



Philadelphia Collaborative
Violence Prevention Center

www.phillyviolenceprevention.org

**Safe Neighborhoods, Safe Lives:
Things that Prevent or Reduce the Impact of Violence in the Community**

Expert's Tips for Preventing Violence from
the Philadelphia Collaborative Violence Prevention Center
For more information, please visit www.phillyviolenceprevention.org

Emotional Wellbeing (Tips 20-37)

20. Expect respect.....	2
21. You can help protect children and families in need.....	3
22. Young people still need support after violence happens.	4
23. Learn how children are hurt by violence.....	5
24. Feeling nervous, scared, or worried after being hurt or seeing violence is a normal reaction.....	6
25. If your child is injured, it also affects you.	7
27. Scared straight programs can hurt young people who are dealing with violence in their lives.....	9
28. <i>Holding a grudge hurts you.....</i>	10
29. You have the power.	11
30. When you're threatened, stay calm.	12
31. Practice ways to calm down before you are in a conflict.....	12
32. Know yourself.	13
33. Know you.....	14
34. Don't Assume.	15
35. Shake it off.	16
36. Practice optimism.	17
37. Humor and laughter make life easier.....	17



20. Expect respect.

Abuse is never your fault and is not okay, no matter what a boyfriend or girlfriend might say. Talk to an adult you trust. You need someone to confide in to look out for you with your safety in mind.

Importance: Many men and women who suffer abuse in their relationship do not take any action against their abusers because they feel it is their fault. However, it is not. Violence is a learned behavior, and it is the responsibility of the abuser to choose not to channel his anger in that manner.

How it helps: There are places you can go and things you can do to help yourself in this situation. Support from friends and family is one of the most powerful tools in dealing with intimate partner violence.

References:

- McHugh, M. (2005). Understanding Gender and Intimate Partner Violence. Sex Roles. 52(11): 1573-2762.
- Wathen, C. & MacMillan, H. (2003). Interventions for Violence Against Women. Journal of American Medical Association. 289(5):589-600.
- Zeitler, M., Paine, A., Breitbart, V., Rickert, V., Olson, C., Stevens, L., Rottenberg, L. & Davidson, L. (2006). Attitudes About Intimate Partner Violence Screening Among an Ethnically Diverse Sample of Young Women. Journal of Adolescent Health. 39(1) 119.e1-119.e8



For more info:

Communities Against Violence Network

<http://www.cavnet2.org/>

Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence

<http://www.pcadv.org/>

The National Domestic Violence Hotline

<http://www.thehotline.org/>

Choose Respect

<http://www.cdc.gov/chooserespect/>

That's Not Cool

<http://www.thatsnotcool.com>

21. You can help protect children and families in need.

If you know or suspect that a child in your community is being abused or neglected, contact your state child welfare hotline. Hotlines are available 24 hours a day and one call could make the difference for a child in need of help and protection. In Pennsylvania, you can contact ChildLine 24 hours a day (1-800-932-0313). You can also contact the National Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-4-A-CHILD) for information and resources to assist with supporting families in need.

Importance: The trauma of child abuse or neglect has many long-lasting effects. State and local child welfare agencies can provide information, counseling, and also referrals to families in need. By calling, you could save a child from further abuse or neglect and start their healing process.

How it helps: Childhood victims of abuse and neglect may carry that trauma with them into adolescence and adulthood. Research has shown that childhood victims of abuse or neglect are more likely to have arrests for non-traffic violations as juveniles and adults, and also more likely to have more arrests for violent crimes than individuals who did not experience child abuse. Since childhood victimization is a risk factor for later violence, intervening and getting help for a victim of child abuse or neglect could help break that cycle of violence.



Philadelphia Collaborative
Violence Prevention Center

www.phillyviolenceprevention.org

References:

- Widom, C. S. (1989). The Cycle of Violence. *Science*, 244 (4901), 160-166.
- Maxfield, M. G., & Widom, C. S. (1996). The Cycle of Violence: Revisited 6 Years Later. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med*, 150(4), 390-395.
- Cathy Spatz, W. (1998). Child victims: Searching for opportunities to break the cycle of violence. *Applied and Preventive Psychology*, 7(4), 225-234.

