

## MEDIA VIOLENCE

- Discuss with your children the definition of violence.
- Encourage alternative activities for entertainment for children (puzzles, drawing, reading).
- Decrease the dependence on television as a babysitter.
- Identify normal habits of your family and media (hours, usage and monitoring)
- Monitor what your children watch and the number of hours they are exposed to various media (TV, video games, music)
- Keeping video games, TV and computers out of bedrooms makes supervision easier.
- Praise children for making good viewing decisions.
- Help children select non-violent toys and to use non-violent language.
- Use monitoring tools when available such as the V-chip and create rating systems.
- Help children understand the difference between fantasy and reality.
- Talk to your children about the characteristics that they think a hero should have (intelligence, courage, kind, good behavior that helps others rather than hurt them).
- Discuss the difference between consequences of real life violence and fantasy violence.
- Discuss any feelings associated with the different things they see on TV (How do they feel when they see someone get punched? Then ask them how it would make them feel if they were the person being punched.)
- Discuss non-violent problem solving techniques (talking, walking away)
- Children learn from watching you, so lead by example and avoid using violent language or acting aggressively.
- Create family media rules, this will give your children a sense of ownership and encourage them to follow the rules.
- Explain to your children that with every action there are consequences, these consequences are not always shown in media.

**By the end of elementary school children have seen over 110,000 acts of violence.**

**Remind children that they always have choices in life and violence should never be a choice.**