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Ben Silliman, Family Life Specialist, Editor

GIVE PEACE A CHANCE

"In violence, we forget who we are."
--Mary McCarthy

CHICAGO--An 11 year-old guns down a 14 year-old in gang-related violence. A couple of weeks later, 6 and 10 year-old boys drop a 5 year-old from a building for refusing to steal candy.

Driven by gales of injustice, neglect, media violence, and drugs, our children are increasingly victims and victimizers. Nationally, arrests of juveniles (14-17 yrs) for serious crimes has risen from 34.4/1,000 in 1969 to 49.2/1,000 in 1990. Arrests for crimes such as assault, vandalism, or stealing (up from 96.5 to 131.8/1,000 in the same period), further reflect a context of alienation and hostility surrounding youth development. Wyoming may not be the wild West of range wars and gunfights, but our children are not immune to dangers seen in D.C. or L.A. The most recent state Dep't. of Education survey of high school students found:

- 43.8% of male students reported carrying a weapon to school in the 30 days prior to the survey. Of these, 44.5% carried a gun.
- 8.6% of students surveyed had been threatened or injured by a weapon on school property.
- 31.8% of students sustained property loss or damage in the school year.
- 3.6% skipped school at least once in the previous month due to fear for safety at or en-route to school.
- 47.7% of males and 31.9% of females were in a physical fight (60% with a family member) within the year.

22.7% of all males had been in a fight on school property in the year preceding the survey.

Not only does school-site coercion and violence reflect a "distraction" from the work and fun of school life, it drives a wedge of fear and anger where support and group spirit should be growing. Kids forget who they are as thinking people; as a caring community.

Schools, youth organizations, and parents are increasingly using problem solving and conflict resolution techniques to model and teach ways of getting along. Not only are these efforts resulting in greater respect and cooperation today, but they are keys to democratic workplaces and neighborhoods of the future.

Myths About Conflict

Differences in personality, gender, age, interests, or ethnicity can mean a wider variety of problem-solving resources (vs. increased conflict). People who are alike don't necessarily cooperate on things, either.

Winning is the focus of many tasks and conflicts, yet working together to meet needs of all often works better than working against one another.

ROUNDUP ON THIS EDITION

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FAMILY LIFE SPECIALIST ADVENTURES

11/ 7-13 National Council on Family Relations Annual Conference, Minneapolis.

Ben will lead roundtable discussion on "Balancing Work and Family for Men in Early Marriage," "Teaching Family Theory to Undergraduates," and "Assessing Training Needs" (at Extension preconference). Duncan Perrote and several community educators from the Reservation will also present.

11/14-18 EPIC, Laramie.

12/ 8 "Right From the Start," Casper.

Ben will present on marriage preparation to Casper-area clergy and counselors and act as moderator for a panel reviewing peer mediation programs in schools.

Casper Peer Mediation Training Conference will explore issues and models related to peer-to-peer conflict resolution/life skills training in the schools and a major component of building resiliency. Ben will participate as a panel moderator and is working with Dr. Dave Carson, UW Child and Family Studies and Drs. Ray Yang and Robert Fetsch, CSU Human Development and Family Studies, on a research project which will document the connection between youth resiliency and conflict resolution skills/training. This is a "hot topic" area, and one in which agents might show collaboration with schools and measurable effects of programming.

GOPHER HOLE "Gopher" is a popular name for electronic files accessed via Internet (in all county offices soon, we hope). Both Extension and 4-H (CYFERNET) offer "gophers," as well as universities, government agencies, and private organizations. Newsletters, program information, research, and statistical reports, grant announcements, and much other info appear on menus.