For more info:

US Department of Health and Human Services Children's Bureau

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/index.htm>

Recognizing and Preventing Child Abuse

http://www.helpguide.org/mental/child_abuse_physical_emotional_sexual_neglect.htm

ChildHelp

<http://www.childhelp.org/>

22. Young people still need support after violence happens.

Be there for them, spend more time with them, and listen if they want to talk about their feelings or worries.

Importance: Young people are just as affected as adults by violence or a traumatic event. Many times, youth are affected even more than adults, but their feelings go unnoticed or disregarded. This may cause youth to experience self-doubt and feelings of helplessness.

How it helps: Family plays a large role in helping a child to deal with the aftermath of violence. Young people need to have the social support of their parents and the other people who interact with them on a regular basis. Two research studies showed that family support after an instance of violence improved the way that youth dealt with feelings.



Philadelphia Collaborative
Violence Prevention Center

www.phillyviolenceprevention.org

References:

- Cooper, C., et al. (2000). Repeat victims of violence: report of a large concurrent case-control study. Archives of Surgery. 135(7): 837-843.
- Kellerman, A., et al. (1998). Preventing Youth Violence: What Works? Annu. Rev. Public Health. 19: 271-292.
- Hernández-Cordero, L.J. & Fullilove, M. T. (2008). Constructing Peace: Helping Youth Cope in the Aftermath of 9/11. American Journal of Preventive Medicine. 34(3) S31-S35)

For more info:

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

http://www.aacap.org/cs/root/publication_store/your_child_childhood_trauma_and_its_effects

National Association of School Psychologists

http://www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis_safety/psycht_general.aspx

23. Learn how children are hurt by violence.

Injury is not just physical, so give them a safe place to talk about how they feel—not just once, but many times. If you see changes in eating habits, sleeping habits, energy level, or behavior (such as acting out or seeming sad), get help from a school counselor, minister, doctor, mental health professional, or nurse practitioner.

Importance: The emotional injury experienced by children hurt by violence can be much greater than the physical one. There is a strong relationship between children who have experienced violence and the internalization of their feelings. Many times this effect of violence on a child can manifest itself through bouts of anger or sadness.

How it helps: Providing a safe atmosphere for children affected by violence to communicate their feelings gives them an opportunity to cope with the traumatic experience. Expressing their feelings in this manner has been shown to reduce the likelihood of future psychological problems.



Philadelphia Collaborative
Violence Prevention Center

www.phillyviolenceprevention.org

References:

Cooley-Quille, M., et al. (1995). Emotional Impact of Children's Exposure to Community Violence: A Preliminary Study. Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine. 34(10):1362-1368.

Fein, J., et al. (2002). Persistence of Posttraumatic Stress in Violently Injured Youth Seen in the Emergency Department. Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. 156(8):836-840.

For more info:

National Center for Children Exposed to Violence
<http://www.nccev.org/index.html>

National Institute of Mental Health
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/coping-with-traumatic-events/index.shtml>

24. Feeling nervous, scared, or worried after being hurt or seeing violence is a normal reaction.

Seek help and have your child talk with a counselor or doctor if these feelings don't go away after a few weeks.

Importance: It is important for children to know that it is normal to feel frightened after experiencing or seeing violence. Healing is a constant evolving stage for most children affected by violence, and may require outside assistance in dealing with their feelings. In one study, young children were afraid to be near the scene of the violent event that they had witnessed, often were afraid to go to sleep or woke up with nightmares, and showed a limited range of emotion in their play.

How it helps: One of the most valuable resources available to allow a child to cope with exposure to violence is a strong relationship with their parents. When you talk about these feelings with your children, it will help them cope with their reactions and move on. Children whose parents communicate that they understand their children's fears and work to deal with them tend to respond the most successfully.



