

...strengthening your child's foundation through life skills education.SM

YOUTH VIOLENCE FACTS

In addition to physical fights, gang violence and assaults with weapons, youth violence includes a range of behaviors that includes bullying, threats and suicide. While juvenile arrest rates for violent crimes are on the decline, youth violence continues to be a widespread problem as shown by the following statistics:

- ✎ About 1 in 3 high school students in a nationwide survey say they have been in a physical fight in the past year.
- ✎ Youth under 18 years of age account for about 15% of violent crime arrests.
- ✎ According to a national survey, for every teen arrested, at least 10 were engaged in serious violence which could have resulted in injury or death of another.
- ✎ Suicide is the third leading cause of death among teenagers.

WHO IS AT RISK FOR ENGAGING IN VIOLENT BEHAVIOR?

Typically young people who present the following signs are at greater risk, although many young people can show some of these signs and never resort to violence. They are however important issues and should be addressed:

- ✎ Early involvement in risky, violent or aggressive behaviors
- ✎ Family history of violent behavior; witnessing violence in the home
- ✎ Lack of adult supervision or support
- ✎ Animal cruelty or fire setting behaviors
- ✎ Use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs
- ✎ Gang or cult involvement
- ✎ Friendships with antisocial or delinquent peers
- ✎ Lack of healthy peer relationships or social isolation
- ✎ Bullying, threatening or intimidating peers or younger children
- ✎ Being a victim of bullying, abuse or neglect
- ✎ Preoccupation with violent themes in music, books, movies and websites

WHAT WORKS TO PREVENT YOUTH VIOLENCE?

Parents, educators and community members have access to a range of effective violence prevention programs and strategies. These include after school programs, mentoring programs, and programs that teach effective life skills. Young people can also make a commitment to:

- ✎ Respect others and value differences
- ✎ Get involved in positive, healthy activities
- ✎ Tell a trusted adult or authorities if there are threats of violence or danger
- ✎ Take a stand to promote non-violence in schools and communities

Resources: www.cdc.gov | www.umdj.edu/vinjweb | www.safeyouth.org