

# SCHOOL VIOLENCE

## INDEPENDENT STUDY

A FIVE CREDIT CLASS

SS406m/SS506m

INSTRUCTOR :

DR. MICHAEL SEDLER

Email: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net)

(509)443-1605

THE HERITAGE INSTITUTE

## **Please use the checklist/syllabus in the manual.**

Thank you for signing up for my independent study classes. You may take up to six months to complete this course, and may obtain an additional 3 month extension. DO NOT send in any completed papers unless you have registered for the class! If working in a group, put all names on each paper, except the integration paper which must be individually authored. See \*\* at bottom of page.

The checklist in the manual is to help you plan your schedule to successfully complete this course. The last page of the manual includes a General Bibliography with phone numbers of publishing companies. If you prefer, you may choose an alternate book not on the suggested list.

On the following page, I have given you a brief biography/resume of my background. You will see that I have a Masters Degree in Social Work; my K-8 Teaching Certification and am a Licensed Social Worker with the State of Washington. My current primary role is as a consultant and trainer for schools, businesses and agencies. I also worked in education for 15 years as a Director of Special Education, a Behavior Intervention Specialist, School Social Worker, and Teacher.

I teach classes and seminars throughout the United States and in Canada. I am adjunct professor through two Universities in Washington. I am available for on-site training, classes, and in services for agencies and schools. I anticipate this class will be enjoyable and full of learning. Please contact me if you would like me to be involved directly with your school or business.

Thank you, once again, for signing up for it and I look forward to working with you over the next weeks/months. If you would like individual feedback on assignments, please indicate this when turning in your work.

Sincerely,

**Michael Sedler**  
**(509) 443-1605**  
**E-mail: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net)**  
**Website: [www.michaelsedler.com](http://www.michaelsedler.com)**  
**P.O. BOX 30310 - Spokane, WA 99223**

\*\* For those working in groups (400/500 level only!)- be sure to go to The Heritage Institute website at [www.hol.edu](http://www.hol.edu) and click on the "group collaboration" icon.

1. Each group member must pick a book to read (you may all choose the same book).
2. Each group member must read the entire manual.
3. Final evaluation/integration paper must be individually authored.

Please share about my classes with others. It is my main form of advertising 😊

## **MICHAEL SEDLER**

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website: [www.michaelsedler.com](http://www.michaelsedler.com)

### **Education**

B.A., Political Science

Master Degree, Social Work

Master Degree, Divinity

Doctorate Degree, Ministry

Teaching Certificate

### **Work Experience**

Consultant/Trainer/Counselor

Director of Special Education

Developmental Disabilities Administration-behavior consultant

Supervisor, Educational Services

School Social Worker (K-12)

Behavior Intervention Specialist (K -12)

Classroom Teacher (elementary and middle school)

Assistant Pastor

### **Other Experiences**

State Correctional Facility for Juveniles, Counselor and Supervisor

Community Mental Health Therapist

State Trainer in Autism (State of Washington)

Adjunct Professor for several Universities

Student Teacher Supervisor

Consultant for schools, business, churches throughout United States

Provide weekend marriage retreats

Interview and Speech Coach/Trainer for Miss Arizona, 3<sup>rd</sup> runner-up Miss America 2012

### **Author**

***When to Speak Up and When To Shut Up.*** (Jan., 2006 Revell Books, \$5.99). Book from faith-based perspective.

Communication book discussing conflict, power struggles, listening strategies, asking questions.

**(Over 300,000 copies sold).**

***What To Do When Words Get Ugly.*** (October, 2016, Revell Books, \$5.99).

(updated/edited version of “Stop The Runaway Conversation.”) Two new chapters in addition to edits. Book from faith-based perspective.

Importance of not listening to negative discussions and how they impact a person's attitude.

Books are available through all bookstores, at [www.bakerbooks.com](http://www.bakerbooks.com), by calling 800 877 2665, or by checking with various online book companies. Revell Books is a division of Baker Publishing Group. Both books are available in CD format as audio books.

# **INDEPENDENT STUDY COLLEGE COURSES**

THE HERITAGE INSTITUTE (credits through Antioch University, Seattle, WA)

MICHAEL SEDLER, INSTRUCTOR

Register for courses anytime. (6-month period for completion from the date you register). **Collaborate with fellow educators-only one set of assignments turned into instructor.** (Check out "Group Collaboration Guidelines" at [www.hol.edu](http://www.hol.edu)). \*\*Clock hours available for partial course completion.

The following are **3 CREDIT CLASSES** (3 quarter credits = 2 semester credits)

**1. Increasing Motivation and Self-Esteem in Students** (SS401p/SS501p)

Strategies to help students feel confident and help educators find more successful approaches with them.

**2. Parents: Adversary or Ally--A Cooperative Approach** (SS401q/SS501q)

Specific ideas on connecting with parents and helping better communication between school and home.

**3. Social Skills: A Foundation For Learning** (SS401v/SS501v)

Activities and ideas to encourage students to improve their peer and social relations.

**4. Understanding & Connecting With Aggressive Students** (ED404d/ED504d)

Each person will increase their understanding of ways to de-escalate aggression and its' causes.

**3 CREDIT COST: \$280-400/500 level; \$195-clock hours (3 quarter = 2 semester)**

The following are **5 CREDIT CLASSES:** (5 quarter credits -3.3 semester credits)

**1. Bullying Behaviors: Enough is Enough** (ED437q/ED537q)

Identification and interventions to reduce bullying behaviors and victim mentality within schools and community.

**2. Counseling Skills For Educators** (ED409r/ED509r)

Helpful ideas on listening skills, asking questions, and communicating with students.

**3. Gang Attitudes And Actions** (SS406k/SS506k)

This class will help each person to identify gangs and intervention strategies for your community/school.

**4. High Maintenance Behaviors & Interactions** (SS409f/SS509f)

This course investigates the many aspects of high needs people, behaviors and effective interactions.

**5. Mental Health Issues and Students** (HE402n/HE502n)

Understand various disorders (oppositional defiant, obsessive compulsive, bi-polar) and interventions.

**6. Nurturing Compassion Within Our Schools** (ED434y/ED534y)

Ideas to help adults and children learn to be more sensitive, kind, and compassionate toward one another.

**7. Organizational Teaching Skills** (ED429w/ED529w)

Increase your own organizational and time management skills as well as helping students in these areas.

**8. School Violence** (SS406m/SS506m)

Each person will learn indicators and interventions for potential violent situations.

**9. Stress Reduction in Staff and Students** (HE401m/HE501m)

Strategies to reduce stress, become more effective in life, and teach these skills to students.

**10. Student, Classroom and Whole-School Discipline** (ED419g/ED519g)

Focus is on negative talk, gossip and rumors within schools. Behavioral strategies for each above area.

**11. Youth Suicide** (SS404u/SS504u)

Specific discussions on signs and interventions for suicide prevention.

**5- CREDIT COST: \$415-400/500 LEVEL; \$315-clock hours (5 quarter = 3.3 semester)**

**NEXT PAGE FOR MORE CLASSES AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

# **INDEPENDENT STUDY COLLEGE COURSES**

THE HERITAGE INSTITUTE (credits through Antioch University, Seattle, WA)

MICHAEL SEDLER, INSTRUCTOR

The following are **6 CREDIT CLASSES**: (6 quarter credits - 4 semester credits)

## **1. Autism: Questions and Answers (ED445y/ED545y)**

Understanding the general areas of autism, diagnosis, and overall strategies for interventions for children with special needs.

## **2. Establishing Rules and Boundaries (ED445x/ED545x)**

Ideas to assist educators in setting up a successful work environment for children (rules, procedures, teaching tools).

## **3. Inspirational Education (ED452f/ED552f)**

This course will re-charge the batteries and create a new excitement about teaching in each person.

## **4. The Impact Of Trauma and Loss in Students (ED464z/ED564z)**

Strategies to support children who have experienced traumatic situations in life.

## **5. Why Children Act Out (ED458t/ED558t)**

Recognize the underlying function of behaviors and interventions approaches.

**6- CREDIT COST**: \$495--400/500 LEVEL; \$380-clock hours (6 quarter = 4 semester)

**REGISTRATION**: Call The Heritage Institute--1 (800) 445-1305; 1 (360) 341-3020  
*Or register on line at [www.hol.edu](http://www.hol.edu)*

**QUESTIONS**: Please call Michael Sedler at (509) 443-1605. Leave message when necessary.

**Email address**: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net) **Website**: [www.michaelsedler.com](http://www.michaelsedler.com)

\*\*For clock hours, only complete the first section of the course. Remember, clock hours may not transfer to other districts or states. You cannot go back and acquire credit once clock hours have been earned for a class.



**\_\_ Assignment #8:**

Contact a supervisor (principal, superintendent, etc.) and discuss their concerns for violence in the community and school setting. Compare and contrast the non-educator answers with educator answers. Write a 1-2 page paper. **(send to instructor)**

*This completes the assignments required for Washington Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, or CEUs.*

*Continue to the next section for additional assignments required for University Quarter Credit*

**ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED for 400 or 500 LEVEL UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

In this section you will have an opportunity to apply your learning to your professional situation. This course assumes that most participants are classroom teachers who have access to students. If you are not teaching in a classroom, please contact the instructor for course modifications. If you start or need to complete this course during the summer, please try to apply your ideas when possible with youth from your neighborhood, at a local public library or parks department facility, (they will often be glad to sponsor community-based learning), with students in another teacher's summer classroom in session, students from past years, or use one of your own children or other relative.

**\_\_ Assignment #9: (Required for 400 and 500 Level)**

Using the "change process" format (p. 40), write out specific areas of growth, suggestions and a plan to develop a climate of civility in your school. Write a 2-3 page paper. **(send to instructor)**

**Assignment #10: You must choose either "A" or "B" (Required for 400 and 500 Level)**

**Assignment #A: (SEND commentary to Instructor)**

- Develop a lesson to reflect what you've learned in this course.
- Implement your lesson with students in your classroom.
- Write a 2 page commentary on what worked well and what could be improved.
- Include any student feedback on your lesson.

*(The following is encouraged but not required):*

- Share what you've learned with other teachers taking our courses by also contributing your Lesson to The Heritage Institute Lesson Library located at <http://www.hol.edu/lesson-plan-library>

**OR**

**Assignment #B: (SEND lesson and summary to Instructor)**

Use this option if you do not have a classroom available.

