

Dear Educators, Parents, and Community Members

Welcome to this resource guide, a companion to the interactive television program *Safe Passage: Voices from the Middle School*. National Middle School Association, together with Court TV, the U. S. Department of Education, Cable in the Classroom, AT&T Broadband, the Y.W.C.A. of the USA, the Hazelden/Johnson Institute, and other partners have produced this program in order to help our young people navigate their young adolescent years securely and safely.

Twenty-eight middle level students from across the country came together to work with Court TV anchor-woman Catherine Crier and NBC's Al Roker to discuss how to guarantee the safe passage of our young people from childhood to adulthood. Listen to these young voices as they describe their lives in *Safe Passage: Voices from the Middle School*. They want schools that are safe, adults who are caring and involved, and safety nets in place when things get difficult. Most importantly, they are eager to work collaboratively with adults to derail violence, eliminate the power of the bully, and reach for high academic goals.

At National Middle School Association, we recognize that educators are under increasing pressure to help students meet state and local academic standards, which often leaves little time for topics that fall outside the core curriculum. This guide contains many suggestions for modifying the school environment, both inside and outside of the classroom, in order to develop and sustain a safe and welcoming environment for all students. We want to stress that this is not a curricular "add-on." School-wide implementation of suggestions such as these creates a significant and necessary "updraft" for raising academic achievement.

All of us have a stake in helping our young people navigate these critical transition years securely and safely. This resource guide presents many options for developing and maintaining safe and welcoming environments within the school, at home, and in the community. We hope you will use these resources to equip young adolescents with the skills and values necessary to establish positive, peaceful environments for optimum success. Thank you for your efforts on behalf of young adolescents!

Sincerely,



Sue Swaim
Executive Director
National Middle School Association





A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITIES

Safe Passage Resource Guide and Video

To order more copies of this resource guide and the video that includes a collection of ideas for use with school, families, and communities, call Hazelden-CourtTV Hotline at 1-888-328-9000.

Table of Contents

Where to Start

- A Valued Member of the School4
- A Valued Member of the Home4-5
- A Valued Member of the Community5-6

Handling Harassment

- At School: Handling Harassment7
- At Home: Learning to Cope with Difficulties7-8
- At School: The School Bully8
- At Home: What to Do About the School Bully8
- Recognizing Signs of Bullying and Characteristics of Victims8-9
- Characteristics of Kids Who Bully9

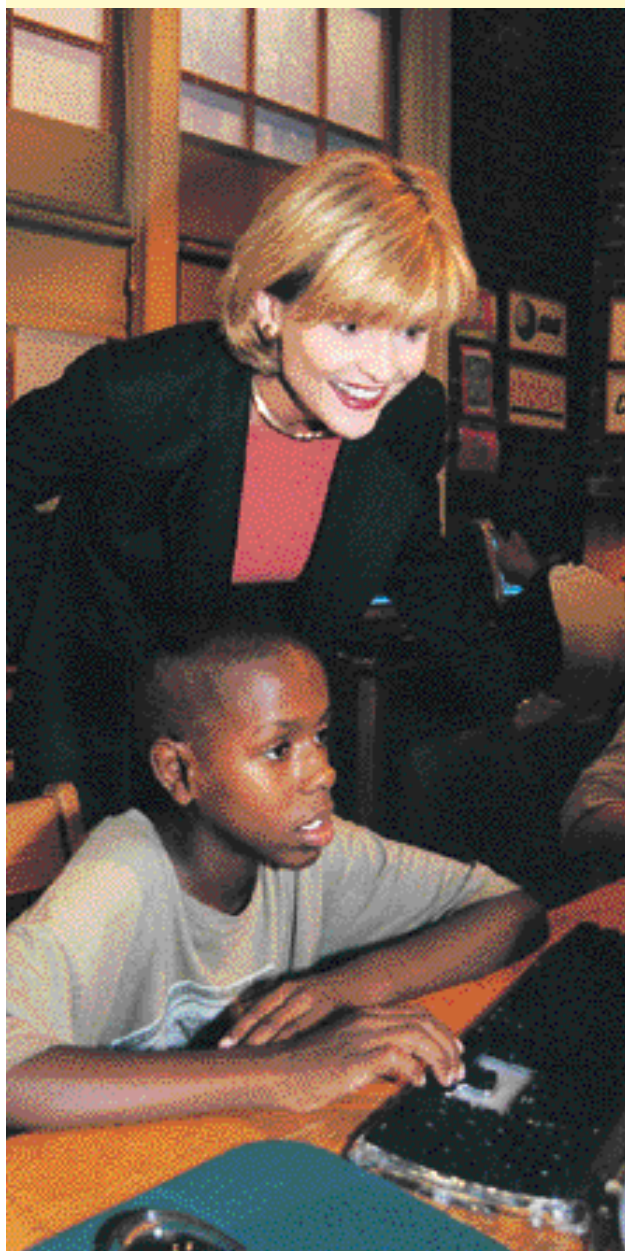
Building a Safe Environment

- The Neighborhood Contribution to a Safe Environment11
- Skill Building for Positive Relationships at School11
- Pick a Skill, Any Skill11-12
- Skill Building for Positive Relationships at Home13

Conclusion14-15

Resources16

About Our Partners17-18



Where to Start?

THIS GUIDE, AND THE ACCOMPANYING VIDEO (SEE BACK COVER PAGE) CAN HELP PARENTS, TEACHERS AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS EASE THE UNDERLYING CAUSES OF CONFLICT AND FEAR AMONG YOUNG ADOLESCENTS. Remember to

include young people in your conversations. Their insight and investment is essential to the success of any intervention. By working together we can help them become strong, resilient adults.

“If you don’t fit in it’s just a terrible experience. I mean, no one wants to talk to you, no one wants to like sit with you at lunch, sit with you in class. it makes you feel like you don’t even want to go to school anymore.”**

—James, age 13

* Quote from Safe Passage television program.



A Valued Member of the School

Transitioning through a middle level school often includes new classmates, teachers, and expectations, while testing new ways of thinking and feeling. Old relationships change and new options often become apparent. Of critical importance is the need to be valued by one’s peers and to be a part of a significant group. It is during this time that one’s need to belong may override sound decision making and formerly positive patterns of behavior. Educators can promote belonging, allegiance, identity, inclusion, sensitivity, and the positive involvement of every individual. With purposeful action everyone can be seen as a valued member of the learning community.

William Purkey, in his book *Inviting School Success: A Self-Concept Approach to Teaching, Learning and Democratic Practice* (1996), offers many suggestions for teachers, among them are:

- **Create “inviting” classrooms and school**

Create environments which let students know that they are able, valuable, and responsible; that they have opportunities to participate in their own development; and that they are pleasantly invited to take advantage of these opportunities. Smiles, consistency, sensitivity, achievable goals, recognition of personal and class effort, and positive feedback characterize an inviting learning environment. An inviting message is an effort to establish a cooperative interaction.

