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Tips For Safer Schools

With violence in schools on the increase, many parents and children are wondering what they can do to create safer schools. The following is a list of ideas that parents and students in several communities have used to make schools a safer place for everyone.

Tips for Parents

- ? Discuss the school's discipline policy with your child. Show your support for the rules, and help you child understand the reasons for them.
- ? Involve your child in setting rules for appropriate behavior at home.
- ? Talk with your child about violence.
- ? Teach your child how to solve problems. Praise your child when he or she follows through.
- ? Help your child find ways to show anger that do not involve verbally or physically hurting others. When you get angry, use it as an opportunity to model these appropriate responses for your child and talk about it.
- ? Help your child understand the value of accepting individual differences.
- ? Note any disturbing behaviors in your child. For example, frequent angry outbursts, excessive fighting and bullying of other children, cruelty to animals, fire setting, frequent behavior problems at school and in the neighborhood, lack of friends, and alcohol or drug use can be signs of serious problems. Get help for your child. Talk with a trusted professional in your child's school or in the community.
- ? Keep lines of communication open with your child, even when it is tough. Encourage your child always to let you know where and with whom he or she will be with. Get to know your child's friends **(continued on page 2)**

Increase Your Self-Dicipline

Successful people typically have more self-discipline than others. They have formed good habits like punctuality, organization and persistence.

The good news is that you can learn better work habits within three to four weeks. A habit is simply behavior done so often that it becomes automatic. Force yourself to keep good records, and you will see the day when it becomes part of your normal routine. Drive yourself to be punctual and you will soon keep your appointments on time without thinking about it. Make yourself plan your days and weeks in advance, and planning will become second nature.

Deliberately training yourself to good habits requires stern self-discipline at first. Once those habits become second nature, the payoff is considerable. Good habits save effort, ease routine, increase efficiency and release power.

“Successful People form the habit of doing what failures don't like to do. They like the results they get by doing what they don't necessarily enjoy”

-Earl Nightingale

DON'T CATCH THE SNAKE THAT BITES YOU

If a snake bites you, don't try to catch it. Many people think the identity of the snake is needed for proper treatment, but that's not so. Ninety-eight percent of venomous bites in the US come from rattlesnakes, water moccasins and other pit vipers. The common-neutralizing antivenin needed to treat the bites of these indigenous snakes is the same. So, it's not necessary to know the type of snake to get the right treatment.

SAFE SCHOOLS-CONTINUED

- ? Listen to your child if he or she shares concerns about friends who may be exhibiting troubling behaviors. Share this information with a trusted professional, such as the school psychologist, principal, or teacher.
- ? Be involved in your child's school life by supporting and reviewing homework, talking with his or her teacher and attending school functions.
- ? Encourage your school to offer before and after school programs.
- ? Volunteer to work with school-based groups concerned with violence prevention. If none exist, offer to form one.
- ? Talk with the parents of your child's friends. Discuss how you can form a team to ensure your children's safety.

ACTION STEPS FOR STUDENTS

- ? Listen to your friends if they share troubling feelings or thoughts. Encourage them to get help from a trusted adult.
- ? Create, join or support student organizations that combat violence.
- ? Work with local businesses and community groups to organize youth oriented activities that help young people think of ways to prevent school and community violence.
- ? Get involved in planning, implementing and evaluating your school's violence prevention response plan.
- ? Work with your teachers and administrators to create a safe process for reporting threats, intimidation, weapon possession, drug selling, gang activity, graffiti, and vandalism.
- ? Help to develop and participate in activities that promote student understanding of differences and that respect the rights of all.
- ? Volunteer to be a mentor for younger students and/or provide tutoring to your peers.
- ? Know your school's code of conduct and model responsible behavior. Avoid being part of a crowd when fights break out. Refrain from teasing, bullying and intimidating peers.
- ? Seek help from your parents or a trusted adult if you are experiencing intense feelings of anger, fear, anxiety or depression.

HOW ANTIOXIDANTS WORK

Vitamins C and E and beta-carotene are three of the most common antioxidants. But how do they work?

Despite the fact that that oxygen is essential for life, oxygen is harmful as well. Much like it causes metal to rust, oxygen causes the formation of free radicals in the body. These free radicals, which are often produced when we exercise, can cause damage to cells, tissues and even organs.

Antioxidants act to neutralize these free radicals. These free-radical fighters minimize the potential for damage.

REV UP EMPLOYEE LOYALTY

Consider this: the odds are that many of your best employees are actively looking for another job...*right now*. It's simply the hottest job market in 30 years and turnover remains sky high.

Unless you want to damage your reputation for keeping good people, use these questions to gauge employee contentment. Would your employees say yes?

- ? Do I understand what is expected?
- ? Have I received proper training?
- ? Are refresher courses offered?
- ? Do I have room to grow in my job?
- ? Is there room to exercise judgment?
- ? Have I been exposed to other functional areas?
- ? Has my boss discussed possible routes of advancement?
- ? Do I have good working conditions?
- ? Is the boss reasonable?
- ? Does the boss ever tell me I've done a good job?

HBA is your 24-hour employee assistance program. Eligible employees and family members may call for confidential assistance with personal, legal, childcare, financial, alcohol/drug and other problems. HBA has identified a variety of community resources and self help associations. Also available is a panel of professional counselors and hospitals that have agreed to provide free or low cost counseling and treatment services to persons who have been referred by Human Behavior Associates. Dial 1-800-937-7770 for information or assistance.