

# **Creating Safe Places for Our Children – A Job for the Entire Community**

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Creating safe places for our children is Promise 2 and keeping it is essential to the successful delivery of the other four. If we can't keep our children safe, and alive, how can we expect them to learn marketable skills, form relationships with caring adults, give back to their communities and look forward to a healthy future? We can't, of course.

The National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) has developed lists of what we: parents, teachers, students, principals and law enforcement can do to help stop school violence. Here is the to-do list for the general community.

1. Adopt a school. Help students, faculty, and staff to promote a sense of community in the school and with the larger community through involvement in a wide range of programs and activities.
2. Help to strengthen links between school services and the network of community services that can help students and families facing problems.
3. Join with school and law enforcement in creating and sustaining safe corridors for students traveling to and from school. Help with efforts to identify and eliminate neighborhood trouble spots.
4. Help students through such opportunities as job skills development, entrepreneurship opportunities, and internships.
5. Encourage employees to work with students in skills training, youth group leadership, mentoring, coaching, and similar one-to-one and small group activities. Make your facilities available for these activities when possible.
6. Provide anger management, stress relief, and conflict resolution training for your employees. They can help build an anti-violence climate at home, at school, and in the community. You might gain a more productive working environment, too!

7. Speak up in support of funding and effective implementation of programs and other resources that help schools develop an effective set of violence prevention strategies.
8. Offer your professional skills in educating students on costs and effects of violence in the community (including their school). Public health personnel, trauma specialists, defense and prosecuting attorneys, and judges are among those with important messages to deliver.
9. Help employees who are parents to meet with teachers by providing flexible hours or time off; encourage employee involvement in sponsoring or coaching students in school and after-school activities.
10. Develop an anti-violence competition, including speech, dance, painting, drawing, singing, instrumental music, acting, play-writing, and other creative arts. Get youth to help suggest prizes. Make it a community celebration.
11. Report crimes or suspicious activities to police immediately. Encourage employees and families to do the same.
12. Establish business policies that explicitly reject violent behavior by employees or others on the premises.

Excerpted from *Stopping School Violence*, a supplement to *Making Children, Families, and Communities Safer From Violence*, a free publication from the NCPC.