The Univ. of MN Cooperative Service places their monthly "family life packet" on their gopher. The January 1993 edition has an insightful item on **Rural Violence**:

The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence identifies the following factors in rural settings which create barriers to dealing with abuse:

1. Physical isolation makes it difficult to report or escape abuse or find support.
2. Females and children, most frequent victims, lack access to transportation.
3. Victims may also lack a telephone, have a long-distance charge, or be unaware of services or shelters.
4. Police and/or legal response may not be supportive. Neighbors with police scanners may spread gossip.
5. Poor road conditions may leave no out.
6. Services may be unavailable or far away.
7. Rifles and guns are more available, increasing risks of use at emotional times.
8. Job opportunities are often lacking, marginal, far away, and seasonal.
9. The ongoing farm crisis and economic stress add to personal strains.
10. Housing may be inadequate, making it difficult for a woman to strike out on own.
11. Rural communities tend to operate on a "couple mentality," thus limiting support for single women.
12. Individuals want to stay with their community and lifestyle, thus tolerate abuse.

Rural communities need education about violence, services, and alternatives. Awareness of the role of alcohol and drugs as well as the importance of community support will help communities prevent and protect their most vital "resources."

Extension Service-USDA gopher offers PAV-Net (Programs Against Violence) which describes youth-at-risk programs offering alternatives to violence and drugs.

NEWS & NOTES ON HUMAN DEV. & FAMILY

School Violence Adults see schools' most important problems as violence, fighting, and lack of discipline. Despite declines in youth crime among whites, 18% of white adults cited violence as #1. Among non-whites, 31% of adults said gangs and guns were top concerns, reflecting an increase in crime among non-white youth. Most cited causes as drug abuse (78%), gangs and available weapons (72%), and breakdown of family (70%). Solutions? 86% named stronger penalties for weapons possession, 72% training of school staff, 67% more vocational programs. 51% say schools have gotten worse in the past 5 years; most feel more positive about their child's school than schools in general

--USA Today, 8/26/94, p. 7D.

Gun Deaths. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention found AIDS and gun-related events the fastest-growing causes of youth deaths, 1980-91. While accidental deaths from firearms decreased, guns were more often used in homicides (68 vs. 61%) and suicides (60 vs. 59%) from 1986-91.

--USA Today, 8/26/94, p. A1.

A lean compromise is better than a fat lawsuit.--George Herbert

**STATS AND FACTS:
VIOLENCE IN THE LIVES OF YOUTH**

Incidents of Domestic Violence Reported to Police(WY)

1991: 2,621 1992: 3,305 1993: 3,275

Source: V. Von Son, (1993). CQ's Fact Finder. Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly.

Child Abuse and Neglect(USA, 1993)

Children reported abused or neglected 2,901,000

Source: The State of America's Children Yearbook 1994. Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, p. 20.

Child Abuse Substantiated Maltreatment by Type(WY, 1993)

| | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Minor Physical Injury | ----- ----- ----- | (296) |
| Neglectful Treatment | ----- ----- ----- | (276) |
| Sexual Abuse/Incest | ----- ----- ----- | (255) |
| Lack of Supervision | ----- ----- | (202) |
| Emotional Abuse/Neglect | ---- | (52) |
| Major Physical Injury | --- | (33) |
| Medical Neglect | --- | (26) |
| Abandonment | -- | (16) |
| Nutritional Deficiency | - | (11) |
| Psychological Terror | - | (10) |
| Other: Drugged/Poisoned | (2); | Educational Neglect (2); |
| Exploitation (1); Fatalities | (1) | |

Source: Wyoming Department of Family Services. (1994). Management Information and Statistical Report, Fiscal Year 1993. Cheyenne: DFS.
Note: regional statistics available from DFS.

Adolescents show the highest rates of abuse and neglect nationally. Youth 12-17 yrs. had 25.7 cases/1,000, 50% higher than children under 12 yrs. Females are more likely to be sexually abused, but genders are equally represented in other categories. Figures likely underestimate abuse of teens, esp. of males, due to under-reporting and less serious injuries. Maltreatment is correlated with depression and emotional disorders, suicide attempts, confused sexual identity, and increased risk of eating disorders.

Source: National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, 1986.

Homicide is most often the focus of youth violence. In 1989, 7.5% of deaths of 12-17 yr.-olds were homicides. However, **Suicide** rates are higher in WY than USA: In 1989, 23.9% of all fatalities among 15-24 yr.-olds were suicides. A recent study indicated 21% of high school males and 37% high school females seriously considered suicide.