- Develop a lesson to reflect what you've learned in this course. (Do not implement it.)
- Write a 2 page summary concerning any noteworthy success you've had as a teacher with one or more students.

*(The following is encouraged but not required):*

- Please refer to the guidelines on our blog <http://www.hol.edu/blog> prior to writing your article.
- Please email a copy to [Rebecca Blankinship \(rebecca@hol.edu\)](mailto:rebecca@hol.edu) THI blog curator and media specialist.
- Indicate whether or not you are OK with having your article considered for publishing on our website.
- Subject line to read: (Course Name, Blog)

**Send to instructor: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net)**

**500 LEVEL ASSIGNMENT**

**\_\_ Assignment #11: (500 Level only)**

In addition to the 400 level assignments, complete **one (1)** of the following assignment options:

**Option A)** Using the text read for the class, compare and contrast ideas, suggestions and interventions found in the book with those areas being presented by your district or community. Write a 2-3 page paper. **(send to instructor)**

**OR**

**Option B)** Contact a fellow educator from another district or community. Discuss the program ideas utilized in their school setting. Compare this to what you know of your district or community. Write a 2-3 page paper. **(send to instructor)**

#### **400 & 500 LEVEL ASSIGNMENT**

##### **\_\_ Assignment #12: (Required for 400 and 500 Level Credit)**

Write a 2-3 page Integration Paper answering these questions:

1. What did you learn vs. what you expected to learn from this course?
2. What aspects of the course were most helpful and why?
3. What further knowledge and skills in this general area do you feel you need?
4. How, when and where will you use what you have learned?
5. How and with what other school or community members might you share what you learned? **(send to instructor)**

**Must be individually authored (name and course title) for those taking in a group.**

#### **QUALIFICATIONS FOR TEACHING THIS COURSE:**

**Mike Sedler, M.S.W.**, brings over 30 year of educational experience as an administrator, social worker, behavior specialist and teacher to each of his classes. He provides consultation and seminars throughout the United States and Canada for schools, agencies and businesses. He has a graduate degree in Social Work, a Doctoral degree in Ministry, a Counseling license, as well as his teaching certification. All of Mike's classes are practical and "field tested" in schools and classrooms. Educators have found success in implementing Mike's clear and concise approaches. All of his course material may be immediately implemented into a school or a home.

**NOTES:** You may work collaboratively and submit joint assignments on all but the Integration Paper portion (and other designated assignments) which must be individually authored and submitted. Alternatives to written assignments such as a video, audio tape, photo collage, etc. are permissible with prior approval of instructor. **If you do not receive a confirmation email back after sending your paperwork via email, please re-send or contact the instructor to confirm it has been received. It seems that occasionally things get lost in cyber- space. Thank you.**

**Full credit will be given to each student as long as all work is turned in. If something is missing, I will be in contact with you. Failure is not an option. ☺**

## INTRODUCTION

Students are dying in American schools. They are beaten, harassed, scared and threatened. Over three million violent crimes and thefts occur every year in our public education system. Since 1985, over one million high school students have been the victims of violent crimes. It has been estimated that 20% of our student population has brought a weapon to school.

Violence impacts students, teachers, parents and the general community. It has been brought into the schools from the home, society, entertainment and media. Schools cannot shut their doors and isolate themselves from society. The rise in violence is certainly not limited to larger urban areas. In fact, there is no community (rural or urban), no school (public or private), and no home (regardless of socio-economic status) that is immune to violence.

Every day, guns kill 15 to 20 children (between the ages of 14 and 19). It has been estimated that 135,000 students bring weapons to school each day. Approximately 150,000 students may stay home from school each day because they are afraid what might happen if they attend. One out of eleven teachers have been physically assaulted in the school.

The attitude of society is mirrored in the school classroom. Racial and interracial tension does not seem to be improving. Some would say it is worse than in the past. Many minorities feel cheated and slighted by the present educational system. These discrepancies only increase the tension among students, families and communities.

If we expect a school to be safe, it must also be healthy. Students, teachers and parents should have a comfort level that says "Today is going to be a great day" not, "I hope I don't get hurt at school today." This course will examine some of the reasons why our schools are not safe. We will also explore various methods of interventions.

This manual has a variety of plans, strategies and ideas. Some are geared for elementary students and others for the older students. Please be creative and modify the plans to meet your needs. Some of the worksheets will be basic in their prevention ideas. Many of you will find this helpful as your schools are not a "war zone." On the other hand, some of the interventions are very intense and demand resources and support. Unfortunately, there are those of you who need this type of strategy for your school. While not pretending to give you the answers to violence, I do believe this class will increase your knowledge of "why?" and "what can we do?" in our schools.

**May your knowledge increase during this course. Michael Sedler**

GENERAL  
OVERVIEW  
OF  
VIOLENCE

## TYPES OF AGGRESSION

READ THE FOLLOWING LIST AND DECIDE WHICH TYPES OF AGGRESSION ARE MOST PREVELANT IN YOUR SCHOOLS, HOME, COMMUNITY. ARE THERE SOME OTHER TYPES NOT LISTED?

**ACCIDENTAL AGGRESSION-** unintentional injury of another person. Examples of this would be a hunting accident or sports related injury.

**PLAYFUL AGGRESSION-** use of a weapon or violence as an exercise in skill, but someone is injured. Examples of this would be sparring in boxing, karate, tae kwan do, etc. Contact and injury may occur.

**SELF-ASSERTIVE AGGRESSION-** moving toward a goal without hesitation, doubt or fear. People may become defensive when confronted or make excuses and blame people. They become aggressive verbally and begin to attack individuals with their words.

**DEFENSIVE AGGRESSION-** a reaction to danger or a threat. The "fight or flight" reaction may occur. A natural and instinctive response may follow. Threats against our freedom or physical well-being may create this response.

**CONFORMIST AGGRESSION-** motivated by sense of duty or need to obey others (an order or command). Military responses are a common example.

**MALIGNANT AGGRESSION-** an impulse to injure, harm or torture for pure enjoyment. Gang killings, violent crimes, serial killings are some examples of this area.

**EMOTIONAL AGGRESSION-** a reaction to an incident, provocation or situation. Anger is prevailing feeling for an "unjust" situation. If someone injures you or steals something from you, a response might fit into this category.

**INSTRUMENTAL AGGRESSION-** may not involve anger. Planned aggression used to attain a goal or reward. Group violence may be one manifestation of this area. The intentional aspect of it takes it out of the realm of being influenced by feelings.

Aggression is not always bad or destructive. We often try to separate aggression from assertive.

A crucial factor for aggression **is the intent to cause harm.**

## **WHY THE ESCALATION IN VIOLENCE?**

### **Send to Instructor**

1. **POVERTY**- people who are poor feel oppressed, powerless, and resentful of those who are not poor. The daily frustration of the lack of food, resources, jobs, opportunity may lead to anger and aggressive violence. The general lack of hope is very damaging. "Children growing up in our poorest neighborhoods are far more likely to fare poorly in school, become teenage mothers, suffer chronic unemployment, and resort to crime and violence. They grow up with little investment in their future and little evidence from their bleak environment that the future is something worth investing in. When they pull a gun and risk a jail term, they have very little to risk." George Miller, journalist, Milwaukee Journal.
2. **AVAILABILITY**- guns are readily available to teenagers. Guns are a symbol of power, manhood, and strength. There is an allure to many kids when it comes to guns. Gun laws are a subject of great debate in our country, yet each year more and more people are killed by guns. Do we pass restrictive gun laws? Do we try to teach more responsibility? This topic needs to be answered in each of our minds. Should we pass gun control laws? I will not attempt to answer that question for you. However, I will say that something needs to be done, and done quickly.
3. **DRUGS**- drugs are a leading cause of crime outside of gang activity. People who use illegal drugs commit four to six times as many crimes as non-drug users. Nearly 60% of juveniles in correctional institutes for violent crimes were under the influence of drugs or alcohol when they committed the *offense*. Naturally, there is a decrease in inhibitions when one is involved with drugs.

Other reasons include violence and conflicting media messages, families in crisis or transition, decline in respect for life and authority, to name a few.

It is not difficult to see the connection between poverty, guns, drugs and violence. However, eliminating these areas (poverty, guns, drugs) would not make the problem of violence disappear. There are too many other influences involved in the arena of violence.

**Send a 1-2 page summary to the instructor on "why you think there has been an escalation in violence over the past decade or so?"**

## *VIOLENCE IN THE MEDIA: Is there an impact on us?*

"We not only tolerate violence, we put it on the front pages of our newspapers. The majority of our television programs use it for the amusement of our children. Condone? My dear friends, we love it." Dr. Karl Menninger, renowned psychiatrist.

"Cartoon figures have always been violent. The difference now is the quantity of violent events per hour and the special effects that make them seem all the more real."

Dr. Arlette Lefebvre, psychiatrist, Children's Broadcast Institute.

"Our ability to feel compassion is brutalized by excessive brutality, especially when it's given that Hollywood sheen. It has gotten out of control. The imaginary violence might be contributing to an increasingly dangerous real life."  
Newsweek Magazine.

"The constant portrayal of sexual violence leads to increased acceptance of rape and can instigate anti-social values and behavior." American Psychological Assoc.

"Watching television violence has a detrimental effect on children. There is a desensitization to watching violence and sexually degrading behaviors....viewing violence helps foster the belief in children that such behavior is normal and acceptable." Matthew Delapair, National Coalition on TV Violence.

"Music videos---specifically certain videos for rap music---are purposefully glorifying armed violence and criminality." Bob Greene, Chicago Tribune journalist.

"The difference between violence in the classics and violence in modern entertainment is its purpose. Is it there just for the shock value, or is it an integral part of the story?" Rollo May, Psychologist and author.

"This brand of journalism (explicit, graphic descriptions) promotes terrorism and other acts of violence. Mass murders have increased in recent years (1982-1991). Meticulous and instant reporting of these massacres by the mass media shares a responsibility for the increase of such incidences." Peter Riga, columnist, lawyer and former law professor.

"A recent study found that more preteens can identify the sadistic monsters of movies than can recognize George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, or Martin Luther King. To think such trends are unrelated to the growing number of rapes is to be naive."  
Ann Miller, author.