A “dis-inviting” message tells students that they are irresponsible, incapable, and worthless, and that they cannot participate in activities of any significance. Frowns, punishment, sarcasm, and negative feedback characterize dis-inviting learning environments. There may also be well meaning, but condescending, thoughtless, or patronizing remarks. Students see these classes as boring, busy work, and insensitive to their thoughts and feelings. A dis-inviting message is an effort to establish a controlling interaction.

- **Utilize the Rule of the Five C’s to Manage Conflict**

The *Five C’s* described by Purkey are *concern*, *confer*, *consult*, *confront*, and *combat*. The rule is to employ the lowest *c* first and move upward through higher *c’s* only as necessary. Purkey also encourages teachers to handle challenges in the most decent, respectful, and caring way. This approach provides a practical way to resolve concerns with the least amount of time and energy, with minimal emotional costs, and most important, in the most humane and respectful manner possible. This approach, if implemented school-wide, provides a climate in which conflict management and peer mediation programs may be successfully established.

A Valued Member of the Home

Young adolescents have certain psychological tasks to accomplish between the ages of 10 and 15. They grow in independence as individuals, as learners, and as members of society. There are lots of hurdles, though: peer pressure, an increasingly violent society, and socially negative media messages. How will they

ever become the accomplished young men and women we know they are capable of being?

Children who are successful have a strong sense of *connectedness*. Connectedness means that the child derives satisfaction from people (family members or other adults) with whom he or she feels connected and valued. One of the ways connections can be established and maintained between parents and children is by inviting children's participation in an activity that encourages *conversation* coupled with *effort*. This expands the opportunities to increase connectedness and communication that, for many parents, is often limited to "car time."

By spending purposeful time with adults, children learn they are a valuable member of the family. Parents can seek opportunities for their children to meaningfully connect through participation in projects or events that include extended family and friends (National Middle School Association, 1998).



"...parents are still the strongest role model for those children. Parents have to stay involved with them particularly to be able to pick up any symptoms of difficulties..."*

**—Alvin Poussaint
Harvard psychiatrist
and noted author**

* Quote from Safe Passage television program.

Provide a climate in which *conflict management and peer mediation* programs may be *successfully established*.

More than any time except infancy, young people need adult support during their middle school years. Yet they will act as if that support is the thing they value least. While it is true that middle schoolers become more dependent on their peers for figuring out how to belong, it does not mean that they are ready to be released from the supervision and value focus of their families.

A Valued Member of the Community

The immediate and extended family is not the only place where children learn that they are valued and valuable. Research confirms the more support young people receive from their community, the more likely they are to lead successful lives. Many communities have positive youth development programs in place that build the competencies of youth and prepare them to become active and involved citizens. Youth development programs approach youth as resources, providing young people with quality after-school and summer programs that offer constructive activities in safe, caring environments.

SAFE PASSAGE TIPS

- 1.** Help young adolescents appreciate the changes that are happening in their lives. Avoid putting the past or the future in a more positive light than the present. (Growing up is great!)
- 2.** Make sure your child has the skills needed to address problems without violence, remembering that pushing, shoving, teasing and put downs are sometimes preludes to more serious conflicts.
- 3.** Listen, listen, and listen. All this change is stressful for young people. They need to know that you're there for them when they need you.
- 4.** Try to find a moment each day when you can show your child how much you care about him/her. Put a positive note in your child's lunch, leave a positive voicemail message or share a well-timed hug (Giannetti and Sagarese, 1997, p. 16).
- 5.** Connect conversation with effort by participating in fitness activities like biking, skating, jogging at a conversational pace; building or repairing something together; painting a room; doing yard work; a family service project, etc.

Communities can focus their efforts by working together to provide youth with the following five resources from America's Promise—The Alliance for Youth:

- Ongoing relationships with caring adults—parents, mentors, tutors or coaches
- Safe places with structured activities during the non-school hours
- A healthy start and future
- Marketable skills through effective education
- Opportunities to give back through community service.

When communities rally around young people, everyone wins.

- Youth gain self-esteem when valued as problem-solvers
- Families and communities connect around a common goal to support and involve young people
- Youth are exposed to a wide range of opportunities and diverse groups of people
- Through service, youth are empowered to make a difference in their communities
- Youth receive affirmation and support from caring adults in addition to family support
- Youth develop the skills and competencies that they need to make responsible choices now and as adults.

SAFE PASSAGE TIPS

1. Involve youth in program design and implementation.
2. Begin a neighborhood conversation to determine what programs are available to young people.
3. Inquire about service learning programs available through schools and other community organizations.
4. Go online to find out what is available in your community at www.servenet.org.
5. Contact the local United Way, America's Promise, or volunteer centers to determine options in your area. Bring together organizations such as the YWCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA, 4-H, Junior Achievement and religious organizations in order to determine what is available and how they can best work together to address the needs of youth.
6. Read "Developmental Assets" by the Search Institute, Minneapolis, MN which details ways schools, parents, and community organizations can bolster the development of attributes important for the personal and academic success of our youth.

"We know it takes at least five caring adults to make a difference in the life of a child and parents are only one part of that."*

**—Ginny Markel,
President National PTA**

* Quote from Safe Passage television program.



Handling Harassment



At School: Handling Harassment

PRODUCTIVE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES REQUIRE EMOTIONAL INVESTMENT ON THE PART OF THE LEARNER. For example, it is not possible to engage fully in learning when sexual harassment or intimidation is part of the hallway, class-change scenario. This is as true for the bystanders and observers of negative behavior as it is for the victim and perpetrator of harassment. Harassment often results in students not wanting to go to school, not wanting to talk as much in class, finding it hard to pay attention, making lower grades on tests, thinking about changing schools, or even doubting whether they have what it takes to graduate from school.

According to the National School Safety Center, "The Right to Safe Schools" amended section of the California constitution was passed because it was believed that school children are twice victimized when

- They become actual victims of school-related crime, violence, disruption, or fear;
- They are thereby denied their right to a quality education in a tranquil learning environment.

All students have the right to feel safe and welcomed in their school. Litigation has reinforced the need for schools to protect students from harassment through a series of important steps. The steps are outlined in an excellent video and manual of instructional strategies and student activities for middle school students and staff entitled *Sexual Harassment: It's Hurting People*, which discusses recommendations that address hostile and intimidating environments including

- The development and adoption of school district policies;
- Purposeful professional development that clearly defines harassment and helps to separate "normal" behavior from harassment;

- Professional development which addresses appropriate responses to harassment;
- Student focused lessons which encourage appropriate behavior and define inappropriate behavior that will trigger school intervention under the harassment policy;
- Student-focused lessons which empower students to seek appropriate resolution of harassment situations; and
- Student-focused lessons designed to alter normative/supportive bystander behaviors to rebuke harassment by peers.

