

## Violence: Saving our Homes, Schools & Workplaces

Often people who act violently have trouble controlling their feelings. They may have been hurt by others. Some think that making people fear them through violence or threats of violence will solve their problems or earn them respect. This isn't true. People who behave violently lose respect. They find themselves isolated or disliked, and they still feel angry or frustrated.

If you see these immediate warning signs, violence is a serious possibility:

- Loss of temper on a daily basis
- Frequent physical fighting
- Significant vandalism or property damage
- Increase in use of alcohol or drugs
- Increase in risk-taking behavior
- Detailed plans to commit acts of violence
- Announcing threats or plans for hurting others
- Enjoying hurting animals
- Carrying a weapon

If you notice the following signs over a period of time, the potential for violence exists:

- A history of violent or aggressive behavior
- Serious drug or alcohol use
- Gang membership or strong desire to be in a gang
- Access to or fascination with weapons, especially guns
- Threatening others regularly
- Trouble controlling feelings of anger
- Withdrawal from friends and usual activities
- Feeling rejected or alone
- Having been a victim of bullying

- Feeling constantly rejected

If you recognize any of the warning signs for violent behavior in yourself, get help. You don't have to live with the guilt, sadness and frustration that comes from hurting others.

Admitting you have a concern about hurting others is the first step. The second is to talk with a trusted adult such as a school counselor or psychologist, teacher, family member, friend or clergy. They can get you in touch with a licensed mental health professional who cares and can help.