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF VIOLENT INDIVIDUALS**

OFTEN SUFFERS FROM PARANOIA

CHRONICALLY DISGRUNTLED- QUICK TO PERCEIVE INJUSTICES  
AT WORK AND/OR UNFAIRNESS IN OTHERS

SOCIALLY ISOLATED

POOR SELF-ESTEEM

TEMPER CONTROL PROBLEMS

OFTEN CHALLENGES AN AUTHORITY'S REQUEST--EITHER  
COVERTLY OR OVERTLY

ALCOHOL OR DRUG USE/ABUSE

FASCINATION WITH WEAPONS

HOME LIFE PROBLEMS/STRESS OFTEN SPILLS OVER INTO OTHER  
PARTS OF LIFE

REFUSES TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR A PROBLEM--IT'S IS  
ALWAYS SOMEONE ELSE'S FAULT

## **Dealing with Media Violence**

Here are some ideas:

- Limit television-viewing time to one to two hours a day.
- Make sure you know what TV shows your children watch, which movies they see and what kind of video games they play.
- Talk to your children about the violence that they see on TV shows, in the movies and in video games. Help them understand how painful it would be in real life, and the serious consequences of violent behaviors.
- Discuss with your children ways to solve problems without using violence.

Teach your children ways to avoid becoming victims of violence. Here are some important steps that you can take to keep yourself and your children safe:

- Teach your children safe routes for walking in your neighborhood.
- Encourage them to walk with a friend at all times, and only in well-lighted, busy areas.
- Stress how important it is for them to report any crimes or suspicious activities they see to you, a teacher, another trustworthy adult or the police. Show them how to call 911 or the emergency service in your area.
- Make sure they know what to do if anyone tries to hurt them: Say no, run away and tell a reliable adult.
- Stress the dangers of talking to strangers. Tell them never to open the door to, or go anywhere with, someone they don't know and trust.

Help your children stand up against violence. Support your children in standing up against violence. Teach them to respond with calm but firm words when they see others insult, threaten or hit someone. Help them understand that it takes more courage and leadership to resist violence than to go along with it.

### **Television Violence: What is a Parent to Do?**

Television has become our children's master teacher. What are they learning? Because 25 violent acts per hour are shown on Saturday morning cartoons and six per hour on evening prime-time programming, one thing they are learning about is violence. Some are learning to do it (the copycat effect). Some are learning to be more afraid of their worlds (the increased fearfulness effect). And some are learning to be unconcerned when others are victimized by violence (the desensitization effect).

Research shows that these negative effects of abundant television violence in our children's lives are particularly harmful for preschool children, whose critical thinking skills have just begun to develop. What is a parent to do? Here are some suggestions:

1. Sit down and watch three or four children's shows yourself. As you do, try to be your child, seeing and mentally processing the show as he or she would.
  - What is going on?
  - What is make-believe and what is real?
  - What are the shows' lessons about how people get along?
  - How to go about solving the conflict?
  - What toys to buy?
2. Don't just flip on the set as you flip on a light switch:
  - Plan the family's TV viewing in advance.
  - Include your child in the planning.
  - Set guidelines about what kinds of shows can be watched.
  - Stick to your selections.
  - Emphasize nonviolent shows.
3. Monitor your child's actual television viewing. Help your child understand the unreality of TV violence and its consequences as well as the undesirability of imitating it. Be sure that what and how much is viewed conform to the guidelines you have set. A good rule is to limit total viewing to an hour or two each day. If you do fire your TV set as a major babysitter by limiting the amount to be watched, you'll need to provide your child with interesting alternatives. Games, helping with household chores and especially reading are some good possibilities. If you feel that more than an hour or two of TV viewing each day is okay, substitute good children's videotapes as an alternative to network or cable programming.
4. Watch some shows with your children, and then, talk them over. Find out how they are interpreting what they have seen. Discuss what is real and what is pretend. Make your disapproval of the violent acts depicted clear, and suggest alternative, nonviolent ways in which the conflict shown could have been handled. Some research shows that only ten percent of the three to five hours of daily TV viewed by young children is actually children's programming. Ninety percent of what they see are programs designed for adults! This very likely means that much of what your child watches is the programs you have decided to watch. Thus, you may do well to change some of your own viewing habits and select violent shows less often. It will be good for both of you.
5. Pay special attention to the commercials. Some shows are no more than thirty-minute "infomercials" for a particular toy or game. Help your child understand those advertiser claims that are exaggerated or false. Do what you can as a concerned citizen to encourage legislators, television networks and cable companies as well as advertising sponsors to increase substantially the levels of nonviolent programming, and to decrease the large number of violent shows now presented to our children.

Television is a powerful teacher, both for better and for worse; but thus far, it is teaching too many of the wrong lessons to our children. Perhaps with enough involvement of all citizens, its potential as a good teacher can be more fully realized.

## LEARNED BEHAVIOR OR INSTINCTIVE?

### THE MILLION DOLLAR QUESTION

**(NOTE: activity at the end of this section you send to instructor)**

This is an ongoing debate among professionals. Some psychiatrists, psychologists and sociologists say that a primitive rage reaction is instinctive. It is part of our survival mechanisms. We feel threatened, we strike out. This is at times called "blinding rage." Anger and frustration build up to such an extent that it blinds us to our reasoning power.

I will sometimes say the person loses touch with reality. Whereas five minutes ago, they were laughing and enjoying life, a situation occurs that triggers this anger and they strike out quickly and furiously.

Let's say two people are walking along in the shopping mall. They have enjoyed their time, bought a few items and are heading toward the exit. Someone bumps into them and begins to call them names. Quickly, a crowd surrounds them and begins to yell, "fight", "hit him", and "go for it." The individual continues to push one of the people. Have you ever seen this in the schools? On the playground? In the hallway?

A blinding rage can build up over time and eventually explode into violence. For example, the people that walked into a McDonald's and began to open fire (California), the destruction at Luby's Cafeteria (Texas), and of course, the tragic deaths at Columbine High School (Colorado). In each case, the random killings and destruction were traced to an accumulated anger in the lives of the perpetrators.

While we may explain some of the violence in people, we must be careful not to excuse it or to blame it on situations. Erich Fromm says that some people like to think of aggression as all instinctive so they have an excuse for their rage. However, he says, if we were all instinctive in our responses, we would respond in the same way to threats, danger and fear.

In the above scenario (in the mall), one person may have refused to fight and looked for help. Another may have grabbed their pocket knife and wielded it as a weapon. Same danger, same threat, different response. According to Fromm, the reason has to do with experience, character and values. When confronted with a situation, we are not limited to the influences of the moment. In all circumstances, we bring everything we have learned, all that we are, to that decision process.

The hereditary (instinct) arguments are founded in the statistics involving male violence. It seems that most documented cases of violence involve males.

- All documented mass murders from 1949 to 1991 in the U.S. were committed by males.
- Most of the world's atrocities were planned and carried out by males.
- Males commit over 90% of violent crimes.

Does this mean men are born with abnormal genes and defective viewpoints? (And I hear some women saying, "Amen"). In fairness, we all know that men, historically, have been taught to be manly, to fight, protect. They are told to be courageous, bold, and strong. To be nonviolent may be viewed as cowardly, weak, unmanly or being a sissy. Due to that dominant influence in our culture, does that impact a child's, teenager's, man's thinking and responses?

Draw your own conclusions.

**Three suggestions to help change the culture** (Konrad Lorenz)

1. Let each person develop an awareness of themselves. Evaluate your attitudes, prejudices, and viewpoints. Confront the demons in your own life. Think ahead. How will you handle a violent situation? How would you deal with a violent scene?
2. Get to know others. Gaining a deeper understanding of human responses and attitudes allow us not to be threatened by differing approaches. We do not all think or act the same.
3. Find genuine causes to serve society. If we channel our energy to helping one another, preferring one another and encouraging one another, we will be less likely to attack and injure other people (physically and emotionally) .

**\*\*\*ACTIVITY\*\*\* (send to instructor)**

What can you do to make a difference in your school or community?

List at least two things you can do in the next week that may impact others in your circle of life.

1.

2.

## **School violence**

**School violence** is widely held to have become a serious problem in recent decades in many countries, especially where weapons such as guns or knives are involved. It includes violence between school students as well as physical attacks by students on school staff.

### **International character of school violence**

**Australia--** 27% of students aged four to nine are bullied at least every few weeks. In 87% of these cases, onlookers are present yet do nothing. Bullying is most prevalent around ages five to eight. Queensland schools have experienced a constant increase in violence of over 100% since 2008. Over 1000 violent acts against students and teachers are committed each year in our school system. (2013)

**Belgium--**A recent study found that violence experienced by teachers in francophone Belgium was a significant factor in decisions to leave the teaching profession.

**Bulgaria--** If there were 606 registered cases of aggression in Bulgarian schools in the school year 2013-2014, less than a year later the number of children who had demonstrated violence had grown by 174 per cent, to 1662", Georgi Bogdanov, director of the network, told a roundtable in parliament on violence by and against children. Most reported accidents related to vandalism – 1,603, followed by psychological torture, 497 cases of which have been registered. -

**France--**The French Education Minister claimed in 2000 that 39 out of 75,000 state schools were "seriously violent" and 300 were "somewhat violent".

**Japan--** A news report out yesterday reveals how violence in elementary, secondary and high schools has increased 70% over 3 years. 29% of that violence is directed against property (vandalism), 14% is directed at teachers while the remaining is among students themselves. (2014)

**South Africa--**The South African Human Rights Commission has found that 40% of children interviewed said they had been the victims of crime at school. More than a fifth of sexual assaults on South African children were found to have taken place in schools. Exposure to domestic violence, gangsterism, and drugs has had a substantial impact on student performance.

**United Kingdom--** A government inquiry into school violence in 1989 found that 2 percent of teachers had reported facing physical aggression. In 2007 a survey of 6,000 teachers by the teachers' trade union NASUWT found that over 16% claimed to have been physically assaulted by students in the previous two years. On the basis of police statistics found through a Freedom of Information request, in 2007 there were more than 7,000 cases of the police being called to deal with violence in schools in England. In April 2009 another teachers' union, the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, released details of a survey of over 1,000 of its members which found that nearly one quarter of them had been on the receiving end of physical violence by a student.