Ignoring harassment will not end it. The establishment of a tranquil learning environment is a school-wide task with school-wide benefits.

At Home: Learning to Cope with Difficulties

Young children are quite protected by their teachers and families. If a big dog barks, parents pick up their children so they won't be afraid or bitten. If a child says something mean to another in class, the teacher steps in to make the first child apologize and smooth things over.

In middle school, though, protections disappear. Because young adolescents are more independent and are old enough to go places and be in certain limited circumstances on their own, they have to deal with people and situations on their own as well. The most common experience shared by almost all middle schoolers, is the person who, in reality or perception, peer or adult, makes fun of them or puts them down. Since the "put down" is the most common form of humor in the media, it isn't surprising that young adolescents adopt it with each other as an ordinary form of conversation. Additionally, since some middle schoolers are experiencing a decrease in self-esteem, even teasing remarks can be extremely hurtful.

No child will escape the cruelties of being left out or being teased about something. Sometimes siblings, parents, grandparents, teachers, neighbors, shopkeepers and, well, almost the whole world seem difficult to a middle schooler. Young adolescents can learn to negotiate their way through these encounters without blowing up, throwing a tantrum, or walking away frustrated and convinced the other person is “stupid.” Those who do learn how to maintain their relationships in spite of disagreements have learned a wonderful lifelong lesson.

SAFE PASSAGE TIPS

1. Talk with your middle schooler about ways to deal with difficult people. Teach your child how to respond in these situations without becoming violent or overly sensitive. Remind your child of similar instances you experienced and how you handled them.
2. See if your child’s school or a local community organization offers a conflict resolution class—there are lots of materials available, and every middle level school and community should be able to provide this experience.
3. If a young person shares fears or worries about a difficult person or group of persons, listen carefully and then check out the situation in a calm and discreet manner.
4. Avoid using put downs as an ordinary form of humor. Work with kids to find other ways of being humorous without hurting feelings.
5. Be aware of young persons—your child or others—who use violent language and/or regularly play violent games (including violent video games). Such habits of violence can lead to violent behavior.
6. Encourage kids to see their good qualities and to recite them when they feel that they are being teased. Help them see how being able to laugh at oneself can take the sting out of some encounters.
7. Make sure your child’s school has strict rules about violent talk and/or violent behavior among both adults and students.
8. Educate your children about firearm safety. Make absolutely certain fire arms in the home are not accessible to children (Giannetti and Sagarese, 1997, p. 129).

At School: The School Bully

In a survey reported in the Program Directors Manual of the *No-Bullying Program: Preventing Bully/Victim Violence at School*, 20 percent of students surveyed avoided hallways, 43 percent avoided school restrooms, 50 percent knew of a student who switched schools to feel safer, and 63 percent said they would learn more if they felt safer at school.

Of significant concern, however, is the reality expressed by only 25 percent of students who reported that teachers intervene in bullying situations, while 71 percent of teachers believed they always intervene (Lajoie, et.al, 1997, p. xi). This disparity highlights the need for specific attention to the problem of bullying at school, for the sake of the victims as well as the perpetrators of bullying behavior.

Providing teachers with strategies for successfully dealing with bullying behavior is the focus of a publication available from National Middle School Association entitled *Take Action Against Bullying*. “Research has clearly shown that those who bully do not respond to social skill work. What schools need is a research-based, educational model to deal with bully/victim violence in the school, to help schools become violence-free, and thus to create for our children” a great childhood without violence!” (Bitney & Title, 1997, p.5).

At Home: What to Do About the School Bully

Studies have shown that bullying behaviors include not only forms of physical aggression, but also emotional harassment, social alienation, and both subtle and overt intimidation (hurting someone’s body or things, hurting someone’s feelings, or hurting someone’s friendships).

Imbalance of power is the primary quality that characterizes bullying. That imbalance might be due to superior physical strength, but it also might issue from superior intelligence or from sources such as economics, ethnicity, social skill, weapons, or information. Those who engage in bullying behavior take unfair advantage of a weaker party. (Bitney & Title, Program Director’s Manual, 1997, p.7).

Bullying is more than a single act. It is a pattern of behavior. Those who bully repeatedly engage in conflicts that they are sure to win due to their superior power, and they are merciless in their tactics (Bitney & Title, Program Director’s Manual, 1997, p.7).

Recognizing Signs of Bullying and Characteristics of Victims

When a child has been repeatedly victimized, certain behaviors and attitudes tend to emerge which are

inconsistent with his/her typical behaviors. Often children are too embarrassed and humiliated to report victimization. The following guidelines will help to identify a child who may be victimized.

The child

- Is disinterested in and reluctant to go to school
- Complains of headaches, stomach aches or other untraceable illnesses
- Is depressed, apathetic, or loses sleep
- Is reluctant to talk about daily happenings at school.

The *No-Bullying Teacher's Program: Preventing Bully/Victim Violence at School* teacher's manual lists characteristics of passive and provocative victims of bullying. Kids who are *passive* victims

- Rarely tell about being bullied because they think it will make matters worse, and they don't think adults can help
- May carry weapons for protection
- May use money or toys as bribes for protection.

Kids who are *provocative* victims

- Are pesky and repeatedly irritate others
- Are quick-tempered and prone to fight back
- Sometimes look as if they are bullies themselves, but unlike true bullies, they always lose in the end.

Characteristics of Kids Who Bully

Bullying is a learned behavior and can be un-learned. If bullies don't learn how to change their behavior, the pattern of bullying behavior often becomes a habit as the bully gets older (Lajoi, et.al, 1997, p.19).

The *No-Bullying Teacher's Program: preventing bully/victim violence at school* teacher's manual lists the following characteristics of kids who bully

- Enjoy feelings of power and control
- Lack compassion and empathy for their victims and actually blame the victims
- Do not have low self-esteem
- Are successful at hiding their bullying behavior

In identifying bullying behavior, it is important to note that boys more often use physical force, insults, and threats while girls more often rely on social alienation and intimidation, such as excluding their victims, threatening them, or making them feel as if they don't belong.

