of a particular race or culture. Gangs cross all ethnic, racial, socioeconomic, gender, and geographic boundaries. They bring fear and violence to neighborhoods, traffic in drugs, destroy property, involve youth in crime, and drive out businesses. Gangs pull teens away from school and home into a life of violence.

One of the scariest aspects of gang violence is it's often indiscriminate and unpredictable. Gang members have been known to kick, punch, hit, or even kill their victims. People get hurt if they are in the wrong place at the wrong time. If gangs or gang members are in your school or neighborhood, you know it.

Learn About Gangs

- Gangs can be organized around race or ethnic group, money making activities, or territory.
- Gangs usually claim a particular area of town which they call their "turf." They spend much of their time fighting rival gangs to keep them out of this territory.
- Most gang members are males ranging in age from 8 to 22 years old.
- Females, especially Asian and Hispanic, are moving away from the traditional role of being merely girlfriends of gang members and are forming their own gangs.
- Gangs wear particular items, styles, brands, or colors of clothing. Some gangs wear bandannas of a certain color or baseball caps of a specific team.

Some gangs mark their bodies with tattoos of their gang symbol or name.

- Gangs often use special hands signs or handshakes to tell others the gang to which they belong.
- "Gangsta" rap paints a realistic picture of daily gang activity. The lyrics glorify violence, abuse of women, and disrespect for authority, especially the police.

Contrary to what you may think, gangs are not around to help you. These groups of young people break the law, beat up people, and murder.

Why Do Young People Join Gangs?

What causes some teens to join gangs? Among the most common reasons are to

- belong to a group
- receive protection
- earn money
- end boredom and seek more excitement
- be with friends and be more popular.

For some it is even a family tradition.

None of these reasons are good reasons to belong to a gang. Most of the other kids who don't belong to a gang will be afraid of you and won't hang out with you. If you think you will be safer joining a gang, you're wrong. Most likely, you will increase your chances of being injured or killed. Think you'll be rich? Not likely. Over a lifetime, gang members make far less money than those who are not in gangs. And by joining you usually don't end up with a good education, making it hard to find a good job.

Join a Gang?

Joining a gang is like entering enemy territory. Belonging to a gang has a warlike existence where beatings and shootings happen all the time. Typical scenarios of joining a gang involve violence and rape.

- Boys usually have to fight several other gang members at the same time—this is called being "rolled-in" or "walking the line."
- Girls may be forced to have sex with several gang members or fight other female gang members.
- New members may be required to prove themselves by beating up an innocent person, robbing a store, or shooting someone—including drive-by shootings.

If you break the rules after joining a gang, your punishment may be death.

What Does the Future Hold for a Gang Member?

Gang membership can severely hurt one's health and future.

- Gang members may be killed or injured.
- Many put themselves in danger of disease, prison, and death.
- Many become dependent on alcohol and drugs.
- Gang members usually drop out of school, limiting their chances for higher education or good employment.
- They are likely to be involved in crime throughout the rest of their lives.
- They may commit serious and violent crimes that lead to lengthy jail time.

What About Violence in the Workplace?

There are many forms of violence in the workplace, from raised voices, profanity, or sexual harassment to robbery or homicide. Although you hear about homicide most often, that kind of violence is the most extreme and not very common. To assess your workplace's vulnerability to violence ask yourself these questions.

- If you work in an office, is it secure? Do you have easy-to-use phone systems with emergency buttons, sign-in policies for visitors, panic buttons, safe rooms, security guards, good lighting, and safety training?
- Are all employees trained on security procedures?
- Are you encouraged to report unusual or worrisome behavior? Is there a clear written policy that spells out procedures in cases of violence and sanctions for violators? Make sure you know to whom to report unusual behaviors.
- Are there procedures in place to report sexual harassment? Is it clear that violators will be punished and victims will not?

If the answers to these questions are "no," you can approach someone in the personnel department with your concerns. Employers are liable for any harm that may come to you while you're at work and most of them want to lower the risks. If your employer doesn't take action, look for another job.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse in the Workplace

Drug and alcohol abuse in the workplace are problems that affect everyone,

not just the abuser. Approximately 68 percent of illegal drug users are employed full- or part-time. There's a good chance that someone where you work abuses alcohol or drugs.

- Workers who abuse alcohol and drugs are far less productive, miss more work days, and are more likely to injure themselves or someone else.
- Employers pass on the costs of drug and alcohol abuse on to other employees through reduced salaries, benefits packages, and privileges. Co-workers often shoulder the burden of filling in for absent or tardy users.

Don't enable a troubled co-worker to continue abusing alcohol or other drugs on the job by ignoring the problem, lying or covering up for him or her, doing his or her job, or lending money. Talk to your supervisor.



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Take Crime Prevention to Work



**National Crime
Prevention Council**

Going to work? You need to take your street smarts along. Almost any crime that can happen at home or school can happen at work. But common-sense prevention skills can help make your workplace safer.

Whether you're working part-time after school and on the weekends, have a summer job, or starting your first full-time job, it's smart and responsible—and mature—to avoid becoming a victim.

Work Sense is Common Sense

- Keep your purse, wallet, keys, or other valuable items with you at all times or locked in a drawer or closet.
- Let your parents know your work schedule, especially if you're going to be leaving work early or staying late.
- Be sure to let your supervisor know when you are going on a break or leaving the premises, even for a few minutes.
- Mark your personal items, such as a radio, CDs, or cellular phone, with your name or initials and an identification number like your driver's license number, if you choose to bring them to work.
- Report to maintenance any broken or flickering lights, dim corridors, doors that don't lock properly, and broken windows. Don't wait for someone else to do it.
- Don't advertise your social life or your family's vacation plans to people at work.
- Be clear about and always follow official procedures for handling cash.
- Check with your parents if your supervisor asks that you close up in the evening. If you feel uncomfortable, ask that someone else stay with you.
- Do not use drugs or alcohol at work or while working.
- Do not take anything from work. It's theft. You can be fired or arrested.
- Report any suspicious activity or person immediately.
- Cooperate if you are confronted by a robber. Merchandise and cash can always be replaced—people can't.

Trouble Spots

- *Stairwells and out-of-the-way corridors*—don't take the stairs alone. Talk to your supervisor or building manager about improving poorly lighted corridors and stairways.
- *Elevators*—don't get into elevators with people who look out of place or behave in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable. If you find yourself in an elevator with someone who makes you nervous, press the next floor button and get off as soon as possible. Also, stand near the emergency phone or button in the elevator.
- *Restrooms*—attackers can hide in stalls and corners. Make sure restrooms are locked and only employees have keys. Be extra cautious when using restrooms that are isolated or poorly lighted.
- *After hours*—don't work late alone. Create a buddy system for walking to parking lots or public transportation or ask security to escort you.
- *Parking lots or garages*—choose a well-lighted, well-guarded parking garage. Always lock your car and roll windows up all the way. If you notice strangers hanging around the parking lot, notify security or the police. When you approach your car, have the key ready. Check the floor and front and back seats before getting in. Lock your car as soon as you get in—before you buckle your seat belt.
- *Public transportation*—exercise caution when using subways and buses. Wait at well-lighted, busy stops. Sit close to the driver or exit doors. If someone makes you feel uncomfortable, tell the driver or subway personnel.

In Jefferson City, Missouri, teenagers audition to be in the cast of the Safety Kids program. They get to travel around to schools making presentations about drugs to other young people.

- Teach younger kids anti-violence or anti-drug strategies.
- Put on art shows or performances with prevention themes.

Take Action

Here are a few ideas of things you can do to improve your school and neighborhood.

- Set up a group for teens to share problems and solutions.
- Join a group that builds and renovates houses for low-income or homeless families.
- Do peer counseling.
- Start a teen court program in your school.
- Film anti-crime commercials and deliver them to your local television station.
- Clean-up and repair a playground or build a new one in an area that lacks one.
- Be a tutor or mentor to a younger person.
- Develop a “street smarts” section for your school’s Web site.
- Volunteer at a homeless shelter, preschool, or senior center.
- Put on drug- and alcohol-free events to celebrate holidays or other special events.



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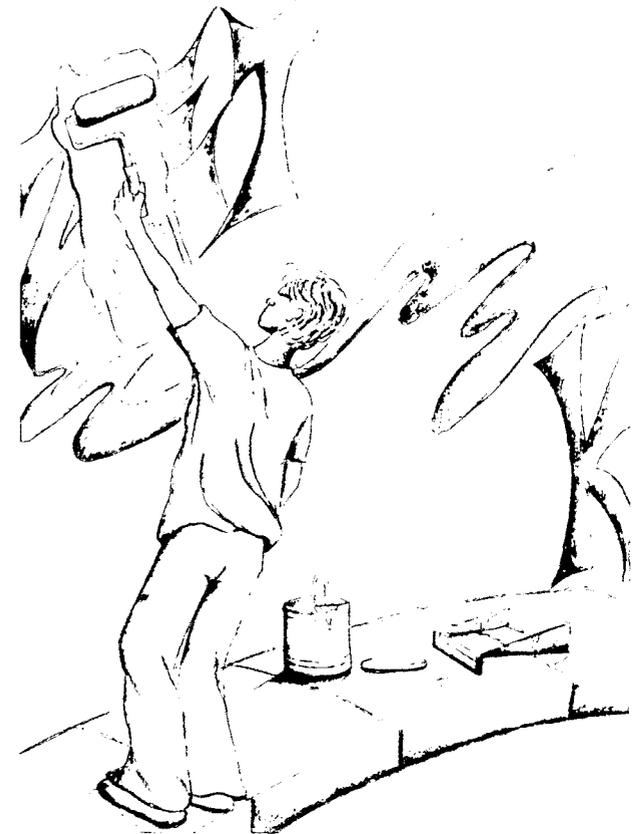
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Everyone's Doing It

Planning a Successful Community Crime Prevention Project



**National Crime
Prevention Council**

Are you tired of walking by playgrounds that are filled with trash and broken equipment? You know kids won't play there because it's such a mess. There is something you can do. You can make a difference by cleaning up that playground as a community crime prevention project.

There are hundreds of problems teens can solve to make their school, neighborhood, and community safer. Teens have talents and skills that can be put to use—if you're an artist you can paint a mural to replace graffiti; if you like sports, you can coach a team in your neighborhood; if you are a listener or a problem solver you can help settle arguments. You just need to fit your skill to a problem you want to solve.

Either find a group or get one together. Join an existing group like an after-school program at your school, Boys & Girls Clubs, 4-H, Scouts, YMCA or YWCA, or Camp Fire. If you need help finding out what's around, talk to someone in your school, place of worship, police station, or recreation center. Whoever you work with, your project will need a plan if it's to be a success. This brochure will give you some ideas about setting up a helpful plan.

Steps for Success

1 Decide what your project is going to be.

List the problems that you and your group believe you can change in your neighborhood or school. For example, are there too many fights in your school? Are kids doing drugs? Has there been an increase in drunk driving incidents? Choose one problem. (At this point you may want to look around your community and see what people are already doing. Maybe you can work with another group.)

2 Plan what you're going to do and each step you're going to take to get there.

Decide who's going to do what, and set deadlines for completing each step. Split up the work evenly. This way no one will get burned out. Remember to plan for how you're going to be able to tell if your project was successful. Are there fewer fights at school? Has the school remained free of graffiti?

3 Get what you need.

Basically, you need people to do the work, materials (remember to include things like transportation, meeting space, food, photocopies), money, publicity, and the support of adults. Look to local businesses, foundations, parents, the school, community organizations, or places of worship to provide help. Get moving on your project.

4 Check your progress once your project is underway.

You want to be able to see if what you are doing is working. Ask people what they think—do they feel safer with less arguing in school? Ask your friends how they think it's going. Or count things. If your project is supposed to reduce fights in your school, you can count how many fights there were in a typical week before your project began and how many there are now.

5 Get the message out.

And when you've got things moving—share your success in your school or local newspaper. Then celebrate and thank everyone involved.

- train school personnel in conflict resolution, problem solving, drug prevention, crisis intervention, cultural sensitivity, classroom management, and counseling skills. Make sure they can recognize trouble signs and identify potentially violent students.
- encourage students to talk about worries, questions, and fears about what's going on in their schools, homes, and neighborhoods. Listen carefully to what they say.
- take seriously students who make threats—even if it's in writing.
- take time to talk about violence or frightening experiences that occur at school or in the neighborhood. Discuss the consequences and get students to think about what other choices besides violence might have been available. Get help from trained counselors, if necessary.
- work with students, parents, law enforcement, local governments, and community-based groups to develop wider-scope crime prevention efforts.
- be open to student-led solutions.

Community Partners

Look to community partners to enrich and make your school safer.

- Law enforcement can report on the type of crimes in the surrounding community and suggest ways to make schools safer.
- Police or organized groups of adults can patrol routes students take to and from school.
- Community-based groups, church organizations, and other service groups can provide counseling, extended learning programs, before- and after-school activities, and other community crime prevention programs.
- State and local governments can develop model school safety plans and provide funding for schools to implement the programs.
- Local businesses can provide apprenticeship programs, participate in adopt-a-school

programs, or serve as mentors to area students.

- Colleges and universities can offer conflict management courses to teachers or assist school officials in implementing violence prevention curricula.

Take Action

- Recruit other teens, parents, school staff, police to develop safe school task force.
- Start a conflict resolution program in your school.
- Set up a group for teens to share problems and solutions.



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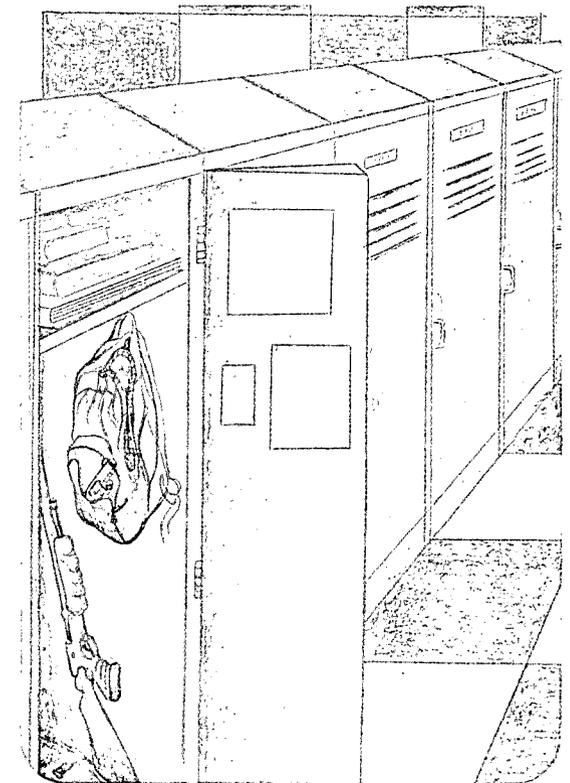


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Tips for Working Together to Create Safer Schools



National Crime Prevention Council

When crime, drugs, and violence spill over from the streets into the schools, a safe learning environment becomes increasingly difficult. Students carry weapons for protection. Gunfights start replacing fist-fights. Many students must travel through gang turf or groups of drug dealers just to get to school. Violence seems to become an acceptable way to settle conflicts. And drugs make it hard for users—and others—to learn. Students cannot learn and teachers cannot teach.

Addressing the violence issue is difficult and complex; however, there are ways to create a safer environment in which to learn. Teens can't do it alone because there needs to be a community-wide effort addressing the issue. They need help from others. But teens can take the lead.

Creating a safe place where you can learn and grow depends on a partnership among students, parents, teachers, and other community institutions to prevent school violence. Think about the issues that affect your school, and see how you or a team of people can make a difference in addressing the problem.

Here are some suggestions on how you can involve other students, parents, school staff and others in the community to help create a safe school.

Students

- Settle arguments with words, not fists or weapons. If your school doesn't have a conflict mediation program, help start one.
- Don't carry guns, knives, or other weapons to school. Tell a school official immediately if you see another student with a gun, knife, or other weapon.
- Report crimes or suspicious activities to the police, school authorities, or parents.
- Tell a teacher, parent, or trusted adult if you're worried about a bully or threats of violence by another student.
- Learn safe routes for traveling to and from school and stick to them. Know good places to seek help.
- Help start a mediation program in your school. Or help begin a student court that hears cases on violations of school policies—fighting, stealing, or cheating.
- Get involved in your school's anti-violence activities—have poster contests against violence, hold anti-drug rallies, volunteer to counsel peers. If there's no peer counseling program at your school, help start one.

Parents

If it's talking straight with your parents about school issues or working with the PTA on holding meetings to educate adults about drugs in your community, parents must be involved in creating a safer school. Encourage parents to

- spend time with you, attend the activities you're involved in, or just have dinner together.
- teach children how to reduce their risks of becoming crime victims.
- know where children are, what they are doing, and whom they are with at all times. Set clear rules in advance about acceptable activities.
- ask children about what goes on during the school day. Listen to what they say and take their concerns and worries seriously.
- help children learn nonviolent ways to handle frustration, anger, and conflict.
- refuse to allow children to carry guns, knives, or other weapons.
- become involved in school activities—PTA, field trips, and helping in class or the lunch room.

School Staff

The school staff including the administration must be behind any effort to create a safer school. Here are a few ideas of how the school can be involved in this effort. School staff and administrators can

- evaluate school's safety objectively. Set targets for improvement. Be honest about crime problems and work toward bettering the situation.
- develop consistent disciplinary policies, good security procedures, and response plans for emergencies.

- Offer to drive for the person who is high or drunk or call your parents or a friend for a ride.
- Remind friends that buying or possessing illegal drugs is against the law. Being arrested and getting a police record may not seem like a big deal now, but could keep you from getting jobs, college loans, or licenses for many professions.
- Remind friends that using intravenous drugs places them at risk of getting AIDS and hepatitis.

Take Action

- Encourage your school to organize drug-free activities—dances, movies, community service projects, walk-a-thons, marathons, etc.—to raise money for charities or local substance abuse programs.
- Use plays, songs, and raps to show younger children the consequences of drug abuse.
- Urge your school, faith community, or neighborhood to organize an anti-drug rally.
- Tell a teacher, your parents, or the police about drug dealers in your school and community. Many areas have phone numbers that let people report these crimes anonymously. Don't ignore the problem by thinking, "that kid will graduate next year" or "they only deal to a few kids." The problem will only get worse.
- Talk to school counselors about starting an alcohol or other drug abuse prevention program.
- Check with recreation centers, youth clubs, libraries, or schools to see if they offer after-school activities—classes for you and your friends. Ask your school

or neighborhood to publicize these activities.

- Encourage your school to start intramural sports for kids who may not be interested in competing on the junior varsity or varsity athletic teams but still want to play.



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Don't Lose a Friend to Drugs



**National Crime
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Has a friend become moody, short-tempered, and hostile? Does he or she seem out of it or spacey? Is she suddenly cutting classes and hanging out with the “wrong crowd?”

Stop and think about it. Your friend may have an alcohol or other drug problem.

Additional Signs of Drug or Alcohol Abuse Include

- increased interest in alcohol or other drugs; talking about them, talking about buying them
- owning drug paraphernalia such as pipes, hypodermic needles, or rolling papers
- having large amounts of cash or always being low on cash
- drastic increase or decrease in weight
- sometimes slurred or incoherent speech
- withdrawal from others, frequent lying, depression, paranoia

- dropping out of school activities
- increased sexual activity.

If a friend acts this way, it is not a guarantee that he or she has an alcohol or other drug problem. You need to compare behavior now to behavior in the past. But it's better to say something and be wrong than to say nothing and find out later that you were right to be worried.

How To Talk to a Friend Who's in Trouble

It is not an easy thing to do. You may feel like your friend will think you are judging him or her. A friend in trouble may very well get mad at you for interfering in his or her business. Although it's not your job to get people to stop using drugs, you can and should express concern as a friend. **Only the user can decide to stop.** Before you talk to a friend, it may be helpful to know some of facts about drug use.

- There are an estimated 1.5 million Americans, ages 12 and older, who use cocaine.
- Drug-related deaths remain at near historic highs.
- Current illicit drug use among 8th and 10th graders has more than doubled in the past five years.
- Teens who drink alcohol are 7.5 times more likely to use any illicit drug, and 50 times more likely to use cocaine than young people who never drink alcohol.

Think ahead about what you want to say. These tips can help you through the process:

- Let the friend know that you care about them.
- Plan ahead what you want to say and how you want to say it.

- Pick a quiet and private time to talk.
- Don't try to talk about the problem when your friend is drunk or high.
- Use a calm voice and don't get into an argument.
- Ask if there is anything that you can do to help. Have information about local hotlines and drug abuse counseling and offer to go with him or her.
- Don't expect your friend to like what you're saying. But stick with it—the more people who express concern, the better the chances of your friend getting help.
- Look for help for your friend. Talk about the situation with someone who knows about drug abuse and helping abusers.
- Seek advice from a trusted adult such as a guidance counselor, a teacher, a religious leader or a parent about how to talk to friends who may have a drug problem.
- Be prepared for denial by the friend when you talk to him or her about his or her problem. The user may automatically turn aggressive and defensive.

Keeping Yourself Drug Free Helps Friends Stay That Way

- Skip parties where you know there will be alcohol or other drugs.
- Hang out with friends who don't use alcohol or other drugs to have fun.
- Get involved in drug-free activities. Ask your friends to join.
- Learn how to talk to your peers and younger kids about the dangers of abusing drugs and alcohol. Many communities have programs that teach teens how to counsel their peers about problems that teenagers face, including substance abuse.
- Don't accept a ride from someone who has been drinking or doing drugs. Find someone else to give you a lift.

- Talk with other persons present or check the area for clues to what was used.
- Help the abuser get professional help from a school nurse, counselor, physician, or health care worker. Once he or she is recovered, offer to go with the abuser to his or her appointment.

What Can You Do To Prevent Inhalant Abuse?

Know the facts. Remember that inhalants are not made for the body. They are deadly chemicals and poisons. Know the many ways inhalants can damage your mind and body. Tell your friends about the dangers of inhalant abuse. And refuse to hang out with friends who sniff.

As with many prevention efforts, preventing inhalant abuse takes a community effort. Organize with other teens to take the lead in involving the media, retailers, schools, churches, health care providers, civic and volunteer organizations, elected officials, and the law enforcement community to work together to stop kids from sniffing. Churches could educate their youth groups. Retailers could monitor their sales of certain products. Health care providers could pass out literature to patients.

Take Action

- Work with local middle and elementary schools to start an inhalant abuse prevention project. It is not unusual for this kind of abuse to start as early as 10 or even 7 years of age.

- Educate your school about the dangers of inhalants through posters, newspaper articles, and announcements over the p.a. system at your school.
- Participate in National Inhalants and Poisons Week. Contact the National Inhalant Prevention Coalition at 800-269-4237 for more information.
- Educate adults about inhalant abuse. Many parents, coaches, and teachers may not know how widespread the problem, the extent of the danger, or how to recognize abuse.
- If you're tempted to use, get help from a counselor—fast.



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Sniffing Your Life Away

Inhalants



**National Crime
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Inhalant abuse can kill. And if it doesn't kill you, it can leave you with severe brain damage or severe respiratory problems.

There's no fooling around—even a first-time user can end up dead after “sniffing” or “huffing” inhalants.

Everyday products like glue, paint, lighter fluid, fingernail polish, permanent markers, WiteOut®, deodorants, and anything in an aerosol can are sniffed to get a rapid and dangerous high. While this type of substance abuse may seem harmless because the products are not legally classified as drugs, they are deadly chemicals and poisons. An inhalant “high” may give the feeling of well-being and reduce inhibitions, much like the effects of alcohol and other sedatives. Higher doses produce laughter and giddiness, feelings of floating, time and space distortions, and hallucinations. But the reality is inhalant abuse has serious short- and long-term side effects.

The Short Term

Sniffing can make you sick. For example, victims may become nauseated, forgetful, and unable to see things clearly. Some victims lose control of their body, including the use of arms and legs. You don't look real cool stumbling around high from inhalants. Side effects can last 15 to 45 minutes after sniffing. People who sniff often act intoxicated and experience short-term memory loss as well.

The Long Term

- potential “Sudden Sniffing Death” even for first-time users
- permanent brain damage
- hearing loss
- increased heart rate
- arm or leg spasms
- bone marrow damage
- liver and kidney damage
- damage to an unborn baby, if pregnant.

Chronic inhalant abusers may exhibit such symptoms as anxiety, excitability, irritability, or restlessness that can lead to violent behavior.

What Are Some Signs of Inhalant Abuse?

Inhalant abusers may show all or some of these symptoms:

- unusual breath odor or chemical odor on clothing
- slurred or slowed speech
- a general drunken appearance
- paint or other products on the face or fingers
- red or runny eyes or nose
- spots or sores around the mouth
- nausea and/or loss of appetite.

What Should You Do if Someone You Know Is Sniffing and Seems To Be in Trouble?

- Stay calm.
- Call 911—or your local medical emergency number.
- Open the windows and doors to let in fresh air.
- Do not excite or argue with an abuser under the influence, as he or she can become aggressive or violent.
- Administer CPR until help arrives if the abuser is not breathing.
- Ask the abuser to sit down and stay calm—activity or stress may cause heart problems, which could lead to “Sudden Sniffing Death.”

Cruising

- Keep your car in good running condition. Make sure there's enough gas to get where you're going and back.
- Turn the ignition off and take your car keys with you, even if you just have to run inside for one minute.
- Roll up the windows and lock car doors, even if you're coming right back. Check inside and out before getting in.
- Avoid parking in isolated areas. If you are uncomfortable, ask a security guard or store staff to watch you or escort you to your car.
- Drive to the nearest gas station, open business, or other well-lit, crowded area to get help if you think you are being followed. Don't head home.
- Use your cellular phone, if you have one, to call the police if you are being followed or you've seen an accident. Otherwise, stay off your cellular phone while you are driving.
- Don't pick up hitchhikers. Don't hitchhike.

Taking Buses and Subways

- Use well-lit, busy stops. If you must get off at a little-used stop, try to arrange for a friend or an adult to meet you.
- Stay alert! Don't doze or daydream.
- Say, "leave me alone" loudly if someone hassles you. Don't be embarrassed.
- Watch who gets off your stop with you. If you feel uneasy, walk directly to a place where there are other people.

If Someone Tries To Rob You

- Give up your property—don't give up your life.
- Report the crime to the police. Try to describe the attacker accurately. Your actions can help prevent others from becoming victims.



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Streetwise

The Way To Be



**National Crime
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Teens are the age group most vulnerable to crime. But putting into practice some basic crime prevention tips can help you and your friends avoid becoming the victims of crime.

How Streetwise Are You?

Do you

- stuff your backpack or purse with cash, keys, pager, cell phones, credit cards, checkbooks—and then leave it wide open at school or work, near your desk, or on the floor?
- pay attention to your surroundings or do you think about school or your friends when walking, driving, or riding the subway or bus?
- think it's a waste of time to use your locker for valuables or to lock your car when you'll be back in a few minutes?
- walk or jog by yourself early in the morning or late at night when the streets are quiet and deserted?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, you need to change a few habits. Even if you answered “no” and made a perfect score, read on. Spend a few minutes now to prevent trouble later.

