

Dear Parents,

Violence is the number one public health problem in America today, and it is preventable. Your student has been participating in *Too Good for Violence*, a school-based, violence prevention program. This newsletter will encourage students to share some information with their families. Please take the time to do the activities in this newsletter together and to discuss ways that you, as a family, can prevent violence. Violence is not acceptable, and by working together, we can prevent it.

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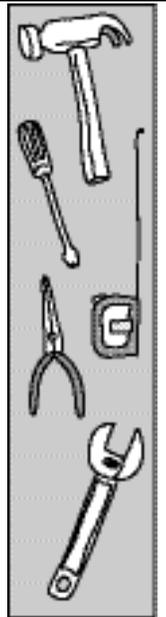
Use the Right Tools

Turn Your Conflicts Around

Conflicts are inevitable, but violence is not. It takes two to fight, but only one to turn a conflict around. Lowering the tension level and keeping a disagreement from becoming a fight takes work, and like any other job, having the right equipment makes the work easier. Be sure to carry along these conflict tools all the time, because you never know when you'll need them.

Work Together to Work Things Out

- Use words like "let's," "we," "our" and "together."
- Identify the problem without blaming the other person.
- Call the other person by name.
- Relax your face and body.
- Ask to hear the other point of view.
- Show respect for the other person.
- Use a calm voice.



**When Parents & Teens Disagree:
Tips You Can Both Use Now**

*By Dr. Gary DuDell, Ph.D
Author and Parenting Consultant*

Seventh grade is tough for both teens and parents. During these years, teens need to establish themselves as different from their parents. But this inevitable conflict can be an opportunity for everyone to grow.

Parents:

Don't just say no when your teens ask permission to do things they've never done before. Take your time making up your mind.

Get more information. Ask, "Who else is going? How will you get home?" With the details, you will be able to make a better decision.

Request more time. Let your

child know you are really thinking it over, and not just delaying a negative response.

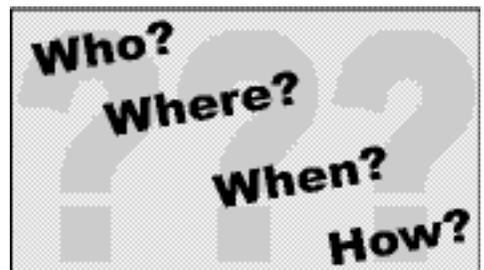
Teens:

Ask, don't tell. Parents are more likely to say "yes" to requests than to demands.

Pick a good time. Parents are more likely to consider your request when they aren't involved in something else.

Be aware of their concerns.

Your parent is concerned about your safety and will need details about what you want to do. Before you ask, know the details - Who's going? Where? When? How are you getting there and back?



When you feel anger flaring up, don't react in that same old style!

A racing pulse, a pounding heart, a reddening face—these are ways that our bodies respond to anger. But the burst of extra energy that comes with anger can interfere with our ability to think. There are many poor ways to handle anger. These anger styles are hazardous to both your relationships and your health. (In other words, they don't work so hot!)



Try these great ways to CHILL!

Don't hold on to your hostility or hurt someone else with it. Instead, when you feel angry, CHILL! Three great ways to chill are shown below.



Distract Yourself
Take your mind off the situation for a while. You can whistle, take a walk, count to ten or think about something silly.



Relax
Calm your body. Concentrate on unclenching your fists and shake the anger out of your hands.



Talk to Yourself
Research says that this is one of the best things to do to manage anger. Be sure to tell yourself calming things.