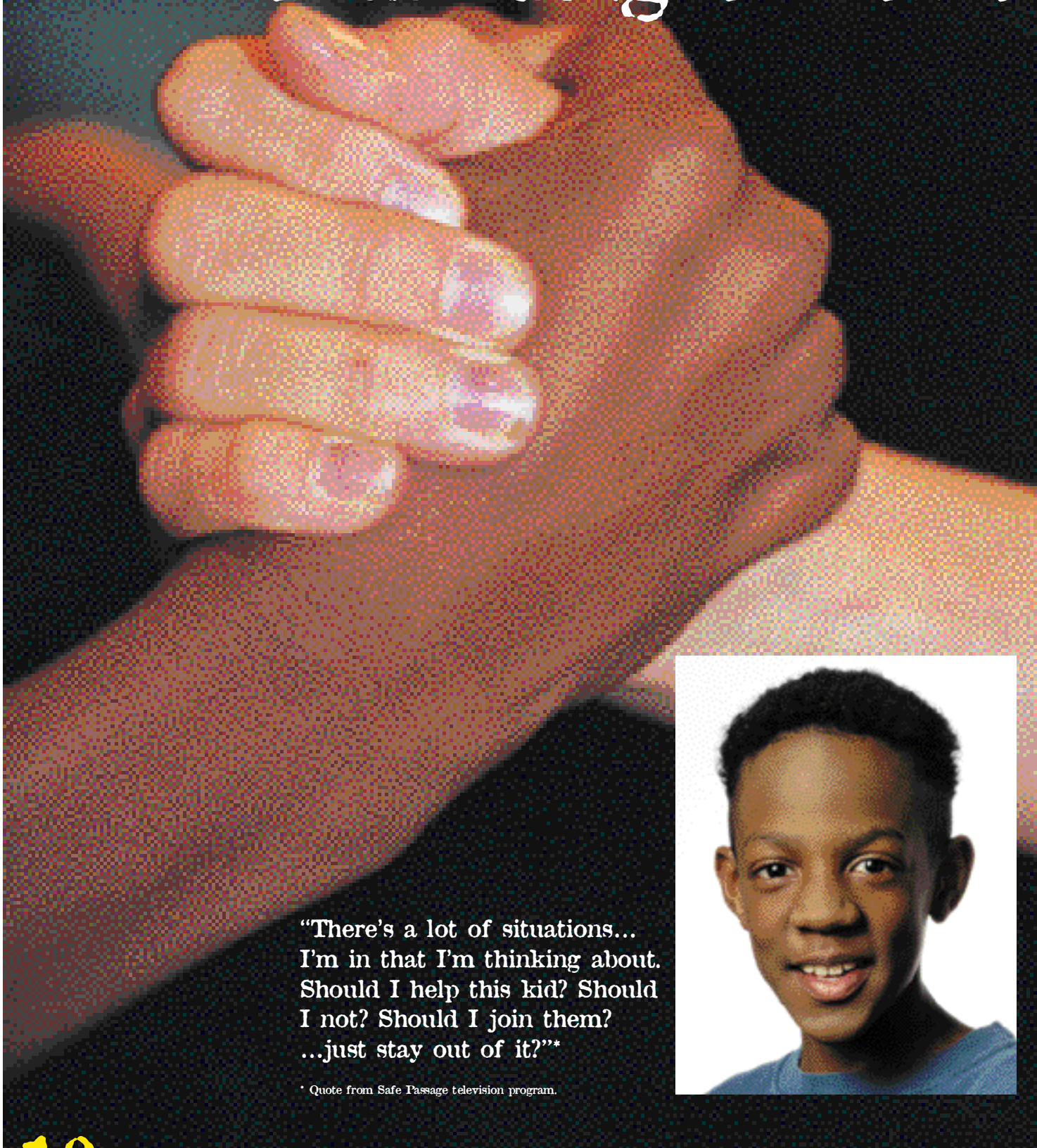
Bullying occurs where there is an imbalance of power. It is, therefore, a problem that requires adult intervention. Victims cannot solve a bullying problem on their own.

SAFE PASSAGE TIPS

1. One of the most effective ways for kids to combat bullying is to be connected with other kids. Engaging in meaningful activities with peers and developing connections help to protect children from bullying behavior (Lajoi, et.al, 1997, p.44).
2. Council children to report bullying. Research indicates that bullying stops when it is reported and acted upon by adults.
3. Bullies frequently get away with bullying because they are careful to hide what they are doing from adults. They look for victims who are alone and appear to lack confidence, as they pose much less resistance.
4. Bullies rely on instilling fear in the children they bully and the other children who witness the bullying. Bully behavior can be quite subtle. Once a bullying relationship has been established, a knowing look or even a smile by the bully directed to the victim can be sufficient to reinforce panic in the victim (Lajoi, et.al, 1997, p.44).
5. Students must know it is safe for them to go to an authority figure for help without fear that they will be labeled a "rat" and risk losing their place within their peer group (Lajoi, et.al, 1997, p.44).

Kids **must know** that three things will happen when they ask for help:
 - The bullying will stop.
 - It will be stopped in such a way that no one knows who reported it.
 - The bully will be treated firmly but with understanding (Lajoi, et.al, 1997, p.44).
6. Sixty percent of students are not bullied or victimized. These students hold the greatest power to stop bullying (Lajoi, et.al, 1997, p.44).
7. Encourage your child to engage in community service projects. Such activities are a great way to work with others outside of their group and to get to know people unlike themselves.
8. Work with your school and community organizations on all of the issues young people mentioned in this program. Most middle schools and youth programs welcome parental input and would appreciate assistance in getting programs started that would help young adolescents solve problems and resolve conflicts.

Building a Safe



“There’s a lot of situations...
I’m in that I’m thinking about.
Should I help this kid? Should
I not? Should I join them?
...just stay out of it?”*

* Quote from Safe Passage television program.



Environment

The Neighborhood Contribution to a Safe Environment

INDIVIDUALLY AND IN GROUPS, YOUTH NEED ADULT INTERACTION IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD, EVEN IF IT'S A WAVE OR SIMPLE, "HELLO." In addition to strengthening intergenerational links, informal adult attention will be enough to keep some children from engaging in negative behaviors.

SAFE PASSAGE TIPS

1. Encourage adults in your neighborhood to be on their front steps or porch when children are likely to be going to and from school.
2. Although your child's school may be a safe haven, sometimes the neighborhood is not. Walking to the bus stop or to school might be a dangerous situation. Work with other parents to begin or participate in a *Kids Walk-to-School* program through your local elementary or middle level school to escort students to school or waiting at bus stops.
3. Encourage community-based organizations to create safe spaces for young people in the afternoon hours.
4. Acknowledge good manners and courtesy on the part of children. Remember that such practices are *caught* more than *taught*...you are an important role model.
5. Make an effort to "catch" children doing the right thing and reinforce positive behavior with a comment or smile.

Skill Building for Positive Relationships at School

Despite all efforts to create a positive environment, there will still be conflicts among people. Two primary issues must be addressed consistently within a school in order to productively respond to specific concerns. First, the attitudes that draw people to gather around a potential fight, encourage escalation of conflict, or silently witness harassment must be changed. An example of helpful materials that address normative change is *Get Real About Violence* by Comprehensive Health Education Foundation. The bystander's response to conflict can be changed to one of de-escalation, supporting mediation and the involvement of adults in the derailment of negative behaviors.