Source: Wyoming Youth Risk Behavior and School Health Education Surveys (1991). Cheyenne: Dep't. of Education.

Juvenile Crime Arrest (Rate per 100,000 10-17 year-olds)

| | 1987 | 1988 | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 |
|---------|------|------|------|------|------|
| WYOMING | 84 | 87 | 104 | 85 | 87 |
| Rank | 7 | 8 | 8 | 6 | 5 |
| USA | 319 | 347 | 385 | 429 | 457 |

Source: KIDS COUNT Data Book (1994). Greenwich, CT: Annie E. Casey Foundation, p. 152.

Juvenile crime nationally has increased dramatically over the past 40 years for 14-17 year-olds (4.1 to 131.8) and 18-24 year-olds (12.9 to 126.2 per 1,000 youths). In Wyoming juvenile violent crimes for 1993 were 51, contrasted with 48 in 1992 and 71 in 1991 (Dep't. of Education report, p. 30).

Incarceration of youth surpassed 500,000 in 1990(over 50% increase in the decade). Minor offenses most often put teens in jail, yet youth are more often victims of brutality and suicide than adults. Little rehabilitation occurs and recidivism rates of 50-75% are not unusual.

Source: M. Brodtkin & Coleman Assoc. (1993). Every Kid Counts NY: HarperCollins.

Assets Promoting Resiliency(Percentages of youth with asset)

| Assets | #/Risks: 0 | | 5+ | | 0 | | 5+ | | 0 | | 5+ | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------------|----|----|----|----|--|---|--|----|--|
| | Sexual Abuse | Phys. Abuse | Parental Addiction | | | | | | | | | |
| Church/Synagogue involvement | 72 | 37 | 68 | 38 | 62 | 31 | | | | | | |
| School extracurricular activities | 66 | 44 | 66 | 45 | 67 | 41 | | | | | | |
| Community clubs | 53 | 33 | 50 | 34 | 42 | 28 | | | | | | |
| Parental standards | 88 | 54 | 90 | 51 | 85 | 47 | | | | | | |
| Parental discipline | 72 | 54 | 78 | 52 | 64 | 47 | | | | | | |
| Achievement motivation | 87 | 55 | 83 | 50 | 83 | 49 | | | | | | |
| Educational aspirations | 96 | 75 | 92 | 72 | 92 | 70 | | | | | | |
| Homework | 42 | 19 | 40 | 17 | 34 | 15 | | | | | | |
| Helping people values | 67 | 47 | 64 | 40 | 62 | 38 | | | | | | |
| Concern for poor | 63 | 44 | 57 | 36 | 61 | 36 | | | | | | |
| Values sexual restraint | 70 | 9 | 60 | 8 | 59 | 8 | | | | | | |
| Family support | 66 | 28 | 51 | 22 | 57 | 21 | | | | | | |
| Parent as social resources | 60 | 26 | 51 | 24 | 54 | 24 | | | | | | |
| School climate | 42 | 19 | 34 | 16 | 46 | 17 | | | | | | |

Source: D.A. Blyth & E.C. Roehlpatrian. (1993). Healthy Communities Healthy Youth. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute.

Note that increased numbers of risks as well as the presence of "protective factors" (assets) reduced the percentage of youth who experienced sexual or physical abuse. Also note that no asset or absence of risk is a guarantee of avoiding problems.

WORK AND FAMILY NOTES

Talking 9-to-5: Workplace Communication

In You Just Don't Understand (Ballentine, 1990) Deborah Tannen dissects subtleties of male and female communication style in intimate settings. Her recent bestseller, Talking from 9 to 5 (Morrow, 1994) explores effects of these differences in the workplace. Not all men or all women fit the stereotype all the time, but certain patterns and their results bear notice--not only for issues of sexual harassment and gender justice but for corporate teamwork and productivity. As the book notes:

"Work is a special world because as we talk to get our jobs done, we are also being evaluated. How we get others to get what we want, and how we accept or avoid responsibility for mistakes, display or challenge authority, reveal or conceal what we don't know--all affect how we are regarded and rewarded."