Keeping Street Sense in Mind

- Stay alert and tuned into your surroundings wherever you are—at school or the mall, on the street, waiting for a bus or subway, or driving.
- Send the message that you're calm, confident, and know where you're going.
- Don't accept rides or gifts from someone you don't know well and trust—that includes people you've met on the Internet.
- Trust your instincts. If something or someone makes you uneasy, avoid the person or situation and leave as soon as possible.

- Know the neighborhoods where you live, go to school, and work. Keep in mind locations of fire and police stations and public telephones. Remember which stores and restaurants stay open late.

Strolling—Day and Night

- Try to walk places with your friends rather than alone.
- Stick to well-lighted, well-traveled streets. Avoid shortcuts through wooded areas, parking lots, or alleys.
- Take the safest route to and from schools, stores, or your friends' houses. Know where to go for help if you need it.
- Don't display your cash or any other inviting targets like pagers, cell phones, hand-held electronic games, or expensive jewelry and clothing.
- Carry your backpack or purse close to your body and keep it closed. Just carrying a wallet? Put it inside your coat or front pants pocket, not in your back pocket or in your backpack.
- Have your car or house key in your hand before you reach the door.
- If you think someone is following you, switch directions or cross the street. If they're still there, move quickly toward an open store or restaurant or a lighted house. Don't be afraid to yell for help.
- Have to work late? Make sure there are others in the building and that someone—a supervisor or security guard—will wait with you for your ride or walk you to your car or bus or train stop.
- Be alert in the neighborhood. Call police or tell an adult about anything you see that seems suspicious.

- Park in busy, well-lighted areas.
- Carry the registration and insurance card with you. Don't leave personal IDs or credit cards in your vehicle.
- Leave only the ignition key with the attendant when you pay to park in a lot or garage. Do the same when you take the car for repairs.
- Report your stolen car to the police immediately.

A Little Extra Protection

- Etch the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN)—found on a metal plate behind the front windshield—on the windows, doors, fenders, and trunk lid. This helps discourage professional thieves who have to either remove or replace etched parts before selling the car. Copy the VIN and your license plate tag number on a card and keep it in a safe place—the police will need this information if your car is stolen.
- Investigate security systems if you live in a high-theft area or drive an automobile that's attractive to thieves. You may get a discount on your auto insurance.

What About Carjacking?

Carjacking—stealing a car by force—has captured headlines in the last few years. Statistically, your chances of being a carjacking victim are very slim, and preventative actions can reduce the risk even more.

- Approach your car with the key in hand. Look around, inside, and underneath the car before getting in.
- Keep your car doors locked and windows rolled up at all times while you are driving.
- Be especially alert at intersections, gas stations, ATMs, shopping malls, and

convenience and grocery stores—all are windows of opportunity for carjackers.

- Park in well-lighted areas with good visibility, close to walkways, stores, and people.
- Beware of the “bump and rob” where someone lightly hits your car from behind. When you get out to assess the damages, the carjacker's accomplice gets in your car and drives away.
- Give up your car with no questions asked. Your life is worth more than a car.



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Road Rules



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Getting a driver's license is a big deal for every teenager. It represents freedom, the chance to go new places, and a great deal of responsibility. The vehicle you drive—the family car, a motorcycle, even your own car—may seem like an oasis, safe from the hassles of everyday life. But you are still vulnerable to crime.

Here are a few things to keep in mind to help keep you crime free on the road.

- Don't drink or do other drugs and drive. And don't ride with drivers who are under the influence.
- Keep your car in good working condition and the gas tank full. If your car does break down, pull over and stay inside it with the doors locked and the windows rolled up. Wait for the police to arrive or ask a passing motorist to call the police for you.
- Always lock a parked car, and look under and inside the entire car to see if someone has gotten into your car before you get back in.
- Avoid parking in isolated areas. If you're uncomfortable about where your car is parked, ask a security guard or store staff to watch you or escort you to your car.
- Drive to the nearest gas station, open business, or busy, well-lighted area to get help if you think you are being followed. Don't head home.
- Use your cellular phone, if you have one, to call the police if you are being followed. Otherwise, stay off cellular phones while you are driving.
- Don't pick up hitchhikers. Don't hitchhike.

Taking Your Anger on the Road

Road rage—uncontrolled anger or frustration because of traffic conditions or other drivers—is becoming a serious problem throughout the country. A majority of drivers get angry when someone cuts them off or tailgates them. Here are some tips on avoiding road rage:

- Keep calm when you're driving. Instead of retaliating, count to 10 and take a few deep breaths.
- Back off when someone cuts you off. If someone tailgates you, change lanes. Don't get pulled into a game of chicken on the road. Your life and the lives of others are at stake.
- Keep a reasonable distance between you and the car in front of you, and make sure that you aren't cutting someone off when you change lanes. Drive in the passing lane only when you are passing another car, and be sure to use your signals.
- Use your horn sparingly—as a warning, not an outburst.
- Don't make obscene gestures to other drivers, no matter how mad they make you—even if they make obscene gestures at you.
- Don't fight over parking spots.
- Stay out or move out of the way of other angry drivers.

Don't Make it Easy for a Thief To Steal Your Wheels

You don't want to lose your newfound freedom by losing your car.

The Basic Prevention Policy

- Never leave your car running or the keys in the ignition when you're away from it, even for "just a minute."
- Always roll up the windows and lock the car, even when it is front of your home.
- Never leave valuables in plain view, even if your car is locked. Put them in the trunk or at least out of sight. Buy auto stereo equipment that can be removed and locked in the trunk.

- Say no to a bully's demands from the start. If the bully threatens you with a weapon, give in to the demands and immediately tell an adult.
- Tell the bully assertively to stop threatening you (for example, "I don't like what you're doing—stop it!" or "Get a life—leave me alone.")
- Do not physically fight back: experience shows that this actually increases the likelihood of continued victimization.
- Seek immediate help from an adult.
- Report bullying to school personnel.
- If your safety is at stake, walk away or run if you need to.

Stop the Bullying

It's everyone's responsibility to stop bullying. And don't be afraid to get help when necessary. It takes courage, but you will be preventing the intimidation from continuing and possibly escalating. You can report the problem to authorities anonymously.

- Refuse to participate in taunting and teasing.
- Treat others the way you would like to be treated.
- Tell adults if you witness cruelty or hear about violence that might occur.
- Walk away from fights.
- Speak out against the bully.
- Stand tall and walk with confidence and in a way that commands respect.
- Hang out with friends who don't get involved in bullying.
- Stand up for others who are being intimidated.

- Include the person who is being bullied in your activities.
- Show compassion for the victim.

Take Action

- Work with the school administration and get students together to develop or revise your school's code of conduct.
- Start a bully education program for the local elementary school—consider a puppet show or skit that teaches kids about bullying.
- Organize a teen panel or discussion group to talk about the issues of bullying and intimidation at your school.



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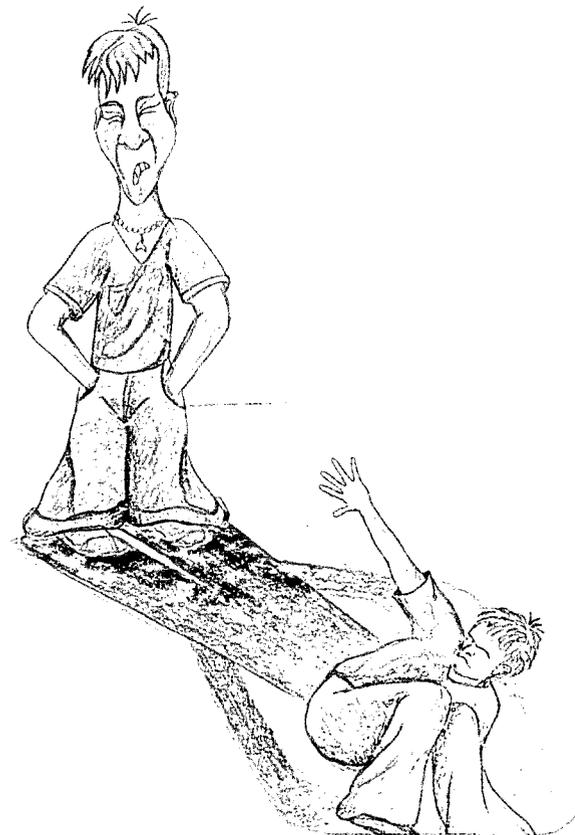


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Power Tripping



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Bullies don't go away when elementary school ends; bullying actually peaks in junior high. It continues through high school and even into the workplace. It can lead to serious problems and dangerous situations for both the victim and the bully.

Bullying is repeated and uncalled-for aggressive behavior, or quite simply, unprovoked meanness. It's a form of intimidation, which means behavior designed to threaten, frighten, or get someone to do something they wouldn't necessarily do. Bullies have learned that bullying works. They do it to feel powerful and in control. There are things you can do to deal with the situation without making things worse.

The Facts

- Bullies keep bullying as long as it works—as long as it makes them feel more powerful.
- Many children and teens are bullies or victims of bullies, but the largest number of children and teens are bystanders—witnesses to bullying.
- Eight percent of urban junior and senior high students miss one day of school each month because of fear.
- Bullying takes lots of forms: it can be physical or verbal, mild to severe.
- One in four children who bullies will have a criminal record before the age of 30.
- Girls can be bullies too, although bullying by girls is more likely to show up as spreading rumors, leaving people out of social events, teasing about clothes or boyfriends, or threatening to withdraw friendship. However, this doesn't mean that girls don't use physical intimidation to bully.
- Although much bullying happens where adults can't see or hear it, it also happens when adults are present. Often adults don't do anything to stop the bullying.

The Victim

Anyone can be the target of bullying. However, most victims are often less—or feel less powerful—than the bullies. A typical victim is likely to be shy, sensitive, and perhaps anxious or insecure. Some teens are picked on for physical reasons, such as being overweight or small, wearing different or “weird” clothing, having a physical disability, or belonging to a different race or religious faith.

The Bully

The Intimidators

Some bullies are outgoing, aggressive, active, and expressive. They get their way by brute force or openly harassing someone. They may carry a weapon. This type of bully rejects rules and regulations and needs to rebel to achieve a feeling of being better than everyone else.

The Smooth Talkers

Other bullies are more reserved and tricky and may not want to be recognized as harassers or tormentors. They try to control by talking, saying the right thing at the right time, and lying. This type of bully gets his or her power secretly through manipulation and deception.

As different as these two types may seem, all bullies have these characteristics in common:

- concern with their own pleasure
- want power over others
- willingness to use and abuse other people to get what they want
- feel pain inside, perhaps because of their own shortcomings
- find it difficult to see things from someone else's perspective.

If You Are the Victim

No one solution works well in every situation, but there are a variety of strategies you can try.

- Avoid or ignore the bully.
- Hang out with friends. There is safety in numbers.

Take Action

- Take pride in your surroundings. Vandalism cheapens your area and you.
- Learn about the costs and effects of vandalism by working with law enforcement, school officials, and community leaders. Teach what you learn to other teenagers and younger children.
- Start a clean-up crew at your school or in your neighborhood. Ask local businesses to donate supplies like paint and paintbrushes for covering graffiti, or tools and equipment for repairing vandalized property. Volunteer to help businesses and homeowners repair their property as soon as it is vandalized and paint over graffiti.
- Write articles for your school or community newspaper on the costs of vandalism and graffiti, their impact on school and other budgets for activities, and how the courts—juvenile and adult—treat vandals.
- Look for ways to use the talent and creativity of vandals in positive, non-destructive activities. Sponsor a mural contest at your school or a youth center. Encourage art supply stores and area businesses to provide large canvases and materials for kids to create murals inspired by themes like saying no to drugs, the importance of education, or celebrating diversity in your community. Ask local artists to attend and provide instruction and advice or judge a mural contest.
- Start a vandalism hotline in cooperation with law enforcement and school officials that lets callers anonymously report incidents of vandalism and gives tips about vandals.

- Work with your faith community to adopt a street or a park with your school, youth, or community group. Plant trees, bushes, and flowers. Repair equipment and install trash containers. Organize a monthly outing to clean up garbage and keep an eye on things.



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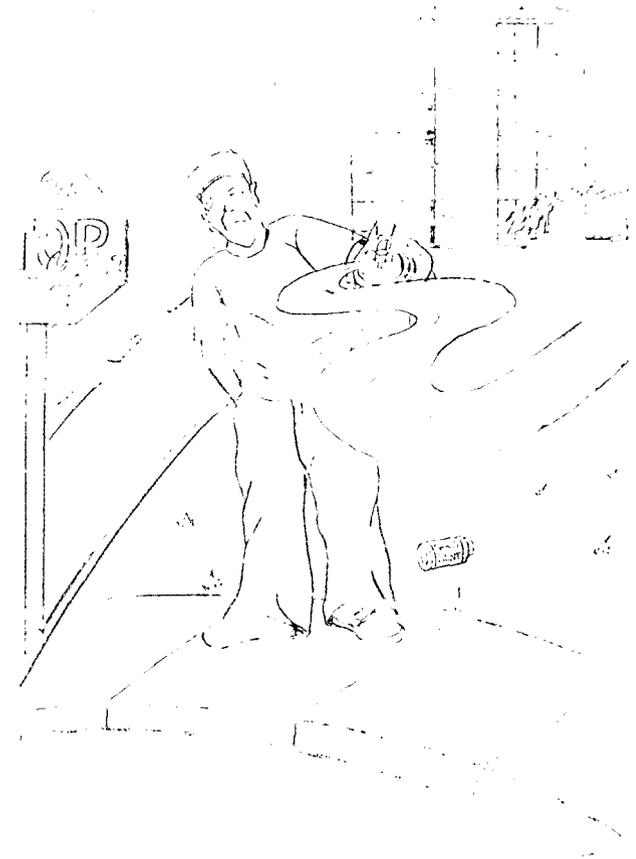


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The Scoop on Vandalism



**National Crime
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Look around your community.

Do you see

- graffiti-covered walls?
- spray-painted or destroyed mailboxes and garbage cans?
- broken street lights?
- spray-painted street signs?
- busted public tele-phones?
- missing street and traffic signs?
- writing or torn pages in library books?
- broken fixtures, doors, and stalls in public restrooms?
- shoe-polished cars?

Vandalism—the willful destruction or defacing of property—is a crime. It’s expensive to repair. It makes our communities unattractive and unsafe. It isn’t cool.

Help send a clear message that teens don’t tolerate vandalism!

Graffiti

From obscene and violent language scrawled on a public bathroom door to elaborate murals on a brick wall, graffiti appears in many forms. But it’s all the same, if it’s not on the artist’s property—it’s vandalism, and it’s a crime.

Graffiti is often the first sign that gangs are taking over a neighborhood. Gangs’ “taggers” act as messengers for the gang, use graffiti to mark their turf, advertise their exploits, and challenge or threaten rival gangs.

Graffiti gives criminals the impression that residents don’t care about their neighborhood, and a neighborhood that doesn’t care is an easy target for crime. Don’t let this happen to your neighborhood—take a stand against graffiti and make sure graffiti is removed as soon as it appears. It takes persistence, but by working with law enforcement and other residents, you can keep your neighborhood clean and the effects of vandalism to a minimum.

The Price We Pay

- Schools pay millions of dollars each year to clean up graffiti, repair buildings, and replace vandalized equipment. That’s money that could be used to buy better sports equipment or new computers.

- Local governments (and taxpayers—your parents, your neighbors, and even yourselves) pay the bills for broken street lights, stolen signs, and vandalized parks. We pay higher taxes and services are cut to pay for damage caused by vandalism.
- Businesses pass on the costs of vandalism to customers through higher prices. Some businesses are forced to move to different neighborhoods, taking good shopping out of your community.

More Than Money

- People feel angry, hurt, and sometimes frightened when something of theirs—a mailbox, a bike, a car door—is destroyed for no reason.
- Vandalism claims other victims as well—a car crash because stop signs were stolen; someone in need of help can’t dial 911 because the pay phone is broken; people get lost because street signs are missing or covered with graffiti.

Who Vandalizes and Why?

Some vandals work in groups. You may even know some of the teens doing the damage—there’s no one “type” of teen who vandalizes. He or she might be the smartest kid in school, or the kid who’s always in trouble. Most vandals are young people—from grade schoolers to teens to young adults—who vandalize out of

- boredom
- anger
- revenge
- defiance
- association with friends.

Chat rooms

When someone is posting a message in a chat room, other users have no way of knowing who that person really is. Though the anonymity of a chat room can be liberating—it's cool to create a different identity—some use it as a way to meet people they want to harm. Never say anything in a chat room that you wouldn't say in public. Many chat rooms have monitors or speakers who maintain order. These monitors can kick people out of the room for inappropriate behavior.

If you meet someone online and strike up a good relationship with them, they may want to go to a private chat room. Most of these rooms are unmonitored. There will be no filter for inappropriate conduct.

Harassment

Not everyone online minds their manners. When you are in chat rooms or bulletin boards there is a chance that you'll get messages that are harassing, demeaning, or just plain mean. Just ignore them. Some messages, however, may constitute harassment, which is a crime under federal law. If someone sends you messages or images that are obscene, lewd, filthy, or indecent, with the intent to harass or threaten you, report it to your Internet service provider. One trick to avoid harassment is to choose a gender-neutral name to use in a chat room and other public places on the Internet.

Take Action

- Educate your parents. Take the time to show your parents what you do online.

Show them your Web site, if you have one. Tell them who you are communicating with on a daily basis. Most likely you will be teaching your parents some new tricks.

- Talk to your parents about where you can go online and how long you can stay online. Also, tell them about activities you participate in online.
- Teach other teens about keeping safe on the Internet.
- Know your rights—where to report crimes and what you can report.



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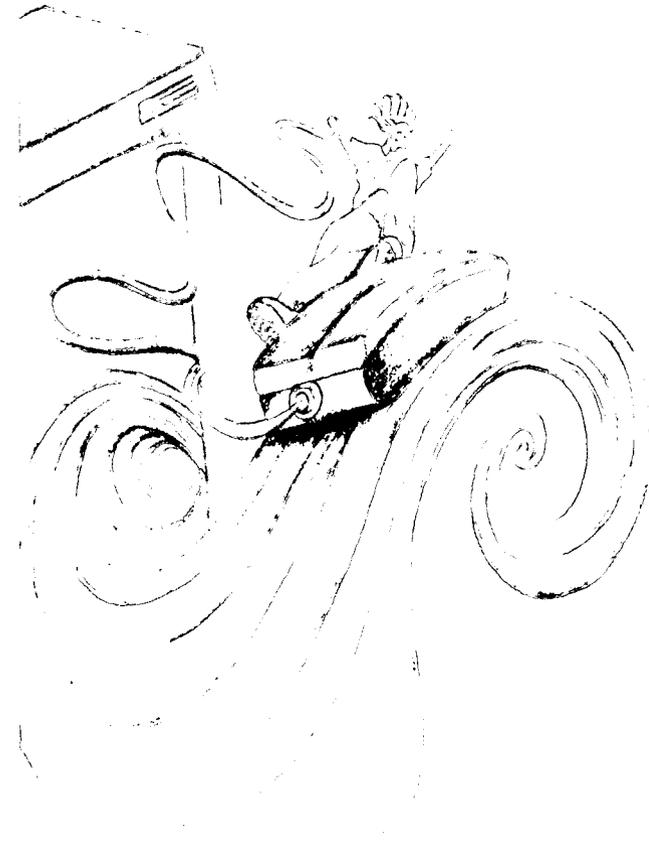


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Safe Surfing



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Cyberspace is a gigantic community of millions, where people research information for school, learn about movies, shop, listen to music, watch video clips, even develop sites of their own. As in any community, there are people and places you should avoid to reduce your crime risk.

Rules of the Road on the Internet

The best tool you have for screening material found on the Internet is your brain. If you come across sites that are pornographic, full of hate literature, or excessively violent, move on.

Here are a few reminders for safe browsing on the World Wide Web:

- **Never** give out your name, address, telephone number, password, school name, parent's name, pictures of yourself, credit cards, or any other personal information to others online.
- Never agree to meet face to face with someone you've met online without discussing it with your parents. Only if your parents decide that it's okay to meet your "cyber-friend," arrange to meet in a familiar public place, and take an adult with you.
- Never respond to messages from unfamiliar persons.
- Never enter an area that charges for services without getting your parents' permission first.
- If you receive pornographic material or threatening e-mail, save the offensive material, tell your parents, and contact that user's Internet service provider and your local law enforcement agency.

The Sites You See (and Visit)

E-mail

E-mail is a great way to communicate with your friends and family. Sometimes you may receive messages trying to sell you something or encouraging you to visit a Web site. It is probably best not

Assessing a Web Site

Aside from the fun ways to keep in touch with people, the Web can be a powerful research tool. But you need to be able to evaluate the pages you visit to know whether the information is accurate. As you visit new sites keep these pointers in mind:

- Look for Web pages that have a proper title, additional resources, a contact person with his or her e-mail address, an announcement of the last time the page was updated, and current links.
- Know who are the authors or sponsors of the site. What gives them the authority to discuss the issue at hand?
- Know the code. Check the URL (Web site address) to see what the domain name includes: a .com (commercial), a .gov (government), an .org (organization), .net (network), an .edu (educational organization), or a two letter country code (country of origin). This will provide an idea of the author or sponsor of the site. Not all commercial sites want to sell you something and not all educational sites will educate you. Be an educated consumer as you sort through the information.
- Know what's happening. Is the main purpose of this site to sell, inform, or persuade you?
- Check with the author first, if you find information that you want to use for your research, about copyright privileges and permission.

to respond to e-mail from people or groups you don't know. These sites might be a scam to sell you something you don't want. Remember, the sender might not be who he or she seems to be. If you respond, you are confirming that you have a valid e-mail address. That information can encourage the sender to forward inappropriate e-mail or put your address on even more lists.

- Only 3 to 5 percent of alcoholics are what we think of as bums. Most alcoholics are just like people you know. Anyone can become an alcoholic— young, old, rich, poor, single, married, employed, or out-of-work.
- Drinking alcohol does not quench your thirst; it causes dehydration.
- Alcohol interferes with your central nervous system. You lose balance, coordination, and judgment.
- Alcohol ages and damages the brain.
- Alcoholism is hereditary.
- Eight young people a day die in alcohol-related crashes.
- Teens who drink alcohol are 7.5 times more likely to use any illicit drug, and 50 times more likely to use cocaine than young people who never drink alcohol.
- You are breaking the law by buying or using alcohol before you are 21 years old.

Take Action

- Make a pledge with your friends that you will help each other avoid alcohol and other drugs. Leave parties where kids are drinking.
- If a friend, or someone you know, has passed out from drinking too much alcohol, turn the person on his or her side and call 911 or your local emergency number for help. Too much alcohol can cause the central nervous system, which controls breathing, to shut down. Death can result.
- Don't ride with someone who has been drinking. Call a taxi, your parents, or another relative or friend for a ride.

- Encourage someone you think has a drinking problem to get help. Go with them to Alcoholics Anonymous meetings or to meet with a counselor.
- Suggest that members of any club or youth group you belong to organize an anti-drinking project—an alcohol-free post-prom, graduation, or New Year's Eve party.
- Make a presentation to your school's PTA meeting about how teachers and parents can realistically help kids avoid drugs and alcohol.
- Ask for help if someone is pressuring you to try alcohol or other drugs. Talk to someone you trust.



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The Dangers of Drinking



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- Alcohol is the number one drug of choice for teenagers.
- Alcohol-related car crashes are the number one killer of teenagers in the United States.
- Alcohol is the number one drug problem in America.

If you think it can't happen to you, look around. Check your school's yearbooks for the last ten years. How many were dedicated to a student who was killed in a drunk driving crash?

Ask your friends how many people they know who have had bad things happen to them when they or someone else was drinking.

You don't even have to be the one doing the drinking—most teenage passenger deaths are the result of crashes caused by alcohol-impaired teenage drivers. No matter what the situation, drinking alcohol under the age of 21 is illegal.

How Does Alcohol Affect You?

- You see double, slur your speech, you lose your sense of distance.
- Alcohol loosens your inhibitions; you make bad judgments that can result in car crashes, violence, unwanted pregnancy, sexual transmission of diseases, or rape.
- A significant portion of violent crimes and vandalism among and by youth involve use of alcohol.
- Using alcohol can cost you your freedom. You can be grounded by parents, lose your driver's license, or end up in jail.
- You can get sick or die from alcohol poisoning.
- Poor grades may be a result of increased use of alcohol.

Be Smart About Advertising

Take a good look at how the alcohol industry tries to convince people to use its products.

- Wine coolers are displayed in stores next to fruit drinks. Maybe they don't think you'll notice the difference between a regular fruit drink and one with alcohol.
- Different brands of beer and other alcoholic beverages are slipped into the movies you watch. They think if you see your favorite actor drinking it, you will too.
- The models on the beer commercials are always young, fit, and beautiful. But alcohol has plenty of calories and little nutritional value. Drinking it will not make you fitter or more attractive.
- Advertisements feature celebrities and sports figures, but drinking will not make you famous or athletic.
- Alcohol advertisers are now reminding people not to drink and drive. But drunk driving is not the only way alcohol can mess up your life.

Advertisers hope you won't stop and think when you see their ads. Don't be conned. Use your own judgment, not theirs, and learn the facts.

More Facts About Alcohol

- The earlier young people start drinking and using drugs, the more likely they are to become addicted.
- Drinking coffee, taking a cold shower, exercising, or breathing fresh air will not sober you up. The only thing that sobers you up is time—at least several hours.
- One beer, one shot of whiskey, and one glass of wine all have the same amount of alcohol. Don't fall for the myth that beer and wine are less intoxicating than hard liquor.

- look and feel relaxed
- keep your voice calm
- be direct and specific about what's bothering you
- ask—don't demand
- make your statement once—then give it a rest.

Redirecting Your Anger

It's easy to lose control when you're angry. There are many ways to deal with anger by turning that negative energy into something positive. There can be immediate rewards from exercising, or there are some longer-term solutions.

- *Get involved in a cause.*
Find a group in your school or community that is trying to make a positive impact on society. For instance, you might volunteer with an environmental group or tutor younger kids after school.
- *Exercise!*
Physical activity is a great way to blow off steam, and spending time outside can also help you calm down. Take a walk in the park or go for a run. Train for a 5k race. Shoot some hoops, or try a new sport. Don't think about what makes you angry while you exercise.
- *Find a hobby.*
Many people have a hobby that helps them unwind. Your hobby could be anything from reading, painting and drawing, music, or sports to cooking, writing, collecting comic books, dancing, or building model airplanes. Find something that interests you!

Take Action

- Talk to your teachers or community leaders about developing a cross-age,

anti-bullying program for the local elementary schools.

- Encourage your school or community center to start a peer mediation program. These programs give teens a way to resolve problems peacefully and provide a resource through which they can let out their anger.
- Encourage your school administrators to make anger management courses a requirement for all graduating seniors and for faculty as well.