**Wales--** a 2009 survey found that two-fifths of teachers reported having been assaulted in the classroom. 49% had been threatened with assault. According to the latest survey of more than 1,500 teachers from 2014 on pupil behavior by the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL), more than half of teachers in state schools have faced aggression from pupils in the last year, and more than a quarter have experienced it from parents or careers.

**United States--** In 2014, 4,300 young people ages 10 to 24 were victims of homicide—an average of 12 each day. Homicide is the 3rd leading cause of death for young people ages 10 to 24 years old. Among homicide victims 10 to 24 years old in 2014, 86% (3,703) were male and 14% (597) were female. Among homicide victims ages 10 to 24 years old in 2014, 86% were killed with a firearm.

Youth homicides and assault-related injuries result in an estimated \$18.2 billion in combined medical and work loss costs.

In a 2015 nationally representative sample of youth in grades 9-12:

7.8% reported being in a physical fight on school property in the 12 months preceding the survey.

10.3% of male students and 5.0% of female students reported being in a physical fight on school property in the 12 months preceding the survey.

5.6% did not go to school on one or more days in the 30 days preceding the survey because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school.

4.1% reported carrying a weapon (gun, knife or club) on school property on one or more days in the 30 days preceding the survey.

6.0% reported being threatened or injured with a weapon (gun, knife or club) on school property one or more times in the 12 months preceding the survey.

In a 2015 nationally-representative sample of youth in grades 9-12:

20.2% reported being bullied on school property in the 12 months preceding the survey; the prevalence was higher among females (24.8%) than males (15.8%).

15.5% reported being bullied electronically (email, chat room, instant messaging, website, texting) in the 12 months preceding the survey; the prevalence was higher among females (21.7%) than males (9.7%).

**School-associated Violent Deaths**

During the 2012-2013 school year, 31 homicides of school-age youth ages 5 to 18 years occurred at school.

Approximately 2.6% of all youth homicides in 2012-2013 occurred at school, and the percentage of all youth homicides occurring at school has been less than 3% since the 1992-1993 school year. There was approximately one homicide or suicide of a school-age youth at school per 1.5 million students enrolled during the 2012-2013 school year

The United States has the highest gun homicide rate of 34 industrialized countries—30 times higher than Australia, France, or the United Kingdom.

The U.S. is:

3.8 times higher than Turkey

6 times higher than Canada

15 times higher than the Czech Republic

30 times higher than Israel

**Risk factors**--A distinction is made between internalizing and externalizing behavior.

Internalizing behaviors reflect withdrawal, inhibition, anxiety, and/or depression. Internalizing behavior has been found in some cases of youth violence although in some youth, depression is associated with substance abuse. Because they rarely act out, students with internalizing problems are often overlooked by school personnel. Externalizing behaviors refer to delinquent activities, aggression, and hyperactivity. Unlike internalizing behaviors, externalizing behaviors include, or are directly linked to, violent episodes. Violent behaviors such as punching and kicking are often learned from observing others. Just as externalizing behaviors are observed outside of school, such behaviors also observed in schools.

**Other individual factors**--A number of other individual factors are associated with higher levels

of aggressiveness. Early starters have worse outcomes than children whose antisocial activities begin late. Lower IQ is related to higher levels of aggressiveness. Other findings indicate that in boys: early problematic motor skills, attention difficulties, and reading problems predict later persistent antisocial conduct.

**Home environment--** The home environment is thought to contribute to school violence. The Constitutional Rights Foundation suggests long-term exposure to gun violence, parental alcoholism, domestic violence, physical abuse of the child, and child sexual abuse teaches children that criminal and violent activities are acceptable. Harsh parental discipline is associated with higher levels of aggressiveness in youth. There is some evidence indicating that exposure to television violence and, to a lesser extent, violent video games is related to increased aggressiveness in children, which, in turn, may carry over into school.

**Neighborhood environment--**Neighborhoods and communities provide the context for school violence. Communities with high rates of crime and drug use teach youth the violent behaviors that are carried into schools. Dilapidated housing in the neighborhood of the school has been found to be associated with school violence. Teacher assault was more likely to occur in schools located in high-crime neighborhoods. Exposure to deviant peers is a risk factor for high levels of aggressiveness. Research has shown that poverty and high population densities are associated with higher rates of school violence. Longitudinal research indicates that children's exposure to community violence during the early elementary school years increases the risk of aggression, as reported by teachers and classmates, in the later elementary school years. Neighborhood gangs are thought to contribute to dangerous school environments. Gangs use the social environment of the school to recruit members and interact with opposing groups, with gang violence carrying over from neighborhoods into some schools.

**School environment--**Recent research has linked the school environment to school violence. Teacher assaults are associated with a higher percentage male faculty, a higher proportion of male students, and a higher proportion of students receiving free lunch. In general, a large male population, higher grade levels, a history of high levels of disciplinary problems in the school, high student to teacher ratios, and an urban location are related to violence in schools. In students, academic performance is inversely related to antisocial conduct. The research by Hirschi and others, cited above in the section on the home environment, is also consistent with the view that lack of attachment to school is associated with increased risk of antisocial conduct.

In 2014, among students ages 12–18, there were about 850,100 nonfatal victimizations at school, which included 363,700 theft victimizations and 486,400 violent victimizations (simple assault and serious violent victimizations).

- In 2014, students ages 12–18 experienced 33 nonfatal victimizations per 1,000 students at school and 24 per 1,000 students away from school.
- Between 1992 and 2014, the total victimization rate at school declined 82 percent, from 181 victimizations per 1,000 students in 1992 to 33 victimizations per 1,000 students in 2014. The total victimization rate away from school declined 86 percent, from 173 victimizations per 1,000 students in 1992 to 24 victimizations per 1,000 students in 2014.
- In 2014, students residing in rural areas had higher rates of total victimization at school (53 victimizations per 1,000 students) than students residing in suburban areas (28 victimizations per 1,000 students).

Prevention and intervention--The goal of prevention and intervention strategies is to stop school violence from occurring. According to the [CDC](#), there are at least four levels at which violence-prevention programs can act: society in general, the school community, the family, and the individual.

- *Society-level prevention strategies* aim to change social and cultural conditions in order to reduce violence regardless of where the violence occurs. Examples include reducing media violence, reshaping social norms, and restructuring educational systems. The strategies are rarely used and difficult to implement.
- *School-wide strategies* are designed to modify the school characteristics that are associated with violence. The CDC suggests schools promote classroom management techniques, cooperative learning, and close student supervision. At the elementary school level, the group behavioral intervention known as the Good Behavior Game helps reduce classroom disruption and promotes pro social classroom interactions. There is some evidence that the Second Step curriculum, which is concerned with promoting impulse control and empathy among second and third graders, produces reductions in physically aggressive behavior. Other school-wide strategies are aimed at reducing or eliminating bullying and organizing the local police to better combat gang violence. Research, however, suggests that the idea of creating a school-wide early-warning system, the school equivalent of a radar installation designed to "prevent the worst cases of school violence," is problematic. Violence-prevention efforts can be more usefully directed at developing anti-bullying programs, helping teachers with classroom-management strategies, applying behavioral strategies such as the Good Behavior Game, implementing curricular innovations such as the Second Step syllabus, developing programs to strengthen families (see below), and implementing programs aimed at enhancing the social and academic skills of at-risk students (see below).
- Some intervention programs are aimed at *improving family relationships*. There is some evidence that such intervention strategies have modest effects on the behavior of children in the short and long term. Patterson's home intervention program involving mothers has been shown to reduce aggressive conduct in children. An important question concerns the

extent to which the influence of the program carries over into the child's conduct in school.

- Some prevention and intervention programs focus on *individual-level strategies*. These programs are aimed at students who exhibit aggression and violent behaviors or are at risk for engaging in such behaviors. Some programs include conflict resolution and team problem-solving. Other programs teach students social skills.

**LOOKING  
AT  
INDIVIDUAL  
STUDENTS**

## **WHAT CAN BE DONE?**

### **A STUDENT HANDOUT**

#### **Assignment at end to SEND TO INSTRUCTOR**

Say No To Handguns- *start in your life. Don't let others use you as their support or encouragement. Guns should never be used to impress other students, intimidate other people or to be used as protection from other students.*

Become Involved In School- *be involved in activities, clubs, events. They allow you to meet people, have common interests and obtain skills for your future.*

Learn To Trust Other People, Especially Adults- *find people you can talk to and share concerns. Trusting and believing in other people will help prevent you from getting involved in situations that may be dangerous.*

Learn New Strategies To Deal With Conflict- *ask your teacher or counselor for help in working out problems. Have a strategy to prevent involvement in drugs and violence.*

Speak Strongly In A Non-provocative Manner- *don't try to "pick a fight" with someone. Be assertive, be clear, be forceful, but don't attack someone verbally or physically.*

Learn To Compromise And Negotiate- *learn how to give and take. It is important not to get angry and upset while negotiating with someone. Keep your cool, but be clear as to your concerns.*

Learn How To Be Assertive Without Being Aggressive- *understand the difference between being aggressive with others and being assertive. Aggression will usually increase the conflict and increase anger. Assertiveness will usually clarify the issues and create boundaries for a life.*

How many of the above areas does your school teach to students? Which ones do you deem most important and why?

**2 pages—SEND TO INSTRUCTOR**

# AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR RESPONSES

(Adapted from article by James Kaufman "Creating a climate of classroom civility")

## **ESP (EXQUISITE SENSITIVITY TO THE PERSONAL)** -

Most things are construed as an attack, challenge, insult, disrespect. The person is quick to bristle, and anticipates offense and hurt feelings. (teacher says "slow down", kids says "why picking on me".) Hypersensitivity.

## **GOP (GROUP OFFENSE PATROL)** -

Assumption of group victimization takes place and there is a lack of humor regarding one's own group identity. Each person believes it is "important for our group to be recognized." There is a preoccupation with language and titles with little regard to personal sensitivity toward people...

## **STD (SLIGHT TRIGGER DISEASE)** -

These people are quick to fight if people bump into them or look at them the "wrong way." Aggression is seen as the answer to the problem. Life modeling: politicians demeaning one another, parents cursing in traffic or fighting one another through a divorce, talk shows engaging in fisticuffs. We have an "in your face culture."