Opposition, Equality, and Flexibility

A major point regarding conversational style--the pattern of verbal and non-verbal rituals in talking and listening--is that males and females use different techniques, cued by different priorities, to express themselves. Listen to a group of guys--preschoolers or working men on lunch break--in conversation with one another: "Aaah, you got macaroni on your shirt--do you need a bib?...I've got the chair next to Jason...Hey, guys, listen to this joke my dad told me." Everything is said in fun, but the underlying message is: "Notice me...I'm cool...You can't put me down." This attitude gives men the grit to persevere and succeed. Women often view this oppositional style as arrogant or hostile. A steady diet of put-downs, teasing, or "one-ups-man-ship" can build defensiveness and lower esteem in men or women. Overemphasis on competition between employees may kill cooperation, teamwork, and efficiency. "Outdoing the competition" may lead to stretching corporate resources too thin or missing opportunities for profitable cooperation.

By contrast, women at coffee break avoid boasting and more often focus on others' feelings: "I heard your report got rave reviews at the Board meeting...Yeah; say, I've noticed you've been out sick lately--are you O.K.?...Girls, how should we decorate the office for Christmas (after break: how should we divide responsibilities on this project)?" Women more typically emphasize connecting and cooperating, downplaying their own abilities and accomplishments. While this may promote greater teamwork, it is often viewed by men as a lack of confidence or competence. Overemphasis on cooperation can produce indecisive leadership and "safe," ideas produced without critical consideration. Too much cooperation in the marketplace and you may be swallowed up or eliminated.

Each gender feels slighted by the other on the job. Yet neither style is "right." Appreciation of differences helps co-workers understand and bring out the best in each other. Flexibility in style helps attain the benefits and avoid deficits of each style.

For more on this issue, see the Sept. 4 USA Today magazine.

Walking in the Others' Moccasins: Social-Emotional Development

Sarah L. Lee

Sarah is a certified Elementary school teacher and currently a Child & Family Studies graduate student.

A child with a strong "sense of self" who can also care and cooperate with others will likely succeed in his./her own ventures and help others to grow and succeed. Attachment to a caring adult is most important event in this process. Cues or signals that promote trust include dependable feeding and sleeping schedules, affectionate voices and handling, and interesting toys, games, and stories shared together. Some theories suggest that the quality of caregiving is more important to the child than the quantity of food or material comfort provided, even in infancy. The sense of trust developed in a child's first 18 mo. affects his/her entire life.

Infants need to develop a sense of control of body movements as they begin grasping and holding objects. They also begin to enjoy social play, such as "This Little Piggy" and "Pattycake." By the end of the first year, they show preferences for particular people, objects, and situations.

Children begin to increase attempts to explore surroundings establish independence from age 1 to 3. This period may be better described as the "testing" rather than "terrible" Two's. At their own pace, children "test" their physical abilities, make simple choices, and experiment with ever-growing verbal skills. Caregivers who provide an environment to explore, make decisions, ask questions, and learn self-restraint encourage growth within healthy limits. Helpful hints for parents are forbid only what is most important to avoid (keep safety in mind) and be clear and consistent.

From roughly four to five years old, children develop their senses of imagination, including amazing fantasy worlds. They love to imitate, as well as test their physical and verbal limits. They gain a deeper understanding of their own emotions, and others' emotions as well. They test what they have learned, and also experiment with emotions through their play. As conscience begins to develop they may have trouble understanding the negative thoughts they have in their dreams. They begin to develop a sense of responsibility, as they learn to take care of their own body, behavior, toys, pets, etc.

As children enter school, they begin to choose their own friends, join in more competitive games, and play more cooperatively within groups. They enjoy learning new things. Peer acceptance becomes very important, but children also should learn to accept self and their own accomplishments.

Some basic guidelines for the challenging task of helping children get along and understand feelings include establishing routines, setting limits, and providing consistency, while still offering variety. Since all of this takes time, adults must make a special effort to make room for kids in our busy lifestyles.