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Calling All Hotheads

Tips on Keeping Cool in an Angry World



**National Crime
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Anger is a normal, healthy emotion. It lets us know when something is wrong and makes us take action. It's when anger runs wild that people may become hostile, even violent.

Why Do People Get Angry?

- *"Nobody listens to me unless I get angry."*
Some people feel that the only way they can get attention is to get mad, even if it means getting in trouble.
- *"It helps me get what I want."*
Just like people who use anger to get attention, these people try to use anger to force others into giving them what they want.
- *"He/She dissed me."*
People lash out when they feel they are being disrespected or treated unfairly. They may be insecure about themselves or sensitive to certain criticisms and insults.

- *"I just got frustrated."*
Sometimes it's hard dealing with a lot of emotions, and we don't know how to express ourselves. The result is often frustration and sometimes rage.
- *"I was sick of him or her teasing me."*
While many people may think teasing is harmless and just in fun, it can really get to people after awhile. As a result, they may lash out at the person who is teasing them.
- *"It's like I'm excited when I'm angry."*
Anger makes our bodies produce more adrenaline. It may not be a pleasant experience, but it's definitely intense.

Getting a Grip

It doesn't matter whether you're a toddler going through the "terrible twos" or a grumpy older person, it's always a good time to learn to cope with your temper.

- *Admit that you're angry.*
It's hard to deal with something if you don't admit that it exists first. Try saying to yourself, "Okay, I'm really angry right now, but I'm not going to lose my cool. I'm going to deal with it."
- *Deal with it!*
When you start feeling angry or frustrated, stop what you're doing. Take a few deep breaths. Count to 10 or 100. Take a walk, stretch, laugh, go for a run, or do anything that takes your mind off the anger.
- *Don't brush it off.*
Everyone gets angry sometimes—it's perfectly normal. Ignoring your feelings doesn't solve the problem and may make things worse in the long run.

Don't reject your anger as irrational or without reason. Instead, try to figure out what's making you feel that way or talk to someone.

- *Identify and understand the cause.*
You've just failed your third English test this semester, and you yell at your best friend for asking you a stupid question. What's the real cause of your outburst? The test, not your friend. Knowing why you're angry helps you deal with it.
- *Walk away.*
You have the power to change or avoid an anger-provoking situation—so use it! Losing your cool isn't cool.
- *Get a new perspective.*
If you're having an argument with someone, try to put yourself in that person's shoes. Understanding where they're coming from might help you resolve the situation without losing your temper.
- *Vent to your friends and family.*
Venting is not taking out your anger on your friends and family. It's explaining your feelings and frustrations to people you trust and who can help you deal with the situation. Or talk to a school counselor, a teacher, or another adult you trust.

If you find that you are angry all of the time, and can't get a grip even after you have really tried, you may want to seek professional help.

How To Talk to Someone Who Makes You Mad

Being able to communicate with someone who makes you angry is an important skill. When talking with people who drive you crazy remember to

What Are "Date Rape" Drugs?

Rohypnol ("roofies," "roopies," "circles," "the forget pills") works like a tranquilizer. It causes muscle weakness, fatigue, slurred speech, loss of motor coordination and judgment, and amnesia that lasts up to 24 hours. It looks like aspirin—small, white, and round.

GHB (also known as "liquid X," "salt water," or "scoop") also causes quick sedation. Its effects are drowsiness, nausea, vomiting, headaches, dizziness, coma, and death. Its most common form is a clear liquid, although it also can be a white, grainy powder.

Rohypnol and GHB are called "date rape drugs" because when they are slipped into someone's drink, a sexual assault can take place without the victim being able to remember what happened.

or ashamed, and don't try to ignore it. It is a crime that should be reported.

- Get medical attention as soon as possible. Do not shower, wash, douche, or change your clothes. Valuable evidence could be destroyed.
- Get counseling to help you through the recovery process. Rape is a traumatic experience and trained counselors can make recovery easier and quicker.
- If you think you've been sexually assaulted under the influence of a date rape drug, get medical help immediately. Try not to urinate before providing any urine samples. If possible, collect any containers from which you drank.

If It Happens to Someone You Know...

- Believe her.
- Ask her how you can help.
- Offer comfort and support. Go with her to the hospital, police station, or counseling center.
- Remind her that it is not her fault.

Take Action

- Ask your student government or a parent group to sponsor a workshop on date rape and sexual stereotyping. Work with a hotline or crisis center to persuade rape victims to join the panel.
- Volunteer at a rape crisis center or hotline.
- Monitor the media for programs or videos that reinforce sexual stereotypes. Write, call, or e-mail to protest. On the other side, publicly commend the media when they highlight the realities of date rape.



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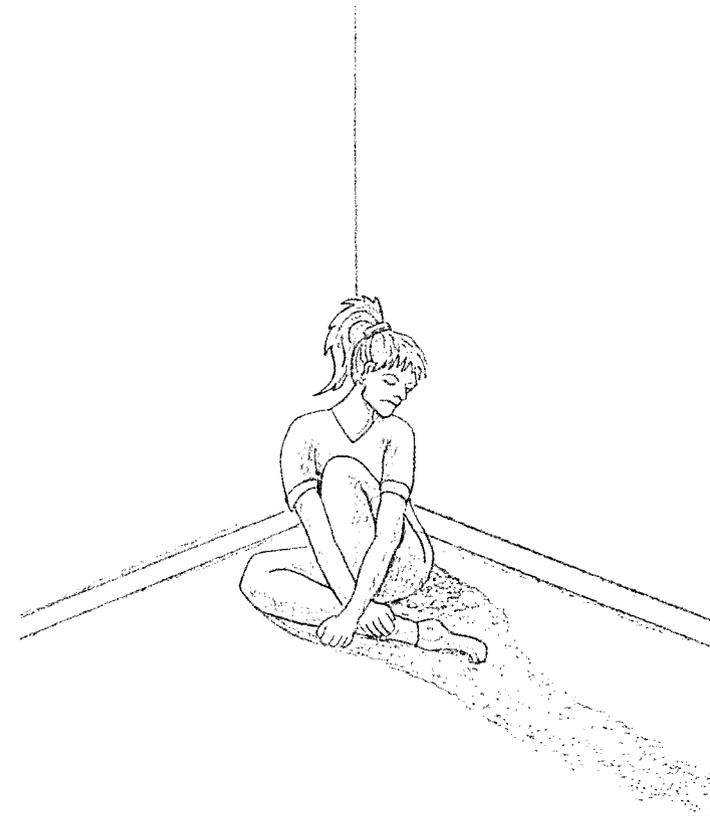
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Date Rape

A Power Trip



**National Crime
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Nothing—not even previous consensual sex—entitles anyone to force others to perform sexual acts. Without consent, forcing sexual contact is a crime. Date rape is a betrayal of trust and causes long-lasting emotional injuries. Date rape or acquaintance rape is about power, control, and anger—not romance.

Why Does it Happen?

- Let's look at sexual stereotyping and how males and females talk to each other.
- Although things are changing, society still frequently encourages men to be competitive and aggressive and teaches women to be passive and avoid confrontation.
 - Men say they misunderstand a woman's words and actions—the excuse “she said no, but meant yes.”
 - Some people—men and women alike—still believe that it's okay for a man to demand sex if he takes a woman out or buys her gifts, and that it's not rape if he forces sex on a woman who previously had sex with him or other men.
 - Women also feel that if they've previously had sex with their boyfriend and he later forces her to have sex against her will, it may not be considered rape.

Date rape can happen in homosexual relationships as well as heterosexual ones. Although it is less frequent, men can also be the victim of rape. It is still a crime and the victim still needs to get medical attention and counseling as soon as possible.

Preventing Date Rape

As a Woman, You Can...

- Be clear with men in your life about what, if any, sexual behavior you are comfortable with and keep talking as you get deeper into a relationship.
- Don't use alcohol or other drugs—they decrease your ability to take care of yourself and make sensible decisions.
- Trust your gut feelings. If a place or the way your date acts makes you nervous

or uneasy, leave. Always take enough money for a phone call for help.

- Check out a first date or blind date with friends. Meet in and go to public places. Take public transportation or drive your own car.
- Leave social events with friends not with someone you just met or don't know well.
- Always watch your drink and never leave it unattended. Don't accept beverages from someone you don't know and trust.

As a Man, You Can...

- Realize that forcing a woman to have sex against her will is rape, a violent crime with serious consequences.
- Accept a woman's decision when she says “no.” Don't see it as a challenge.
- Ask yourself how sexual stereotypes affect your attitudes and actions toward women.
- Don't use alcohol and other drugs—it clouds your judgement and understanding of what another person wants.
- Get help if you see men involved in a gang rape.
- Understand that if a woman is drunk and you have sex with her against her will, it's still rape.
- Seek counseling or a support group to help you if you feel violent or aggressive toward women.

If Date Rape Happens...

Remember that rape is rape. You are not to blame. Remember that and know that action against the rapist can prevent others from becoming victims.

- Get help immediately. Phone the police, a friend, a rape crisis center, a relative. Don't isolate yourself, don't feel guilty

Don't Go Up in Smoke



Smoking—cool? Definitely not. Every day, we see images—on the Internet, in tobacco company advertising, and in the movies—that depict smoking as cool, sexy, professional, and glamorous. What we don't see is that every day 3,000 children become regular smokers. This youthful smoking can have severe lifelong consequences. In addition, teens who smoke are more likely to use illicit drugs and drink more heavily than their non-smoking peers. Don't think that it's just cigarettes that can cause damage to your health—cigars and chewing tobacco also cause cancer.

Smoking can cause bad breath, permanently stained teeth, and early wrinkles—not a big turn-on when you're dating. More importantly, it wrecks your lungs. You can't catch your breath, and when you try to do anything athletic, you feel like you're suffocating. Smoking also blocks oxygen from your bloodstream. Your heart works harder but accomplishes less. You can't move as fast and you're not as strong. Not only does smoking cause many major health risks, it is highly addictive as well.

A Quiz To Light You Up

You have probably heard of the dangers of smoking in health class or from concerned adults or friends. Let's see how much you really know.

True or False?

- Overall, smoking among teenagers has decreased.
False—in recent years, the number of 12th graders who reported smoking daily has increased steadily.
- Females smoke more than males.
False—there is little or no difference in the prevalence of smoking between males and females.
- On the average, smokers do worse in school than non-smokers.
True—a national survey of high school students showed that non-smokers did better in school and went on to college at higher rates than did smokers.
- Cigars and smokeless tobacco—chewing tobacco, dip, spit, or chew—are non-addictive and don't cause cancer.
False—cigars and smokeless tobacco are highly addictive and just as likely to cause cancer as cigarettes.
- As long as you don't smoke, cigarettes can't hurt you.
False—secondhand smoke can kill you. Many people die each year from lung cancer caused by the smoke of others.
- Most adult smokers started smoking in their teens.
True—few smokers start after age 21.
- No one suffers from the side effects of smoking until middle age.
False—aside from bad breath and stained teeth, smoking can hurt your stamina when you are walking, running, or playing sports, and it adds more misery to colds and other respiratory conditions.
- Smoking cigarettes is related to use of other drugs.
True—teenagers using tobacco are far more likely to use drugs like marijuana and cocaine.
- Buying cigarettes is legal if you're 16.
False—selling tobacco to anyone under 18 is illegal.
- Teens who start smoking won't get hooked.
False—nine years after being polled, 75 percent of those teens who said they smoked were still lighting up.
- You don't need that much cash to be a smoker.
False—a person who smokes a pack a day will spend at least \$1,000 over a one-year period to keep up the habit.

Take Action

- Don't start!
- Start a nutrition program in your school to help teens—especially girls—understand that smoking is not a good weight control remedy.
- Refuse to wear tobacco name brands on hats, T-shirts, jackets, and other articles of clothing.
- Start a “smoke-out” week at your school where everyone at school, including teachers and administrators, go an entire week without smoking.

Marijuana—Common, Dangerous, and Still Illegal



Contrary to popular belief, not all teens smoke pot. Only about one in five 10th graders report they used marijuana within the past month. Fewer than one in four high school seniors is a current marijuana user.

Marijuana—pot, reefer, grass, joint, stick, ganja, rope, blunts, smoke, bud, weed, bhang—is one of the most widely used illicit drugs in the United States and very few young people use other illegal drugs without first trying marijuana.

Just because it's common doesn't mean marijuana is safe. In fact, the marijuana sold today is far stronger than it was two or three decades ago, and far more dangerous.

What You May Not Know

Some people may think that smoking a joint is just a “mellow” way to relax. They don't realize that using marijuana can cause

- memory problems
- reduced concentration and coordination
- increased appetite
- decreased inhibitions
- bloodshot eyes, dry mouth, and dry throat
- lower testosterone levels and sperm counts in men
- increased testosterone in women, which can cause acne and increased facial and body hair
- paranoia
- diminished or complete loss of sexual pleasure
- psychological dependence so that over time, more of the drug is needed to get the same effect.

Damage

Marijuana smokers face the same cancer risks as tobacco smokers, even though they may smoke only a few joints a day compared to a pack or more of cigarettes. Damage from smoking pot includes

- deteriorating performance at school or at work
- experiencing a “burn out” characterized by muddled thinking, acute frustration, depression, and isolation
- impaired sexual development and fertility, including production of abnormal sperm and menstrual irregularities
- damage to lungs and pulmonary system (one marijuana joint is equal to approximately 25 commercial cigarettes)
- exposure to illegal drug culture.

Marijuana Is Still Illegal

While there are groups who encourage the legalization of marijuana, it is still illegal. Depending on where an individual is arrested, penalties for possession, use, and dealing can be harsh. Convicted individuals face fines, possible imprisonment, a criminal record, and lost job opportunities.

Some people are confused about marijuana's medical uses. There are no medically accepted uses for smoking marijuana. THC, the active chemical in marijuana, is manufactured into a pill and available with a prescription to treat nausea and vomiting that occur with some cancer treatments and to help people with AIDS gain weight.

Dater's Bill of Rights

- 👤 I have the right to refuse a date without feeling guilty.
- 👤 I can ask for a date without feeling rejected or inadequate if the answer is no.
- 👤 I do not have to act macho.
- 👤 I may choose not to act seductively.
- 👤 If I don't want physical closeness, I have the right to say so.
- 👤 I have the right to start a relationship slowly, to say, "I want to know you better before I become involved."
- 👤 I have the right to be myself without changing to suit others.
- 👤 I have the right to change a relationship when my feelings change. I can say, "We used to be close, but I want something else now."
- 👤 If I am told a relationship is changing, I have the right not to blame or change myself to keep it going.
- 👤 I have the right to an equal relationship with my partner.
- 👤 I have the right not to dominate or to be dominated.
- 👤 I have the right to act one way with one person and a different way with someone else.
- 👤 I have the right to change my goals whenever I want to.

Methamphetamines: Nothing To Rave About

“Meth,” “speed,” “chalk,” “ice,” “crystal,” “crank,” “fire,” and “glass” are street terms for a man-made drug called methamphetamine. Methamphetamine is among the most addictive substances around. The drug can easily be made in secret laboratories from relatively inexpensive over-the-counter ingredients. This white, odorless, bitter tasting crystalline powder can be smoked, snorted, injected, or swallowed. Teens may think that the bizarre way the drug makes them feel is cool; however, the drug is altering their brains—maybe permanently.

Methamphetamine is not usually sold and bought on the streets like many other illicit drugs. Instead, people obtain supplies through friends or acquaintances. It is typically a more closed or hidden sale. Most teens who come in contact with methamphetamines will do so attending a “rave” or private club. It is at these clubs where the drug is often sold.

Because methamphetamines can be made with readily available, inexpensive materials, there is great variation in the processes and chemicals used. This means that the final product that is sold as “methamphetamine” may not be that drug at all. Uncertainties about the drug’s sources and its content make it difficult to know how powerful this substance may be and what the consequences are of this potent mixture.

Signs of a Methamphetamine User

Users may experience

- signs of agitation, excited speech, decreased appetites, and increased physical activity levels (Other common symptoms include dilated pupils, nausea and vomiting, diarrhea, and elevated body temperature.)
- occasional episodes of sudden and violent behavior, intense paranoia, visual and auditory hallucinations, and bouts of insomnia
- a tendency to compulsively clean and groom and repetitively sort and disassemble objects such as cars and other mechanical devices.

Long-Term Effects of the Drug

Methamphetamines can

- change the brain’s ability to manufacture a chemical substance essential for the normal experience of pleasure and for normal psychological functioning. These changes in the brain can persist long after the user stops taking the drugs.
- cause a stroke
- create a mental disorder that may mimic schizophrenia
- be extremely addictive.

Kicking the Habit

There are currently no medications available to treat addiction or overdose to methamphetamines. Withdrawal from this drug is typically characterized by drug craving, depression, disturbed sleep patterns, and increased appetite.

Take Action

- Skip parties where you know there will be alcohol and drugs.
- Get involved in drug-free activities.
- Urge your school, faith community, or neighborhood to organize an anti-drug rally.
- Talk to school counselors about starting an alcohol or drug abuse prevention program.



National Crime Prevention Council

1000 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Thirteenth Floor
Washington, DC 20036
202-466-6272
www.ncpc.org



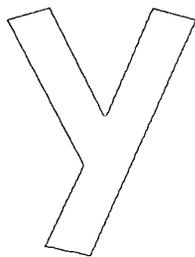
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The American Legion
Child Welfare Foundation, Inc.

Giving Youth a Voice

Involving Teens in Crime, Drug, and Violence Prevention



Young people have the most to lose from crime, violence, and drug abuse. They are disproportionately victims of crime; they will have to live with a future that is either riddled with crime, violence, and drug abuse or not. Young people who feel connected to the community and have a sense of their own competence become better individuals, citizens, and parents. And communities become safer, more caring places to live when youth are active members of those communities.

Whether you are an educator, law enforcement officer, community volunteer, parent, or other adult who works with teens, this kit will help you to

- provide information to teens on crime prevention topics that affect them
- learn methods for involving parents in your crime prevention work
- describe the developmental stages of youth and apply that information to the way you work with youth
- identify good methods for reaching or teaching teens
- discuss comprehensive strategies for approaching issues that affect teens
- name partner organizations to work with in your efforts to teach crime prevention to youth
- identify national and state resources for information on crime prevention.

The kit is designed to help adults start or strengthen a crime prevention program by, for, or with teens.

What's in the Kit?

► User's Guide

► Reproducible Materials To Distribute to Teens

- Making Peace—Tips on Managing Conflict
- Safe and Secure in an Electronic World
- Shoplifting
- Teen Dating Violence
- The Reality of Gangs
- Take Crime Prevention to Work
- Everyone's Doing It: Planning a Successful Community Crime Prevention Project
- Tips for Working Together To Create Safer Schools
- Don't Lose a Friend to Drugs
- Sniffing Your Life Away: Inhalants
- Streetwise: The Way To Be
- Road Rules
- Power Tripping
- The Scoop on Vandalism
- Safe Surfing
- The Dangers of Drinking
- Calling All Hotheads: Tips on Keeping Cool in an Angry World
- Date Rape: A Power Trip
- Don't Go Up in Smoke
- Marijuana—Common, Dangerous, and Still Illegal
- Dater's Bill of Rights
- Methamphetamines: Nothing To Rave About

The reproducible materials are designed to be copied, printed, photocopied, or offset—that's why they're printed in high resolution black type on glossy paper. All brochures can be individualized by adding local addresses, phone and fax numbers, and Web sites in the space provided.

Although these materials are copyrighted to protect their integrity, you can produce unlimited copies for free distribution as long as you do not change the text or sell the materials without NCPC's written approval. If you wish to alter the text, you must first get permission by calling the editorial unit at NCPC.

Here are some suggestions for using these reproducible materials:

- Enlarge the mini-posters and print them on brightly colored paper or heavy stock and display them at schools, shopping malls, movie theaters, fast food restaurants, after-school activities, and any place where teens gather.
- Hand out the brochures at school assemblies, presentations to teens, and booths at fairs. Ask libraries, recreation centers, medical offices, and local businesses to distribute them.
- Create bookmarks, bumper stickers, and fliers.

- Organize a crime prevention fair at a shopping mall or local school. Pick a theme and use the appropriate brochures, drop-ins, and mini-posters.
- Let your imagination take the lead. How about handing out the vandalism prevention brochure at a community clean-up day?
- Publish portions of the program papers in school newspapers, community newsletters, or PTA/PTO newsletters.
- Place an information rack with brochures in malls, schools, or community centers.
- Ask schools and parent groups to include them in mailings.
- Work with school security or crime prevention officers on date rape prevention or personal safety workshops for students.
- Post the information on school and library Web sites.
- Enlist teens' ideas for how to spread the word.

► Ten Program Papers

- Understanding and Working Effectively With Teens
- Helping Teens Take Charge of Community Issues—A Guide for Developing Successful Crime Prevention and Community Building Projects
- Strong Foundation—A Guide to Safer Schools
- Teaching Tolerance Reduces Crime and Violence
- Turning Young Lives Around—Helping Kids in Trouble
- Involving Teens in Drug Abuse Prevention
- Youth and Guns—A Deadly Combination
- Gangs
- Preventing Violence—How Domestic Violence and Child Abuse Feed the Cycle of Violence
- Watching Out and Helping Out—Teens Taking the Lead in School Crime Watch

These papers are designed to give you background information on various crime prevention topics that pertain to teens and give you information on starting or supporting a teen-led or comprehensive community effort to prevent juvenile crime. Why the community approach? The fact is, many of the initiatives that can reduce crime by and against youth are grounded in community action. Parents, civic associations and fraternal groups, juvenile courts and probation officials, social service agencies, school personnel, community policing officers, youth membership groups, youth-serving agencies, faith institutions, public health and mental health organizations, child welfare groups, and others all have a role to play in reducing youth-related crime. Each of these people and groups brings a special perspective and varied resources to their work with teens. Together they have tremendous potential to solve problems and to create the kind of community that supports the growth of safe, healthy teens.

Who mobilizes participants for community action? Individuals who want to make a change. Their roles emerge based on their talents and the needs in their communities. You may feel the task of making the community more responsive to the needs of teens is worthwhile but overwhelming. It does not have to be. The effort can range from one program to a dozen, and may be active in just one neighborhood or in the entire community. Communication and coordination among groups usually results in more focused and productive efforts, but there is something every group and individual can do.

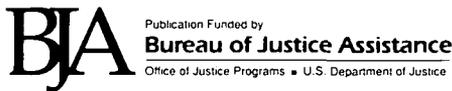
To begin, focus work according to your community's needs and resources. What has been effective in one community may not work in another. Action is the key—*by adults* to educate young people about their responsibilities, opportunities, and roles in the community and *by teens* to protect and help themselves and others. This kit provides the materials and ideas for action. You and teens in your community provide the energy and direction.

A Special Thanks

This kit is the result of the hard work of many people. Special thanks are extended to the following individuals for their assistance:

Katrine Pendleton, consultant, was the principal writer of this kit. Her diligent research and writing helped to make this kit a success. Susan Scott's inspired artwork helped to make the brochures appealing to a youth audience. Judy Kirby, director of publications, and Anna Hayes, editorial assistant, tirelessly reviewed, rewrote, and revised the material and guided the project through production. Jean O'Neil, director of research and policy analysis, helped frame the document and provided invaluable guidance in making sure the information was correct. Several interns served as youth reviewers—Emma Goodell, Molly Taylor, Mike Ianni, and Marty Diegelman. Other NCPC staff also helped in the review process—Rosemary DeMenno, Lisa Lybbert, Lori Jackson, Jean O'Neil, and Jim Copple. Jim Copple, vice president, also lent his drug abuse prevention expertise and provided encouragement and guidance. John A. Calhoun, NCPC's president, was supportive throughout. Also appreciated is the guidance of Trish Thackston, program manager, and Robert H. Brown, Jr., senior advisor for prevention, Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, which provided substantial funding for this project.

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The National Crime Prevention Council is a private, nonprofit tax-exempt [501(c)(3)] organization whose principal mission is to enable people to prevent crime and build safer, more caring communities. NCPC publishes books, kits of camera-ready program materials, posters, and informational and policy reports on a variety of crime prevention and community-building subjects. NCPC offers training, technical assistance, and national focus for crime prevention: it acts as secretariat for the Crime Prevention Coalition of America, more than 400 national, federal, state, and local organizations committed to preventing crime. It also operates demonstration programs and takes a major leadership role in youth crime prevention. NCPC manages the McGruff "Take A Bite Out Of Crime" public service advertising campaign, which is substantially funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Proceeds from the sale of materials funded by public sources are used to help support NCPC's work on the National Citizens' Crime Prevention Campaign.



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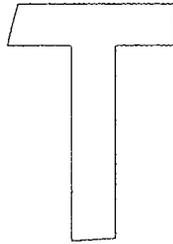
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Teaching Tolerance Reduces Crime and Violence

*Like an unchecked cancer,
hate corrodes the personality
and eats away its vital unity.
Hate destroys a
man's sense of
values and his
objectivity. It
causes him to
describe the beau-
tiful as ugly and
the ugly as beau-
tiful, and to confuse
the true with the false and
the false with the true.*



*Darkness cannot drive out
darkness; only light can do
that. Hate cannot drive out
hate; only love can do that.
Hate multiplies hate,
violence multiplies violence,
and toughness multiplies
toughness in a descending
spiral of destruction. The
chain reaction of evil—hate
begetting hate, wars produc-
ing more wars—must be
broken, or we shall be
plunged into the dark abyss
of annihilation.*

—Rev. Dr.
Martin Luther King, Jr.

The United States is built on the foundation of “freedom and justice for all.” It is technologically, scientifically, medically, and educationally more advanced than most countries around the world. And yet it still struggles with issues that have plagued the world since the beginning of time—racism and intolerance. Crimes directed at others because of their actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, disability, or sexual orientation occur across the country—a cross burning on a lawn; a person assaulted, even murdered, because of his or her sexual orientation; symbols of hate written on students’ notebooks and appearing on their Web sites; and remarks based on race or ethnicity that demean and belittle. These are learned behaviors. People are not born to burn crosses or dislike people because of their skin color. Whether these behaviors are learned from parents, grandparents, peers, or through the media, they cannot be changed by limited encounters. In order to create a climate of tolerance, behaviors need to be changed. Although people may still believe that certain people are “different,” they can act in a manner that treats others with civility.

Issues of race and discrimination reach into all aspects of society, including education, civil rights, administration of justice, government, and the workforce. This paper will not attempt to provide definitive answers on race, bias, and crime in the United States. Instead, it will provide information to teach young people about the issues of racism and intolerance and ideas on how to involve

them in stopping the violence that intolerance can create. Teens must be engaged in efforts to bridge cultural divides in order to promote tolerance.

Know the Facts About Hate Crimes

Half of all hate crimes in the United States are committed by young people ages 15 to 24.¹

Whether it takes the form of writing racist notes, destruction of property because of the owner's religious beliefs, beating someone brutally because of his or her sexual orientation, or committing genocide, hate crimes affect everyone. A hate crime is any crime in which bias, prejudice, or bigotry is a motivating factor. Hate crimes are directed against people because of what they are, not who they are. And nearly 500 hate groups in the United States were documented in 1998. These crimes take place in all types of communities—urban, suburban, and rural—against all kinds of people. When people are attacked solely because of their race, religion, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or physical disability, it has a devastating impact on the victims.