Second, all teachers must know and understand the skill development used in the prevention programs and health curricula in their school building. Skill development around decision making, negotiation, refusal, and anger management are typically introduced in prevention programming and life-skill lessons. Skill acquisition is not skill inoculation. In order to become accessible tools, the skills must be seen, heard, and used by young adolescents over time and across content areas.

Pick a Skill, Any Skill

Choose a life skill currently taught at any grade level. Teach and practice this skill with the entire staff so they may reinforce and utilize it during the school year. A good source of teaching tips and experience are persons in the building who teach special education, health education, or are assigned specific prevention programming. You may also want to work with a local youth-serving organization and partner with them to introduce violence prevention into your district.

For instance, if decision making, conflict resolution, or negotiation is the focus, learn to teach and apply one of the many models that are available such as The POWER Model for Decision-Making, Helping Kids Prevent Violence, or Negotiation Skills (see next page).

Skills must be *seen, heard, and used* by young adolescents over time and across content areas.

The **POWER** Model for Decision-Making

P

What's the **PROBLEM**?

Gather information by considering

- A description of the situation
- Facts you know about the situation/problem
- What you think is important about the situation/problem
- What your parents think/feel is important
- What your friends think/feel is important
- State the problem as specifically as possible.

O

What are the **OPTIONS**?

- State the outcome you want to achieve.
- Brainstorm options without evaluating them, looking for lots of variety.
- Pick 2-3 that you think are reasonable/feasible.

WHAT'S BEST to do?

- Evaluate your options. Consider possible good and bad outcomes of each.
- Which one is the best? Healthiest for you? For others?
- Select the option you know is right for you. (If you are having difficulty discovering this, consult with your parents or another trusted adult who has your best interests in mind.)

W

ENACT your plan.

- Write down the steps/tasks it will take to carry out your selected action.
- **NOW, DO IT!**

E

REFLECT and **REVISE**.

Reflect on the *real* outcomes and revise your strategies and be ready for the next problem/decision

- What are my thoughts and feelings now?
- How did others respond? Positive and negative outcomes?
- Did I achieve what I wanted?
- What did I learn? About myself? Others?
- What might I do differently next time?

R

-- J.G. Sowers, *Michigan Model for Comprehensive Health Education*

Conflict Resolution Without Fighting

(A Video-supported Presentation)

1. **THINK ABOUT IT**

- Who am I in conflict with?
- What's the conflict about?
- What's my part in the conflict?

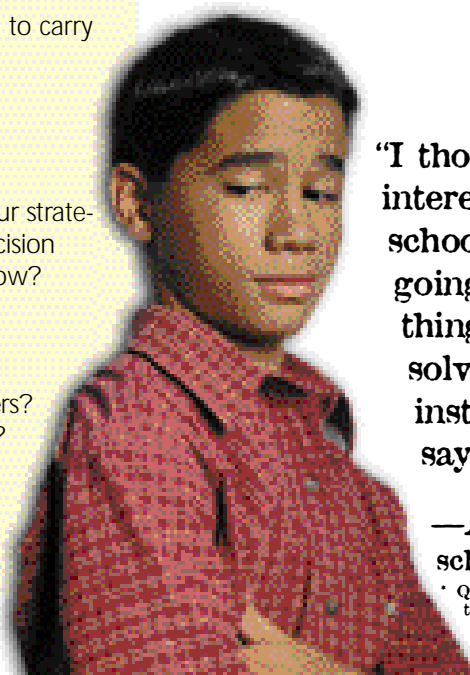
2. **TALK ABOUT IT**

- *Tell* the other person your side of the conflict and how you feel about it by using "I statements." (I feel angry when you borrow money and won't pay it back.)
- Ask the other person to give his or her side of the conflict. (How do you see it?)
- Listen to what he or she says and repeat it back. (You feel embarrassed when I yell at you to pay me back in front of your friends.)

3. **TRY TO WORK IT OUT**

- *Tell* the other person what you need, want, or expect. (I want you to keep your promises.)
- Ask the other person what he or she wants. (You want me to cut you a little slack sometimes.)
- Be *willing* to compromise. (We can work this out together even if we only agree to disagree)

Helping Kids Prevent Violence: Skill Building for Anger Management and Conflict Resolution for Middle School Children



"I thought it was more interesting that the school was actually going to do something to help us solve our problems instead of just saying, "don't fight."*

—Anthony, middle school graduate

* Quote from Safe Passage television program.

Steps (and Key Phrases) of Negotiation Skills

(Supported by a video, instructional manual, and student activities that can be utilized by parents, staff, and students at home and at school.)

1. **Ask for what you want.**
("Can I...?" "Is it okay if I...?")
2. **If you don't get it, ask why.**
("May I ask why?")
3. **Repeat the reason the other person gives you.**
("So the reason...")
4. **Offer a compromise.**
("How about...")

When your word is no good

- Pay your debts
- Use collateral
- Give references

If the person is busy

- Offer to help
- Wait for a better time
- Ask to talk later
- Ask someone else

If the person is angry

- Wait for a better time
- Ask to talk later
- Ask someone else

If the information is insufficient or vague

- Get more information

Negotiation Skills: A Skill to Help Teenagers Reduce Conflicts with Their Parents and Peers

Skill Building for Positive Relationships at Home

Young adolescents need to be clear about both the short term and long-term consequences of their behavior. Adults must not assume that young adolescents will understand who might be hurt or helped by an individual action, especially when they are being cajoled or encouraged by their peer group. Often this does not come naturally to a middle schooler, but must be taught, with patience, over and over again.

Additionally, girls and boys must be taught how to seek help when things go wrong. Seeking help is

difficult for young adolescents who wish to appear "macho" or "sophisticated" or mature. Students who work with others on community service projects, who are not allowed to engage in put downs, and who are taught to value each individual have a better chance of making it through middle school safely. Additionally, students who are taught to control their own anger and to resolve conflicts with words instead of fists move more easily through early adolescence than those who are allowed to let their feelings flow over into negative behaviors.



Seeking help is difficult for adolescents who wish to appear "macho" or "sophisticated" or mature.

SAFE PASSAGE TIPS

1. Frequent angry outbursts, increased time behind a closed door, always feeling tired or sleeping a lot, and certainly using alcohol or other drugs, are generally signs of stress. Work with your young adolescent to write down and sort out their problems, fears, and pressures. Help them make an action plan to work on eliminating some of their stressors. If alcohol or other drugs play a part, work with a counselor.
2. Find out about the life skills being taught at school or in after-school programs. Skills like decision making, negotiation or problem solving can be effectively used at home, too.
3. Help children understand that bystanders contribute to conflict by watching. Encourage your child to leave the area, support conflict resolution strategies among peers, and involve adults in the resolution of problems.