Philadelphia Collaborative
Violence Prevention Center

www.phillyviolenceprevention.org

References:

Cooley-Quille, M., et al. (1995). Emotional Impact of Children's Exposure to Community Violence: A Preliminary Study. Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine. 156(8):1362-1368.

Osofsky, J. (1999). The Impact of Violence on Children. Domestic Violence; 9(3): 33-49.

For more info:

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

http://www.aacap.org/cs/root/facts_for_families/posttraumatic_stress_disorder_ptsd

25. If your child is injured, it also affects you.

Take time to deal with your own feelings and turn to your family, friends, or clergy to talk about your concerns and to get a little more support.

Importance: Parents are often traumatized from the effects of violence on their children. Feelings of frustration and helplessness from their inability to protect their children as well as the inability to communicate those feelings are common among parents dealing with the aftermath of violence exposure.

How it helps: Parents must cope with their feelings before they can help their children. Taking advantage of your outside supports can be critical in providing a venue to discuss your feelings and trauma. Through discussion, parents can get the confidence and reassurance needed to help their children.

References:

Osofsky, J. & Jackson, B. (1994). Parenting in Violent Environments. Zero to Three; National Center for Clinical Infant Programs. 13(3): 8-12.

Osofsky, J. (1999). The Impact of Violence on Children. Domestic Violence; 9(3): 33-49.

For more info:

CDC Tips for Coping with a Traumatic Event

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/masscasualties/copingpub.asp>



Philadelphia Collaborative
Violence Prevention Center

www.phillyviolenceprevention.org

National Institute of Mental Health

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/helping-children-and-adolescents-cope-with-violence-and-disasters-parents/index.shtml>

26. Living with violence is very unhealthy and makes people more scared and anxious.

Even finding little ways to reduce everyday stress and to make things safer can make a difference.

Importance: Violence-related stress can overwhelm your ability to cope, and it can take a severe psychological and physical toll. High levels of stress have been linked to depression, anxiety, and various physical ailments.

How it helps: Establishing more opportunities for physical, emotional and mental recreation provides a means of lowering everyday stress. Exercising, eating properly, and getting enough rest are a few simple things that studies have shown to help reduce anxiety.

References:

- Margolin, G. & Gordis, E. (2000). The Effects of Family and Community Violence on Children. *Annual Review of Psychology*. 51(2):445-479.
- Schwab-Stone, M., et al. (1999). No Safe Haven II: The Effects of Violence Exposure on Urban Youth. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*. 38(4):359-367.
- Fullilove, M.T., Heon, V., Jimenez, W., Parsons, C., Green, L.L. & Fullilove, R.E. (1998). Injury and anomie: effects of violence on an inner-city community. *American Journal of Public Health*. 88(6):924-927

For more info:

CDC Tips for Coping with Stress

http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pub/coping_with_stress_tips.html

Coping with Traumatic Events

<http://www.samhsa.gov/trauma/index.aspx>



27. Scared straight programs can hurt young people who are dealing with violence in their lives.

A better way to help is to make sure young people can connect with at least one caring adult who can help them expect, do, and be better.

Importance: Multiple research studies have shown that scared straight programs are ineffective in preventing juvenile delinquent and at-risk youth from committing crimes. The results are indicating through randomized trials that youth enrolled in the scared straight programs are at a higher risk for re-offending crimes.

Children need to know it is okay to grieve after a violent event occurs. Adults need to give children the opportunity to talk about what has happened. Adults must listen to the child, encouraging them to talk about the events that occurred, their emotions, and honestly answer any question the child may have about the event. Realize that every child grieves in their own way.

How it helps: Creating a stable relationship between an adult and child, gives the child a sense of security and comfort. Having someone he/she can trust will allow the child to be more open in discussing events that are occurring in their life. That way, when a problem arises a child will know they have someone to turn to for help. A child will also feel a sense of commitment to the adult, not wanting to disappoint them.

