

Hello Parents!



With a growing need for mental health awareness, we are pleased to share with you that our most recent PATH lessons address the crucial topic of violence. Youth Violence is considered a serious public health problem.^[1] These lessons were created to increase awareness and decrease the occurrence of violence in our school and community by emphasizing the value of human life and safety procedures. These three lessons examine recent statistics, identify risk factors, and promote protective strategies. Your child's safety is a priority for us, so we will continue to invest time into their social and emotional health through these sessions. Obviously, our children must feel safe in the environment in which they learn. We encourage them to examine their own beliefs and actions. We believe in the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. when he said, "This is the ultimate weakness of violence: It multiplies evil and violence in the universe. It doesn't solve any problems."

We consider these efforts a partnership; therefore, this letter provides parental tips for supporting children who have either been victims of violence or may display violent behavior. Your awareness creates an invaluable layer of prevention. Please take time to talk with your child this week to learn more about the outcome of these sessions. In the spirit of a true village, we are here not only for your child but also for you. Our counseling staff welcomes any questions or concerns you may have.

1,000

Emergency Departments treat more than 1,000 youth for physical assault-related injuries each day.^[1]

Did You Know?

- Youth violence is common. 1 in 5 high school students reported being bullied on school property in the past year.^[2]
- Youth homicides are spiking and have increased by 30% from 2019 to 2020 which was the largest increase since 1980.^[3]
- Two out of three of all youth homicides occurred with a firearm.^[3]
- Youth violence kills and injures. Homicide is the third leading cause of death for young people ages 10-24.^[4]
- Youth violence is costly. Youth homicides and nonfatal physical assault-related injuries result in an estimated \$18.2 billion annually in combined medical and lost productivity costs alone.^[4]
- Some of the signs of school violence include physical marks, such as cuts or bruises; fear of riding the bus to school; depression, anxiety, or moodiness lasting more than a couple of weeks; and sudden loss of friends.

Tips:

- **Provide quality education early in life.**
- **Allow children to talk about their concerns and validate their feelings when they express those concerns.**
- **Set an example by promoting non-violence in your own conflicts.**
- **Limit your child's access to media violence.**
- **Teach acceptance, tolerance, and non-discrimination.**
- **Know warning signs of violent behavior such as extreme moodiness, cruel acts, or uncontrolled anger.**
- **Educate yourself about violent trends among teens such as fight videos, threats via social media, challenges, and trolling.**
- **If there are guns in the home, keep them locked safely, and teach children proper gun safety.**
- **Communicate with the school personnel when students have a safety concern - whether the threat is physical or digital.**
- **Connect them with caring adults in the community.**

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Helplines/Resources

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Youth Violence <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/index.html>
- Violence Against Children and Youth Survey <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/vacs/resources.html>
- Futures Without Violence <https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/>
- Nemours KidsHealth: Parental Gun Safety <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/gun-safety.html>
- Family Lives: Gangs <https://www.familylives.org.uk/advice/teenagers/behaviour/gangs>
- 10 Things You Can Do To Prevent Violence In Your School Community. <https://www.pta.org/home/family-resources/safety/School-Safety/Checklist-to-Help-Prevent-Violence-in-Schools>

References

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