## **HIV (HEAVY INTO VIOLENCE)** -

We find more serious crimes, vicious, casual crimes. Violence is seen as power, power to coerce and to communicate - Political power, physical power and moral power. Violence gives moral power to the victim as well who feels revenge is justified.

### **\*\*\* ACTIVITY\*\*\***

HOW DO THE STUDENTS IN YOUR BUILDING/DISTRICT RESPOND?  
WRITE OUT A PARAGRAPH EXPLAINING THE MOST COMMON  
RESPONSES OF STUDENTS YOU WORK WITH.  
**SEND TO INSTRUCTOR**

# **PATTERNS OF AGGRESSION**

## **THE FRUSTRATION STAGE**

BEHAVIORS- Signs of anxiety (bite nails, lip, tense muscles, grimace). Complain about illness--indicate future crisis.

INTERVENTIONS- Need surface behavior management... assist with assignment, proximity control, signal for help, personal connection, physical touch. Interventions do not require lots of time, but consistency. Be ready to intervene. Need to connect "Do you need help?", "I'm here if you need me?"

## **THE DEFENSIVENESS STAGE**

BEHAVIORS- Lashing out verbally or threatening physically at students or teachers. Withdrawing from others. Challenging the classroom structure, students or authority of the school. Engaging in power struggles.

INTERVENTIONS- Reach out without getting caught in power struggles. Restate rules, routines, consequences. Acknowledge student difficulty and redirect to tasks. Avoid lengthy discussions, logical approaches and explanations, who is right, who is in control. .. this encourages escalation. Set clear boundaries.

## **THE AGGRESSIVE STAGE**

BEHAVIORS- If behavior not diffused in frustration and defensive stages, may escalate to this stage. Myriad of behaviors including kicking, biting, hitting, destroying property. Loss of rational behavior, lack of personal connection with people.

INTERVENTIONS- Teacher seeks assistance, emphasis on teacher and student safety. Remove other students or clear the area. Send student(s) for help. Use this as time to teach self-control and problem solving.  
(Best to teach crisis management before it happens.)

## **THE SELF-CONTROL STAGE**

BEHAVIORS- without intervention, student may become sullen, depressed, withdraw, deny behavior occurred. Be prepared for another outbreak or signs of frustration.

INTERVENTIONS- works with student to re-integrate back into classroom. Use supportive strategies, natural and logical consequences. Process the situation with them, developing preventative strategies.

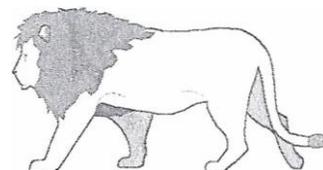
# POSSIBLE MOTIVATIONS BEHIND AGGRESSIVE OR VIOLENT BEHAVIOR

- TO HARASS
- TO EMBARRASS
- TO GET REVENGE
- TO SHOW POWER
- TO GAIN MONEY OR POSITION
- TO INTIMIDATE
- TO REDUCE BOREDOM
- TO ENTERTAIN OTHERS
- FEAR
- FRUSTRATION
- EMOTIONAL INSTABILITY

## \*\*\* ACTIVITY\*\*\*

LIST OTHER REASON THAT YOU THINK PEOPLE MIGHT BECOME  
AGGRESSIVE OR VIOLENT:

- 
- 
- 
- 



## **PREVENTING ANGER FROM BECOMING VIOLENCE**

CHOICE POINT 1 (start)-Pain or frustration occurs.

CHOICE POINT 2-Fear is added.

CHOICE POINT 3-Evil intent is assumed.

CHOICE POINT 4-Judgment is passed.

CHOICE POINT 5-Retaliation begins.

ARRIVAL AT PRIMITIVE RAGE-Violence seems good and necessary.

**CHOICE POINT 1**-try to prevent the conflict from beginning. Use self-talk (is this worth a fight? Will I gain anything from fighting?)

**CHOICE POINT 2**-prevent the adding of fear. Realize that anxiety builds up in each one of us. Take deep breaths, look for support, refuse to become defensive, don't give the other person a reason to retaliate.

**CHOICE POINT 3**-don't assume evil intent. Try to look at it from the other person's perspective. Maybe an occurrence triggered his anger, something not even associated with you.

**CHOICE POINT 4**-don't pass judgment. The other person made a mistake. You may have made a mistake. People let their emotions lead them. It is okay to work this out without anger.

**CHOICE POINT 5**-don't retaliate. Find another way to resolve the issue. Get help, counsel, guidance. Avoid a one-on-one confrontation.

# **HOW TO MAKE PEACE**

## **Resolving conflict nonviolently**

- SLOW DOWN THE ACTION- don't let your emotions escalate. Make an effort to stay calm.
- LISTEN WELL- don't interrupt others. Hear what they have to say.
- GIVE THE OTHER PERSON THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT- in a conflict of two people, each one feels they are right. Try to see things from the other person's perspective. They feel you have wronged them, just as you feel you have been wronged by them.
- ACKNOWLEDGE THE OTHER PERSON'S FEELINGS- use "I" statements such as "I can see you are angry at me" or "I know you don't care too much about me right now, but we do need to work this out."
- BE STRONG WITHOUT BEING MEAN- express your point of view, assertively without putting the other person down. Name calling, threats, bossing and put downs are ineffective.
- TRY TO SEE CONFLICT AS A PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED, RATHER THAN A CONTEST TO BE WON- ask the questions "what do I need?" "what does the other person need?"
- IF YOU DON'T SEEM TO BE GETTING ANYWHERE IN SOLVING A CONFLICT, ASK FOR HELP- find a third party that will listen to both of you. Make sure they understand their role is to listen, clarify and help you get to a place of agreement. They should not take sides.
- CONFLICT, WHEN HANDLED WELL, PROVIDES FOR PERSONAL GROWTH- look for opportunities of growth. How can you handle the same situation next time? Are there other options for the same situation?

**CLASSROOM  
AND  
SCHOOL  
APPROACHES  
FOR REDUCING  
VIOLENCE**

## **TEN STEPS TOWARD A SAFER SCHOOL**

1. ***Establish parameters for acceptable behavior. Be fair and consistent in responding to transgressions.*** Write out the rules for each classroom. Have school-wide rules that are taught to the students. While most educators like to have autonomy in developing rules, there needs to be a consistency across the systems of classrooms.
2. ***Demonstrate sincerity in your concerns for safe schools and students you encounter.*** Take the time to talk with students about the issues of school violence. Examine problems in the school. Don't assume it is the administrator's or superintendent's problem.
3. ***Learn and teach conflict resolution.*** Relate the benefits of avoiding violence and encourage students to resolve differences through dialogue. Have a discussion room available, staffed by a counselor, to help students resolve conflicts.
4. ***Reinforce the concept that schools are there to benefit students, and staff members are there to help students.*** We must find a way to connect with the student population as adults.
5. ***When you become aware of possible threats or signs of dangerous behaviors, take follow up action immediately.*** Report all crimes to the school administrator, who in turn should notify security or the police.
6. ***Do not condone bullying or harassment between students.*** Show students that such behavior is unacceptable by intervening and taking follow-up action.
7. ***Participate in activities outside of your area of responsibility.*** You share school ownership; make your opinions and recommendations known along the way. Be visible to the students so they see your involvement, concern and guidance.
8. ***Reach out for the parents or guardians of the children.*** Assume responsibility to learn what each student experiences at the end of a school day. Make yourself accessible. Many of our kids need as many role models as possible.
9. ***Have a plan to follow in the event you encounter a dangerous situation.*** Be familiar with the school's crisis-response plan. If your school does not have one, recommend one be written.
10. ***Be a role model for positive behavior.*** Refrain from acting in ways you are trying to discourage. Give them a living example of good behavior.

# **10 Ways Teachers Can Help Prevent School Violence**

## **Ways to Prevent School Violence**

School violence is a concern for many new and veteran teachers. One factor that was revealed in the Columbine massacre along with other events of school violence is that in most instances other students knew something about the plans. We as teachers need to try and tap into this and other resources at our disposal to try and prevent acts of violence within our schools.

### **1. Take Responsibility Both Inside Your Classroom and Beyond**

While most teachers feel that what happens in their classroom is their responsibility, less take the time to involve themselves in what goes on outside of their classroom. In between classes, you should be at your door monitoring the halls. Keep your eyes and ears open. This is a time for you to learn a lot about your and other students. Make sure that you are enforcing school policy at this time, even though this can sometimes be difficult. If you hear a group of students cursing or teasing another student, say or do something. Do not turn a blind eye or you are tacitly approving of their behavior.

### **2. Don't Allow Prejudice or Stereotypes in Your Classroom**

Set this policy on the first day. Come down hard on students who say prejudicial comments or use stereotypes when talking about people or groups. Make it clear that they are to leave all of that outside the classroom, and it is to be a safe place for discussions and thought.

### **3. Listen to "Idle" Chatter**

Whenever there is "downtime" in your classroom, and students are just chatting, make it a point to listen in. Students do not have and should not expect a right to privacy in your classroom. As stated in the introduction, other students knew at least something about what the two students were planning at Columbine. If you hear something that puts up a red flag, jot it down and bring it to your administrator's attention.

### **4. Get Involved With Student-Led Anti-Violence Organizations**

If your school has such a program, join in and help. Become the dub sponsor or help facilitate programs and fundraisers. If your school does not, investigate and help create one. Getting students involved can be a huge factor in helping prevent violence. Examples of different programs include peer education, mediation, and mentoring.

### **5. Educate Yourself on Danger Signs**

There are typically many warning signs that show up before actual acts of school violence occur. Some of these include:

- Sudden lack of interest
- Obsessions with violent games
- Depression and mood swings
- Writing that shows despair and isolation
- Lack of anger management skills
- Talking about death or bringing weapons to school
- Violence towards animals

A study of the individuals who have committed acts of school violence were found to have both depression and suicidal tendencies. The combination of these two symptoms can have terrible effects.

## **6. Discuss Violence Prevention With Students**

If school violence is being discussed in the news, this is a great time to bring it up in class. You can mention the warning signs and talk to students about what they should do if they know someone has a weapon or is planning violent acts. [Combating school violence](#) should be a combined effort with students, parents, teachers, and administrators.

## **7. Encourage Students to Talk About Violence**

Be open to student conversations. Make yourself available and let students know that they can talk with you about their concerns and fears about school violence. Keeping these lines of communication open is essential to violence prevention.