References:

- McCord, J. (2003). Cures That Harm: Unanticipated Outcomes of Crime Prevention Programs. Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. 587(5): 16-30.
- Petrosino A, Turpin-Petrosino C, and Finckenauer JO. (2000). Well Meaning Programs Can Have Harmful Effects! Lessons from Experiments of Programs Such as Scared Straight. Crime & Delinquency, 46(3): 354-379.



For more info:

National Association of School Psychologist

http://www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis_safety/griefwar.pdf

Striving To Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere (STRYVE)

<http://www.safeyouth.gov/Pages/Home.aspx>

Scared Straight Programs: Jail and Detention Programs

http://www.djj.state.fl.us/Research/Scared_Straight_Booklet_Version.pdf

Youth Violence: A Report of the Surgeon General

<http://www.nih.gov/news/pr/oct2004/od-15.htm>

28. Holding a grudge hurts you.

If you have been hurt, being able to forgive wrongs, no matter how small, can help end a cycle of anger. Start small and help children (and adults) practice this.

Importance: Holding a grudge generally does little harm to the person it is directed towards. Instead, holding a grudge can cause you emotional and physical stress. The anger that is behind a grudge has been known to cause physical ailments including migraines and high blood pressure.

How it helps: Effectively managing your anger and other feelings can reduce the impact that a situation has on you. Confronting the individual and discussing your feeling can help to begin the process of forgiveness. By teaching your children how to do this, you are teaching them a valuable lesson in dealing with their emotions.

References:

Baumeister, R., et al. (2008). Interpersonal Consequences of Forgiveness: Does Forgiveness Deter or Encourage Repeat Offenses? Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 44(2), 453-460.

Baumeister, R., et al. (1998). The Victim Role, Grudge Theory, and Two Dimensions of Forgiveness. Dimensions of Forgiveness: Psychological Research & Theological Perspectives, 4; 79-104.



Philadelphia Collaborative
Violence Prevention Center

www.phillyviolenceprevention.org

For more info:

International Forgiveness Institute

<http://www.forgiveness-institute.org/>

KidsHealth

<http://kidshealth.org/>

Mayo Clinic

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/forgiveness/MH00131>

29. You have the power.

Promote positive thinking by reminding yourself of three good things every day. Do it at night, or make it a family tradition at dinnertime.

Importance: Positive thinking is important because feeling good can affect the way you interact with others. It is commonly used to boost attitude and promote self-growth. Researchers believe that positive thinking can provide several health benefits.

How it helps: Positive thinking can help you overcome the challenges and stress that you face in everyday life. By putting a positive spin on the negative events that you encounter, you can gradually improve your outlook on life.

References:

Bruckbauer, E. & Ward, S. (2007). Positive Mental Attitude and Health: What the Public Believes. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 25(4): 311-315.

Scheier, M. & Carver, C. (2008). On the Power of Positive Thinking: The Benefits of Being Optimistic. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*. 2(1): 26-30.

For more info:

American Psychological Association

<http://www.apa.org>

Positive Thinking

<http://www.guideposts.com/>



30. When you're threatened, stay calm.

Do not let others see that you are upset. Afterwards, talk to adults you can trust.

Importance: Maintaining a cool-headed approach to a threat can prevent a volatile situation from escalating into a physical confrontation. Studies have shown that youth who are threatened and fight back in self-defense actually risk making the situation worse. Instead, walking away or ignoring the behavior may be a more logical course of action.

How it helps: While reducing the risk of a confrontation through prevention is beneficial, correctly analyzing a situation when faced with the potential of violence can be even more important in preventing injury. Talking to an adult can help youth work through their feelings after such an encounter.

References:

- McCann, J. (2002). *Threats in Schools: A Practical Guide for Managing Violence*. Haworth Press.
- Reddy, M., et al. (2001). Evaluating Risk for Targeting Violence in School: Comparing Risk Assessment, Threat Assessment, and Other Approaches. *Psychology in the Schools*. 38(2): 157-172.

For more info:

National Crime Prevention Council

<http://www.ncpc.org/topics/conflict-resolution/?searchterm=anger>

Striving To Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere (STRYVE)

<http://www.safeyouth.gov/Pages/Home.aspx>

31. Practice ways to calm down before you are in a conflict.

Stop, take a breath, and tell yourself: "Calm down" or "It's not worth letting him or her get to me."