Conclusion

THE SAFE PASSAGE VIDEO PRODUCED BY COURT TV AND AVAILABLE FROM HAZELDEN INFORMATION & EDUCATION SERVICES

(1-888-328-9000) and this guide illustrate some of the issues that concern young adolescents during their middle school years.

It is clear from the comments and concerns of the young people on this video that there is much for parents, teachers, program staff and students to learn. We've offered a few tips for families to consider and a number of resources that will help adults at home, at school, and in the community develop strategies and skills to address young adolescent concerns.

The passage from infancy to childhood is a joyful one when it takes place in an understanding and nurturing environment and children are allowed to progress at their own rate. The same is true of the passage through early adolescence, except that now the young person can be a more active participant in the journey.

Nothing is more effective in helping individuals get through a challenging time than giving them a chance to talk about it. Let *Safe Passage: Voices from the Middle School* be an opportunity to continue these important discussions. Non-judgmental conversations are an important method for getting youth and their families to talk out their fears, hopes, and dreams and

to work together on strategies for making the passage through middle school years a safe and enjoyable one.

Shaping a School's Progress

The following elements are fundamental to successful prevention programming. We thank Rick Wormeli, a middle school teacher, for his insightful remarks.

1. Whatever program is adopted, it must be done *with* and not *to* students.
2. Program principles must *permeate*, becoming a way of life in the entire school.
3. The program must be substantive ... more than a pledge to non-violence.
4. The program must include regular engagement between adults and youth.
5. The program must be consistently applied throughout the school.
6. The program must be maintained and monitored regularly.

Nothing is more **effective in helping individuals** get through a challenging time than giving them a **chance to talk about it.**



Safe Passage

Voices from the Middle School

A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITIES

ALTHOUGH MOST OF US SAY WE LIKE CHANGE, WE PROBABLY REALLY MEAN THAT WE LIKE A LITTLE EXCITEMENT AND VARIETY IN OUR LIVES. Real change is another story.

Dramatic change—the kind that happens between the ages of 10 and 15—is often unsettling and can be very hard to get used to. The young adolescent years bring significant shifts to nearly every aspect of a child's life.

All young adolescents will feel moments of self-consciousness and insecurity during these years. Most will experience considerable stress and puzzling changes in their relationships with friends and adults. Unfortunately, some others may forge unhealthy friendships or join a gang to feel that they belong. Some may turn to violence in reaction to the teasing and bullying that too often is a part of daily school life.

All of us have a stake in helping our young people navigate their adolescent years successfully and safely.

All of us have a stake in helping our youth navigate their young adolescent years successfully and safely. That's why the National Middle School Association, Court TV, the YWCA of the U.S.A., Cable in the Classroom, the Hazelden/Johnson Institute, and other partners have joined together to create *Safe Passage: Voices From the Middle School*.

The project has two components: a television program airing on Court TV (and available on video) and this resource guide. In the television program, 28 middle school students from across the country share their views on the issues that are an uncomfortable part of their daily lives—trying to fit in, dealing with teasing and bullying, and working to avoid or diffuse violent situations. The program also illustrates how some schools and communities are working with students to create environments that value the voices of young adolescents and recognize their strengths.

The *Safe Passage* resource guide is meant to be a starting place for addressing some of these issues in your homes, schools, and communities. While this guide cannot substitute for comprehensive efforts to

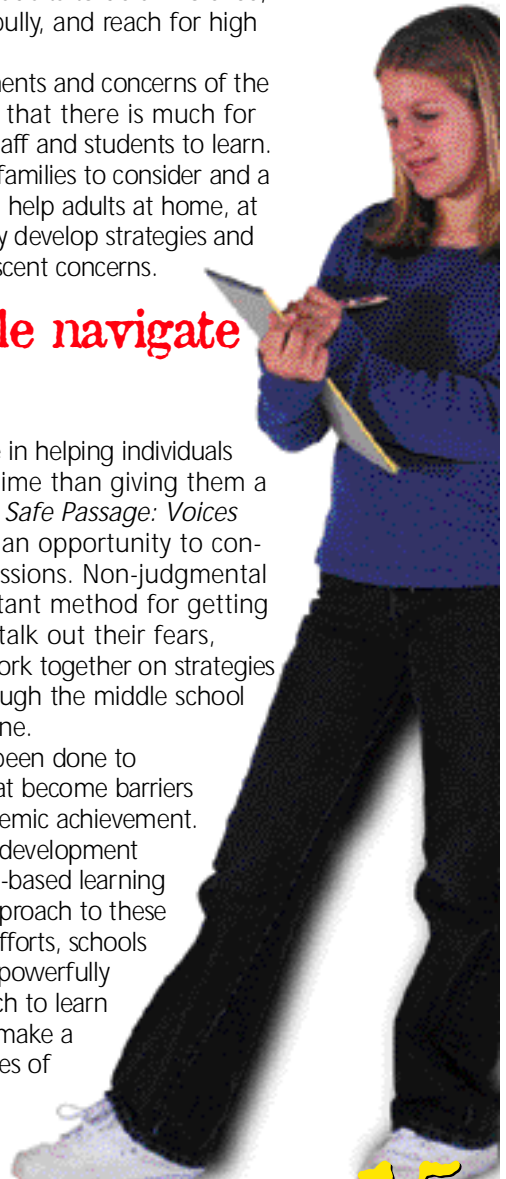
ease the stress of the young adolescent years, it can help put the focus on positive solutions.

Today's adolescents face a passage to adulthood that is more difficult than that of their parents. But listen to their voices as they describe their lives in *Safe Passage*. They want schools that are safe, adults who are caring and involved, and places to go when things get difficult. Most importantly, they are eager to work collaboratively with adults to derail violence, eliminate the power of the bully, and reach for high academic goals.

It is clear from the comments and concerns of the young people on this video that there is much for parents, teachers, program staff and students to learn. We've offered a few tips for families to consider and a number of resources that will help adults at home, at school, and in the community develop strategies and skills to address young adolescent concerns.

Nothing is more effective in helping individuals get through a challenging time than giving them a chance to talk about it. Let *Safe Passage: Voices from the Middle School* be an opportunity to continue these important discussions. Non-judgmental conversations are an important method for getting youth and their families to talk out their fears, hopes, and dreams and to work together on strategies for making the passage through the middle school years a safe and enjoyable one.

Much work has already been done to identify relationship issues that become barriers to personal success and academic achievement. Parents, teachers, and youth development professionals can provide skill-based learning as a part of a coordinated approach to these issues. Coupled with family efforts, schools and communities can create powerfully positive environments in which to learn and grow. Together, we can make a profound difference in the lives of our children.



