

Community Members

- Law enforcement can report on the type of crimes in the surrounding community and suggest ways to make schools safer.
- Community-based groups, church organizations, and other service groups can provide counseling, extended learning programs, before- and after-school activities, school watches, and other community crime prevention programs.
- Local businesses can provide apprenticeship programs, participate in the adopt-a-school programs, or serve as mentors to area students.

Colleges and universities can offer conflict management courses to teachers or assist school officials in developing violence prevention curricula.

**Texas Crime Prevention
Association**

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Safe Schools

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When crime, drugs, and violence spill over from the streets into the schools, providing a safe learning environment becomes increasingly difficult. More students carry weapons for protection. Gunfights replace fistfights. Many students must travel through drug dealer or gang turf. Violence becomes an acceptable way to settle conflicts.

When this happens, children cannot learn and teachers cannot teach.

Creating a safe place where children can learn and grow depends on a partnership among students, parents, teachers, and other community institutions to prevent school violence:

- Find out how crime threatens schools in your community.
- Take actions to protect children.
- Promote nonviolent ways to manage conflict.

How do these ideas translate into action? Here are some practical suggestions for young people, parents and school staff, and others in the community.

Students

- Settle arguments with words, not fists or weapons.
- Report crimes or suspicious activities to the police, school authorities, or parents.
- Learn safe routes for traveling to and from school, and know good places to seek help.
- Don't use alcohol or other drugs, and stay away from places and people associated with them.
- Get involved in your school's anti-violence activities -- have poster contests against violence, hold anti-drug rallies, volunteer to counsel peers. If there's no program, help start one.

Parents

- Sharpen your parenting skills. Emphasize and build on your children's strengths.
- Teach your children how to reduce their risks of becoming crime victims.
- Know where your kids are, what they are doing, and whom they are with at all times.
- Help your children learn nonviolent ways to handle frustration, anger, and conflict.
- Become involved in your child's school activities -- PTA, field trips, and helping out in class or the lunch room.

School Staff

- Evaluate your school's safety objectively. Set targets for improvement.
- Develop consistent disciplinary policies, good security procedures, and a response plan for emergencies.
- Train school personnel in conflict resolution, problem solving, drug prevention, crisis intervention, cultural sensitivity, classroom management, and counseling skills.
- Work with students, parents, law enforcement, local governments, and community-based groups to develop wider-scope crime prevention efforts.