Philadelphia Collaborative
Violence Prevention Center

www.phillyviolenceprevention.org

Importance: When you get angry, your judgment and reasoning can become impaired. The choices made from that point on will dictate how the rest of the interaction proceeds. The potential for emotional or physical violence to occur is at its highest potential.

How it helps: Taking proper measures once you feel yourself getting angry can reduce the potential for conflict. Controlling your anger can prevent tense situations from escalating out of control. Distancing yourself from the situation can provide you with time to calm down.

References:

Adler, R., Rosen, B., & Silverstein, E. (1998). Emotions in Negotiation: How to Manage Fear and Anger. Negotiation Journal. 14(2):1571.

Guerra, N., et al. (1996). A Cognitive-Ecological Approach to the Prevention and Mitigation of Violence and Aggression in Inner-City Youth. Cultural Variation in Conflict Resolution. 18:199-209.

For more info:

KidsHealth

<http://kidshealth.org/>

Striving To Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere (STRYVE)

<http://www.safeyouth.gov/Pages/Home.aspx>

32. Know yourself.

Avoid things that might make you angry, especially if you are hungry, tired, rushed, or stressed.

Importance: Studies have shown that certain emotions caused by hunger or lack of sleep can leave you more vulnerable to anger. This anger can impair your judgment or your ability to safely perform everyday tasks, such as driving.

How it helps: Avoiding situations of conflict when you are experiencing one or more of these emotions can reduce the opportunity for you to lose your temper. Also, keeping yourself healthy by getting enough sleep and eating properly makes it less likely that you will respond with anger when faced with a trigger.



Philadelphia Collaborative
Violence Prevention Center

www.phillyviolenceprevention.org

References:

- Berkowitz, L. (1993). *Aggression: Its Causes, Consequences, and Control*. National Criminal Justice Reference Service. 1-504.
- Macht, M. (1999). Characteristics in Eating in Anger, Fear, Sadness, and Joy. Appetite. 33(1): 129-139.

For more info:

KidsHealth

<http://kidshealth.org/>

National Center for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

<http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/pages/coping-traumatic-stress.asp>

33. Know you.

Learn to recognize how anger feels to you before it grows out of control.

Importance: Anger is an important sign to an individual to let them know that something needs to be fixed. If you know the cause for your anger, then you have a better chance at managing it. The warning signs that surface before anger are important to acknowledge.

How it helps: When anger is properly managed, it can help prevent situations from escalating to levels of physical violence. Having identified what triggers your anger allows you to consider various options for solving it. Knowing the consequences of your anger getting out of control can provide further motivation to harness it.

References:

- Berkowitz, L. (1993). *Aggression: Its Causes, Consequences, and Control*. National Criminal Justice Reference Service. 1-504.
- Stadler, C., et al. (2006). Effects of Provocation on Emotions and Aggression: An Experimental Study with Aggressive Children. Swiss Journal of Psychology. 65(2): 117-124.



Philadelphia Collaborative
Violence Prevention Center

www.phillyviolenceprevention.org

For more info:

American Psychological Association

<http://www.apa.org/topics/anger/control.aspx>

Mayo Clinic

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/anger-management/MH00102>

34. Don't Assume.

Is someone really angry? Maybe he or she is scared or sad. Being able to correctly identify how someone else is feeling can often prevent arguments or confrontations.

Importance: Jumping to conclusions can be one of the leading starting places of anger. It is common for people to perceive the normal things that people say as an attack against them.

How it helps: Many tense situations can be avoided simply by not assuming you know how a person feels. Instead, approaching the person without any expectations can lead to the resolution of any problems that individual might be facing. Also, a person may open up to you if they feel like you can relate to their problem.

References:

Berkowitz, L. (1993). *Aggression: Its Causes, Consequences, and Control*. National Criminal Justice Reference Service. 1-504.