Resources

Wonderful Websites

The National Institute for Child Health and Human Development: www.nichd.nih.gov

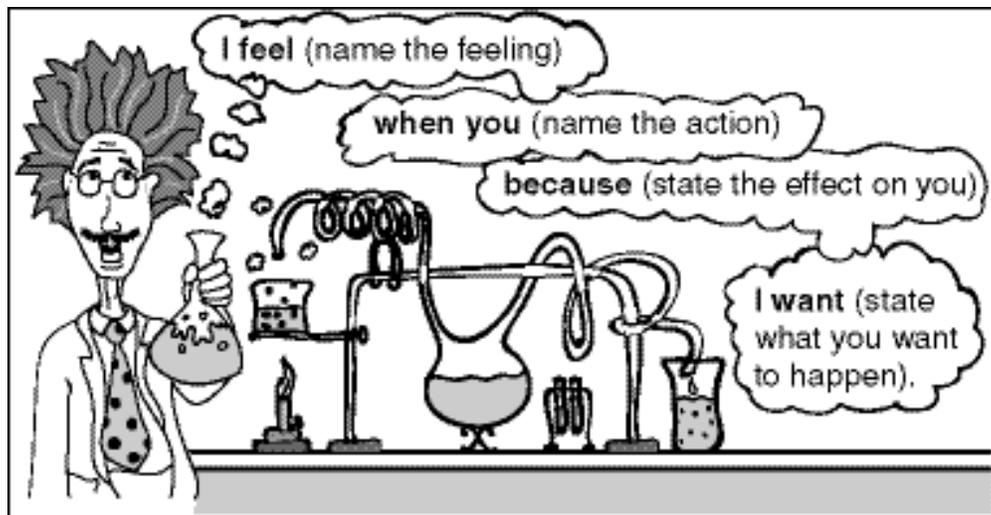
The NICHD, in partnership with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, has created a booklet that incorporates three decades of research on effective parenting techniques and healthy child development. The booklet is called **Adventures in Parenting: How Responding, Preventing, Monitoring, Mentoring, and Modeling Can Help You Be a Successful Parent**. For a copy of the booklet, go to publications/pubs/adv_in_parenting_final.pdf and download.

Mendez Foundation: www.mendezfoundation.org

This site is produced by the Mendez Foundation, the developers of *Too Good For Violence*. It has information on drug/violence prevention and wellness. You may order Mendez products such as T-shirts and pencils by visiting the on-line store.

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The Communication Formula



When Parents & Teens Disagree: Tips You Can Both Use Now

By Dr. Gary DuDell, Ph.D

Author and Parenting Consultant

Many conflicts between teens and parents concern freedom and responsibility. Here are some tips to help both kids and parents survive seventh grade.

Parents:

Ask what your teen thinks.

When teens ask for permission to do things they've never done before, ask, "What do you think about this idea? Does it seem safe to you?"

Get other opinions. When faced with a tough request, talk it over with a spouse or other parents if you don't feel comfortable making the decision on your own.

Set clear limits and enforce them. Remember that teenagers need more privileges and more

responsibility as they mature. Gradually allow more freedom as your teenagers show that they can handle it. When you let them make decisions, hold them accountable for the consequences.

Teens:

Be responsible. When your parents give you more freedom, show that you are mature enough to do new things responsibly.

Own up to your mistakes. When you make a mistake, tell your parents and accept the

consequences. When they know you're mature enough to handle mistakes well, they'll give you more opportunities.

Experiment with the communication formula (shown above) when you have a conflict with another family member. Using the "I-message" formula tells the other person what the problem is in a clear and non-threatening way. It's a scientific method for finding solutions.

A Search for Solutions to Conflicts

Directions: Fill in the blanks and then find the words.

A _____ may be a small disagreement or a large fight.

Instead of answering a put-down with a put-down, use a _____ come-back.

We can _____ a conflict better when we see it, not as my problem or your problem, but _____ problem.

When a conflict comes up, agree to _____, not fight, it out.



To listen well, restate the other person's side and _____ if you have understood.

We can think of more solutions when we _____ together.

When we cooperate, both of us can _____ and neither has to _____.

Respect for _____ means knowing that their opinions, wants and needs are important, even when they are not like your own.

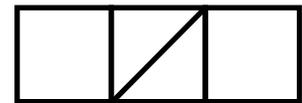
Directions: First try to solve these problems separately. Then try working together to solve them.

No Need To Feel Boxed In

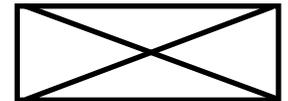
- Agree to work together to solve the problem.
- Get both points of view.
Ask how the other person sees it.
- Brainstorm as many solutions as you can.
- Choose a solution you both like.

Directions: First try to solve these problems separately. Then try working together to solve them.

Try to draw these figures without taking your pencil off the paper or going over any line twice.



Now try to draw these figures. Which ones can you draw without lifting the pencil?



Resources

Recommended Reading

And Words Can Hurt Forever: How to Protect Adolescents from Bullying, Harassment, and Emotional Violence, by James Garbarino and Ellen deLara. Free Press 2002. A must read for parents and educators.

Wonderful Website

Mendez Foundation: www.mendezfoundation.org

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