Factors that help identify a violent act as bias-motivated include

- symbols or acts of hate: a burning cross, hate-related graffiti such as swastikas and racial/ethnic slurs, desecration of venerated objects, and arson are examples of acts that damage or destroy property associated with the hated target group.
- what offenders say: many acts of bias-motivated violence involve taunts, slurs, or derogatory comments about the target's race, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation.
- the absence of another apparent motive: most bias-motivated violence is characterized by the fact that the victim is targeted because he or she represents the hated group rather than because of personal conflict with the offender(s).

To counter trends in hate crimes, federal agencies, national advocacy groups, and local communities have taken action to research the extent and causes of bias-motivated violence. At least 41 states and the District of Columbia have laws against hate crimes. This means that if a bias is involved, a crime such as vandalism, assault, or murder is also a hate crime, and the penalty is more severe than it would be without bias. Moreover, federal prosecutors can seek additional charges that tend to carry a longer sentence if a crime victim is targeted because of his or her race, religion, or ethnicity.

Researchers have found that hate crimes share characteristics that tend to differentiate them from other crimes:

- They are far more brutal than other assaults. Bias-crime victims are four times more likely to be hospitalized for their injuries than the victims of other assaults.
- They are most often committed by groups of four or more people. Researchers have found that many people who would not commit violent, bias-motivated acts by themselves express their hatred freely and violently in groups. Generally, the larger the group, the more vicious the crime.
- They are crimes of youth. Most perpetrators of bias-motivated crimes are in their teens or early twenties. Researchers believe that bias crimes are not acts of youthful rebellion, but rather violent expressions of feelings shared by families, friends, teachers, or communities.

- They tend to be motivated by love or defense of one’s own group. Emotions bound to group identity are deep-seated and strong, especially when a person has suffered emotional neglect as a child.

Increasing Respect for Diversity—Reducing Intolerance

Many experts point out that young people sometimes engage in bias-motivated violence because they are ignorant or misinformed about the target group. Education and one-on-one interaction with members of the target group as individuals can help in such situations. It is easy to think of people in “our” racial, ethnic, religious, or other group as “us” and everyone else as “them.” From there, it is a small step to assuming “they” are not only different but inferior. Once this happens, people feel free of moral restraints against hate crimes, including murder. A process called dehumanization leads to violent expressions of hatred against members of certain groups. In dehumanizing another person or group, a person will

- focus on individual differences, such as skin color, in a negative manner
- refer to the target or group by a derogatory name
- stereotype by focusing on specific superficial characteristics (For example, all that might be noticed about a person is that he or she dresses differently from others or was seen coming out of a gay bar)
- justify or explain their attitudes by stating “they” are different.

One night in Wellesley, MA, a suburb west of Boston, some people painted racist graffiti on dozens of cars, homes, and shops. Among the things they wrote were “Whites Only” and “I hate niggers, chinks, and spics.”

A few days after the incident, police charged two 19-year-olds with 26 counts of malicious destruction of property and intimidating individuals based on their race.

In response to this, three Wellesley High School students decided to act. They organized a candlelight rally to protest racism, attended by nearly 1,000 people. The students also bought a full-page ad in the local newspaper to publicly condemn hate crimes. They then helped organize a day-long workshop at their school, bringing in experts to discuss the reasons for hate crimes.

One of the participants said that because of these hate crimes, she decided to change her behavior. “Sometimes people say or do things that offend me by way of offending other people. Before this I would not have said anything. Now I find that when people start telling racist jokes, I say, ‘Could you tell this another time when I’m not here—or could you just not tell them.’ I’m not so scared of offending people when they do those things.”

Because youth are the aggressors in much hate violence, any effort to combat it must include teens playing an integral role. It is important to help teens understand that intolerance for race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, or gender has a profound effect on the extent to which a person is fully included in American society. These biases affect individuals’

- opportunity to receive an education
- means to acquire necessary tools to maintain a good job
- access to adequate health care.

Helping teens understand diversity is a good place to start. This country's growth was founded on diversity—it was not just black and white. And the racial make-up of this country continues to change; by the year 2050, the population will be approximately 53 percent white, 25 percent Hispanic, 14 percent black, eight percent Asian Pacific, and one percent American Indian and Alaskan Native.² Diversity is differences among people in their attributes or characteristics. These differences can be things that are earned or acquired (like education or religion) or things that are innate (like race or gender). A group of people can be called diverse when it includes people of different ethnicities, religious backgrounds, sexual orientation, or physical attributes.

Work with teens to help them refute stereotypes. Have them consider the stereotypes that they hold about other groups of people, such as women, men, blacks, whites, Hispanics, Asians, seniors, Muslims, Christians, Jews, homosexuals, lesbians, people with disabilities, adults, and other teens. It may be extremely difficult for teens to verbalize their stereotypes. They may avoid conversations of race because they feel they will be ignorant on the topic. Help teens to examine when they have been on the receiving end of bias or discrimination. Discuss stereotypes that adults often hold toward teens. The point of getting teens to think about stereotypes is to show that while everyone may have prejudices, it is a choice whether or not to discriminate or translate stereotypes into action. This kind of open discussion about race will begin to help dispel stereotypes.

In New Jersey, a traveling team of teenagers called the Positive Impact Ensemble gives presentations at high schools throughout the state to illustrate the harm of prejudice and discrimination. A series of skits address prejudices against people with AIDS, homosexuals, people with physical disabilities, and religious and minority groups.

In order to create a climate of tolerance, teens need to take responsibility for their actions as individuals, make a concerted effort to reach out to those who are different, and get involved with the community to build diversity.

As individuals, teens can

- appreciate their own and others' cultural values
- object to ethnic, racist, and sexist jokes
- listen to others and not judge them because of their accents or because they are “different” from others
- learn from other people's experiences and ideas
- include people that don't look and act just like themselves in activities
- refrain from labeling people (e.g., she's a Jew, he's gay)
- support victims of hate crimes and their families
- write letters to the editor of local or school newspaper about talking about diversity in the community or school environment
- get involved in peer conflict mediation groups in school
- become a trained peer counselor for victims of bias-motivated violence
- learn how to respond to offensive comments.

Working with others, teens can continue to combat bias-violence and build diversity by

- starting or joining a bias-victim assistance group in their community

- helping to organize a neighborhood or community group that works to end hate violence in the community
- talking with schools or the school board to introduce or improve cross-cultural education and activities
- volunteering to teach younger kids how to be tolerant and to respect and learn from people who are different from themselves
- painting a mural to celebrate diversity, perhaps in response to bias-motivated graffiti
- organizing a poster, essay, or rap song contest on the theme of anti-racism, or friendship and respect for all individuals and groups
- arranging ethnic origins festivals at school or in the neighborhood and encouraging all groups to participate
- starting a “tip” line for bias-motivated incidents at school.

In California, the Youth Together Project joined human rights groups, teachers, school administrators, parents, and students to address the increasing racial and ethnic tensions among youth in schools. The project fosters cross-cultural understanding, establishes preventive programs designed by and for youth, and influences policy within participating school districts.

Since bias is a learned behavior, adult actions, attitudes, and remarks set the example for teens, friends, families, neighbors, and colleagues. As individuals, adults must speak out against hate activity and stop reinforcing the stereotypes created by using racial slurs and labels. A community effort to prevent crime must involve everyone, but special leadership can come from law enforcement; juvenile justice, social service and victim service agencies; local media; schools; businesses; community organizations; parents; and religious institutions that work together to create a climate of intolerance. Adults can bolster teens’ efforts by

- working with schools to improve cross-cultural relations and develop preschool curricula in which children learn about different cultures, ethnic groups, and lifestyles
- helping develop peer-based youth programs
- educating the community against bias-motivated hatred, suspicion, and violence
- reporting incidents of hate crimes to local law enforcement officials
- building a community-wide coalition against hate violence to discuss local trends and prevention strategies
- ensuring that those who work directly with teens such as teachers, school administrators, and law enforcement officers receive anti-bias and diversity training
- organizing public forums to examine possible sources of bigotry and hate violence in the community and brainstorm preventive actions
- supporting local and state hate crime legislation
- encouraging the media to develop an ongoing community anti-bias awareness campaign
- supporting training in identifying and responding to bias-motivated crime for police and sheriffs’ departments and victim service organizations
- working with the school system and parent-teacher organizations to enhance early childhood learning and strengthen teacher preparation and equity so that all students will receive equal education
- promoting the benefits of diversity in grades K-12 and higher education
- involving local colleges and universities in anti-hate crime/bias initiatives
- supporting victims of hate crimes and their families

- encouraging juvenile justice agencies to start offender intervention and diversion initiatives for hate crimes.

Faced with the mountain of data that indicated that juvenile hate crime was increasing, the Massachusetts Attorney General turned to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) New England Regional Office to help develop a program to provide sentencing options for first-time offenders and others whose crimes did not require incarceration. ADL professionals developed the Youth Diversion Program.

Program participants have all been convicted of civil rights violations, such as vandalizing an elementary school with white supremacist slogans, spray-painting swastikas on a house and synagogue, and making telephone death threats to a Jewish family. One of the first lessons the youthful offenders learn is that if they were not juveniles, they would be in jail.

The program uses videos, readings, group discussions, and field trips to educate youth about the seriousness of their offenses. A strong effort is made to closely tailor the program's content to match the offenses of the convicted youth. Since the program's inception in 1989, no participant has committed subsequent hate crimes.³

Resources

American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee
4201 Connecticut Avenue
Washington, DC 20008
202-244-2990
Web site: adc.org

American Jewish Committee
Jacob Blaustein Building
165 East 56th Street
New York, NY 10022
212-751-4000
Web site: ajc.org

Anti-Defamation League
823 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017
212-490-2525
Web site: adl.org

Asian American Legal Defense & Education Fund
99 Hudson Street, 12th Floor
New York, NY 10013
212-966-5932

Bureau of Justice Assistance Clearinghouse
PO Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000
800-688-4252
Web site: ncjrs.org

Center for Democratic Renewal
PO Box 50469
Atlanta, GA 30302
404-221-0025
Web site: publiceye.org/pr.html

Center for New Community
6429 West North Avenue, Suite 101
Oak Park, IL 60302
703-848-0319
Web site: newcomm.org

**Federal Bureau of Investigation
Uniform Crime Reports**
J. Edgar Hoover Building
935 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20535-0001
202-324-3000
Web site: fbi.gov

National Council of Churches
475 Riverside Drive, Room 850
New York, NY 10115
212-870-3004
Web site: nccusa.org

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Web site: npc.org

National Criminal Justice Association
444 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 618
Washington, DC 20001-1577
202-624-1440
Web site: sso.org/ncja/

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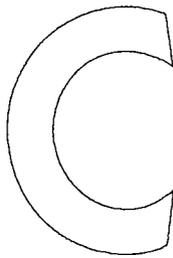


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Helping Teens Take Charge of Community Issues

A Guide for Developing Successful Crime Prevention and Community Building Projects

It's easy to believe that teens these days are committing all kinds of crime. It seems as though every time we open the newspaper or watch the news on TV, we read or hear about kids doing terrible things.



Contrary to what the media tells us, only five out of 1,000 teens are arrested for violent crimes each year. Instead of committing crime, many teens are doing something about preventing crime in their communities. In fact, a survey conducted by the Gallup Organization for the Independent Sector reports that teens are volunteering in greater numbers than adults—59 percent of teens as compared to 49 percent of adults.

This paper will show you how to engage teens in community crime prevention efforts, where the end goal is to give teens the opportunity to take ownership of a project assisted and guided by adults. You will find that teens have much to offer—involve youth in community problem solving and they will bring their energy, talent, imagination, and enthusiasm to solving the issues that surround them. Teens are acute observers of the community and its workings. They can readily identify community problems and take the lead in addressing them, providing fresh ideas and innovative solutions to long-standing problems plaguing their schools or community. And by initiating or participating in community crime prevention efforts, young people gain practice in adult roles, interact with adults, and get the opportunity to connect with the community as individuals and as part of a group. In short, everyone benefits when teens get involved.

Before partnering with teenagers, it is important to think about how developing, implementing, and evaluating a joint effort will

benefit both the community and the young people who live there. For a project to be mutually beneficial, it should

- involve teens in each stage—identifying issues, planning activities, fundraising, carrying out and evaluating the project
- allow teens to take the lead, with adults providing support for youth efforts
- have a plan to attract participants and supporters
- address a problem or issue perceived to be important by teens as well as adults
- offer opportunities for teens to make their own decisions and deal with the consequences
- promote responsibility and enhance self-esteem
- encourage participation of all teens, not just those who are easily motivated
- build on teens' need for friendship—a central theme in their daily lives.

A Starter List of Project Ideas

- ▶ Forums and discussions on community and youth violence and safety issues
- ▶ Anti-vandalism campaigns
- ▶ Victim/witness assistance, especially to peers
- ▶ Warm lines for children at home alone after school
- ▶ Substance abuse prevention education
- ▶ Plays, videos, raps, puppet shows as prevention education tools
- ▶ Teen courts
- ▶ Escort services for young children or senior citizens
- ▶ Tutoring for peers or younger children
- ▶ Home security surveys
- ▶ Anger management training and conflict mediation services
- ▶ Community clean-ups
- ▶ Arts and performance contests on prevention themes
- ▶ Graffiti paint-outs
- ▶ Youth law enforcement academies
- ▶ Intergenerational projects

Step One: Assessing the Need

Work with teens to have them assess the community's needs. Keep in mind the term community refers to a group of people who share a recognizable affiliation—a neighborhood block, a retirement home, a school, or a group of young people with a common interest, for instance.

Teenagers should survey the community to find out its concerns. Canvassing the neighborhood door-to-door with a questionnaire is not the only means by which teens can gather important information. Informal discussions with residents about their perceptions of problems and issues in the community can also yield valuable ideas; so can reading local newspapers and opinion polls or examining police crime reports.

Brainstorm with teens potential partners and supporters for the project. Help them find out what groups are already active in the community—students, teachers, business owners, neighborhood residents, or senior citizens, for example. Who are the formal and informal leaders of these groups? Teens should encourage these leaders—student government

members, school administrators, block watch captains, mayors and council members, law enforcement, and others—to support the project.

Once teens have appraised the community's needs, they can best decide what problem to tackle. The greatest chance of success lies in approaching the problem from the perspective of what solutions young people offer. Encourage youth to pick an issue that excites the most members of the group. This way the project will not lose steam half-way through.

Step Two: Planning a Successful Project

One of your greatest challenges will be showing youth how important good planning is to any project. It's easy for teens, caught up in their excitement and enthusiasm, to want to rush straight into action. But to be successful, they will need to develop an operational plan. This plan will help them identify the specific tasks that need to be accomplished, determine how to delegate responsibilities, and develop and decide how to use resources. Although this part of the process can be the most time intensive, it will reward young people in the long term with a project that is more efficient and effective. Compare developing the operational plan to outlining a research paper—the bulk of the work is completed up front.

As teens develop their operational plan, they will need to

- identify the specific group or individuals the project will help
- spell out precise goals and objectives to help meet those goals
- choose strategies to help reach the objectives
- determine target dates and priorities
- divide up specific jobs and responsibilities for tasks
- recognize a means of evaluating the project.

The plan also will help teens stay focused and will help them meet deadlines.

At this point, the youth group may decide to partner with another organization to carry out the project. Are the Boys & Girls Clubs already engaged in a program similar to the group's proposed project? Perhaps a joint partnership with the Boys & Girls Clubs might be the best action. On the other hand, it may be that the group's plan is unique and bringing in members from outside organizations will create just the right mix of talents for a successful crime prevention project.

Step Three: Developing Resources

Money isn't the only thing needed to carry out a successful crime prevention project. When helping teens plan a project budget, have them look at the potential costs in terms of goods and services needed as well as cash. Youth and adult volunteers, materials and services, and skills are examples of valuable resources community members can provide.

One of the most significant resources for any community problem-solving effort is volunteers. When recruiting volunteers, it is important to ask the volunteer personally for help. Most people are willing to get involved if they are asked. Teenagers involved in the project should ask friends and other students to participate. New skills developed, new friends, and a sense of accomplishment result from volunteering for a crime prevention project.

As volunteers are recruited, teens will need to think about the role each person will play. It seems obvious, but it will make a big difference if volunteers are matched with their interests and skills as closely as possible.

Crucial to the volunteer structure are community partners. These partners, usually made up of adults, assist with many of the duties for the crime prevention project. Consider the following community partners:

- law enforcement agencies
- schools
- businesses
- print and broadcast media
- faith-based institutions
- colleges and universities
- public housing authorities
- service clubs
- youth-serving organizations
- park and recreation departments
- health and mental health care providers
- fraternal and civic associations
- community and neighborhood associations.

Support from key adults, such as school administrators, police chiefs, city officials, and business leaders helps meet the goals set by teens. These adult/teen relationships also help change stereotypes, promote communication, and foster respect between adults and youth. It gets teens and adults communicating with each other. What once may have been an adversarial relationship can develop into a supportive, productive team effort.

Other resources for teens to consider are the materials and services that will be needed to complete the project, such as food, printing, and transportation, including some sort of thank-you to participants. That thank-you can be as simple as pizza and sodas at the end of a park clean-up or as involved as an awards ceremony hosted by the mayor of your town.

Once volunteers and other resources are determined, a final cost of the project needs to be assessed. Help teens identify what needs to be purchased and what items can be donated. Encourage teens to think creatively about how to get the items they will need. Examples include asking a local printer to donate printing of fliers, having a special event to raise funds and awareness for community issues, or asking a school or public library to donate meeting space.

Community-building projects also require publicity. If people don't know your group is starting a tutoring program for elementary school-aged children, they won't be able to support it. Getting the word out about the project can be as simple as putting up signs at schools and making announcements on the school public address system. Help teens develop a plan for publicity for the project.

Volunteers may need training in order to complete the project. Training can help ensure that volunteers understand the goals and objectives of the project, that the information volunteers provide about the project is correct, that they have the necessary skills, and that they know what to do if there is a problem. Work with teens to determine the amount of training their crime prevention project volunteers will need, and help them estimate the amount of time this training will take.

Step Four: Take Action

This is the good part—actually getting out there and getting to work.

Most good projects usually have good leaders. Good leadership will keep teens motivated and help keep volunteers committed and working together. Remember that leadership

is a skill that is learned, not inherited, and it takes practice. Since the teens are the leaders of the crime prevention project, it is important to help them learn and practice good leadership skills.

Here are some tips on good leadership to pass onto teens.

- Lead with care—understand the needs of those you work with.
- Lead positively—let others know you appreciate their efforts.
- Lead by using the leadership style needed at the time. Some situations require a rapid decision with little chance of consulting others. Other situations require working together to reach a consensus.
- Don't be afraid to delegate authority to others to get something done.
- Ask for help. Don't try to do it all yourself. You will get burned out very quickly.
- Help determine clear, responsible roles for teen and adult volunteers.
- Initiate activities to earn publicity, goodwill, and more teen and adult volunteers.
- Screen and carefully select volunteers.
- Provide supervision and direction.
- Monitor and evaluate.
- Act as a spokesperson for your effort.
- Take responsibility when the project may take a wrong turn and try to find a solution.
- Promote successful activities, results, and benefits.

Step Five: Evaluate the Project

While teen and adult volunteers may feel very good about the project, it is important to show what has been accomplished. Evaluation can help do that if it is planned for from the beginning as part of the measurable objectives of the plan.

The evaluation might show that the project produced some or all of these results:

- reduced crime
- reduced fear of crime
- costs less than the benefit it brings
- attracted support and resources
- made people feel safe and better about being in your school or community.

There are many different ways to evaluate a project. A survey of the target audience, asking whether or not certain conditions have improved as a result of the program, may be a good place to start. Or count things—did the project reduce fights in school? Count how many there were before the project and how many there are now.

While the project is in progress and when it is finished, there needs to be a way to check to see that it is reaching the goals teens set. Have them use project goals and objectives as their guide to measuring results. Was crime reduced in the school or neighborhood? Were all the persons in the neighborhood reached? How many elementary school children received the information that was provided?

The project may not meet every goal and objective. No project can be perfect. Remind teens that the whole point of evaluation is to learn from the experience. Finding out what worked and what didn't will help them improve their efforts for the future.

Step Six: Celebrate!

After a great deal of hard work, a crime prevention project needs to be celebrated. Not only does this give your volunteers a chance to be proud of their hard work, but also gives them

a chance to get to know each other in an informal setting. The celebration acknowledges the work that went into the project. Your celebration can be as simple as donuts and cider at the end of a meeting or as involved as a community block party celebrating the reopening of a park or playground. Remember to involve the media in publicizing your successes.

A nationwide program, *Teens, Crime, and the Community (TCC)*, links crime prevention education with action projects in the community. Young people learn how to protect themselves and others from crime and then design projects to help prevent crime in their own schools and neighborhoods. Both a classroom textbook and *Community Works!* (community-based sessions) help youth learn about crime and its prevention. Youth-led projects have included teen courts, mediation, cross-age teaching, child abuse prevention campaigns, and a wide variety of other strategies to address local needs. Evaluations have found that TCC helps youth feel safer, reduces delinquency-related behavior, increases self-esteem, and enhances ties with the community. This program has been implemented successfully in settings including middle and high schools, juvenile justice facilities, and community organizations.

Resources

AmeriCorps hotline
800-94ACORPS
Web site: cns.gov/ameriCorps

Barrios Unidos
1817 Soquel Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95062
831-457-8208
Web site: barriosunidos.com

Boys & Girls Clubs of America
1230 West Peachtree Street, NW
Atlanta, GA 30309-3494
404-815-5700
Web site: bgca.org

Boy Scouts of America
1325 West Walnut Hill Lane
PO Box 152079
Irving, TX 75015-2079
972-580-2004
Web site: bsa.scouting.org

Camp Fire Boys and Girls
4601 Madison Avenue
Kansas City, MO 64112
816-756-1950
Web site: campfire.org

Center for Youth as Resources
1700 K Street, NW, Suite 801
Washington, DC 20006-3817
202-466-6272
Web site: yar.org

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America
901 North Pitt Street, Suite 300
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-706-0560
Web site: cadca.org

Girl Scouts of the USA
420 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10018-2798
212-852-5000
Web site: girlscouts.org

Mothers Against Drunk Driving
511 East John Carpenter Freeway, Suite 700
Irving, TX 75062-8187
214-744-MADD
Web site: madd.org

National Crime Prevention Council
1700 K Street, NW, Second Floor
Washington, DC 20006-3817
202-466-6272
Web site: ncpc.org

National 4H Council
7100 Connecticut Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815
800-368-7432
Web site: fourcouncil.edu

Points of Light Foundation
1400 I Street, NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005
202-729-8000
Web site: pointsoflight.org

HELPING TEENS TAKE CHARGE OF COMMUNITY ISSUES

Police Athletic League

618 North US Highway 1, Suite 201
North Palm Beach, FL 33408-4609
561-844-1823

Teens, Crime, and the Community

1700 K Street, NW, Eighth Floor
Washington, DC 20006-3817
202-466-6272
Web site: nationaltcc.org

United National Indian Tribal Youth, Inc.

PO Box 25042
Oklahoma City, OK 73125
405-236-2800
Web site: unityinc.org

Youth Crime Watch of America

9300 South Dadeland Boulevard, Suite 100
Miami, FL 33156
305-670-3805
Web site: ycwa.org

Youth for Justice

c/o Street Law, Inc.
1600 K Street, NW, Suite 602
Washington, DC 20006
202-293-0088



National Crime Prevention Council
1700 K Street, NW, Second Floor
Washington, DC 20006-3817
202-466-6272
www.weprevent.org
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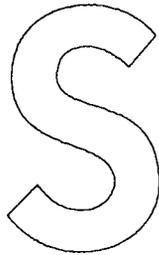


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Strong Foundation

A Guide to Safer Schools*

Schools have long been regarded as safe havens for kids. Parents expect that their children will be safe and will return at the end of the day. Although an overwhelming number of schools are safe, we have learned schools can be susceptible to violence like other environments.



Shootings in schools across the country have shocked and alarmed administrators, teachers, parents, students, government officials, media, law enforcement officials, and others throughout the nation. Students are afraid to learn, parents are afraid to send their kids to school, and teachers are unable to teach in this fear-laden environment. Everyone looks for answers to difficult questions: “Why does this happen?”, “Whose fault is it?”, and most importantly, “How can we make our schools safer?”

There are no easy answers. The issues are complex. And although anyone can begin the process, it is clear that collaboration between educators and law enforcement officials is essential. Many things can be done to prevent school violence. Short- and long-term practices and programs must be adopted to help achieve safety goals. To be successful, prevention programs must address how students deal with anger and conflict; how students get access to weapons (guns, knives, bombs, etc.); and how prevention programs need to involve all members of the community—educators, law enforcement, parents, teenagers, media, government officials, faith leaders, and other community leaders. Approaches must be balanced with a respect for differences in students’ dress, appearances, and behaviors. Many in the education and criminal justice communities have already begun prevention programs.

*Adapted from *Safer Schools: Strategies for Educators and Law Enforcement Seeking to Prevent Violence Within Schools*.

Indicators of Crime, Violence, and Drug Abuse

Before starting a comprehensive school safety effort, it is important to understand and be able to communicate the indicators of the potential of crime, violence, and drug abuse to teachers, parents, other law enforcement officials, and community leaders.

Remind parents, teachers, and others that no one indicator should be reason for alarm or concern. Multiple indicators suggest increased potential risk of a student participating in violence or using drugs. These behaviors usually appear suddenly, but they may evolve over a period of time. Look for multiple indicators in teens that could include the following:

- declining grades
- change in friends
- spends a great deal of time alone (depression)
- acts cruel to animals
- change in clothing or style of dress that could be sudden
- carries or has access to large amounts of cash
- exhibits shortened temper and sudden outbursts of anger
- shows an increased fascination with weapons or bombs
- threatens violence to self or others
- refuses to follow rules
- displays interest or is involved in gangs
- has a history of bullying
- expresses images of violence in drawings and writings.

Working Together Works Wonders

Bibb County, GA, was confronted with a dramatic increase in weapons found on its school campuses. Rather than tackle the signs of violence piecemeal, the Bibb County Board of Education formed a school safety task force that included school district police officers, city police officers, school employees, parents, students, and area residents. That task force developed a comprehensive community policing plan that included a variety of both prevention and intervention measures, such as educational programs, posters, signs, videos, random classroom searches, locker searches, and use of a gun detection dog. Results were remarkable: over four years, the county's schools experienced a 70 percent reduction in student weapons violations and an 83 percent drop in the overall incident rate.

The Key Partnership

The key partners in developing a school violence prevention program are the senior school building official and the senior law enforcement official for the area or jurisdiction in which the school is located. The match should be one to one; it should focus around the school and its surrounding neighborhood; the partners should have decision-making authority.