Horstmann, G. (2003). What Do Facial Expressions Convey: Feeling, States, Behavioral Intentions, or Action Requests? Emotion. 3(2): 150-166.

Taylor, L., Davis-Kean, P., & Malanchuk, O. (2007). Self-esteem, Academic Self-concept, and Aggression at School. Aggressive Behavior. 33(2): 130-136

For more info:

KidsHealth

<http://kidshealth.org/>

Mayo Clinic

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/anger-management/MH00102>

35. Shake it off.

When you are stressed, feeling angry, or anxious, your body builds up too much energy. Stretch, laugh, walk, run, or take a time-out to let off steam. Adults - understand when young people need to be active and build this into their day.

Importance: Not expressing your emotions can cause a great deal of angst and other negative feelings to build up within yourself. This build-up may produce feelings of aggression, depression, and powerlessness. Exercise has been proven to have a soothing impact on a person's state of mind, and a therapeutic effect on one's body.

How it helps: When you pick up on the signals produced by your body alerting you to release your emotions in a constructive manner, it will allow you to deal with them more effectively. Studies have shown that there are various activities you can do that will reduce your level of stress, irritability, and frustration.

References:

- Berkowitz, L. (1993). *Aggression: Its Causes, Consequences, and Control*. National Criminal Justice Reference Service. 1-504.
- Kochanska, G., et al. (2005). Temperament, Relationships, and Young Children's Receptive Cooperation With Their Parents. *Developmental Psychology*. 41(4): 648-660.
- Quartana, P. & Burns, J. (2007). Painful Consequences of Anger Suppression. *Emotion*. 7(2): 400-414.

For more info:

KidsHealth
<http://kidshealth.org/>

Mayo Clinic
<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/anger-management/MH00102>



36. Practice optimism.

In neighborhoods with lots of violence, it can take a little work. But, being able to see the good things in yourself and others will make it easier to cope with troubles.

Importance: Because of the countless cases and causes of violence that occur more commonly these days, many people believe the situation is hopeless. It is important to maintain optimism and join together with members in your community to make an impact against violence.

How it helps: Parents can help by getting involved with their communities through attending town hall meetings and asking their neighbors to help with supervising the neighborhood. By taking self-inventory and maintaining optimism, you make it easier to handle whatever hardship you may face.

References:

- Taylor, S. & Armor, D. (2006). Positive Illusions and Coping With Adversity. Journal of Personality. 64(4): 873-898.
- Taylor, S. & Gollwitzer, P. (1995). Effect of Mindset on Positive Illusions. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. 69: 213-226

For more info:

KidsHealth
<http://kidshealth.org/>

Striving To Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere (STRYVE)
<http://www.safeyouth.gov/Pages/Home.aspx>

37. Humor and laughter make life easier.

Humor can help you overcome bad times, get over angry feelings, and diffuse a tense situation. Think or say something funny but don't make fun of the other person.



Philadelphia Collaborative
Violence Prevention Center

www.phillyviolenceprevention.org

Importance: Humor and laughter is one method of coping with the stress and strain of everyday life. Additionally, humor is very important in creating bonds when meeting a new person. For children, humor is a valuable tool in building friendships and becoming part of a larger group.

How it helps: Humor and laughter has been shown through research to aid in decreasing stress, blood pressure, and improving immune function. This free and convenient tactic can help distract an individual from anger or other negative feelings.

References:

MacDonald, C. (2004). A Chuckle a Day Keeps the Doctor Away: Therapeutic Humor and Laughter. Journal of Psychosocial Nursing and Mental Health Services. 42(3): 18-25.

Pasquali, E. (1990). Learning to Laugh: Humor as Therapy. Journal of Psychosocial Nursing and Mental Health Services. 28(3): 31-35.

Poole, C. (2005). Development: Ages and Stages - The Importance of Humor. Early Childhood Today. 19(3): 29-35.

For more info:

KidsHealth

<http://kidshealth.org/>

Laughter and Humor Benefits

http://www.helpguide.org/life/humor_laughter_health.htm