"Solve Your Own Problems, Kids"**Mark Bittner**Mark is Director of UW Child Care
in the Dept. of Home Economics

Most of us working with young children find rewards in everyday situations which involve warmth and smiles on our faces. Early childhood educators, like the parents of young children, do not expect or enjoy arguments or fighting among those same children. But a day of pushing, teasing, or flying sand elevates the blood pressure of the most long-suffering teacher or parent.

We all have moments in which adult-child or child-child problems go beyond our highest level of patience. Often the best approach in these situations is to take a big step backwards--literally. When adults try to resolve children's problems or clear things up too quickly, children lose the chance to develop life-long skills for resolving difficulties creatively. According to Guilford (1967), creativity in humans is best enhanced through the process of divergent thinking. Divergent thinking is simply the ability to devise as many solutions to a problem as possible.

One way to encourage divergent thinking, is to use the Problem Solving Technique (Crary, 1984). This technique consists of a 5-step process which involves the adult as the facilitator. This technique is generally more appropriate for children over the age of two and one-half. It takes a lot of time at first, but eventually the goal is for the adult to not be involved at all. Imagine a situation with two children arguing over a toy in the sandbox. As a facilitator you would:

1. **Gather Data:** Ask both people involved to tell what happened, what they want, how they feel.
2. **State the Problem:** Make a simple statement describing the problem without judgement.
3. **Brainstorm Solutions (divergent thinking):** Encourage the people to think of as many ways as possible that the problem could be solved. Ask others not involved in the problem for ideas. Do not evaluate the solutions suggested.
4. **Ask for a Decision:** Ask one person which way they want to solve the problem. Ask the other if that's okay with them; if not, ask them how they want to solve the problem. When there is a consensus, a decision is made.
5. **Follow-up:** Say to those involved, "You solved the problem. That's wonderful;" or "Give a hug;" or indicate how pleased you are that they solved their problem. Again, the goal is limited parent or teacher facilitation. We want children to learn they are capable of intelligent decisions. When they participate in the process they gain greater self-esteem and stimulate creative thought.

Crary, Elizabeth. (1984). *Kids Can Cooperate*. Seattle, WA: Parenting Press.

Guilford, J.P. (1967). *The Nature of Human Intelligence*. NY: McGraw-Hill.

**Bringing Communication Home:
"Siblings without Rivalry"**

Sibling rivalry expresses all the power of the closest affection and competition known to humanity. To parents, this threat is exceeded only by the energy of collusion among sibs--being a little too allied for the parents' own good. Sibling rivalry, according to Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish, authors of *Siblings without Rivalry* (Avon, 1987), springs from children's desire for the exclusive love of parents and peer competition. Their advice:

- + Sibling rivalry is natural and "testing" can spur physical, social, and mental skills in each child
- + Conflicts can be "teachable moments" for accepting feelings and expressing ideas in respectful words, without hurting
- + Comparisons reduce esteem and add fuel to rivalry--even when they are favorable. "Your homework is as neat as your sister's" misses the child's own accomplishment
- + Description works better than comparison: "That's such a colorful picture you painted" inspires pride without measuring skills against a brother or a Rembrandt
- + Equal treatment is not as important as meeting unique needs. Some kids want more hugging, some more roughhousing some need more help on homework, others on athletics
- + Parents should intervene to stop fighting only when it cannot be ignored. Avoid seeking blame or jumping to punishment. Instead...
 - Recognize emotions: "You were angry when your crayon was taken."
 - Describe, don't judge: "I can see a crayon is missing (broken, worn)."
 - Affirm children's own problem solving efforts: "You guys know how to share crayons. I know you'll work it out." (This works when you've taught how in calmer moments)
 - Leave the scene as soon as the situation is stabilized. If conflict continues, help them find another distraction (perhaps separate activities or something more fun).
- + Enjoy times with each child individually. Time together recognizes special interests and lowers needs to "grab" parent attentions.
- + Allow children their own "spaces," daily and through each life stage. Expecting them to play together or get along all the time will only drive you and them crazy.