Most policies cannot be enacted unilaterally; they require endorsement and support from such policy makers as school boards and city councils or county commissioners. State and local laws and court decisions set parameters for law enforcement agencies; school board decisions and superintendents' directives must be followed by principals. Early involvement in the development process by policy makers will increase the likeli-

hood that decisions will be endorsed and supported. That support can be critical when parents, students, or community leaders seek explanations for changes.

The senior school building official and the senior law enforcement official should meet to discuss common areas of interest and ways to work together throughout the school system and surrounding neighborhoods. Working in this partnership means

- establishing agreements and understandings about policies and procedures
- developing both preventive and problem-solving strategies
- keeping each other informed of activities and issues that touch on security and safety
- encouraging close communication between the organizations
- reviewing progress regularly.

Starting or Building a Partnership

If your community does not have a law enforcement/school administrator partnership,

- set up a brief initial appointment to talk about school safety and security
- review actions that require policy changes
- discuss issues or problems with respect to the building, students, and staff
- draw up a memorandum of understanding covering certain key issues (e.g., day-to-day operations and crises, reporting weapons or concerns about them, following up to ensure that troubled students get help, and coordinating responses to incidents)
- identify additional community partners
- review elements of collaboration among the cooperating agencies
- agree on a regular communication schedule (e.g., monthly meetings or conference calls) and what information you will share
- get your partnership moving with some early action steps.

Who Else Should Be Partnering With You?

Establish a Safe School Committee that includes all school staff, students, and parents, as well as businesses, faith community representatives, and civic leaders. The committee can help you identify immediate actions and draw up longer-term plans. Aside from being a sounding board for issues in the community, the committee can take on a number of tasks and provide links with a variety of groups. Invite the committee to create a vision of what a “safe school” means and to help develop a consensus among students, staff, and parents about making that vision a reality. That vision and its goals can focus energy toward improvement and prevention rather than reaction. Students are critical and often overlooked partners. Include them—they are close to the action and know what’s going on. Teens are often ready to help because they don’t like being afraid to go to school.

Beyond the committee, reach out to others. Here are some people you may want to enlist:

- parents and parent groups
- business leadership
- all school building staff—including custodians and bus drivers who see and hear about many incidents.
- student clubs and activity groups
- area youth center staff
- local community policing officers
- school resource officers

- social service agency representatives
- juvenile probation and court staff
- fire and rescue departments
- civic club and association members.

Including Parents in Creating Safe Schools¹

Parents are the first defense in helping to create safe schools. Encourage parents to

- ▶ discuss the school's discipline policy with their child
- ▶ involve child in setting rules for appropriate behavior at home
- ▶ talk with children about the violence they see—on television, in video games, and possibly in the neighborhood or at school
- ▶ help children find ways to show anger that do not verbally or physically hurt others
- ▶ help children understand the value of accepting individual differences
- ▶ provide anger management training for all students—bring in guest speakers to keep teens interested
- ▶ note any disturbing behaviors in children
- ▶ keep lines of communication open
- ▶ listen to children
- ▶ get involved or stay involved in children's school lives.

Involving Teens in Creating Safer Schools²

Teens play an essential role in preventing school violence by

- ▶ listening to friends who may be in trouble and encouraging them to get help from a trusted adult
- ▶ creating, joining, or supporting student organizations that combat violence
- ▶ getting involved in planning, implementing, and evaluating the school's violence prevention and response plan
- ▶ participating in violence prevention programs such as peer mediation and conflict resolution
- ▶ working with teachers and administrators to create a safe process for reporting threats, intimidation, weapon possession, drug selling, gang activity, graffiti, and vandalism
- ▶ helping to develop and participate in activities that promote student understanding of differences and that respect the rights of all
- ▶ volunteering to be a mentor for younger students
- ▶ seeking help from parents or a trusted adult if experiencing feelings of anger, fear, anxiety, or depression
- ▶ reporting to school officials such situations as students who bring or threaten to bring weapons to school or students who seem depressed or exhibit disturbing behavior.

Assess Problems and Assets

Fear of crime can cripple any community, including a school community, much more than the actual incidence of crime would warrant. Survey students, staff, and parents about their

concerns and fears. Ask local residents and business people familiar with the school about crime-related issues in and around the campus. You may be surprised by the results.

After surveying the community, share the information. Highlight the problems you believe are most urgent. Compare lists. Anything agreed on should be in the top three or four problems you need to work on together.

While you examine the problems, don't forget to inventory assets. There are many. You can call on such positives as

- number of students involved in school activities
- police officers who see the school as a community
- staff willing to work together on these problems
- neighborhood and businesses committed to the school
- parental support for the school.

Take Action

The following list represents ideas on school violence prevention efforts from around the nation. Not all of these ideas will be right for your environment, but they offer starting points for action. They have been divided into three sections:

- Policies and Procedures
- Training and Public Education
- Programs

Review the following and apply the most appropriate items to your school safety plan. Some of these ideas you may have already implemented. Others may spur new ideas for your efforts.

Policies and Procedures

- Decide what is to be done about weapons present in schools.
- Enforce zero-tolerance policies toward weapons, alcohol, and other illegal drugs.
- Establish policies that anything illegal off campus is illegal on campus.
- Develop protocols between the law enforcement agency and the school about ways to share information on at-risk youth.
- Establish agreements, memo of understanding, and systems for communicating in emergency situations.
- Determine how and to whom and what kinds of crimes or other incidents will be reported.
- Set forth both positive expectations and clear rules for students.
- Insist that all students put outerwear in their lockers during school hours.
- Require all students to wear shirts tucked in to help prevent hidden weapons being brought into classrooms.
- Develop and enforce dress codes that ban gang-related and gang-style clothing.
- Conduct random searches of classrooms for weapons and other contraband.
- Make it clear that any gang or gang-like behavior in school will immediately involve severe sanctions.
- Establish a policy of positive identification such as ID badges for administrators, teachers, staff, students, and visitors.
- Develop resource lists that provide referral services for students who are angry, depressed, or otherwise under stress.

- Deny students permission to leave school for lunch and other non-school related business during school hours.
- Enforce drug-free and gun-free zones.
- Ban pagers, headphones, and cellular phones on school property.
- Ensure that pay phones with no-charge access to emergency services are strategically placed in and around the building.
- Apply crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) principles to the school building.
- Pledge to remove graffiti as soon as it appears.

Training and Public Education

- Train school staff and police in working together to handle emergencies and crises throughout the year.
- Train staff and students in how to effectively take reports from students of activity causing suspicion or concern.
- Train teachers and administrators how to break up fights with minimal risk.
- Train staff and police officers in anger management skills.
- Develop an outreach education and “refresher” course in school rules.
- Make certain that all teachers and other school staff as well as any law enforcement officers who work with youth know warning signs of youth who are troubled or are troubling others.
- Share with staff, students, and parents the school’s progress.
- Hold parent meetings to discuss indicators of risk.
- Talk to parents about the importance of safely storing and securing all guns and keeping ammunition separate.
- Make sure students know which school personnel or student peers they can approach if they are angry, depressed, or need help working through a problem.
- Encourage your PTA/PTO to have parents read regularly to children. (Education studies show that a half-hour of reading each day can increase skills and positive connections to the family. Those children positively connected are less likely to get into trouble.)

Programs

- Involve teens in designing and running programs such as mediation, mentoring, peer assistance, school crime watch, and graffiti removal programs.
- Invest students in maintaining a good learning environment by establishing a teen court at school.
- Develop anonymous reporting systems that let students share crime-related information in ways that do not expose them to retaliation.
- Create a suggestion box for students to offer ideas about reducing violence, drugs or alcohol use and abuse, or other crimes at school.
- Set up a “red flag” system to ensure that reports about students who exhibit warning signs of violence or self-destruction get immediate attention and help.
- Develop (with social services, youth workers, and others) a comprehensive truancy prevention effort.
- Conduct periodic safety audits of the school’s physical environment.

- Work with community mental health, substance abuse counselors, the faith community, and other practitioners to inform students, faculty, and staff about resources to help at-risk youth.
- Provide adequate security at all school events taking place after school hours.
- Invite the juvenile probation staff to set up an office in your school.
- Establish emergency intervention teams trained in crisis management and grief counseling.
- Build and sustain an educational environment that is inclusive of all youth including teens interested in sports, computers, theater, and academics.
- Provide access to support groups for children already facing stress.
- Ensure that security and safety factors are fully considered in siting, designing, and building additional or new facilities.
- Develop joint-use programming through which community organizations provide after-school activities on campus.
- Establish a Student Assistance Program that helps youth get help with such problems as substance abuse, violence or anger management, and bullying.

North Carolina's Center for the Prevention of School Violence³ has identified two major categories of approaches for preventing violence in its state:

- ▶ creating a safe and secure learning environment (via such strategic areas as school resource officers and physical design and technology) and
- ▶ empowering students to deal with problems that may arise (via such strategies as law-related education, conflict management, peer mediation, teen/student courts, and anti-violence co-curricular groups).

Resources

Big Brothers Big Sisters of America
230 North 13th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107
215-567-7000
Web site: bbbsa.org

Boys & Girls Clubs of America
1230 West Peachtree Street, NW
Atlanta, GA 30309-3494
404-815-5700
Web site: bgca.org

Bureau of Justice Assistance Clearinghouse
PO Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000
800-688-4252
Web site: ncjrs.org

Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence
Institute of Behavioral Science, University of Colorado
Campus Box 439, Building #10
Boulder, CO 80309-0439
303-492-8465
Web site: colorado.edu/cspv

Community Policing Consortium
1726 M Street, NW, #801
Washington, DC 20036
202-833-3305
Web site: communitypolicing.org

International Association of Chiefs of Police
515 North Washington Street, Suite 400
Alexandria, VA 22314-2357
703-836-6767
Web site: theiacp.org

National Association of Elementary School Principals
1615 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-684-3345
Web site: naesp.org

National Association of School Resource Officers
PO Box 40
Boynton Beach, FL 33425-0040
888-31NASRO

STRONG FOUNDATION

National Association of Secondary School Principals
1904 Association Drive
Reston, VA 20191
703-860-0200
Web site: nassp.org

National Center for Conflict Resolution Education
110 West Main Street
Urbana, IL 61801
217-384-4118

National Crime Prevention Council
1700 K Street, NW, Second Floor
Washington, DC 20006-3817
202-466-6272
Web site: ncpc.org

National School Safety Center
141 Duesenberg Drive, Suite 11
Westlake Village, CA 91362
805-373-9977
Web site: nsscl.org

National Sheriffs' Association
1450 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-836-7827
Web site: sheriff.org

National Youth Gang Information Center
Institute for Intergovernmental Research
PO Box 12729
Tallahassee, FL 32317
800-446-0912
Web site: iir.com/nygc/

North Carolina's Center for the Prevention of School Violence
20 Enterprise Street, Suite 2
Raleigh, NC 27607-7375
919-515-9397
Web site: ncsu.edu/cpsv/

Street Law, Inc.
1600 K Street, NW, Suite 602
Washington, DC 20006
202-293-0088
Web site: streetlaw.org

Youth Crime Watch of America
9300 South Dadeland Boulevard
Suite 100
Miami, FL 33156
305-670-2409
Web site: ycwa.org

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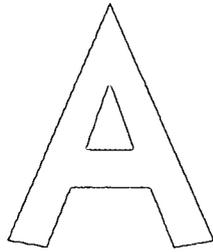
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Understanding and Working Effectively With Teens

Helping children through adolescence and into adulthood is a tough job, one that many community organizations, schools, parents, churches, and other individuals work hard at, usually with success.



Adolescence has been termed the “crucially formative phase [that] can shape an individual’s life course and thus the future of a whole society.”¹ Those who work with teenagers—law enforcement officers, coaches, community volunteers, parents—can help young people develop the skills they need to make good choices today and in the rest of their lives.

In teaching these skills, it is important to understand how teens develop so that your work with them can be effective and meaningful. With help from caring adults, teens can better cope with the dizzying array of dangerous choices they face.

The media, parents, teachers, and other adults often wonder what makes teens tick. Teenagers often wonder themselves. Just as we will never know how every adult operates, we will never know how each individual teen thinks and develops. There are, however, various stages of development—physical, intellectual, emotional, and social—that most teens traverse during adolescence. This paper will explore those developmental stages and offer some guidance in how to work effectively with teens as they pass through these stages.

Contrary to many adults’ opinions, changes during teen years are real and major. These changes occur at different times for different youth. A 16-year-old body may house the emotions of a 13-year-old and the intellect of a 19-year-old, for example. Gender makes a difference as well—girls tend to mature earlier than boys do.

Teen development can be categorized into three periods—early, middle, and late.

- Early adolescence—ages 11 to 14—is when teens have a tendency to regress to more infantile needs, have childlike ways of relating, and experience a decline in self-esteem. It is these ages that girls usually start puberty. Boys generally start about two years later than girls do.
- Middle adolescence—ages 15 and 16—generally marks the increase of sexual impulses and attention to grooming and cleanliness. A parent of a 15-year-old may tell you that all the child does is shower and look in the mirror.
- During late adolescence—ages 17 and 18—teens are interested in self and self-image, vocational aims, the future, and the meaning of life.

These stages influence where teens are in terms of their development on physical, intellectual, moral, emotional, and social levels.

Physical Changes

Puberty has a major impact on teen development. Puberty is a series of biological changes that physically transform a child into a reproductively mature adult. Girls begin the changes of puberty somewhere between eight and thirteen years of age. Boys start generally between ten and fifteen years of age. During puberty, the body changes extremely quickly. The signs are familiar—development of facial and body hair, breast development in girls, growth spurts, and changing voices in boys. Not since conception, birth, and the first years of life do bodies develop and change this quickly. The large growth spurts that characterize puberty often make a confident 10- to 12-year-old seem awkward and unsure. Puberty takes about four years to complete, and girls begin the process about a year and a half to two years earlier than boys do. Teens are uncomfortable with their changing bodies and with the way that these changes often set them apart from their peers.

As a boy's body matures, his image of himself improves. On the other hand, as girls mature, they experience conflict between the normal process of puberty—weight gain, breast development, waist development—and the high value society places on being thin. For girls who mature at early ages, this conflict can set the stage for low self-esteem, substance abuse, and eating disorders.² When working with girls who do develop early, it is critical to help them understand that their value is not inherently tied to the way they look. Adolescents are intensely self-conscious and sensitive about their changing bodies.

Teens need the opportunity to build the self-confidence that may be diminished because of the physical effects of puberty. Providing adolescents something positive to be involved in reduces the opportunity to develop self-destructive behaviors. Activities that benefit the community will help teens develop feelings of self-worth from having done something good for the place in which they live and a feeling of connection to their school or neighborhood.

Teens must be offered a level playing field in order to be successful at building self-confidence. Activities that allow teens to use their many different talents are usually the best. Take, for instance, a play or a skit—there are roles for all. Youth can write the script, build the set, paint the scenery, act out roles, provide the background music, make and serve refreshments, promote the event and sell tickets, and design and make costumes. This allows many different youth with many different talents to be involved and to be successful.

In building self-confidence, it is important for teens to experience some immediate gratification, as well as to learn to work over time toward goals. Offer teens activities that take place over the short-term and long-term.

Intellectual, Moral, and Emotional Change

Some of the most important early research on child development is that of Jean Piaget. (However, it is important to note that Piaget was exclusively concerned with children under the age of 12. Lawrence Kohlberg later applied Piaget's theories to adolescents in a series of studies and showed their validity when applied to adolescents.) Piaget holds that the last stage of cognitive development, the formal operational stage, takes place during adolescence. During this stage, the thinking of an adolescent differs radically from that of a child. Adolescents are able to solve problems because they are able to understand conditions, reason with the conditions, try out various solutions systematically, and discard those that don't fit. Teens also become flexible in their thinking. They can come up with many possible reasons for an observed outcome. Since they can anticipate many possibilities prior to an actual event, they are not surprised by unusual outcomes. Teens can think beyond what is present to what might be possible and what might occur. They become inventive, imaginative, and original in their thinking.³

This new way of thinking has profound effects on teens' behavior. This is the age at which teens start to assume adult roles. Because they want to be adults, they are motivated to take their places in the adult world. As they begin to discard their childhood inferiority and subordination to adults, they begin to see themselves as the equal of adults and to judge them on the same plane as themselves. Their ability to distinguish the real from the possible makes them idealistic. When comparing the possible to the real, and finding the real lacking, they become critical.⁴

Some teens see themselves as being essential in the salvation of humanity. They become the champions of the underdog. Because of their own intense identity struggles, they easily identify with the weak, the poor, and the oppressed. In earlier adolescence, teens express their views primarily on the verbal level. As they age and mature, they begin to back up their ideals with appropriate actions.⁵

When working with teens, this idealism is a tremendous benefit. They may not be able to solve the problems of the world, but they need the chance to become involved in the issues that plague the community. They can help develop projects in their schools that address such tough issues as racism, hate crimes, date rape, and domestic violence. These are great learning opportunities for teens to take on. They will grow intellectually as they puzzle through the issues they address.

As teens become more aware of their own thoughts, they also become more egocentric, self-conscious, and introspective. Teens develop what Elkind calls a personal fable: a belief that their experiences are unique.⁶ This may be why teens often believe that pregnancy will only happen to other girls, they will never overdose on drugs, they will not get shot, and they will never get caught if they break the law. Their immaturity at making sound judgments tends to make them take more risks. The challenge is to provide stimulating opportunities for teens that are positive and safe. Teens also need to be able to practice critical thinking skills in safe environments. Adults must walk a fine line between providing guidance and necessary protection and allowing independence and some safe risk taking.

Schools and community and religious organizations can arrange for safe activities that don't involve danger or illegality. These events can range from establishing a "club" soccer or street hockey league to holding drug- and alcohol-free New Year's Eve and post-prom parties. All of these events create positive opportunities for young people and can help keep them from making unhealthy decisions. Consider a range of activities that appeal to different types of youth. A community service project might provide one teen with a sense of adventure and stimulation, but another teen may need to ski or hang-glide to satisfy his

or her need to take risks. If the only risk-taking activities open to teens in the neighborhood are drugs, gangs, and crime, the chances are greater for teens to become involved in these activities. Positive activities provide a way for teens to learn decision, life, and risk analysis skills.

Many outside circumstances influence a teenager's ability to develop formal operational thought. Some cultural backgrounds offer more opportunities to teens to develop abstract thinking than others. Social institutions such as the family and school can accelerate or retard the development of formal operations. And the maturation of the central nervous system plays a role in development as well.⁷

Until the last decade, the predominate belief was that by the time a child reached puberty, his or her brain was fully developed. Recent research shows that this is not true. It turns out that the brain is not fully developed until the early twenties.

In fact, different parts of the brain develop on different timetables. One of the last sections to mature is the one in charge of making sound judgments and calming unruly emotions.

- Younger teens' emotions are in overdrive.
- Teens are less able to handle unclear information and make decisions.
- Teens can't gain quick access to critical memories and emotions that allow them to make good decisions.
- Teens are far more interested in novelty than are children or adults.
- Teens are more likely than adults to act impulsively.

What does this mean for adults who work with teens? Teens are in the process of "hard-wiring" their brains. The more they exercise their brains by controlling their impulses, understanding abstract thoughts, and practicing critical thinking skills, the better it will serve them in the future. Because teens' brains are still forming, even teens that have gotten into trouble can still learn restraint, judgment, and empathy.⁸

Adults can encourage the development of abstract thinking and formal operations problem solving in a number of ways. Teens need to be presented with experiments or problems that allow them the opportunity to observe, analyze possibilities, and draw inferences. Discussion groups, debates, question periods, and problem-solving sessions are approaches that encourage the development of abstract thinking and problem-solving abilities. Adults need not be overly concerned with instilling a zest for knowledge—that will already exist—they need to ensure that the zest is not dulled by overly rigid standards.

Erik Erikson, another pioneer in the study of adolescence, described the major task of this time period to be identity formation. Establishing an identity requires an individual to evaluate one's personal assets and liabilities to achieve a clearer concept of who one is and what one wants to be and become. According to Erikson, to achieve this, teens must gain a sense of time and the continuity of life so that they can gain some concept of how long it takes to achieve one's life plan. They must develop self-confidence and the feeling that they have a reasonable chance of accomplishing their future goals. They must have the opportunity to try out the different roles they are to play in society. They need to be able to explore and try out different occupations. They need to begin to take on leadership responsibilities as well as learn how to follow others.⁹

An interesting aspect of Erikson's theory is the concept that adolescence is a time period sanctioned by society when teens are free to experiment and try on various roles. He cautions, however, that at the end of adolescence a failure to establish an identity can result in deep suffering for the teen. Many a teen faced with no sense of identity will choose to be somebody "bad" or nobody at all rather than not be somebody.¹⁰

Identity formation needs may be met in many ways, positive and negative, whether it is through an organized youth program at school, religious institution, community organization, or joining their peers to be “part of the group.” Look at your community. What kinds of opportunities are there for teen involvement? Young people can thrive in a variety of situations that meet their needs and challenge their intellectual growth. Look at the community’s resources—are there after-school, weekend, and summer programs, job opportunities, and other chances to learn and demonstrate leadership and life skills in a supportive atmosphere?

Social Development

Parents usually are the greatest conveyors of standards and values as children grow, but however vital their role, they cannot offer all the broadening of horizons and extra-familial growth adolescents seek. Adolescents compare themselves to other teens and to adults they see in families and communities as well as in the fashion, music, and entertainment industries. These comparisons can be affirming or isolating depending on what conclusion teens draw.

In early adolescence, teens develop their self-concept in terms of how others relate to them. If a teenage boy is labeled a troublemaker or delinquent, others begin to distrust him and accuse him of delinquent acts. In the absence of objective ways to decide for himself whether he is in fact a delinquent, he is likely to rely on the view of others. Thus, he is apt to begin to perceive himself as delinquent and begin to act out delinquent roles.

Young people may reflect many adult values and norms, but there are certain aspects of their lives where they can exercise some control and make their own decisions. Such matters as dress, music, movies, automobiles, dating customs, and behaviors at youth hangouts may run counter to adult preferences. However, teens usually do not stray far from what is accepted by their peer group. If a teenager’s behavior or style falls outside of these norms, teens can be rejected, even taunted, by their peers. This need to feel a sense of belonging is extremely important in that it helps develop external sources of validation.

In addition to wanting to experiment with adult roles, teens seek ways to spend time with their peers. Several studies of students have shown that as teens get older they become increasingly less interested in the academic program and more interested in social activities, clubs, and sports.¹¹ The need for close friends during adolescence becomes crucial. Up until this time, children have had their emotional needs met by their parents. Friends and peer groups help teens and young adults to make the transition from parental dependence to independence.

As the number of teens’ acquaintances broadens, teens become increasingly aware of their needs to belong to a group. Teens use several strategies to become part of a “group.” They aspire to be part of cliques or groups that are most like themselves. Members are characterized according to attributes that they share—dress, scholastic standing, social skills, reputation. Another way of finding group acceptance is through achievement—in sports, grades, recreational activities. Joining in-school clubs and participating in a variety of out-of-school social activities are other ways that teens find acceptance. An important aspect in the social development of adolescents is their strong herd instinct. In order to be part of the “in” group, one must be accepted by the herd.¹²

Teenagers over and over again express their pleasure at opportunities for socializing. Within the framework of a structured activity, allow teens some informal time to enjoy themselves.

Some teens achieve group acceptance through deviant behavior. What might be considered a “bad” reputation at a local high school might be considered a “good” reputation in a street gang.¹³ Studies have shown that peer groups are an important influence in whether a youth will become involved in serious juvenile delinquency. And youth that associate with other youth involved in risky behavior are more likely to become involved in that behavior.

How can adults prevent teens from falling into deviant behavior or becoming isolated and angry? According to Patricia Hersch, author of *A Tribe Apart: A Journey into the Heart of American Adolescence*, “Kids need outlets, they need connections, and they need boundaries.”¹⁴ Supporting Ms. Hersch’s view is a recent report from the National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health, which suggests that feeling connected to family and school protects teens from risky behavior.

Numerous studies have shown that one of the most important influences on teens’ lives and their ability to become productive, well-adjusted members of society is the presence of at least one caring adult in their lives. Youth need to interact with adults who model appropriate behavior and decision-making skills. They need the opportunity to interact with adults and to have adults value their thoughts, ideas, and input. These developmental stages are just guidelines to help design activities that will take into consideration what youth are capable of and what skills they need to achieve some of the developmental tasks of adolescence. The most important thing an adult can do is be a presence in the lives of youth and support their efforts.

Resources

American Academy of Pediatrics
 PO Box 927
 141 Northwest Point Boulevard
 Elk Grove, IL 60009-0927
 847-228-5005
 Web site: aap.org

American Correctional Association
 4380 Forbes Boulevard
 Lanham, MD 20706-4322
 800-222-5646
 Web site: corrections.com/aca

Big Brothers Big Sisters of America
 230 North 13th Street
 Philadelphia, PA 19107
 215-567-7000
 Web site: bbbsa.org

Boys & Girls Clubs of America
 1230 West Peachtree Street, NW
 Atlanta, GA 30309-3494
 404-815-5700
 Web site: bgca.org

Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence
 Institute of Behavioral Science, University of Colorado
 Campus Box 439, Building #10
 Boulder, CO 80309-0439
 303-492-8465
 Web site: colorado.edu/cspv

Center for Youth as Resources
 1700 K Street, NW, Suite 801
 Washington, DC 20006
 202-466-6272
 Web site: yar.org

Center for Youth Development and Policy Research
 Academy for Educational Development
 1825 Connecticut Avenue, NW
 Washington, DC 20009
 202-884-8000
 Web site: aed.org

Educational Development Center, Inc.
 55 Chapel Street
 Newton, MA 02158-1060
 617-969-7100
 Web site: edc.org

Family Resource Coalition
 20 North Wacker Drive, Suite 1100
 Chicago, IL 60606
 312-338-0900
 Web site: frca.org

National Adolescent Health Resource Center
 1313 Fifth Street Southeast, Suite 205
 Minneapolis, MN 55414
 612-627-4488
 Web site: cyfc.umn.edu/Youth/adoleshealth.html

National Clearinghouse on Families and Youth
 PO Box 13505
 Silver Spring, MD 20911
 301-608-8098
 Web site: ncfy.com

National Family Partnership
 Informed Families Education Center
 2490 Coral Way
 Miami, FL 33145-3449
 800-705-8997
 Web site: nfp.org

National Network of Children's Advocacy Centers
 1319 F Street, NW, #1001
 Washington, DC 20004
 202-639-0597
 Web site: nncac.org

National Organization for Victim Assistance
 1757 Park Road, NW
 Washington, DC 20010
 202-232-6682 or 800-TRY-NOVA
 Web site: try-nova.org

National Network for Youth
 1319 F Street, NW, Suite 401
 Washington, DC 20004
 202-783-7949
 Web site: nn4youth.org

National Youth Leadership Council
 1910 West County Road B
 St. Paul, MN 55113
 612-631-3672
 Web site: mightymedia.com/edunet/nylc/

Strengthening America's Families Project
 Department of Health Education
 300 South, 1815 East, Room 215
 University of Utah
 Salt Lake City, UT 84112
 801-581-7718
 Web site: strengtheningfamilies.org

YouthBuild USA
 58 Day Street
 Somerville, MA 02144
 617-623-9900
 Web site: youthbuild.org

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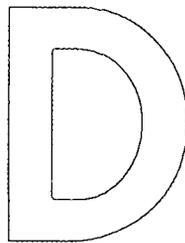


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Turning Young Lives Around

Helping Kids in Trouble

Demographic experts predict that juvenile arrests for violent crimes will more than double by the year 2010,¹ given population growth projections and trends in juvenile arrest over the past several decades.