## **8. Teach Conflict Resolution and Anger Management Skills**

Use teachable moments to help teach conflict resolution. If you have students disagreeing in your classroom, talk about ways that they can resolve their problems without resorting to violence. Further, teach students ways to manage their anger. Allow a student who has anger management issues the ability to "cool off" when necessary. Teach students to give themselves a few moments before reacting violently.

## **9. Get Parents Involved**

Just as with students, keeping lines of communication open with parents is very important. The more that you call parents and talk with them, the more likely it is that when a concern arises you can effectively deal with it together.

## **10. Take Part in School Wide Initiatives**

Serve on the committee that helps develop how school staff should deal with emergencies. By being actively involved, you can assist with the creation of prevention programs and teacher trainings. These should not only help teachers become aware of warning signs but also provide them with specific directions on what to do about them. Creating effective plans that all staff members understand and follow is one key to help prevent school violence.

# **DECISION-MAKING ACTIVITIES**

## **Elementary age students**

### **I. STEPS TO FOLLOW IN DECISION MAKING:**

1. Tell what the problem is.
2. Find as many solutions as possible.
3. Decide which solutions are "good."
4. Choose one solution and act.

Brainstorm a list of actual conflicts with the students. Examples:

- a. A student takes a basketball from another student.
- b. Two students are making fun of another student.
- c. One student has the answers to the upcoming test. You need a good grade on the test or you will be in trouble with your parents.

### **II. BLOCKBUSTING (Developed by William Kreidler)**

Tell the kids to:

1. Picture the situation and what it would look like if it were solved.
2. Wait for a while, about 30 minutes, before acting on the solution.
3. Change perspective; think about how someone else might see this conflict if they were in it. How would someone in your family see it? How would a teacher see it?

### **III. HASSLE LINE**

Have the kids get into two lines, facing each other. Be sure each one has a partner. If there is an extra student, the teacher may need to participate. Think up a scenario where a problem exists. Tell the students they have a time limit (30 to 60 seconds) to come up with a solution with their partner. Continue to practice this over a period of time. Students will be able to problem solve in a shorter period of time.

### **IV. CONFLICTS AND CHOICES**

This is especially effective for older students. Have a group of students (or a class) brainstorm on daily decisions they have to make in life. Be sure to go beyond the walls of the school and think about home and community. They then talk about the constraints and limitations of each decision. For example, think of going to college. The idea of money limitations, distance from home, being away from friends, grade point average would all be discussed. Other areas might include what to do over a weekend, working out a conflict with a friend, not being selected to make a team or club.

## A CASE STUDY

**PLEASE ANSWER THE QUESTIONS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE AND  
RETURN THEM TO THE INSTRUCTOR.**

Julie gets up in the morning to get herself ready for school. As she heads out of her room to get breakfast, she is stopped by her brother, who says, "Yuk, Julie, that blouse is ugly. It has stains on it and makes you look fat." Julie quickly goes back into her room and changes her shirt. She heads to the kitchen to greet her mom. "Morning, Mom. What's for breakfast?" "Breakfast?" Mom responds, somewhat frustrated. "Do you realize how late you are, again?" You've got to get up earlier if you expect breakfast. Now get to school before you miss the bus." Julie grabs a banana and runs outside, only to see the school bus pulling away. A kid yells out the window, "Tough luck, Julie. Have a great walk to school."

Once at school, Julie remembers that she has a history test. She forgot to study. At lunch time, she notices a group of her friends looking at her and laughing. She feels her face turn red, and she turns to leave quickly. Finally, the day is over, but not before she got her math test back with a "D+" on it. She felt the test was very unfair as it covered material not in the book She tried to explain this to her teacher, but he dismissed her complaints.

Julie decides to walk home. On the way home, one of the local kids begins to throw pine cones at her. One hits her in the back. Furious, she turns and chases him down. Once she catches him, Julie begins to swing her arms, hitting him numerous times. Several other students passing by pull her off. But Julie is crying, breathing heavily and seems to be ignoring the other kids. All she wants to do is hit the "pine cone thrower."

### QUESTIONS:    **SEND TO INSTRUCTOR**

1. If Julie were to come to you and tell you she just "lost it", what kind of advice or explanation would you give her?
2. The mother has brought Julie to you for counsel. What kind of counsel would you give Julie to prevent a further occurrence?
3. If this had occurred at school, would you give Julie consequences? What type and how severe?
4. Think of the last incident of aggression or violence you saw or heard about. Were there circumstances surrounding it? What were they?

# VERBAL VIOLENCE INTERVENTION: TURNING CONFRONTATION INTO COMMUNICATION

(from Safe Schools consultant Mike Palermo)

VERBAL VIOLENCE IS IDENTIFIED BY EDUCATORS AS THE MOST COMMON TYPE OF ABUSE. FOR SOME PEOPLE, IT IS AN EVERY DAY ISSUE. THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF THINGS TO THINK ABOUT WHEN BEING VERBALLY ASSAULTED.

1. How you respond in the first few minutes of the conflict will often dictate the conflict path. **Self-talk statement:** "This is going to upset me, but I know how to deal with it."
2. Personalizing the attack, defending yourself, or attempting to prove the "attacker" wrong will likely cause an escalation of the conflict. **Self-talk statement:** "As long as I keep my cool, I'm in control (of my emotions)."
3. Verbal attacks occur because people are truly angry or are using mock anger to gain power over an individual or group. **Self-talk statement:** "If I keep a clear head I can understand his/her intent."
4. Powerful language is sometimes used to manipulate a situation in someone's favor. When it works, it becomes a repetitive strategy. **Self-talk statement:** "Just roll with the punches (not literally), I'll let him/her speak. However, I need to be prepared to separate the person from the group or separate the group from the person."
5. If you see the conflict building to a verbal attack, try to meet privately to avoid the person "playing the galleries" to save face or gain status from onlookers. **Self-talk statement:** "I'm on top of the situation, let's see if I need to remove the audience."
6. Redirect the emphasis to your willingness to listen by demonstrating attentive non-verbal behaviors, reflecting their feelings, asking open ended questions and exploring their ideas as being legitimate. **Self-talk statement:** "I really have to prove I've been listening before I state my views."
7. Ignore some statements and continue as if they were never said. Not everything deserves a response. **Self-talk statements:** "I can only respond with a negative, and that will lead to more negatives."
8. Spontaneous kindness or soliciting their solutions not only can diffuse the anger but it gives them the message that you value their suggestions. **Self-talk statements:** "Try and break the issue down point by point and ask for their assistance."
9. Verbally abusive people tend to talk rapidly. Repeating their statements verbatim slowly, may slow them down and sometimes allows them to hear what they are saying. **Self-talk statement:** "I had better slow this down and make sure he/she knows what he/she is saying."
10. Remember they may display their anger to you because they don't know who else to attack; you hold a position of authority; or they simply feel safest directing it at you. **Self-talk statements:** "What are the underlying issues in this attack? I can be assertive without being aggressive by using "I" statements instead of "you" statements. "

## **INSTILLING A RESILIENT MINDSET**

Resilient children are able to deal with stress and pressure. They bounce back from disappointment and adversity. They are capable of setting goals, problem solving, and acting responsibly. Resilient children possess a view of the world that enables them to meet challenges and pressures.

- When children feel loved, appreciated and accepted, they feel they can conquer the world. "Charismatic adults" interact with children, convey love, acceptance, and support-all qualities that help children feel special.
  - a. Let your own memory of childhood be your guide.
  - b. Don't miss an opportunity to encourage.
  - c. Be demonstrative in your support and guidance.
  - d. Build up ... don't chip away.
  
- Accepting children in their midst of imperfections. Respond to children as individuals. Fairness and acceptance is not synonymous with having the same expectations and goals for each child.
  - a. Become educated as to the child's temperament, the child development, their likes and dislikes. Understand the child.
  - b. Measure your own mindset. Are you unduly frustrated, anxious, feeling pressure?
  - c. Make necessary adjustments. As you collaborate with the child, are you flexible?
  
- Develop "Islands of Competence." (Dr. Robert Brooks). Find areas that the child feels successful without anxiety.
  - a. Have the child make a list of successful activities or areas in life.
  - b. Ask the child to write out a list of their strengths, the things they like about themselves.
  - c. Ask the child to list areas they want to improve in or grow in. Develop short term and long term plans for this growth.
  - d. Learn from mistakes. Setbacks are only temporary if we move on in life.

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF RESILIENT CLASSROOMS**

1. TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS. When students feel valued, it promotes engagement and confidence in the classroom.

Relationships are one of the greatest reinforcements for learning.

- Classroom Routines That Reinforce Relationships:
  - a. Be aware of classroom environment
  - b. Caring comments
  - c. Sensitive responses
  - d. Weekly discussions or meetings

2. PEER RELATIONSHIPS. Student relationships within the classroom are highly predictive of their academic and social success. Effective peer relationships encourage learning, interest, involvement, and social competence. Resilient classrooms use multiple strategies to enhance classroom relationships.

- Classroom Routines That Reinforce Relationships
  - a. Use of group work
  - b. Daily routines that involve relationship building
  - c. Interventions that promote social learning
  - d. Teach pro-social skills

3. HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS. Patterns and attitudes established at home will carry over into the classroom. When schools and homes are jointly in support of the educational endeavors of the student, there is a greater chance of student success.