Resources

- America's Promise—The Alliance for Youth mobilizes communities and schools to build the character and competence of our nation's youth. Call 1-888-55-YOUTH for more information, or go online at <http://www.americaspromise.org>
- Bitney, J. & Title, B. (1998). *No-Bullying Program: Preventing Bully/Victim Violence at School*, Program Director's Manual. Center City, MN: Hazelden® and Johnson Institute®.
- Bitney, J. & Title, B. (1998). *No-Bullying Program: Preventing Bully/Victim Violence at School*, Teacher's Manual for Grades 6-8. Center City, MN: Hazelden® and Johnson Institute®.
- Comprehensive Health Education Foundation (CHEF). (1996). *Get Real About Violence: Violence prevention that goes beyond conflict resolution and anger management for middle schools*. Seattle, WA: Author.
- Comprehensive Health Education Foundation (CHEF). (1987). *Negotiation Skills: A skill to help teenagers reduce conflicts with their parents and peer..* Video and Leader's Guide. Seattle, WA: Author.
- Family Education. Coping with bullies and talking to your kids about threats and safety. <http://familyeducation.com/safepassage>
- Giannetti, C. & Sagarese, M. (1997). *The Roller-Coaster Years: Raising your child through the maddening yet magical middle school years*. New York, NY: Broadway Books, a division of Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc.
- Hazelden® and Johnson Institute®. (1994). *Conflict! Think About It. Talk About It. Try to Work It Out. Helping Kids Prevent Violence Grades 5-8*, Video and facilitator's guide. Center City and Minneapolis, MN: Author.
- LaJoie, G., McLellan, A. & Seddon, C. (1997). *Take Action Against Bullying*. Coquitlam, B.C., Canada: Bully B'ware Productions.
- National Campaign Against Youth Violence is a national effort to reduce youth violence. The mission of NCAYV is to engage all Americans to work against violence in their daily lives. Call 1-888-544-KIDS for more information on how to get involved and reduce violence in your community, or go to <http://www.noviolence.net>
- National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2000). *Kidswalk-to-School: A guide to promote walking to school*. Atlanta, GA: Author.
- National Middle School Association. (1996). *Sexual Harassment: It's Hurting People*. Video and facilitator's guide. Westerville, OH: Author.
- National Middle School Association. (1998). *Positive Paths for Young Adolescents*, Month of the Young Adolescent Information Packet. Westerville, OH: Author.
- National Youth Development Information Center (NYDIC), a project of the National Assembly, provides practice-related information about youth development to national and local youth-serving organizations. To contact NYDIC go online to <http://www.nydic.org> or call toll-free at: 1-877-NYDIC-4-U; Fax: (202) 393-4517 or Toll-free Fax-on-Demand service: 1-888-653-6177
- Prothrow-Stith, D., Quaday, S. & Shelly Gehshan (Ed.). (1995). *Hidden Causalities: The Relationship Between Violence and Learning*. Washington, DC: National Health and Education Consortium.
- Purkey, W. (1996). *Inviting School Success: A Self-Concept Approach to Teaching, Learning and Democratic Practice*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co.
- Search Institute. Suite 210, 700 S. Third Street, Minneapolis, MN 55415
- Smith College and YWCA of Western Massachusetts. *Our Health, Our Futures: A project by and for adolescent girls*. Available on the Web at <http://www.smith.edu/ourhealthourfutures>
- Sowers, J. (1989). Michigan Model for Comprehensive Health Education. Hampton, NH.
- Youth Service America is a resource center that increases the quantity and quality of opportunities for young people to serve. Contact YSA at 202/296-2992, or go to <http://www.ysa.org> for more information on service learning, or to find volunteer opportunities in your community.
- YWCA *Week Without Violence Organizer's Kit*. Available through your local YWCA or online at <http://www.ywca.org>

About Our Partners



BROADBAND

AT&T BROADBAND

AT&T Broadband, a business unit of AT&T, is one of the nation's largest broadband services companies, providing analog and digital television entertainment services to about 16 million customers across the nation. The company also provides advanced services, such as high-speed cable Internet services and competitive local phone service. AT&T Corp. (NYSE: T) is the world's leader in telecommunications services and technology.



NATIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL ASSOCIATION (NMSA)

National Middle School Association serves as a voice for education professionals, parents, and others interested in the educational and developmental needs of youths ages 10 to 15. As our mission states, we are dedicated to improving the educational experiences of young adolescents by providing vision, knowledge, and resources to all who serve them in order to develop healthy, productive, and ethical citizens.



COURT TV

COURT TV is the only 24-hour cable network dedicated to crime and justice in America. In 1997, Court TV responded to the escalating problem of youth violence by developing *Choices and Consequences*, a multifaceted program designed to teach young adolescents,

that unlike the violence they see on television, real violence has devastating effects that can last a lifetime. Today, *Choices and Consequences* addresses a range of anti-social behaviors that puts our kids, families, and communities at risk. Court TV is meeting these problems head-on where they exist, and inviting concerned citizens to join the effort to create equitable solutions. For more information about *Choices and Consequences* call 1-800-333-7649 or log on to our Web site at www.courtstv.com/choices.

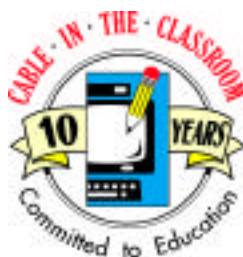


YWCA OF THE U.S.A.

The YWCA of the U.S.A. is the nation's oldest and largest women's membership movement. Operating out of thousands of locations across the country, the YWCA of the U.S.A. represents 2 million women, girls, and their

families. Its mission to empower women and girls and to eliminate racism, is the guiding principle for all YWCA child care, domestic violence, violence prevention, shelter, fitness, and social justice programs.

"The YWCA Week Without Violence" has encouraged alternatives to violent behavior for the past six years. *Safe Passage: Voices from the Middle School* is an excellent vehicle for bringing home the message that violence has no place in our society." Alexine Clement Jackson, President YWCA of the U.S.A.



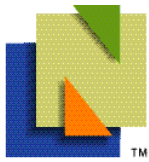
CABLE IN THE CLASSROOM

Cable in the Classroom is a public service of the cable communications industry. Cable networks such as Court TV and local cable companies provide approved K-12 schools with free cable television and high-speed internet connections, commercial-free, copyright-cleared educational programming, and online educational resources.



ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE

The Anti-Defamation League, founded in 1913 "to stop the defamation of the Jewish people and secure justice and fair treatment to all citizens alike," is one of the nation's premier civil rights/human relations agencies fighting anti-Semitism and all forms of bigotry, defending democratic ideals, and protecting civil rights. The ADL's A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE® Institute is an international institute with anti-bias education programs in schools, universities, corporations, and community and law-enforcement agencies.