Despite this prediction, only a fraction of youth is arrested for the total reported violent crimes each year. But demographics are not destiny; communities are looking at ways to deal with the portion of youth that are committing these violent crimes.

Most Americans do not want to give up on helping troubled youth turn their lives around. But most Americans also feel that young people should be held accountable for their actions, especially for acts that cause harm to others. These two beliefs can be blended together through a comprehensive approach to youth violence, which includes a juvenile justice system that provides immediate interventions, appropriate and graduated sanctions, and necessary treatment for delinquent juveniles. Communities also need to look at how serious offenders are prosecuted and work to prevent youth violence by addressing teen victimization, abuse, and neglect. There are also many proven programs that can help young people in trouble turn their lives around.

Historically, juvenile courts placed youth (usually under age 18) who broke the law into three categories: delinquency—breaking a criminal law, such as stealing a car; status offenses—breaking a special law that applies only to juveniles, such as running away from home, skipping school, or repeatedly disobeying parents; and abuse and neglect—when a child is abused or neglected by his or her family. In the last decade, dramatic increases in the visibility and deadliness of youth violence has spurred a serious movement among states to develop a “get tough” model that allows many serious

and violent offenders under 18 to be tried as adults. This trend has challenged many adult correctional systems to develop programming for younger and more vulnerable inmates; while juvenile facilities are increasingly being burdened with older, more violent young people. More severe sanctions for teens may deter some, but this is not the complete answer as it burdens an already overloaded system, does not necessarily prevent teens from committing violent crime, and overlooks other effective prevention measures.

Thoughtful research has pointed the way to a number of strategies that can help young offenders turn their lives around and become productive, competent citizens. Communities across the country are using integrated, multi-agency prevention programs for all youth—with a special emphasis on youth at risk. These communities are looking at local conditions and determining community strengths and weaknesses in support of youth. These efforts require the juvenile justice system to partner with community resources to deal with delinquent behavior. Together the juvenile justice systems and communities are looking to such partners as

- educators
- parents
- mental health and social workers
- court officers
- law enforcement officials
- faith communities
- businesses
- youth.

General Principles To Develop Comprehensive Strategies²

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, effective comprehensive strategies must

- strengthen families
- support core social institutions
- promote delinquency prevention
- intervene immediately and effectively when delinquent behavior occurs
- identify and control a small group of serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders.

Strengthening Families

Families have the primary responsibility for meeting basic socializing needs of children, but many violent offenders have themselves been victims of neglect, abuse, and violence. There is a clear link between violence in the home and a juvenile's later involvement in violent delinquency.³ Youth victimization, abuse, and neglect are difficult situations for communities to deal with; however, it is possible to strengthen families through programs to prevent child abuse and neglect and to foster healthy development. Promising strategies are now being used in social services, education, health, mental health, substance abuse, children's services, and juvenile justice arenas. They include

- family preservation programs
- family skills training programs
- family therapy programs
- parent training programs
- probation and rehabilitation service programs.

In Richmond, California, Child Haven teaches young mothers with premature babies and mothers who have been victims of abuse as children how to bathe, diaper, feed, and nurture their children, as well as nonviolent ways to discipline potentially difficult youngsters as the babies grow up. The program on which it is based, developed in New South Wales, Australia, underwent a three-year evaluation that documented a reduction of child abuse by mothers in the program.

If family strengthening fails, and abuse and neglect occur, juvenile and family courts can play a critical role in identifying cases of child abuse and neglect, making referrals to supportive services, and providing follow-up.

Youth at substantial risk for continued family abuse and neglect can be placed in stable, high-quality foster care to prevent further victimization.

Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care offers an alternative to group or residential treatment, incarceration, or hospitalization for troubled or delinquent youth. Families within the community agree to become highly trained foster parents. Youth receive treatment for specific problems; intensive supervision at home, at school, and in the community; clear limits and consequences that are defined and enforced; and support to the youth's own family to use the same approaches that have been employed in the foster home. After a year, youth placed in this program had significantly fewer arrests than a comparison group, were less likely to run away or to use drugs, and spent less time in incarceration settings.

Suggestions for Action

Breaking the cycle of family violence does not happen quickly or easily. To get started, a community can

- improve juvenile and family court handling of child abuse and neglect cases
- enhance efforts to investigate and prosecute child abuse and neglect cases, including child abuse fatalities, and strengthen child protective services by promoting multi-agency efforts
- support community-based services that reduce family violence and victimization
- improve services to children who are victims of abuse
- support the launch of a Healthy Start program, which combines home visits, home medical services, and teaching parenting and parent-child interaction skills to reduce child abuse and neglect
- involve young men in parenting programs
- support comprehensive adolescent pregnancy prevention programs.

Supporting Core Social Institutions

These social institutions include schools, religious institutions, community organizations, and businesses that provide children with opportunities to mature into productive, law-abiding citizens. Social institutions must be actively involved in the lives of youth. They also can provide meaningful economic opportunities for youth.

Quantum Opportunities aims to help high-risk youth from poor families and neighborhoods to graduate from high school and attend college. It works with small groups of teens for four years, combining skills training, personal development and cultural enrichment, and service to the community in 750 hours of structured activity beyond the school day. Financial incentives help increase participation, completion of the program, and long-range planning by the youth. Evaluation showed that young people taking part in it were less likely to be arrested as juveniles, more likely to have graduated from high school, more likely to have gone on to college or other post-high school training, and less likely to have become teen parents, compared with a similar group that did not get these services.

Young people need room to try on new roles, support from caring adults, a sense of stability in their lives, a belief that they are considered important by their communities, and help in getting back on track when they have done wrong. The community that gives its youth these gifts is rewarded many times over.

New York City decided to get neighborhoods involved in finding ways to meet neighborhood needs by using a neighborhood institution—the school—as a base of services after regular schools hours. The idea was to provide more than an after-school place for kids; instead the goal was to create a neighborhood center that could be the focus for integrated services at the local level to meet local needs. An evaluation termed the Beacon Community Centers particularly promising strategies because they embrace control by local residents, a comprehensive program for all ages (not just youth), an emphasis on personal responsibility, and a secure environment in which problems can be peaceably resolved.

Suggestions for Action

- Offer practical training in life skills and job skills. Enlist others in the community—civic groups, fraternal groups, professional societies, social clubs, and the like—to join in the effort.
- Offer resources—a part-time job, training through company facilities, meeting places, supplies, printing services, and other means of help—as well as money.
- Increase school safety to improve opportunities for academic success.
- Provide opportunities for youth to serve their community.

Promoting Delinquency Prevention

Families, schools, religious institutions, and community organizations must work together to make prevention a priority. When young people “act out,” the family and community must respond with appropriate treatment and support services. Such programs as Boys & Girls Clubs, scouting, and similar efforts—focused on providing positive alternatives while teaching life skills and community values—have documented that their members are less likely to be delinquent or drug-involved as youth and more likely to be successful as adults. Focused mentoring programs that carefully match youth and adults and provide support over the life of the relationship clearly help young people do better in school, stay off drugs, avoid other trouble, and develop positive skills and a sense of being valued by adults other than their parents, according to an independent evaluation.

What do these youth have in common: A 13-year-old girl teaching her peers how to prevent date rape; a high school junior launching an anti-child-abuse public education effort; a 14-year-old boy becoming the linchpin of a school anti-vandalism drive? Each of these young people was spurred to solve a crime problem by Teens, Crime, and the Community (TCC), an education and action curriculum in hundreds of schools as well as in community and juvenile justice settings. TCC teaches youth how to protect themselves, families, friends, and neighbors against crime and challenges them to put their know-how into service to the community. Evaluations throughout the country have documented that teens learn how to reduce their risks of becoming crime victims and that the program strengthens protective factors and attitudes that can reduce the chances of delinquency.

Suggestions for Action

- Advocate for and support programs that help teens and younger children with personal growth.
- Help start recreational opportunities that offer choices for all kinds of young interests at a variety of times and in a range of settings.
- Begin after-school, community-based initiatives that provide a range of programs.
- Work to support programs that fill gaps in needed programs and services.

- Insist on programs that show clear evidence that they are effective.
- Advocate for programs that involve teens.

Intervene Immediately and Effectively When Delinquent Behavior Occurs

It is critical that communities intervene immediately and effectively when delinquent behaviors occur. But because of the increased volume and changing composition of juvenile delinquency caseloads, most communities have crowded juvenile justice systems. The system must be equipped to address the full range of juvenile problem behaviors. Often it is so overwhelmed that juveniles receive no meaningful interventions or consequences, even for relatively serious offenses.

The juvenile justice system needs to respond to delinquent conduct with programs and sanctions that seek to heal both offenders and victims (individual and community) and balance offender punishment with making amends to victims and the community. Making amends can include community service and other work programs for offenders, victim and offender mediation, restitution to the victim, and expanded victims' services. Through a balanced approach, juvenile offenders can gain a better understanding of the impact and damage they have caused.

Integral to this approach is moving beyond the juvenile court officers to include a broad range of people involved with youth, such as intake, probation, parole, education, social, and mental health services. This team of people works together to identify the sentencing, treatment, or rehabilitative needs of each teen offender.

A good way to combine punishment with treatment is to institute a system of graduated sanctions. These sanctions serve to protect the community from the most violent while rehabilitating those who have committed less serious crimes. Graduated sanctions usually consist of three levels:

- immediate intervention, such as day treatment centers for first-time offenders, which include misdemeanors and nonviolent felonies, and many nonviolent repeat offenders.
- intermediate sanctions for many first-time serious and repeat offenders and some violent offenders, including residential and non-residential community-based programs, weekend detentions, intensive supervised probation, wilderness programs, and boot camp with follow-up care
- secure confinement for those found to be violent and repeat serious offenders, including community confinement in small secure treatment facilities.

A community also must consider providing intensive after-care programs that help young people re-enter into the community. After-care programs help prepare teens for responsibility and freedom in the community. They foster youth-community connection and involvement by working with the offender and community support systems, such as families, peers, schools, and employers.

The Allentown, PA, school district developed the Student Assistance Program to address the increased number of dropouts, violent incidents, behavioral problems, and drug abuse problems among its students. School-based probation officers act as student advocates and coordinators to refer students to resources in the school and community. Probation officers also visit classrooms to talk to students and faculty members about the juvenile justice system and to clarify the program. Developing excellent working relationships among education and juvenile justice personnel, law enforcement, other social agencies, and families has been one of the program's most important accomplishments.

Suggestions for Action

Developing a system of graduated sanctions should take place as part of a coordinated examination of the community's response to juveniles who commit delinquent or criminal acts. It may be necessary to change state laws as well as local policies and practices governing the treatment of juveniles in order to institute a system of graduated sanctions and effective interventions. While the idea of changing the system may feel daunting, the results are well worth the effort. There is not one perfect model program of graduated sanctions; however, a number of communities have developed pieces that fit into this model.

- Develop a local prevention policy board or community board to assess risk factors for delinquency in the community, review current juvenile justice laws, and identify priorities for action.
- Develop and implement a range of graduated sanctions that combine accountability with treatment for delinquent juveniles.
- Establish or strengthen a comprehensive system of youth service agencies to reduce fragmented service delivery and to provide a full continuum of service, sanction, and treatment options.
- Provide victim and community restitution opportunities for youth to help enhance public safety and improve the quality of life.
- Work with victims' rights organizations to ensure both juvenile accountability to victims and a strengthened community commitment to rehabilitation.
- Review support services provided to families of troubled youth. Make sure they are being helped in the most effective ways.

Identify and Control a Small Group of Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders

When looking at the issues of youth violence, it is important to have a strong response to the most violent and chronic juvenile offenders. This will help protect the public from violence and separate certain serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders from those youth that can benefit from treatment and rehabilitation in the juvenile justice system.

Transferring to criminal court the most chronic juvenile offenders who commit the most serious and violent crimes enables the juvenile justice system to focus its attention on a much larger group of youth that have committed less serious crimes.

Shifting a young person from the juvenile justice system to a criminal case must only be considered for those youth whose criminal history, failure to respond to treatment, or serious violent conduct clearly demonstrates that they require criminal justice system sanctions. In adopting this method of addressing the most serious of youth offenders, communities must resolve to prevent delinquency and intervene early to decrease the risk of future criminal conduct. Communities can't just "lock 'em all up and throw away the key."

In Tarrant County, (Fort Worth) Texas, high-risk delinquents who might otherwise be placed in expensive detention are placed on high-intensity supervised probation. Trained, locally recruited youth advocates provide between 15 and 30 hours of supervision per week and help the youth and their families connect with community services to resolve problems. In more than five years of operation, the program has kept better than eight out of ten clients in the community in compliance with the terms of their sentence.

By adopting a graduated sanctions model, the number of juveniles transferred to criminal court should decrease. Graduated sanctions allow communities to be flexible and to provide individualized justice. For instance, in Minnesota, a blended sentencing law creates a new category of juvenile offenders called “extended sentence jurisdiction juveniles” who receive both a juvenile disposition and a suspended criminal sentence.⁴ The criminal sanction can be imposed if a juvenile fails to meet the requirements of the juvenile disposition.

In dealing with the most violent juvenile offender, it is critical to examine the community response. Once again, a comprehensive approach is crucial. Legislators, victims, child advocates, law enforcement, the media, and parents must work together to help shape the laws that affect young people of the community.

Suggestions for Action⁵

As communities look to prosecute violent and chronic juvenile offenders, they can

- review how juveniles are prosecuted, adjudicated, and sentenced. Are these sanctions and services consistently applied?
- ensure that there is a system of graduated sanctions in place and that it is well established
- establish automated record-keeping systems in all local juvenile courts
- adopt policies for prosecuting serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders in criminal court
- develop innovative and/or alternative sanctions, such as community-based corrections options
- work with the media to promote greater public understanding of the transfer issue.

Communities need to look closely at the types of crimes their young people are committing and consider the most effective ways to deal with these issues. It is an intricate process that involves the many organizations, individuals, and agencies that work with young people in trouble. It requires a firm knowledge of the issues and some creative thinking. There are many innovative approaches that are cost-effective and produce good results to keep kids from continuing to get into trouble.

Don't forget that teenagers are great crime prevention resources. Include youth in comprehensive planning sessions; ask them to serve on committees; invite groups of teens to adopt anticrime projects from the community's “to-do” list. Their energy, creativity, idealism, and commitment help to energize the adults around them. And equally important, managing and conducting these projects helps teens become more invested in their community.

Resources

American Correctional Association
4380 Forbes Boulevard
Lanham, MD 20706-4322
800-222-5646
Web site: corrections.com/aca

American Probation and Parole Association
PO Box 11910
Lexington, KY 40578
606-244-8203
Web site: csom.org/about/p_appa.html

American Prosecutors Research Institute
National District Attorneys Association
99 Canal Center Plaza
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-549-9222
Web site: ndaa-apri.org/apri/apri2.html

Balanced and Restorative Justice Project
Florida Atlantic University
220 SE 2nd Avenue
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301
954-762-5663
Web site: fau.edu/divdept/cupa/centers.htm

Bethesda Family Services Foundation, Inc.
Central Oaks Heights, Route 15 South
PO Box 210
West Milton, PA 17886
717-568-2373
Web site: sunlink.net/bethesda

Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence
Institute of Behavioral Science,
University of Colorado
Campus Box 439, Building #10
Boulder, CO 80309-0439
303-492-8465
Web site: colorado.edu/cspv

Coalition for Juvenile Justice
1211 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 414
Washington, DC 20036
202-467-0864
Web site: nassembly.org/html/mem_cjj.html

Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse
PO Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000
800-638-8736
Web site: ncjrs.org

National Center for Juvenile Justice
710 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3000
Pittsburgh, PA 15219-3000
412-227-6950
Web site: ncjj.org

**National Council of Juvenile and
Family Court Judges**
PO Box 8970
Reno, NV 89507
702-784-6012
Web site: ncjfcj.unr.edu

National Network of Children's Advocacy Centers
1319 F Street, NW, #1001
Washington, DC 20004
202-639-0597
Web site: nncac.org

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2. Adapted from *Guide for Implementing the Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders* (Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, 1995), 7.
3. *Ibid*, 9.
4. CCJJDP, *Combating Violence*, 5.
5. *Ibid*, 30.



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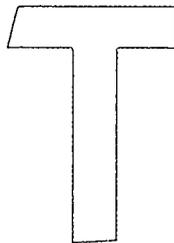
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Involving Teens in Drug Abuse Prevention

Never before have so many substances of potential abuse been so widely available to young teens. It is frightening to know that the age of initiation to substance abuse has never been lower.



he younger an adolescent starts to use alcohol and drugs, the more likely he or she is to develop problems associated with such use. For all teens, substance use and abuse presents serious hazards. It can interfere with their ability to learn, their social, intellectual, and physical development, and in the most tragic cases it can lead to serious accidents and even death.

Drug-related crime is a problem in neighborhoods of all kinds—large and small, rich and poor, new or well established. Drug-dependent individuals are responsible for a disproportionate percentage of our nation's violence and income-generating crimes like robbery, burglary, and theft.¹ Young drug users sometimes steal to buy alcohol or other drugs. Teens that are high are also more likely to vandalize public or private property.

Some of the economic costs of alcohol and other drug use include

- lost or destroyed property
- higher cost for security
- higher insurance costs on property, automobiles, and medical coverage
- higher taxes to cover increased police and other services
- costs to taxpayers and insurers for drug treatment and support
- cost of lost educational opportunities for teenage drug dealers
- reduced productivity or lost jobs in the workplace
- decline in property value.

Demographics of Teen Substance Abuse

Before discussing ways to prevent teen drug abuse in your community, it is important to first understand the demographics of teen substance abuse. This will help lay the foundation for drug prevention efforts.

No geographic area is immune to teen drug abuse. It happens in every community, in every state across the country. Certain areas of the country, however, may have more severe problems with certain drugs. For example, the West ranked higher in marijuana use than other areas of the country, and methamphetamines, more commonly known as meth, are more prevalent in the West and Midwest. Law enforcement, school counselors, and health care professionals can provide information about the drug problem in a specific community.

Young men and women are indistinguishable in their rates of alcohol and drug use. Younger teens tend to use such gateway drugs as alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and inhalants, which they perceive to be less risky and easier to acquire than other substances. For many teens, a progression toward using increasingly dangerous substances starts with cigarettes and alcohol, moves to marijuana, and then on to other illicit drugs such as cocaine, heroin, and LSD. ²

A teen who uses alcohol or other drugs is vulnerable to serious physical and emotional harm. His or her health is in jeopardy with every beer, cigarette, or marijuana joint. The physical consequences of using cocaine and heroin have been demonstrated by the deaths of celebrity athletes and movie stars.

Why Teens Say They Use Drugs

Knowing why teens say they use drugs will help in designing an effective anti-drug effort. Many younger adolescents say they use drugs to fit in with friends and to be cool—peer pressure. Older teens tend to use drugs and alcohol to relieve boredom or to feel good. Other reasons that teens give for turning to alcohol and other drugs include

Emotional Reasons

- to feel more grown-up
- to feel better about themselves
- to feel more self-confident
- to escape problems
- to reduce stress and anxiety
- to take a risk
- to assert independence
- to dull emotional pain

Physical Reasons

- to feel relaxed
- to stop pain
- to feel good
- to increase energy or endurance

Social Reasons

- to be accepted by peers
- to be recognized or admired by friends
- to be a risk-taker

- to loosen up
- to overcome shyness
- to escape loneliness

Intellectual Reasons

- to satisfy curiosity
- to experiment
- to improve attention span

Risk Factors

Although anyone can become a drug abuser, studies have identified factors that increase the likelihood that young people will become involved with drugs, including

- friends or siblings who smoke, drink, or use other drugs
- adults at home who abuse substances
- a biological family history of drug abuse (Research shows that a child born to alcoholic parents but raised by nonalcoholic foster parents has a greater chance of becoming an alcohol abuser than someone without such a genetic link.)
- a family history of criminal or other antisocial behavior
- a family environment lacking consistent direction or discipline
- an absence of strong anti-drug role models
- poor school performance
- a history of violence and delinquency
- poverty.

The existence of any of these risk factors doesn't guarantee that a teenager will turn to drugs. There are many examples of resilient young people who beat the odds. However, in general, as the number of risk factors increases, so does the probability of substance abuse.

Forming a Partnership

A comprehensive drug prevention partnership includes teens, law enforcement, parents, schools, health professionals, community association leaders, businesses, tenant organizations, block captains, media, elected officials, religious organizations, city agencies, and neighborhood residents. This network of people and organizations joins forces to combine prevention education, intervention, treatment, and appropriate sanctions.

Comprehensive anti-drug coalitions in both Miami, Florida, and Multnomah County, Oregon, have brought together enforcement and prevention forces, along with the treatment community, and blended them with other essential social and civic services to focus energy on drug issues, especially neighborhood and youth issues. Activities range from extensive Red Ribbon Week celebrations to discourage drunk and drugged driving to multi-jurisdictional task forces to strengthen enforcement and apprehension efforts.

Anti-drug partnerships such as the ones in Miami, Florida, and Portland, Oregon, draw on diverse resources and community-wide cooperation to identify common goals and develop programs to meet local needs. Networks enable communities to share informa-

tion and resources, identify issues, develop technical assistance, and plan and coordinate services. Some of the questions that should be examined by the group include

- What are the drug problems in the community? How do they affect or involve youth? What drugs are used and by whom? What drugs are sold and by whom?
- What preventive education do children and youth receive? At what age does it start? How much is offered by schools? By law enforcement? By community youth groups or youth-serving agencies? By the faith community?
- What programs are available to help parents recognize and counter drug abuse by their children? What programs help parents deal with related family and community issues?
- What community policies are in place that discourage illegal substance use by youth and encourage appropriate behavior? What policies and practices send conflicting messages to youth?

Why Involve Teens?

This partnership benefits young people as well as the community. For many years, it has been obvious to experts in youth development that adolescents striving for maturity need to develop solid foundations in four areas: competence, usefulness to others, sense of belonging, and a sense of power. Young people need to feel good about giving to their community and to their school. They need to invest themselves emotionally in their neighbors' well-being, serving the needs of those around them.

Communities need to claim their young residents as responsible, contributing, involved citizens for a number of reasons. A young person who does not feel valued is ripe for problems with alcohol and other drugs. A youth who doesn't see himself as a needed member of the community easily becomes an adult with the same view. A youth who is a vested part of the community is ready to solve the community's alcohol and drug problems and is less likely to become involved in drug and alcohol use.

Teenagers are not only a desirable part of the drug abuse solution, they are an indispensable part. They are becoming drug prevention movers and shakers in our schools and neighborhoods, and they are getting results. In New York, teens responded to a drug-related suicide by creating a hotline, and they forged a community coalition to reclaim parks for music and concerts, displacing the drug activity that had taken over. What happens when teens use their power for their communities? They learn adult skills, competence, and self-confidence. Their time is spent building, teaching, interacting, and organizing. And their communities become better and safer places to live.

Adult Roles in Youth-Adult Partnerships

Although teens are *necessary*, they are not *sufficient* when it comes to community drug prevention efforts. Drug prevention is a complex task. It involves a change of attitudes—a change of social norms—to counteract the insidious culture of drug dealers, drug couriers and runners, violence, and crime. Sometimes, the “do drugs” message is subtle, creeping through television shows, music, videos, movies, and other sources. At other times, the message is overt—a teen is told he or she will be rejected by the group unless he or she does drugs. Dealing with this range of messages and all the other factors involved in drug prevention is far from simple.

The drug war cannot be won without battalions of young people. But they need generals who can serve as supporters, mentors, empowerers, and rewarders. Adults serve many

roles for adolescents. On one level, they sign contracts, rent meeting space, and provide transportation and management advice. But more importantly, they serve as strong shoulders, shining examples, navigators, and cheering squads.

An important adult responsibility is to know when to let go. At some point, teen projects can roll along mostly under their own power, without the high-profile support of adults. This is not to suggest that adults withdraw completely, but that they should let teens assume the ultimate responsibility of their own actions.

Advice for Adults

- ▶ Be patient. Learning takes time. Occasionally, a young person's ideas and suggestions will appear to be unworkable from an adult's experienced perspective, but it is better for the youth and for the project to let young people work most ideas through to conclusion.
- ▶ Talk with, not down to, youth. This is the most often and most emphatically cited piece of advice that young people offer. Please don't patronize.
- ▶ Be yourself; don't be someone you are not. It is false to try to be a "with it" adult by adopting teen culture. It doesn't work, and it can be counterproductive.
- ▶ Allow for error; don't demand perfection. Surely you remember from your own experience that learning involves mistakes and missteps. Encourage teens to try again if they fail the first time.

Deciding on a Project

Some anti-drug programs are ongoing efforts that have built in an ability to sustain themselves. But projects—smaller scale or one-time efforts—can offer excellent avenues for young people to make useful contributions to drug abuse prevention in their communities.

A project offers certain advantages:

- Self-limits commitment by both youth and adults
- Sharply focuses energy and resources
- Can be incorporated more easily in an ongoing youth group or classroom program
- Provides opportunity for positive, public recognition of teens, who are most often portrayed in a poor light
- Requires less financial support than a similar ongoing program.

If your situation lends itself to the benefits of projects, there are plenty of opportunities for useful and creative endeavors. Around the country teens have chosen such drug prevention projects as

- having two-member teams visit elementary school classes to present drug prevention information
- producing anti-drunk driving video public service announcements aired locally on both cable and broadcast TV
- forming a team of students who tutored and mentored the most troubled 5th graders at a nearby elementary school for a semester
- partnering with police and nearby businesses to clean up and fix up a local park

- setting up a drug prevention and recreation program for young school children on two days when schools were closed for teacher trainings
- creating and performing anti-drug plays and skits for younger people
- holding a neighborhood anti-drug march attended by the entire student body of an elementary school
- staging student-led school-wide drug prevention education assemblies
- starting a school clean-up campaign to restore pride and school spirit.

Tips To Give Teens

- ▶ Start student and adult recruitment early before schedules are crowded.
- ▶ Some teens may have momentary spurts of interest and others may demonstrate long-term commitment. Include both, but match teens with the task.
- ▶ Offer a broad range of activities and roles to meet the broad range of youth (and adult) interests.
- ▶ Invite important local people, such as the mayor or city council chair, a drug prevention officer, a public health expert, or a school official to speak at meetings.
- ▶ Encourage school-wide adoption of a project. If it becomes a theme of the school, there will be more involvement and enthusiasm.
- ▶ Keep good records of time spent and activities accomplished. This is helpful in project evaluation and valuable for volunteers' job and college applications.
- ▶ If teens are conducting a school-based project, have them gain support from faculty and administrators.
- ▶ Keep meetings short, productive, and to the point.
- ▶ Try to engage all five of the audience's senses in any presentation; a dozen charts or a long lecture can be boring.
- ▶ Find different settings for meetings, such as the cafeteria after school or in the park teens want to clean up.