- Classroom Routines That Reinforce Home-School Relationships
  - a. Inform parents of home-based support practices
  - b. Home communication strategies
  - c. Convenient ways to include parents

# **CHANGE PROCESS FOR VIOLENT ATTITUDES**

• *(FORMAT TO BE USED FOR ONE OF THE ASSIGNMENTS)*

1. **ENGAGE IN SELF-ANALYSIS-** introspection for each student helps in decreasing violence. (90% of people believe rudeness and incivility is a problem, but 99% say their own behavior is civil). We must examine: a) content and source of prejudice; b) influence of prejudice on our thinking process; c) develop a personal plan of action to deal with personal prejudice. As adults, we may have a serious problem with introspection and self-correction. Educators may realize they are more harsh than imagined, more confrontive, etc.
2. **IMAGINE A CLIMATE OF CIVILITY-** create a vision of peace, goodwill, kindness. What are your classroom rules? What are the school rules? Are consequences as severe for rudeness or aggressive acts as they are for cheating, stealing or property damage? a) Must develop a climate of morality. Challenge moral reasoning, build moral commitments in milieu. b) Must develop climate of trust. Educators must establish themselves as people of integrity, honesty and consistency.
3. **BUILD A REPERTOIRE OF RESPONSES-** must use multiple strategies. (Good time for classroom activity-the group list of responses). Humor, natural/logical consequences, cooperative learning, social skills, buddy system, cross age tutoring, peer tutoring, community connections, early screening tools.
4. **MENTOR A STUDENT NEXT YEAR-** make a commitment to establish a close relationship with one student (be appropriate, be gender sensitive). More than 2 million educators, if each one does this, in a few years, tremendous impact.
5. **TEACH NONAGGRESSIVE RESPONSES TO PROBLEMS-** teach problem solving strategies. Most successful violence intervention curriculums teach these areas. Practice in school, give homework in these areas. Seek to educate the kids in areas of violence control and recognition.

**FOR YOUR ASSIGNMENT, DEVELOP A STRATEGY FOR YOUR CLASSROOM, SCHOOL OR DISTRICT. USE ELEMENTS FROM THIS PAGE (AS WELL AS OTHER PAGES) TO LAY OUT A SPECIFIC PLAN THAT WILL FOCUS ON A SAFE ENVIRONMENT AND AN ATMOSPHERE OF CIVILITY.**

## **GUIDELINES FOR A SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT**

1. ***DEMAND HIGH EXPECTATIONS***- if you set your sights too low, it will not challenge the students toward success. Respect, dignity and responsibility should be clearly defined. Administrators and faculty should live by the same standards they impress upon students.
2. ***HAVE A CLEAR, DEFINED SET OF RULES***- students need to understand the rules. Consequences for inappropriate behavior should be spelled out and applied fairly (regardless of race, socio-economic status, parental background, etc.), Rules should be explained periodically throughout the year.
3. ***PARENT INVOLVEMENT IS BENEFICIAL***- clearly explain the importance of parental involvement. Each parent has an impact upon their child. The school should make *every* attempt to include as many students as possible.
4. ***THE TEACHER'S ROLE IS KEY***- each teacher must present themselves as a willing participant in the student's life. Caring behavior from a teacher translates into trust and respect from most students.
5. ***THE ADMINISTRATOR'S ROLE IS ALSO IMPORTANT***- Administrators should be a strong presence in the school (hallway, classrooms, cafeteria, in front of the school). Each administrator should be decisive, quick to respond and supportive of furthering the educational environment of the school.
6. ***STAY ONE STEP AHEAD***- anticipate problems. Have a contingency plan. Communicate among the staff when problems do exist.
7. ***PROMOTE POSITIVE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES***- students who are busy generally have less time to get into trouble. School sponsored functions help incorporate the students into the school.

### **\*\*\*ACTIVITY\*\*\***

**ADD OTHER AREAS YOU HAVE FOUND TO BE HELPFUL IN DEVELOPING A SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT...**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# **GENERAL PREVENTION STRATEGIES FOR VIOLENCE**

## **PRACTICE FOR A CRISIS-**

Just as we practice for fires, we should prepare for violence.

1. Where do we go in a crisis? (exits, rooms, leaders)
2. Who should be notified? (who will contact, how is it done)
3. What students should do during crisis? If involved? If not involved?
4. Roles of staff in school?

## **STAFF TRAINING-**

Training provides efficiency, consistency and safety. Written operating procedure for a crisis. Should identify staff role, intervention plan, communication and evaluation.

## **ESTABLISH TRUST AND RAPPORT WITH STUDENTS-**

Positive relationship will not eliminate violence, but will help prevent some areas. Also, facilitates interventions at the verbal and nonverbal realm. Trust will enhance learning application to prevent further damage. Aid in training of other students. Model appropriate ways to handle anger, working with care and respect, demonstrating patience and understanding.

## **TEACH COMMUNICATION AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES-**

Both students and staff. Calmly communicating. Focus on what of situation, not why. Ignore accusations, acknowledge feelings ("I know you are upset, let's sit down and talk about it")

## **USE A THERAPEUTIC ATTITUDE-**

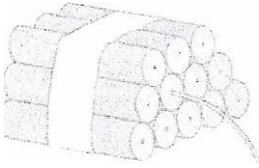
Non punitive approach, don't require apology before you have processed situation. Don't humiliate or belittle. Allow students to save face, give options. Intervene and process in timely manner.

## **ESTABLISH A LIAISON BETWEEN SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY AGENCIES-**

This will increase communication. Have speakers from police, juvenile detention, mental health, violence task force, cps. Show a desire to network together. Collaboration is imperative.

## **HOME-FAMILY-SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT-**

Invite parents to speakers, have parent training sessions, send home articles, offer families a resource list for help (include phone numbers), ask for family input.



## **GUIDELINES FOR CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLANNING**

1. Establish procedures for notifying staff of emergencies. Some schools use code words to broadcast over intercoms to alert staff to take pre-arranged actions. Obviously, an all call saying, "There is a crazy parent with a gun in the office," will probably create a bit of panic. But a pre-arranged code phrase such as, "There is a presentation on alligators in room 415. Contact the office (or wherever the crisis is) if interested." This may seem silly, but it will be effective for those who know what to listen for.
2. Designate leadership within each building. The leaders should have a map of the school site and know where the power and water shutoff points are as well as each fire alarm.
3. Have an in-service meeting at the beginning of the school year in which officials discuss the procedures with police, fire and other emergency personnel.
4. Designate a place where parents and others can obtain information about the crisis and about students. The location should be away from the crisis site so that it does not interfere with emergency procedures. Have staff members trained in basic first aid, and make sure team leaders know who is trained.
5. Make a list of people (counselors, psychologists, mental health workers, social workers) who can be of assistance during and after a crisis.
6. Have a way to communicate. Often normal avenues of communication become useless in a crisis. Consider two-way radios or cell phones.
7. Designate who will communicate with the media and how information will be provided. Make sure correct information is coming from the school system, and control the media's access to school sites.
8. A plan should allow a school leader to locate all staff and students. Have a roster of students and their schedules in an accessible place. This should also include teacher schedules.
10. Be flexible. Prepare for everything you can think of, but some decisions will be made according to circumstances as they develop.

## **BASIC INFORMATION THAT SHOULD BE GATHERED ON INCIDENTS**

- *WHO WAS THREATENED?* - it is important to know the individual who feels impacted by the threat. There may be a need to follow-up emotionally with them.
- *WHO MADE THE THREAT?*- again, knowing the key players will help prevent further incidences. You may need to separate them, monitor them, etc.
- *ANY PREVIOUS INCIDENTS INVOLVING THE VICTIM AND THE PERSON MAKING THE THREAT?* - is there a history of problems? Has this happened before? How often?
- *WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE VICTIM AND THE THREAT-MAKER?* - do they know each other? Are they friends? Same social group? Rival gangs?
- *WHAT WAS THE THREAT?* - this is important to find out. Be sure to obtain an accurate wording of the threat. Avoid miscommunication and confusion.
- *WHAT WERE THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE THREAT?* - by obtaining the essential information, we are able to paint a clearer picture as to the seriousness of the threat. Was it a pre-meditated issue? Did it arise due to a conflict on the basketball court? Was it a boyfriend-girlfriend issue?
- *WHEN, WHERE AND HOW WAS THE THREAT MADE?*-find out the particulars and it will help to eliminate future problems. Again, there may be a need to monitor students, separate students or change class schedules.
- *SOLICIT INFORMATION FROM THE PERSON WHO MADE THE THREAT?* - don't assume the person feeling threatened is an innocent party. Be sure to hear both sides of the issue.

THIS INFORMATION SHOULD BE GATHERED AND WRITTEN DOWN. IF DEEMED NECESSARY, IT SHOULD BE REVIEWED BY A TEAM OF EDUCATORS WHO CAN DETERMINE IF FURTHER ACTION IS NEEDED.

# **IDEAS FOR INCREASED SECURITY**

(IS ANY CHANGE TOO EXTREME?)

**(NOTE: please send the activity at the bottom of this page to the instructor)**

THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF POSSIBLE INTERVENTIONS A SCHOOL MAY NEED TO UTILIZE. THESE HAVE ALL BEEN IMPLEMENTED BY VARIOUS SCHOOLS AROUND THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA.

- Redesigned Space- hallways may be widened to eliminate nooks and crannies where students could hide or loiter. Like mall bathrooms, rest rooms can be designed without doors. Parts of the bathroom are now visible from the outside. A central sink is near the outside of the rest room, so staff can see what's going on inside.
- Surveillance Cameras- video cameras may be placed in the hallway. The cameras are set up to show what's going on in different parts of the school, especially the cafeteria and other places where many students hang out.
- ID's and Access Limitation- school staff wear badges. This allows for easy identification of strangers. Only one main entrance is open during the day. Visitors must walk past the office and obtain a visitor badge.
- Security Guards- security guards walk the hallway, monitoring the traffic of students. Walkie-talkies would allow for instant communication.
- Practice Lockdown Drills- perhaps quarterly, the school practices lockdown drills. A siren would sound and teachers and students would lock the doors and windows, retreat into a designated area, and await further instructions. Similar to our fire drills, it allows an element of confidence.
- Installation of Fencing- around the school, fencing may be used to keep people out. The only access would be the front gate.
- Patrol Cars- have security officers patrolling the campus, especially parking lots.
- Metal Detectors- students and teachers would need to pass through metal detectors before entering the school. This would also be used for all visitors.

**Has your community/school adopted any of these guidelines? Make a list of interventions established by your school district. Add any additional ones not listed above.**

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**Send to instructor!!**

## **Extra Suggestions for Adults**

Stay involved with your friends, neighbors and family. A network of friends can offer fun, practical help and support when you have difficult times. Reducing stress and social isolation can help in raising your children. Try to make sure guns are not available in your area as well. Volunteer to help in your neighborhood's anticrime efforts or in programs to make schools safer for children. If there are no such programs nearby, help start one!

Let your elected officials know that preventing violence is important to you and your neighbors. Complain to television stations and advertisers who sponsor violent programs. Parents whose children show the signs listed below should discuss their concerns with a professional who will help them understand their children and suggest ways to prevent violent behavior.