LEARNING NETWORK

THE LEARNING NETWORK

Learning Network, the Internet's premier education source, offers an unmatched array of online educational tools, content, resources, and communities serving the K-12, higher education, professional

development, and lifelong learning markets. Learning Network is built on a strong foundation of Pearson Education imprints, including Addison Wesley Longman, Allyn & Bacon, Computer Curriculum Corporation, Dorling Kindersley, FT Knowledge, Globe Fearon, Macmillan USA, Pearson Learning, Pearson Technology Group, Penguin Putnam, Prentice Hall, Scott Foresman, and SkyLight, as well as educational properties from leading technology companies, including Blackboard, Classroom Connect, EdGate.com, eSCORE (a unit of SCORE! Learning, Inc.), FamilyEducation.com, InformIT, and others. Learning Network has business offices in San Francisco, New York City, Boston, and Paramus, NJ. For more information call 1-888-816-1999 or visit www.LearningNetwork.com.



THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The U.S. Department of Education was established on May 4, 1980 by Congress in the Department of Education Organization Act (Public Law 96-88 of October 1979). The Department's mission is to

- Strengthen the federal commitment to ensuring access to equal educational opportunity for every individual;
- Supplement and complement the efforts of states, the local school systems and other instrumentalities of the states, the private sector, public and private nonprofit educational research institutions, community-based organizations, parents, and students to improve the quality of education;
- Encourage the increased involvement of the public, parents, and students in federal education programs;
- Promote improvements in the quality and usefulness of education through federally supported research, evaluation, and sharing of information;
- Improve the coordination of federal education programs;
- Improve the management of federal education activities and increase the accountability of federal education programs to the President, Congress, and the public.



HAZELDEN PREVENTION AND EDUCATION SOLUTIONS

Our Prevention and Education Solutions group creates, publishes, and distributes materials and training on alcohol, tobacco, other drug, and violence prevention; parenting and connecting with youth; student assistance, support group and life skills. We offer schools over 600 resources, including critical research-based curriculum for grades K-12.

Our resources include CSAP exemplary program Project Northland for grades 6-8, call 1-888-328-9000 for more information.

"...Have some faith in your young people because young people are powerful. Young people can do a lot of things if they're just given the opportunity to do so...with a little guidance."*

**—Hampton, Virginia
Youth Commission
participant**

* Quote from
Safe Passage
television program.





A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITIES

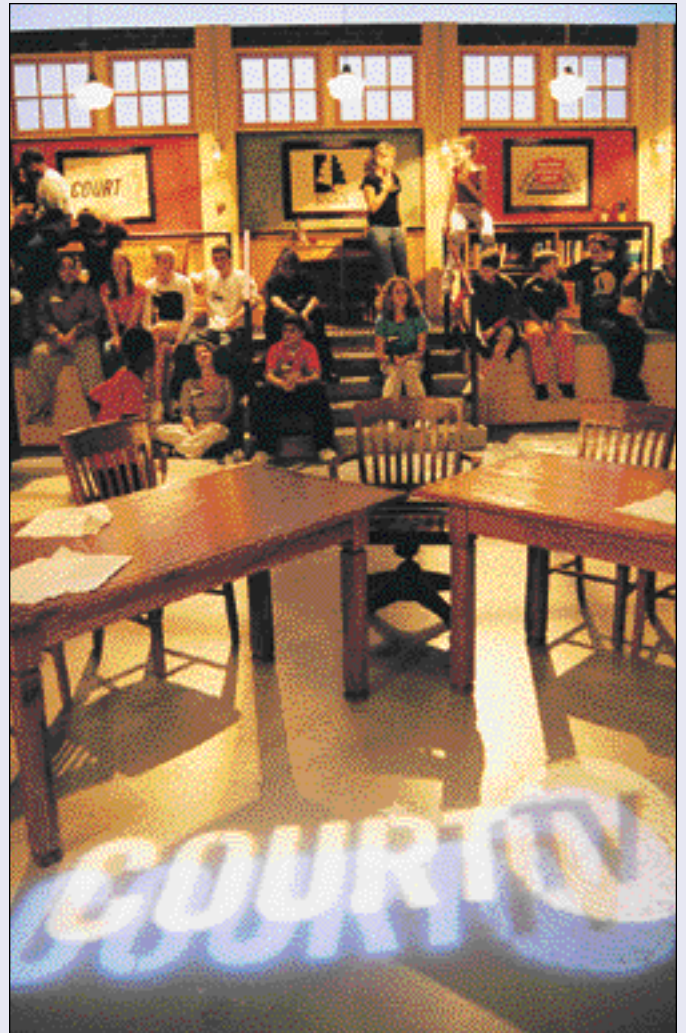
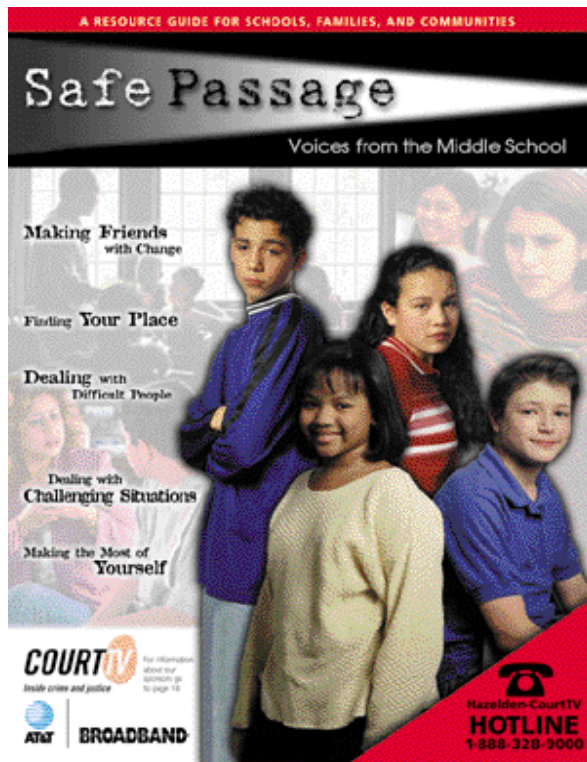
Resources to Build a Safe Passage

Safe Passage Resource Guide

This guide is meant to be a starting place for addressing some of the issues in your homes, schools, and communities and help focus on positive solutions for those adolescent years.

To order the Resource Guides that include a collection of ideas for use with School, Families, and Communities, call Hazelden at 1-888-328-9000.

Order #TVP Safe Passage Resource Guide FREE



Safe Passage Video

Listen to 28 middle school students from across the country share their views on the issues that are an uncomfortable part of their daily lives—trying to fit in, dealing with teasing and bullying, and working to avoid or diffuse violent situations. This video illustrates how some schools and communities are working with students to create environments that value the voices of young adolescents and recognize their strengths.

To order your copy of the video that started it all, please call Hazelden Information and Educational Services at 1-888-328-9000.

Order #6993 Safe Passage Video \$17.95



National Middle School Association
4151 Executive Parkway, Suite 300
Westerville, Ohio 43081