Guidelines for Success

Successful drug prevention partnerships have found that the drug prevention message can be shared through a wide range of strategies, including these education-based components:

- Developing problem-solving and decision-making skills
- Developing cognitive skills for resisting pro-drug messages
- Increasing self-awareness and self-esteem
- Learning to deal with anxiety and stress in ways that are productive and that do not involve using alcohol or other drugs
- Enhancing social skills, such as the ability to initiate conversations
- Developing assertiveness skills, such as the ability to express displeasure or anger appropriately and to community needs
- Learning the relationships between smoking, the use of alcohol and other drugs, and health problems.

Help teens keep these strategies in mind as they start to design their projects. For step-by-step instructions in helping teens move forward with their projects, see *Helping Teens Take Charge of Community Issues—A Guide for Developing Successful Crime Prevention and Community Building Projects* in this kit.

Your community's problems with the use of drugs can be effectively addressed only by involving teens. Young people can be, must be—and in many places are—partners in community drug prevention efforts. They are designing and running projects that change attitudes about the use of alcohol and other drugs. They are educating their friends about the nature of drugs, the effects of drug use, and the damage drugs do to communities. Teens are cleaning up neighborhoods and lending helping hands to people who need assistance. They are changing the meaning of being “cool” to being alcohol- and drug-free.

Resources

American Council for Drug Education

164 West 74th Street
New York, NY 10023
800-488-DRUG
Web site: acde.org

Center for Substance Abuse Prevention

5600 Fishers Lane
Rockwall II
Rockville, MD 20857
301-443-0365
Web site: samhsa.gov/csap/index.htm

Citizen's Committee of New York City, Inc.

305 Seventh Avenue, 15th Floor
New York, NY 10001
212-989-0909

D.A.R.E. America

PO Box 512090
Los Angeles, CA 90051-0090
800-223-DARE
Web site: dare.org

Just Say No International

300 Lakeside Drive, Suite 1370
Oakland, CA 94612
510-451-6666

National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University

152 West 57th Street, 12th Floor
New York, NY 10019-3310
212-841-5200
Web site: casacolumbia.org

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI)

PO Box 2345
Rockville, MD 20847-2345
800-729-6686 or 301-468-2600
Web site: health.org

National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc.

12 West 21 Street
New York, NY 10010
212-206-6770
Web site: ncadd.org

National Crime Prevention Council

1700 K Street, NW, Second Floor
Washington, DC 20006-3817
202-466-6272
Web site: ncpc.org

National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS)

PO Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000
800-851-3420
Web site: ncjrs.org

National Family Partnership

Informed Families Education Center
2490 Coral Way
Miami, FL 33145-3449
800-705-8997
Web site: nfp.org

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

6000 Executive Boulevard-Willco Building
Bethesda, MD 20892-7003
301-496-1993
Web site: niaaa.nih.gov

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)

6001 Executive Boulevard
Bethesda, MD 20892
301-443-6245
Web site: nida.nih.gov

National Parents Resource Institute for Drug Enforcement
(PRIDE)
The Hurt Building
50 Hurt Plaza
Atlanta, GA 30303
800-853-7867

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1. Office of National Drug Control Policy, *The National Drug Control Strategy 1999* (Washington, DC: Author, 1999), 63.
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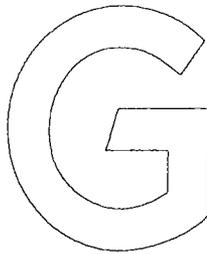


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Youth and Guns

A Deadly Combination

In 1996, there were 15 deaths caused by handguns in Japan, 30 in Great Britain, 106 in Canada—and 9,390 in the United States.



Gun violence is all too customary in the lives of children and teens. According to a recent study by the Children's Defense Fund, one child or teen is killed by gunfire every two hours—nearly 12 deaths a day. Beyond the loss of young people, children and teens suffer in other ways such as the death of family members or friends to gun violence. And gun violence in schools has made teens afraid to go to school.

Incidents across the country have proven that gun violence plagues all communities. Young people are often the victims as well as perpetrators of gun-related violent crime. Researchers attribute gun violence to a number of interrelated factors, including increased access to and use of guns, violence in society, and the connection of guns to the illicit drug trade.

- Increased availability of guns makes youth violence more lethal.¹
- Research indicates that residents of homes where a gun is present are more likely to experience a suicide or a homicide than residents of homes without guns.
- According to a poll by The Joyce Foundation, only 43 percent of parents with children under 18 years of age that own a gun keep that gun safely locked.
- An estimated 1.2 million elementary-aged children come home after school to unsupervised houses where there is a firearm.

Young people killing each other with guns, whether it is in schools, on the streets, or at home, raises huge concerns. Guns in

the hands of young people can engender fear that young people are less likely to exercise the necessary restraint in handling dangerous weapons, especially rapid-fire assault weapons.² Young people often have an underdeveloped sense of the value of life, their own as well as others. They may not have the ability to understand how one seemingly isolated act can in turn impact an entire community.

Among young people, youth aged ten to 19 committed suicide with a gun every six hours. That's over 1,300 young people in a single year.

—Center To Prevent Handgun Violence

The costs of gun violence are enormous—the loss of young lives, the futures of those who are injured or inflict violence on others, the pain caused to families, and the damages incurred by the community cannot be overestimated.

- Acute medical care for patients with firearm-related injuries has been estimated to cost nearly \$32,000 per hospital admission.
- Eighty percent of the medical cost for treatment of firearm-related injuries is paid for by taxpayers.

This paper will provide ideas for comprehensive strategies on ways to reduce youth gun violence and provide examples of what other communities are doing across the country to deal with this issue. No single strategy will work by itself. Because gun violence has many causes, several programs and approaches are needed to address the issue productively. Combining these effective strategies can be the base for comprehensive, coordinated local action. If adults are willing to invest time, resources, and support in building a network of programs that work, both youth and adults will reap the benefits of a safer, more caring community.

What Can Be Done?

According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, any comprehensive strategy to reduce youth gun violence should include

- getting guns out of hands of juveniles. Community-wide efforts need to be made to approach the frequent gun carrier and purveyors of guns. This can be achieved by increased police attention, community support, and youth involvement in planning and implementing the effort
- focusing on gang prevention, intervention, and suppression strategies. This effort must be done in concert with the juvenile justice system and must focus on youth entering or leaving a gang and the development stage of the gang problem in the community
- working with witnesses to violence to provide them with adequate psychological health services
- teaching anger management and conflict resolution skills in schools
- reducing fear through public education programs
- creating initiatives to make guns safer against unauthorized use
- reducing availability and stricter regulation of guns
- enforcing laws
- providing drug treatment and prevention
- improving opportunities for economic and social progress.

In Boston, MA, a comprehensive community-wide effort resulted in several initiatives, including counseling of gun violence victims in hospital emergency rooms, targeted enforcement efforts against gang firearms violence, and community-based justice centers that help mediate disputes.

Although this list can seem overwhelming, *everyone* can help prevent gun tragedies in three ways:

- starting or supporting violence prevention (not reaction) programs in every community
- teaching young people how to manage anger and handle conflicts peaceably
- keeping guns out of the hands of unsupervised kids and treating them as hazardous consumer products.

Starting or supporting violence prevention (not reaction) programs in every community

The first steps in preventing gun violence are to understand the causes of all violence, design programs that address the causes, and support their activities. The roots of violence are many and varied, but years of research on the subject have identified a number of traits, conditions, and situations that increase teen's likelihood of becoming violent. These include

- individual (low self-esteem, sense of hopelessness, emotional problems, lack of problem-solving and refusal skills)
- family (inadequate parenting skills and involvement, abuse and neglect, lack of values, lack of positive role models)

Through periodic home visits, home medical services, and the teaching of parenting and parent-child interaction skills, Healthy Start in Hawaii helps at-risk parents of newborns to find positive ways of dealing with stressful situations. The program actually starts with visits to the new family in the hospital. Evaluations show that the program improved early identification of families less likely to have coping and decision-making skills and helped them to bring up thriving children, dramatically reducing child abuse and neglect cases and improving family functioning.

- school and educational (early and persistent anti-social behavior, poor academic performance, dropping out)
- peer and other social interaction (rejection by peers, lack of social and communication skills, gang involvement)

Young people in Oakland and Los Angeles, California, realized that they could be a powerful force to educate their peers about the costs of gun violence, ways to prevent it, and how to spread the word that gun violence is not cool. Teens on Target, all of whose members have been touched by firearms violence, train others their age and younger in preventing firearms violence, work on promoting positive alternatives and opportunities, and educate adults in the community about what they believe is required to reduce firearms deaths and injuries.

- social conditions (easy availability of drugs and guns, high crime in neighborhoods)
- behaviors (early use of drugs, teenage pregnancy, use of tobacco)

The Awareness and Development for Adolescent Males program in Chicago supplements discussions about long-term life goals and reasons to delay sexual activity with a focus on creating strong relationships between youth and adults through recreational activities and field trips related to career objectives. The program influenced many students to refrain

YOUTH AND GUNS

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Washington, DC 20005
202-289-7319
Web site: handguncontrol.org

Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse

PO Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000
800-638-8736
Web site: ncjrs.org

National Crime Prevention Council

1700 K Street, NW, Second Floor
Washington, DC 20006-3817
202-466-6272
Web site: ncpc.org

National Center for Injury Prevention and Control

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Office of Communication Resources
Mailstop K65, 4770 Buford Highway
Atlanta, GA 30341-3724
770-488-1506
Web site: cdc.gov/ncipc

Education Development Center, Inc.

55 Chapel Street
Newton, MA 02158-1060
617-969-7100
Web site: edc.org

National School Safety Center

141 Duesenberg Drive, Suite 11
Westlake Village, CA 91362
805-373-9977
Web site: nssc1.org

Pacific Center for Violence Prevention

San Francisco General Hospital
1001 Potrero Avenue
Building 1, Room 300
San Francisco, CA 94110
415-285-1793
Web site: pcvp.org

Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program

Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-6123
202-260-3954
Web site: ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS

Teens, Crime, and the Community

1700 K Street, NW, Eighth Floor
Washington, DC 20006-3817
202-466-6272
Web site: nationaltcc.org

Teens on Target

c/o Youth Alive
3300 Elm Street
Oakland, CA 94609
510-594-2588

Youth Crime Watch of America

9300 South Dadeland Boulevard, Suite 100
Miami, FL 33156
305-670-2409
Web site: ycwa.org

References

1. American Psychological Association, 1993; Elliott, 1994; Jones and Krisberg, 1994; McDowall, 1991.
2. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, *Reducing Youth Gun Violence* (Washington, DC: Author, 1996), 6.



National Crime Prevention Council
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www.weprevent.org
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The American Legion
Child Welfare Foundation, Inc.

from sexual activity and convinced others who were already active to use birth control. Before the program, eighth grade participants believed that 16 was the best age to become a parent; afterward, they felt that 22 was the best age.

- community systems (employment problems, lack of positive recreational opportunities, inadequate health and social services).

Police in Houston, Texas, collaborate with the local YMCA, Boys & Girls Clubs, Chicano Family Center, the Parks and Recreation Department, churches, universities, and other organizations to provide a wide range of interesting, nonviolent, drug-free recreational and cultural options for about 800 young Houstonians each year through the Police Activities League, a more wide-ranging version of the Police Athletic League found throughout the United States.

Teaching young people how to manage anger and handle conflicts peaceably

Does your school or community center teach kids ways to manage their anger and handle conflicts peaceably? No one is born knowing how to handle conflict. Children learn to handle conflict by observing other people—parents, brothers and sisters, teachers, friends, or television or movie heroes. (Many cartoons never really show a conflict fully resolved. Does Wyle E. Coyote ever catch the Road Runner?) Some role models for conflict resolution are healthy and others are not.

The Resolving Conflict Creatively Program, co-sponsored by the New York public schools and Educators for Social Responsibility, is one of the oldest conflict resolution programs in the nation for adolescents and their teachers. This program has had a positive impact on student behavior, as indicated by less physical violence in the classroom, less name-calling, fewer verbal put-downs, more caring behavior, increased willingness to cooperate, and increased understanding of others' points of view.

Many things can interfere with people's ability to effectively resolve their differences. Differences that are not resolved can turn into arguments, and arguments can escalate into violence. Some of the things that can get in the way of resolving differences peacefully include

- lack of understanding about the real nature of the conflict
- the method or style used to communicate thoughts and feelings
- inability to listen and understand
- level of investment in resolving the problem in the individual's favor
- level of emotions, especially anger.

The Straight Talk About Risks Program (STAR) is a comprehensive school-based violence prevention curriculum for four grade groups (K-2, 3-5, 6-8)—available in English and Spanish—designed by the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence. Through STAR, students learn how to make better, safer decisions and resolve conflicts without violence through role-playing; how to resist peer pressure to play with or carry guns; how to distinguish between real life and TV violence; goal setting; and the development of leadership skills. Evaluations have found that the program was most effective in grades 3 to 5 in terms of improvement of knowledge, attitudes, and behavior.

Keeping guns out of the hands of unsupervised kids and treating them as hazardous consumer products

Examine your community's current laws and regulations with regard to youth and firearms, particularly handguns. The less access young people have to guns or the longer they have to

wait to get a gun, the more time they have to curb violent impulses. Does your school have a “weapons-free” zone around it so that if a young person is caught with a weapon on school grounds he or she will receive a stiffer penalty? Also look at the policies and procedures that schools, youth groups, youth serving organizations, and other community groups have about firearms of various types.

In Oklahoma, parents can be fined if their child brings a weapon to school. In North Carolina, failure to store firearms safely in homes where children are present can result in prosecution and fines. Twenty-one states have enacted laws mandating gun-free school zones and imposing sharply increased penalties for firearms possession or use in such areas. Florida and Maryland are among the states that have set up special statewide organizations to help address school-related violence, including gun use.

Some communities are trying new ways to reduce the number of guns in circulation. In Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh’s “gun task force” is examining a variety of approaches, including radio and television spots with a telephone number to use to anonymously report illegal guns. In Charleston, SC, a bounty is offered by the police department for reports leading to the seizure of an illegal gun.

Termining firearms a “public health crisis,” the Policy Council on Violence Prevention established by the California Attorney General has recommended sweeping changes in that state’s gun laws. Proposals included banning the manufacture of Saturday Night Special-style handguns in the state, mandating that gun manufacturers build in or provide child safety devices on all firearms sold in the state, requiring that all gun dealers register with the local police or sheriff’s department, and launching an educational campaign to promote firearms safety.

Involving Young People

Involving young people in gun violence prevention does not mean just putting a youth’s face on the cover of a brochure. Young people can and should be involved in planning and decision-making; they should have real responsibilities for concrete tasks. Sometimes they are the only ones to whom other youth will listen. They can be peer counselors and tutors. They can produce public service announcements. They can implement or help to implement programs. Involving young people helps them to develop skills they need to become productive adults—as workers and citizens. Whether or not the youth are at risk, they can play effective, important roles in the community.

The Youth as Resources program enables youth to tackle problems of great concern to them and to make a real change in their communities. Young people identify needs, develop approaches, and calculate budgets. If their presentations to community boards are accepted, they get the funds to carry out the project.

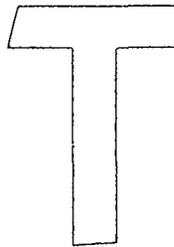
Resources

Bureau of Justice Assistance Clearinghouse
PO Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000
800-688-4252
Web site: ncjrs.org

Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence
Institute of Behavioral Science, University of Colorado
Campus Box 439, Building #10
Boulder, CO 80309-0439
303-492-8465
Web site: colorado.edu/cspv

Gangs

Street gangs were once thought to be an essentially urban phenomenon. The drug trafficking, random shootings, and fear generated by such gangs were assumed to be confined within the boundaries of the big city. No longer true.



he existence of gangs—especially youth gangs—has spread throughout all kinds of jurisdictions—suburban areas and small towns as well as urban cities.

Teens are targets for gang recruitment. Gangs offer a way to escape problems at home provide excitement and a supportive peer group. Youth often cannot see that gang membership creates serious and sometimes life-threatening problems. Teens use gangs as a surrogate family, friend, and protector despite the fact that gang members live violent, criminal lives.

In order to address gang problems in the community, it is important to understand how they affect the community. Because every community is different, each experience with gangs will be different as well. For example, some communities see gang activity in increased vandalism and graffiti, while others have to deal with gun violence and property theft.

Although gangs are working their way into many communities, there are effective responses to address gang problems. Because neighborhoods differ, the best prevention strategies will vary from one neighborhood to the next. Community problem-solvers must study an area's social and physical conditions before developing and implementing strategies. Once they understand what social and physical conditions exist, some communities have found that anti-gang efforts are most successful with a blend of three strategies:

- primary prevention—educating young people and parents about reasons not to join gangs and providing substitutes for gang membership
- intervention—persuading members out of gangs by providing attractive alternative activities and programs designed to help them give up their gang lifestyles
- suppression—responding with strong police action in communities where gangs are prevalent, ensuring swift and severe penalties for gang-related crimes, and providing safe means for gang members to exit from gangs.

These strategies require cooperation, collaboration, and communication among law enforcement agencies, parents, schools, community leaders, youth service organizations, and teens themselves. Each community must decide precisely who needs to be involved and what mixture of the three strategies works best, based on the nature and extent of local gang problems.

In Escondido, California, a coalition of parents, youth, schools, law enforcement officials, former gang members, social workers, faith community leaders, city officials, and community groups devised and implemented a strategic action plan to address the escalating gang problem. The Escondido Gang Project began in 1993 with a series of town meetings conducted in English and Spanish that asked the question, “What can we do to create a unified and safe community?”

What Is a Youth Gang?

There is no widely accepted standard definition for a youth gang, but the following criteria have been widely used:

- formal organization and structure
- identifiable leadership
- identifiable or a claimed territory
- regular meeting patterns
- organized, continuous course of criminality

It is also important to understand what a youth gang is not:

- Youth gangs are not static. They change and evolve.
- Except for a very few instances, youth gangs are distinct from adult criminal organizations that operate drug networks and other criminal enterprises.
- Hate groups, skin heads, motorcycle gangs, white supremacist organizations, and the like are unlikely to have the characteristics of youth street gangs, although youth may make up a large portion of these hate group populations.

Where Do Hate Groups Fall Into the Scheme of Things?

As opposed to youth gangs, which are usually formed around geographic, demographic, or ethnic characteristics, hate gangs are based on ethnic, racial, or religious superiority or bias. Because the foundation of a hate group is fundamentally different than that of a youth gang, the strategies to deal with these groups are different. Intervention may not work with these groups. A good starting point for dealing with hate groups is to check specific state anti-bias laws to see what legal steps you can take against hate crime acts.

Who's At Risk of Joining a Gang?

Anyone—male or female, wealthy or low-income, from any ethnic or racial background, from a functional or dysfunctional family—may decide to join a gang. Gang involvement can begin as early as elementary school. Experts have identified high-risk characteristics that can contribute to a youth being vulnerable to gang membership. Gang members more often

- are male (although female gangs are becoming more prevalent)
- have other family members or friends involved with gangs
- have seen excessive use of alcohol or other drugs in the home
- live with a single parent or with grandparents
- have poor academic performance
- see poor to non-existent job prospects
- are known for fighting and general aggressiveness in early adolescence, or have chronic delinquency problems
- experience poor living conditions or poverty
- have experienced social deprivation or isolation
- have needs that have been neglected or are unmet.

The presence of one or more of these conditions does not guarantee that a young person will join a gang. Identifying risk factors helps a community understand which youth may be more vulnerable to gang recruitment and enables the community to be more effective in implementing anti-gang programs.

Why Do Youth Join Gangs?

Youth who turn to gang membership may be motivated by some or all of these needs:

- **Surrogate family.** Young people join gangs to receive the attention, affirmation, and protection they may feel they are lacking at home.
- **Identity or recognition.** Some youth join gangs for the status they may feel they are lacking if they are unemployed or performing poorly in school. If young people don't see themselves as the smart ones, the leaders, or the star athletes, they join groups where they feel they can excel.
- **Excitement.** Teens may join a gang for what they perceive as a lack of anything better to do. They also may see gangs and gang activity given a positive portrayal through music, videos, and movies.
- **Family history.** Gang members may join to carry on a family tradition established by their siblings, parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, or cousins whom they see as role models.
- **Protection.** Some youths join gangs to protect themselves. They feel threatened, do not feel they can rely on the police and other authorities, and count on fellow gang members to help protect them from attacks.
- **Intimidation.** Some young people feel pressure from friends to join a gang. Some actually feel threatened by other gang members to join.
- **Lack of alternatives.** A deficiency of job opportunities, positive recreational choices, or lack of effective responses to peer pressure can create a climate favoring gang membership as a lifestyle choice.
- **Money.** The monetary allure of gang membership is difficult to counteract. Gang members can share profits from drug trafficking and other illegal activities. To a teen, money often translates into social status and power.

Signs That Gangs Have Moved In

Gangs have unique symbols, signs, and behaviors that declare their presence. You might find the following signs when a gang has invaded the community:

- **Specific graffiti:** Gangs purposely vandalize and destroy public and private property in order to further their reputations. They leave their trademark graffiti behind, or use it to stake out turf controlled by a particular gang. Gangs challenge each other by defacing or drawing a rival gang's symbols upside down. Such a challenge can lead to violence. Abandoned houses are a favorite target for property damage or graffiti. Also, as of this writing, different ethnic gangs have unique styles of graffiti. For instance, Hispanic gang graffiti is often written in stylized, blocked letters, while African-American and White gang taggers tend to use a cruder style.
- **Clothing:** Some gangs choose certain articles or clothing or a specific manner of wearing clothes to show their allegiance to a gang.
- **"Colors:"** Certain colors or combinations may be used to identify gang members.
- **Hand signals:** Gangs use hand signals and gestures called "throw signs" to communicate among themselves and sometimes with other gangs.
- **Language:** The meanings of existing words can be changed or new words created as a gang code.
- **Tattoos:** Many members use gang symbols as designs for tattoos.

What Your Community Can Do To Fight Gangs

Communities are approaching the problem of gang violence in a variety of ways. As discussed earlier in this paper, the key to success relies on the right combination of prevention, intervention, and suppression strategies tailored to the community's issues and resources.

Teens Against Gang Violence (T.A.G.V.), in Dorchester, MA, is a volunteer, community-based, teen peer leadership program. T.A.G.V. is not anti-gang but is against gang violence. Making a distinction between gangs that are nonviolent and those that participate in violence, T.A.G.V. provides violence, gun, and drug prevention education to teens, parents, schools, and community groups through presentations and workshops.

The first steps toward removing gangs from the community is defining what a gang is in your community, identifying what gang-related issues need to be addressed, and then choosing the correct people or agencies to deal with the problems. Consider including the following strategies:

- mobilizing the community (including citizens, youth, community groups, and agencies) to assess the problem and develop solutions
- offering social and economic opportunities for teenagers, including after-school, weekend, and summer activities, alternative schools, and job programs
- starting adult mentoring youth outreach programs
- suppressing gang activity. Community-based agencies and local groups must work together with juvenile and criminal justice agencies in surveillance and sharing of information under conditions that protect the community and the civil liberties of youth.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of America's (BGCA) Gang Prevention Through Targeted Outreach program provides an alternative to gang life by recruiting young people directly through a referral network that links local clubs with courts, police, schools, social services,

and other agencies who have contact with youth. Once in the club, young people participate in structured recreational activities. A case management team monitors their progress and problems through monthly reports. A process evaluation showed that once enrolled in the BGCA, 90 percent of the youth attended once a week or more, with 26 percent attending daily. Substantial improvements in the academic arena were also documented.

It is vital to reach out to all aspects of the community to build an effective anti-gang strategy. Here are some ideas about what these partners can do:

Law Enforcement Can

- train community members about how to spot gang graffiti and how to report it
- coordinate identification and suppression of gang activity
- attend community, school, or religious group meetings—any place where parents get together—to discuss gang activities
- make sure parents know what resources are available to help identify and address gang or near gang behaviors
- organize positive activities for young people through agencies like the Police Athletic Leagues or Boys & Girls Clubs
- develop a community-based presence in gang-involved neighborhoods to increase trust and respect
- get involved with the G.R.E.A.T. program.

Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) is a program designed to reduce youth violence and gang membership through a curriculum taught by law enforcement officers to elementary and middle school students. G.R.E.A.T. students are given the opportunity to discover for themselves the ramifications of gang violence through structured exercises and interactive approaches to learning. Included in the curriculum are many optional and extended activities that reinforce classroom instruction.¹

Teenagers Can

- survey youth in schools and youth programs about their concerns, fears, and needs and work with authorities and community groups to meet them
- start a citywide Youth Council to provide a forum for discussion and influence of government policies affecting young people
- take the lead in designing and promoting programs that educate children and other teens about gangs and provide them with self-esteem life skills and activities that counter the appeals of gang membership
- start a graffiti clean-up in their school or neighborhood. A note of caution on graffiti removal. Check with your community's gang expert before removing graffiti. If it is "in memory of____" graffiti, removal can be seen as disrespect.
- get involved or stay involved in such community organizations as the Boys & Girls Club, the YMCA or YWCA, religious congregations, or community centers.

An anti-gang organization called Barrios Unidos helps ex-gang members become part of the community. Many gang members involved with Barrios Unidos have turned their lives around by doing such things as getting their General Educational Development diplomas, taking college courses, and reaching out to other gang members to curb violence and gang activities.

Parents Can

- learn the signs of gang activity—such as graffiti, hand signs, clothing styles, or colors
- learn why youth join gangs and how to counter those influences
- communicate effectively with children
- get involved in programs that create healthy outlets—sports, hobbies, youth clubs, etc.—for youth
- know their child’s friends
- discuss with their child consequences of being in a gang
- contact their local law enforcement agency or juvenile probation department to find out up-to-date information on gangs
- go to religious leaders for advice on programs their child can get involved in
- start a program to report and immediately remove any graffiti in their neighborhood.

Parents, educators, and other concerned adults should watch for signs of gang involvement. Changes in a child’s behavior or activities, which may be early warning signs of gang involvement, include

- ▶ change in types of friends
- ▶ changes in dress habits, such as wearing the same color combination all the time (note that style changes quickly and just because a child wears a certain type of clothing does not mean he or she is in a gang)
- ▶ displaying gang symbols on books, clothing, or locker
- ▶ wearing tattoos
- ▶ carrying extra cash from unknown sources
- ▶ carrying a weapon
- ▶ losing interest in school and family
- ▶ getting arrested or detained by police
- ▶ becoming truant
- ▶ using alcohol and other drugs
- ▶ talking in gang-style language
- ▶ using hand signals to communicate with others.