### ***Warning Signs in the Toddler and Preschool Child:***

- Has many temper tantrums in a single day or several lasting more than 15 minutes, and often cannot be calmed by parents, family members or other caregivers
- Has many aggressive outbursts? often for no reason
- Is extremely active, impulsive and fearless
- Consistently refuses to follow directions and listen to adults
- Does not seem attached to parents, for example, does not touch, look for or return to parents when in strange places
- Frequently watches violence on television, engages in play that has violent themes or is cruel to other children

### ***Warning Signs in the School-Age Child:***

- Has trouble paying attention and concentrating
- Often disrupts classroom activities
- Does poorly in school
- Frequently gets into fights with other children in school
- Reacts to disappointment, criticism or teasing with extreme and intense anger, blame or revenge
- Watches many violent television shows and movies, or plays a lot of violent video games
- Has few friends and is often rejected by other children because of his or her behavior
- Makes friends with other children known to be unruly or aggressive
- Consistently does not listen to adults
- Is not sensitive to the feelings of others
- Is cruel or violent toward pets or other animals
- Is easily frustrated

***Warning Signs in the Preteen or Teenager:***

- Consistently does not listen to authority figures
- Pays no attention to the feelings or rights of others
- Mistreats people and seems to rely on physical violence or threats of violence to solve problems
- Often expresses the feeling that life has treated him or her unfairly
- Does poorly in school and often skips class
- Misses school frequently for no identifiable reason
- Gets suspended from or drops out of school
- Joins a gang, gets involved in fighting, stealing or destroying property
- Drinks alcohol and/or uses inhalants or drugs

Stay involved with your friends, neighbors and family. A network of friends can offer fun, practical help and support when you have difficult times. Reducing stress and social isolation can help in raising your children.

## **The Horror at Virginia Tech**

April 2007  
Dr. Ronald Stephens  
Executive Director  
National School Safety Center

The unprecedented school massacre at Virginia Tech has underscored one terrifying fact: Such attacks can never be completely prevented, and college campuses are especially vulnerable. Unlike the typical American elementary and high school, college campuses are by design too spread out and open to be totally safe from incursion or attack. According to many college and university officials, maximum security is neither possible, nor desirable in a setting built on openness, accessibility, and trust. Strategies used in crisis situations by K-12 schools likely will not work on the majority of postsecondary campuses because most are simply not built to be locked down, and rarely are the buildings connected to a single public address system with a speaker in *every* room.

### **What can we predict in the months to come as a result of the tragedy experienced at Virginia Tech?**

1. Not long after the dust settles from this horrific event, legal action is bound to begin. Questions will need to be answered: What happened? Why did it happen? Who was responsible? What went wrong? Who should pay? Did the school have reasonable and appropriate standard operating procedures for campus security? Did the campus security force follow their standard operating procedures? Unfortunately for the University, there may be years of litigation to follow.
2. Living in a democratic society in which preeminence is given to individual rights and freedoms propagates an underlying vulnerability. As in most tough societal problems, the solutions to college and university violence will most likely require the willingness on the part of individuals to sacrifice certain freedoms in the name of public safety and to take responsibility for their own safety.
3. Soon after the Virginia Tech shootings, university officials and the police were criticized for taking too long to alert students to the danger after the first attack. Getting people important news as fast as possible can save lives but it is equally important to get accurate news to those who have the need to know. Most colleges and universities will soon have to address these critical issues.
4. The Virginia Tech shooting underscores the need for colleges and universities to re-think their students admissions and student screening policies as well as their academic and behavioral supervision policies. University and college systems are generally not involved in monitoring psychiatric treatment. If no laws are broken, then schools have little authority to mandate counseling or treatment. But because students attend postsecondary institutions voluntarily, schools can establish the behavioral requirements and expectations that when violated subject students to dismissal or voluntary withdrawal.

### **What can colleges and universities do to make their campuses safer?**

The following list includes some safety strategies that postsecondary institutions may want to consider in light the public's heightened awareness of the potential for violence on collegiate campuses:

1. Require first-year students to attend a security and campus safety seminar at orientation. Post safety notices at areas on campuses most frequented by students and staff.

2. Encourage students, faculty and staff to report to designated authorities if they see suspicious or troubling activity. There is no substitute for personal vigilance when it comes to safety on any school campus.
3. Provide stand-alone emergency phones on campus that students can use to contact the police directly.
4. Train faculty how to spot signs of depression and how to access mental health services for students.
5. During the admission process, specifically require students to disclose if they *have* been convicted of a crime or disciplined at school. In essence, require them to submit an "applicant disclosure statement" about their past misconduct. Consider conducting more thorough background checks on prospective students.
6. Prior to admission, require students to sign statements that they fully understand the consequences of exhibiting conduct that is unacceptable, troubling or mentally unstable, or criminal in nature.
7. Establish electronic communications systems that can readily disseminate important information to all faculty, campus police and security personnel, students and parents.
8. Consider installing intercom systems that can immediately broadcast a message to a single classroom or to the entire campus or to any combination in between.
9. Control access to dormitories by giving residents an electronic key that can also be used to track the comings and goings of individual students. Even with building access controls in place, sometimes doors are casually propped open to let in fresh air or to allow easy access. Continually advise residents against such practices.
10. Provide sufficient lighting in and around main entrances.
11. Consider the use of "smart" video cameras that rely on computer algorithms to detect suspicious activity such as someone climbing up a fence, walking down an alley late at night or lingering by a windowsill.
12. Provide adequate training to campus police and security personnel, including how to manage *active* shooter situations.

Violence often prevails because we cannot predict, fully control, or completely understand all the factors of human behavior and thought that foster such violence. We will *never* be able to fully prevent *every* act of violence. In the long run, however, scarce resources may be better spent on mental health services than on high-tech security. Rather than investing in defenses, the best use of our resources may be to direct them toward prevention.

# **RESOURCES**

## **COMMITTEE FOR CHILDREN**

Second step: A violence prevention curriculum (K-8 available)

172 20th Ave.

Seattle, W A. 98122 (800) 634-444

[www.cfchildren.org](http://www.cfchildren.org)

## **KELSO'S CHOICE**

Conflict Management For Children (K -6)

Rhinestone Press

P.O. Box 30

Winchester, OR. 97495 (503) 672-3826

[www.kelsoschoice.com](http://www.kelsoschoice.com)

## **NATIONAL SCHOOL SAFETY CENTER**

4165 Thousand Oaks Boulevard, suite 290

West Lake Village, CA. 91362 (805) 373-9977

[www.schoolsafety.us](http://www.schoolsafety.us)

## **SAVE (Students Against Violence Everywhere) (7th -12th grade)**

West Charlotte Senior High School

2219 Senior Drive

Charlotte, NC 28216

[www.nationalsave.org](http://www.nationalsave.org)

## **SCHOOL MEDIATION ASSOCIATES**

72 Chester Road

Belmont, MA. 02178

[www.schoolmediation.com](http://www.schoolmediation.com)

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**Fishbaugh, Mary Susan.** *Ensuring Safe School Environments.* Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2015. Research findings and information on school violence (grades K-12.) [www.routledge.com](http://www.routledge.com)

**Jimerson, Shane and Amanda Nickerson.** *Handbook of School Violence and School Safety.* Routledge Press, 2012. Implementing effective strategies to implement school safety approaches (grades P-12.) [www.routledge.com](http://www.routledge.com) 800 634 7064.

**Langman, Peter.** *Why Kids Kill.* Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. Case studies of ten school shooters and what created the shooting scenarios along with intervention ideas (Grades 7-12.) [www.palgrave-usa.com](http://www.palgrave-usa.com) 888 3308477.

**Lassiter, William.** *Preventing Violence and Crimes in America's Schools.* Praeger Publishers, 2013. A clear approach to what works and what doesn't in preventing violence (grades K-12) [www.praeger.com](http://www.praeger.com) 800 225 5800.

**Lieberman, Joseph.** *School Shootings.* Kensington Publishing, 2008. Studies the life of Kip Kinkel and offers insights into prevention and intervention (grades 7-12.) [www.kensingtonbooks.com](http://www.kensingtonbooks.com) 800 221 2647.

**Ludwig, Trudy.** *Confessions of a Former Bully.* Dragonfly Books, 2012. Story of impact of bullying upon the bully and victim (grades 2 – 6.) [www.dragonflybooks.com](http://www.dragonflybooks.com) 563 382 4275.

**Madfis, Eric.** *The Risk of School Rampage.* Palgrave Pivot, 2014. Strategies to assess the potential of acts of violence (grades P-12.) [www.palgrave.com](http://www.palgrave.com) (order through Amazon).

**McNamara, Barry Edwards.** *Bullying and Students with Disabilities.* Corwin Books, 2013. Strategies to create a safe learning environment (grades P-12.) [www.corwin.com](http://www.corwin.com) 800 232 9936.

**Scherz, Jared.** *Workbook for Preventing Catastrophic School Violence.* Rowman and Littlefield, 2014. Complexities of violence and comprehensive approaches to prevention (Grades P-12) [www.rowmanlittlefield.com](http://www.rowmanlittlefield.com) 800 462 6420.

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**Temlow, Stuart and Frank Sacco.** *Preventing Bullying and School Violence.* American Psychiatric Publishers, 2011. Handbook to assist in developing interventions and address behavior patterns in school. [www.appi.org](http://www.appi.org) 800 368 5777.

**Thomas, R. Murray.** *Violence in America's Schools.* Rowman and Littlefield, 2008. Discusses escalation in violence, motivation, and interventions (grades 7-12.) [www.rowmanlittlefield.com](http://www.rowmanlittlefield.com) 800 462 6420.

**The following two books are written by your instructor and contain a faith based perspective and biblical references.** These are available on line or through bookstores.

*What To Do When Words Get Ugly.* Michael Sedler. Revell Books, 2016 (edited/revised edition). Examines the topic of gossip and how it impacts people. (Adult) [www.bakerbooks.com](http://www.bakerbooks.com) 1-800-877-2665

*When to Speak Up and When to Shut Up.* Michael Sedler. Revell Books, 2006. Communication book discussing conflict and encouragement. (Adult) [www.bakerbooks.com](http://www.bakerbooks.com) 1-800-877-2665 **(over 300,000 copies sold).** Both books are available in CD format as audio books.