Schools Can

- establish policies that prevent gang involvement
- educate teachers and students about recognizing signs of gang activity
- train teachers in techniques for enhancing children’s self-esteem
- start a drop-out prevention program
- prohibit symbols and clothing that suggest gang activity or membership
- contact parents immediately if their child shows signs of gang activity
- develop approaches to stop truancy
- start a community service program to give young people the opportunity to identify problems, design solutions, and develop a positive stake in the community
- establish and enforce Drug-Free/Gun-Free School Zones
- stage regular campus-wide graffiti and vandalism clean-up campaigns
- organize crisis intervention teams to counsel students coping with violence in and near schools
- develop an early intervention program for special education classes

- offer students special outreach and after-school programs as an alternative to gang membership.

Religious Institutions Can

- learn about how gangs affect the community
- open meeting and other spaces to positive youth activities
- support such community activities as clean-up campaigns, anti-crime rallies, block parties, and youth-led service projects
- start a youth ministry
- use education, recreation, and counseling efforts to reach out to young people at high risk of gang involvement
- start parent support groups.

Media Can

- support gang prevention and awareness campaigns
- refuse to glorify or publicize gang connections to crimes
- air programs that show youth engaged in constructive activities
- give airtime and print space to youth anti-gang and anti-drug success stories, as well as projects undertaken by young people to help improve community well-being
- support legislation that provides swift prosecution and appropriate penalties for gang-related crime.

Community Organizations Can

- promote activities that are led by or involve youth
- reach out to parents with information and support
- create after-school centers using school facilities
- play a major, visible part in anti-gang coalitions
- train members of the community in gang prevention strategies
- involve adults in the lives of youth
- offer activities that involve youth and their families.

Social Service Agencies Can

- reach out to troubled families with counseling and home visits
- address drug and alcohol problems in the community
- organize recreation, service, and skill-building programs for youth.

Business Leaders Can

- provide apprenticeships and vocational training
- provide summer and other jobs for teens
- adopt a local school
- provide one-on-one tutors and mentors
- reward community volunteerism by employees.

Resources

Boys & Girls Clubs of America
1230 West Peachtree Street, NW
Atlanta, GA 30309
404-815-5700
Web site: bgca.org

Bureau of Justice Assistance Clearinghouse
PO Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000
800-688-4252
Web site: ncjrs.org

GANGS

G.R.E.A.T. Program Branch
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms
PO Box 50418
Washington, DC 20091-0418
800-726-7070
Web site: atf.treas.gov/great/great.htm

Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse
PO Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000
800-638-8736
Web site: ncjrs.org

National Youth Gang Information Center
Institute for Intergovernmental Research
PO Box 12729
Tallahassee, FL 32317
800-446-0912
Web site: iir.com/nygci

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Web site: ncpc.org

National School Safety Center
141 Duesenberg Drive, Suite 11
Westlake Village, CA 91362
805-373-9977
Web site: nssc1.org

National Congress of Parents and Teachers (PTA)
330 North Wabash Avenue, Suite 2100
Chicago, IL 60611
800-307-4782
Web site: pta.org

Police Executive Research Forum (PERF)
1120 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 930
Washington, DC 20036
202-466-7820
Web site: policeforum.org

National Graffiti Information Network
PO Box 400
Hurricane, UT 84737
435-635-0646
Web site: inforwest.com/business/n/ngin

Reference

1. J.L. Arnette and M.C. Walsleben, *Combating Fear and Restoring Safety in Schools* (Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, 1998), 6.



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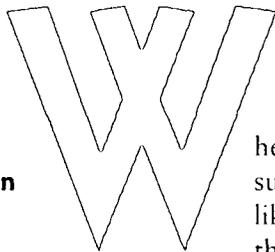


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The American Legion
Child Welfare Foundation, Inc.

Preventing Violence

How Domestic Violence and Child Abuse Feed the Cycle of Violence

An unacceptably high percentage of American families are in trouble. Violence against women by their partners permeates communities across the country. Whether the violence occurs in a situation with or without children, the effects on involved individuals can be devastating.



When family violence exists, the lack of proper role models and supervision creates hostile settings in which children and teens are likely to become anti-social and isolated. Studies have shown that these children often become part of a cycle of violence into their teen and adult years. This violence can manifest itself in both dating violence and partner abuse.

Family violence has two subsets: partner violence and child abuse.

Partner Violence

Partner violence exists in every socioeconomic group, regardless of race or culture. It occurs in every community across the country. It is often considered “private” and is not talked about or acknowledged. However, the more people know about this issue, the better families, communities, religious institutions, and schools can deal with the problems. According to Prevent Child Abuse America (PCA), partner violence is a pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviors, including physical, sexual, and psychological attacks, as well as economic coercion, that adults or adolescents use against their intimate partners.

Partner violence occurs as a result of complex interactions among individual, situational, and social factors with long-term consequences to the victim, all family members, and the abuser. It does not happen only because someone is drunk or high on drugs,

the partner “likes” being hit, or because the abuser does not love his or her partner. Unfortunately, partner violence is also not a single event—“I only hit her that one time.” In fact, episodes often become more frequent and more severe over time.

Partner violence and child abuse often go hand in hand. Children may be victimized and threatened as a way of punishing or controlling the adult victim of violence. Also, children can be injured unintentionally when acts of violence occur in their presence.

What About Child Abuse?

Both researchers and practitioners in the domestic violence prevention field believe that children who grow up in violent homes are more likely to become abusers and victims because they view such violence as normal and even acceptable. Nearly half the children of battered women have been physically abused, according to several studies. Bearing witness to a mother’s abuse can contribute to low self-esteem in girls, aggression and behavior problems in both sexes, and problems with social relationships, depression, and anxiety.¹ Many children are afraid to report an incident involving themselves to anyone, including the police, because the abuser is a family friend or relative.

Adolescents are not immune to child abuse. More than half of 12-year-olds, one-third of 14-year-olds, and one-fifth of 16-year-olds are either hit, slapped, pinched, or shaken by their parents for doing something wrong.² A teen who is hit frequently attempts to hit back, which escalates the violence and potential for serious harm.³

According to a study on child abuse and neglect prepared for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 12- to 14-year-olds are victims of physical abuse—commonly defined as punishment that leaves marks—at twice the rate of toddlers. Adolescents want more than anything to be treated as adults and physical abuse throws them right back into childhood.

A child exposed to partner violence sees the violence in his family and a victim of child abuse feels the violence. Some children are victims of both types of violence. According to PCA, parental stress is an important factor in child abuse, but this link has not been established in cases of domestic violence. PCA also reports that perpetrators of child maltreatment are equally men and women, but the majority of perpetrators of partner violence are men.

Feeding the Cycle of Violence

Victims of child abuse and witnesses to partner violence are likely to have difficulty coping and establishing healthy relationships when they reach adulthood.

Early experiences of violence can lead to later violence and delinquency. A National Institute of Justice-funded study found that experiencing childhood abuse and neglect increases the likelihood of arrest as a juvenile by 53 percent, of arrest as an adult by 38 percent, and of committing a violent crime by 38 percent.⁴ Other studies have shown that adolescents from families reporting multiple forms of violence are more than twice as likely as their peers from nonviolent homes to report committing violent offenses.

Children that are the victims of abuse often grow up to abuse others. The National Clearing House for the Defense of Battered Women estimates that one in four teens are in abusive dating relationships, and the FBI reports that 24 percent of teen homicides relate to dating.⁵

How do teens end up in abusive relationships? Many are experiencing intimacy for the first time and their inexperience leads them to be more susceptible to abuse—

especially if they've witnessed violence within their families. Peer pressure also plays a major role. Girls often feel pressured by other girls to be in a relationship, and often any relationship is better than none at all. And the difference between adult male batterers and adolescent male batterers also can be attributed to peer pressure. Teen batterers often abuse their mates in front of others as a way to maintain their image among their friends.

Dating violence follows the same pattern as adult partner violence. It starts with verbal and emotional abuse and escalates into physical abuse. The batterer begins by isolating his or her victim with jealousy and possessiveness—restricting his or her mate's time with family and friends, checking up on him or her, and putting him or her down in front of friends. Threats and fear are employed to keep the abuse secret. As the victim's self-esteem erodes, the batterer's power grows.

Rape and Acquaintance Rape

Most women are not attacked by strangers. Three out of four physical assaults on women are committed by current or former spouses, live-in partners, boyfriends, girlfriends, or dates. In contrast, men are primarily assaulted by strangers. Acquaintance rape is even more rarely reported to law enforcement than stranger rape. Women who have been raped by someone they know believe that it is a private or personal matter and they fear reprisal from the assailant.

According to a recent study on violence against women, "Prevalence, Incidence, and Consequences of Violence Against Women: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey," 18 percent of women reported having been raped at some time in their lives. More than half were under the age of 18 at the time of the first rape. Twenty-two percent of victims were under age 12.

Break the Cycle

There are no easy solutions to preventing family violence. Because of media attention to family violence issues, more and more survivors are speaking out publicly, helping to lessen the stigma long associated with these victims. Advocates, prosecutors, and survivors are working in states across the country to change laws and statutes. More men are taking public stands against family violence. Also, promising strategies for reaching out to families in trouble are now being used in social services, education, health, mental health, substance abuse, law enforcement, children's services, and juvenile justice arenas:

- family preservation programs
- family skills training programs
- family therapy programs
- parent training programs
- probation and rehabilitation service programs
- mandated batterers programs
- family mentoring.

Contact the local hospital, rape crisis center, colleges and universities, police department, religious institution, victims assistance program, or social service agency to find out the kinds of programs they offer to victims and perpetrators.

Another resource for victims of family violence are shelters. These resources were virtually nonexistent 15 to 20 years ago; now they are available to victims nationwide. They

often provide women and children a way for them to get their life together in a safe and non-threatening environment.

There is no one-size-fits-all-families strategy. There are programs designed for parents of infants, children, and adolescents. Features common to effective programs include the fit between the families, needs and the content duration of the course, the recruitment and retention of participants, and follow-up.

Look for programs designed to help end family violence that do not impose specific parenting styles; instead, they should aim to sharpen parents' skills and help them figure out how to handle problems more effectively. This will begin to pave the way for an end to child abuse, which includes a large majority of adolescents affected by the problem of family violence.

An example of a community creating a network of people to help deal with abused mothers and their children is the AWAKE project started in Boston, MA, by Children's Hospital. This program, Advocacy for Women and Kids in Emergencies (AWAKE), was developed to offer advocacy and support to mothers while the hospital provided medical attention to the children. AWAKE links the battered woman with an advocate, often herself a survivor of abuse. The advocate works with the hospital staff and outside agencies to devise a safety plan and offer other kinds of help to keep the mother and children free from violence and, whenever possible, together.

The Prenatal and Early Childhood Nurse Home Visitation program is a tested model that improves the health and social functioning of low-income, first-time mothers and their babies. In the program, nurse home visitors work intensively with families during pregnancy and after delivery, linking them with needed health and human services. The positive results it achieves during the prenatal and early childhood periods indicate its significant potential as a means of reducing violence and criminality in young adults.

Some key highlights of the major findings on maternal and child outcomes from two randomized clinical trials in Elmira, NY, and Memphis, TN, are

- ▶ 83 percent reduction in rates of child maltreatment among at-risk families from birth through the child's second year
- ▶ 56 percent reduction in rates of children's health care encounters for injuries and ingestions from birth through the child's second birthday
- ▶ 43 percent reduction in subsequent pregnancy among low-income, unmarried women by first child's birthday
- ▶ 83 percent increase in the rates of labor force participation by first child's fourth birthday.

A follow-up study of the youth involved in the Elmira program showed that they were significantly less likely to become delinquent than a similar group of children.

An excellent resource that schools and community organizations can offer children and teenagers that help break the cycle of violence are life-skills training. These trainings equip children and young adults with interpersonal skills and knowledge that are valuable in adulthood, especially in the parenting role. They also provide children with skills to help protect themselves from abuse. For adolescents, an added dimension of life-skills training should include education in sexuality, pregnancy prevention, and issues related to parenting.

With the high numbers of teenagers being raped at some time in their lives, it is crucial to teach personal safety strategies and rape prevention skills to teenage and even preteen

young women. Equipping younger women and girls with prevention and refusal skills can help reduce adult rape as well. A second part of a rape prevention strategy involves helping teens recognize and respect dating rights and responsibilities. These prevention strategies can be incorporated into life-skills training programs.

Communities also need to work together to address teen dating violence. Many state laws do not allow people under age 18 to obtain restraining orders. These laws can be changed to offer protection to teens nationwide. Counseling services and support groups need to be available to teen victims. Teens themselves can become involved in preventing dating violence. They can start a peer education program on teen dating violence, ask their school libraries to purchase books about living without violence and the cycle of domestic violence, create bulletin boards in classrooms to raise awareness, or perform a play about teen dating violence.

Parents need to be educated as well. They need to learn the signs that their child might be involved in an abusive relationship. A 1995 *Family Circle* survey of mothers and daughters found that while 31 percent of mothers reported their daughters had been abused by their boyfriends, 53 percent of the daughters reported having been abused.⁶

As individuals, each of us can play a role in preventing violence by⁷

- becoming aware of how we may unconsciously contribute to violence by supporting violent entertainment, seeking win/lose resolutions to conflicts with others, or being physically or emotionally abusive to people we care about
- speaking out publicly and taking personal action against domestic violence when a neighbor, a co-worker, a friend, or a family member is involved
- encouraging your Neighborhood Watch or block association to become as concerned with watching out for domestic violence as with burglaries and other crimes
- calling the police if you see or hear domestic or family violence
- helping others become informed by inviting speakers to your church, professional organization, civic group, or workplace
- supporting domestic violence counseling programs and shelters.

What Can Communities Do?

- Provide financial resources to improve child protective services including better management of the system and training for child protective service workers, social case workers, judges, and court counselors.
- Support comprehensive adolescent pregnancy prevention programs.
- Support victim and crime prevention education for teens through community- or school-based programs.
- Advocate for manageable caseloads and properly trained child protective workers.
- Reform juvenile and family court administration to better address needs of victimized children and improve dependency case management.
- Launch local Healthy Start programs.
- Involve young men in parenting education programs, especially those placed in juvenile justice facilities and those incarcerated in correctional facilities. Also, teach them that their actions carry responsibility.
- Provide mandatory training for schools and child care centers to recognize abused children.
- Expand education and awareness efforts to increase positive attitudes toward nonviolence.

- Encourage individuals to report rape and family violence.
- Form community-wide coordinating councils or task forces to assess the problem, develop an action plan, and monitor progress.
- Mandate training in domestic violence and rape prevention for all social service and criminal justice professionals.
- Advocate laws and judicial procedures at the state and local levels that support and protect battered women.
- Establish centers where visits between batterers and their children may be supervised, for the children's safety.
- Fund shelters adequately.
- Recruit and train volunteers to staff hotlines, accompany victims to court, and provide administrative support to shelters and victim services.
- Improve collection of child support.
- Establish medical protocols to help physicians and other health care personnel identify and help victims of domestic abuse.
- Provide legal representation for victims of domestic violence and their families.
- Address needs of population groups who may have difficulties accessing services: immigrants and refugees, gays and lesbians, and racial and ethnic minorities.

Is There Help for Abusers?

Psychological studies show that batterers, like other violent criminals, tend to use violence to demonstrate power and achieve control. Certain factors appear to be associated with battering—for example, low self-esteem, witnessing domestic violence as a child, having a lower educational and career status than a spouse—but no one factor stands out.

Society's longstanding view of domestic violence as a private matter has been one among many obstacles to successful treatment for batterers. Such programs were not developed until the late 1970s, and evaluation research on their effectiveness has been scarce and inconclusive. Most men enter these programs because of a court order and many do not complete the course. Most treatment programs last no longer than six months; follow-up or probation supervision is minimal or nonexistent. Some batterers are genuinely motivated to change, especially if intervention takes place in the early stages when abuse has not become routine. Others may simply shift from physical attacks to verbal threats and other forms of psychological intimidation.

The Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (DAIP) in Duluth, MN, has gained national recognition for its court mandated 26-week curriculum that challenges abusers' attitudes and their learned behavior of dominance and control. But at least half the men who complete the program will continue to abuse the same or another woman, according to the program staff. Recognizing the complex nature of the problem, the DAIP forms one component of a coordinated response to domestic violence. The Duluth model includes a mandatory arrest policy, a comprehensive array of services for victims, a "no-drop" prosecution policy (the battering victim cannot drop charges), and automatic arrest and jail time for offenders who miss three consecutive DAIP sessions.⁸

Resources

Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence
 936 North 34th Street, Suite 200
 Seattle, WA 98103
 206-634-1903
 Web site: cpsdv.org

Family Violence Project
 National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
 University of Nevada, Reno
 PO Box 8970
 Reno, NV 89507
 702-784-6012
 Web site: ncjfcj.unr.edu/

Family Violence Prevention Fund
 383 Rhode Island Street, Suite 304
 San Francisco, CA 94103-5133
 415-252-8900
 Web site: fvpf.org

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
 PO Box 18749
 Denver, CO 80218
 303-839-1852
 Web site: ncadv.org/

National Coalition Against Sexual Assault
 125 Enola Drive
 Enola, PA 17025
 717-728-9764
 Web site: ncasa.org/

National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse
 200 South Michigan Avenue, 17th Floor
 Chicago, IL 60604-4357
 312-663-3520
 Web site: childabuse.org

National Crime Prevention Council
 1700 K Street, NW, Second Floor
 Washington, DC 20006-3817
 202-466-6272
 Web site: ncpcc.org

National Center for Victims of Crime
 2111 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 300
 Arlington, VA 22201
 703-276-2880
 Web site: nvc.org

Prevent Child Abuse America
 200 South Michigan Avenue, 17th Floor
 Chicago, IL 60604-2404
 312-663-3520
 Web site: childabuse.org

Violence Against Women Office
 Office of Justice Programs
 U.S. Department of Justice
 810 7th Street, NW
 Washington, DC 20531
 202-616-8894

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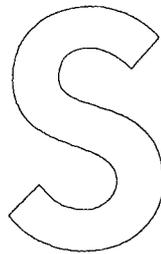


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Watching Out and Helping Out

Teens Taking the Lead in School Crime Watch

Teens are an enormous pool of potential energy, talent, and enthusiasm waiting for a chance to contribute to society.



School crime watch is an excellent mechanism for youth to address the issues that affect their school, find ways to help solve existing problems, and learn how to keep themselves from becoming victims of crime.

What Is School Crime Watch?

School crime watch is based on the Neighborhood Watch concept. Neighborhood Watch is one of the most effective and least costly ways to prevent crime and reduce fear. It has a long track record of success in communities across the country; dramatic decreases in burglary and related offenses have been reported by law enforcement professionals in communities with active Watch programs. Neighborhood Watch works by fighting the isolation that crime both creates and feeds upon. It forges bonds among area residents and improves relations between police and the communities they serve. In a Neighborhood Watch program, nearby residents work with each other and law enforcement to observe and help out each other. As a result, neighborhood pride is developed and a foundation has been laid to address other concerns.

This simple yet powerful crime prevention tool is readily modified for school settings. By adapting Neighborhood Watch techniques—linking personal prevention strategies and laying the foundation for community prevention strategies—school crime watch teaches students to watch out for and help out each other.

Students take the lead while learning how to protect themselves from becoming victims of crime and how to report suspicious activities. When developed correctly, schools that adopt the “crime watch” way of life move from being stagnated by fear and plagued by crime to happier, safer, more productive places to learn and grow.

Does school crime watch work?

Crime dropped 45 percent at Carol City High School in Miami, Florida, within a year of starting a school crime watch!

How To Start a School Crime Watch Program

One person can spark a school crime watch. A concerned adult might talk to students about the idea. A group of students may be fed up with bullying or intimidation. An especially violent incident at or near the school might have students and educators alike wondering how to prevent similar incidents.

Batesville, Mississippi, started its Youth Crime Watch under an already well established structure called “Tigers Against Drugs.” This group focused on developing student leadership, ownership, and community involvement through six special activity groups—ranging from a drama team that performs skits on teen-related issues to students who work against tobacco to a mentoring team. The addition of Youth Crime Watch made seven groups. During the first months of initiating the Youth Crime Watch program, a Youth Crime Watch participant reported an incident of another student who was carrying a gun to school with the intention of shooting another teenager. The gun and clip were confiscated and the student was apprehended.

Whatever the cause, the first task is to gather a group of teens willing to work together to bring the entire student body into the “crime watch” way of life. Getting everyone to watch out, help out, and report crime will be an ongoing task. Try to recruit a diverse group of students. The more people involved the less likely certain “cliques” or individuals will feel excluded. School crime watch is for the entire school, not just the “good” kids. This initial group of students needs to research what crime problems (vandalism, assault, drugs, weapons, theft, etc.) are the most common at the school and what prevention strategies could prove effective. Remember, your school crime watch may be started from one isolated crime incident such as a stolen car from the parking lot, but when the students do their research, they may find their peers are more concerned about vandalism of lockers.

Starting up the program also requires close liaison with school authorities, including the principal. Consider including other officials who are charged with school security (the vice principal, for example), and the local law enforcement agency (especially the crime prevention staff or school resource officer). The initial group should consider inviting these officials to its first school crime watch meeting so that all can agree on the mission and objectives of the project. Initial discussions should also include the incorporation of a student patrol as part of the crime watch program.

School Crime Watch Goes Beyond Watching Out for Classmates

A monthly meeting will keep the momentum and energy building for the school crime watch program. This meeting can be a time for planning new activities, such as hosting a drug- and alcohol-free party, sponsoring a crime prevention fair, working with a neighboring elementary school on child safety issues, writing a school crime watch column for a local or school newspaper, and presenting daily or weekly crime prevention tips over the P.A. system during morning announcements. The school crime watch should have a calendar of regular and special events that bring it into the heart of school activities; it can offer help in running larger events (such as the prom) and act as a resource for prevention news. School crime watches can sponsor monthly or bimonthly speakers. These guest speakers can address many topics of interest to the entire school—drinking and driving, rape prevention, dating violence, building leadership skills, to name just a few. Look to local law enforcement, school resource officers, guidance counselors, community organizations, and parents for a pool of participants.

Communication is critical in a school crime watch program. Students need to understand that the program is being established so they will have a vehicle through which to report crime because it is a serious issue—not to get someone they don't like in trouble.

In Nevada, two sixth graders saw a white van circling the school. They thought it seemed suspect so they wrote down the license plate and turned it into the school. Police followed up on the tip and arrested the man driving the white van. He was a sexual predator wanted in another county.

Non-reporting has serious results that can put teens in dangerous or threatening situations. Vital to the communication aspect of school crime watch is anonymous reporting. It is the crime watch's responsibility to keep all reports confidential. If students start finding out about who reported whom, they will not continue to participate in the program.

Participants in a school crime watch are not vigilantes. The term is "watch," not "capture." Students shouldn't think they can apprehend the criminal; instead, they should work on reporting crime and focus on projects that foster school spirit.

Moving Outside of the School

Teenagers across the country have spearheaded crime watch efforts in places where they congregate. Your school may not have as many pressing crime issues as the local mall. The crime watch concept can be adapted to malls, parks, neighborhoods, apartments, or even gated communities. These communities will benefit greatly from teen involvement and better understanding between the teenagers and adults living there.

Students from Braddock Senior High School in Miami, Florida, have started a H.U.D.D.L.E. (Helping Us Develop Discipline Leadership and Enthusiasm) Club where high school students serve as role models and mentors for feeder elementary schools and middle schools. The intent of their work is to help prevent kids from eventually dropping out of high school. The H.U.D.D.L.E. students prepare lessons to give to the elementary

school kids once a month on topics such as gangs, making choices, even homework. They also act as mentors for the younger students.

The Results of School Crime Watch

School crime watches work. Active school crime watch programs have been able to reduce violence, guns, drug use, and many other crime-related activities across the country. The schools where these programs are in place are happier, safer places with more school pride.

Students involved actively in the program gain an understanding of crime prevention, community organizing, and leadership skills. They also learn to care and value other students with whom they wouldn't always come into direct contact—thus helping to decrease feelings of isolation.

Resources

Youth Crime Watch of America
9300 South Dadeland Boulevard, Suite 100
Miami, FL 33156
305-670-2409
Web site: ycwa.org

National Crime Prevention Council
1700 K Street, NW, Second Floor
Washington, DC 20006-3817
202-466-6272
Web site: ncpc.org

National School Safety Center
141 Duesenberg Drive, Suite 11
Westlake Village, CA 91362
805-373-9977
Web site: nssc1.org

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI)
PO Box 2345
Rockville, MD 20847-2345
800-729-6686 or 301-468-2600
Web site: health.org

National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS)
PO Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000
800-851-3420
Web site: ncjrs.org

What Is a Student Patrol?

One powerful component of a school crime watch can be a student patrol. This moves the program from an information and teaching mode into action. Patrol duties can include monitoring the halls and parking lots between classes and during lunch. Its activity helps reduce the number of crime-related incidents in the patrolled areas.

Participation in a patrol should be seen as an honor. Setting a grade point average requirement and assessing leadership qualities might be places to start. Consider other prerequisites. Remember this program is meant to be for the entire school. Recognize that if the patrol is not accepted by a majority of the students, then it easily can be seen as a group of “snitches.”

In Las Vegas, Nevada, a junior high student turned in a tip on another student carrying a gun at school. The administration searched the student and found a gun on him. No one was injured and the gun was taken away.

Make sure to give the patrol a name that’s catchy or appealing to kids and helps build school pride. Letting teens vote school-wide for the name of the patrol will help involve the entire student body. For instance, if the school mascot is a ram, call it the Ram Patrol.

Once the crime watch program has been started, it is critical to educate the students about the purpose of the crime watch. The student body should understand that the school crime watch program will provide helpful personal safety tips and teach everyone how to report crime effectively without being considered a “snitch.” This educational campaign can be conducted through various vehicles, including word of mouth, morning announcements, posters, fliers, information on the school Web site (if available), and articles in the school paper.

Launch the program with an exciting event such as a pep rally or assembly. Structure the launch to energize and inspire students—think music, skits, or videos. Keep remarks by school administrators to a minimum. Allow teens to do most of the planning for the launch. This effort, while it takes a great deal of planning, will build support for and participation in school crime prevention efforts.

Starting a School Crime Watch Program Ideas and Responsibilities for Adults and Teens

ADULTS	TEENS
Gather teens interested in crime watch	Encourage other friends and other teens to get involved in school crime watch
Listen to what teens are saying	Listen to what adults are saying
Work with students to have a diverse population participating in the school crime watch program	Identify issues that school crime watch should address
Act as liaison for school representatives and school authorities	Work with school authorities and law enforcement to gain their support
Educate colleagues on the importance of the school crime watch	Educate the school on the purpose of the school crime watch
Attend monthly meetings	Plan a major launch of the school crime watch program
Support ongoing activities by helping obtain speakers or planning parties	Hold and attend monthly meetings
	Plan a yearly calendar of events including guest speakers, drug- and alcohol-free parties, etc.



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