Note: Faber & Mazlish books *How to Talk so Kids will Listen* and *Siblings without Rivalry* come in audio/workbook packages for around \$120 each. Contact Ben for an order form.

Sibling Abuse

The National Ag. Library published a reference brief, "Selected Resources on Sibling Abuse: An Annotated Bibliography for Researchers, Educators, and Consumers," by MD Human Dev. Specialist Billie Frazier, July, 1994.

**"Let it Begin with Me:"
Extension Resources for
Coping with Anger, Conflict
Robert Fetsch**

Bob is Colorado State University Specialist
for Human Development & Family.
Materials are under development and will be
available sometime next year.

Dealing with Our Own Anger

Anger is an emotion which often leads to actions showing displeasure with unmet expectations, demands, or beliefs. Anger has a thought component:

"I seem to be interrupted every time I open my mouth."
"I ought to let him suffer cold food for coming home late."

Anger has a feeling component:

"I feel so rejected and frustrated when I'm interrupted."
"It's irritating to get no call, then hear complaints of cold food."

Anger has an action component:

"Take that, you little brat!" (hitting child)
"Well, O.K., I'll have this done this afternoon, sir."
(reatreating, mumbling against the boss)

A five-step approach to successfully controlling anger goes:

- 1 Stop. Notice that you're getting angry. Signs include a rising voice, tightening neck, hot face, shaking hands, or shortening breath, and feeling a need to escape.
- 2 Think. What will happen if you lose control? Usually we don't really want to hurt others, but react when we're overwhelmed.
- 3 Ask. What is it I'm really angry about? What do I really want now? Am I upset with this person or something else?
- 4 Reduce anger. Often we're so angry that trying to solve the problem won't work until we cool down. Exercise, listening to relaxing music, talking to a friend, or reading help.
- 5 Reward yourself for controlling anger. When you do "keep your cool" or work out disagreements agreeably, give yourself a reward for your success.

Myths of Anger

Carol Tavris, in her book Anger: The Misunderstood Emotion (Simon & Schuster, 1989) summarizes research as follows:

- 1 Aggression is an instinctive catharsis for anger. Psychologists who used to recommend "getting out anger" by hitting a pillow, yelling, or pretending with guns now find these actions only escalate emotion and aggression.
- 2 Talking out anger gets rid of it--or at least makes you feel less angry. "Ventilating" doesn't erase feelings of perceived injustice. "Getting it out," then moving on to constructive solutions can help persons learn from trouble.
- 3 Tantrums are healthy expressions of anger that forestall neurosis. A child given positive attention and taught to express feelings more calmly will be less neurotic.

It is not necessary to understand things in order to argue about them.-Pierre Augustin De Beaumarchais

The Youth Violence Connection

CO Child Fatality Review Committee Annual Report found:

- + 82% of all child abuse deaths occurred to children under 5 (48% to children under 1 year)

Research on youth/adults at-risk has found:

- + 97% of male hardcore delinquents have a history of severe physical punishment and assault in the home.
- + 75-80% of young runaways who become prostitutes report being sexually abused by family members.
- + Almost 100% of killers on death row at any one time have been childhood victims of extreme physical or sexual abuse.

A 1992 National Institute for Justice Study revealed:

- + Being abused as a child increases the odds of being involved in future delinquency and young adult crime by 40%.
- + Being abused or neglected as a child increases the likelihood of arrest as a juvenile by 53% and being arrested for a violent crime in young adulthood by 38%.
- + Sixty-three percent of boys and young men ages 11-20 years, arrested for homicide killed men who were abusing their mothers.
- + Mothers and fathers were found to commit 58% of the physical abuse and 94% of neglect cases. Other adults were primary perpetrators of sexual abuse (58%).

Dealing with Others' Anger

David Burns, in The New Mood Therapy (Signet, 1980) recommends you first take steps to protect yourself from violence, then experiment with the following steps:

- 1 Ask, "What is it you're angry with me about?" Listen for the unmet expectation, need, want, or demand.
- 2 Be empathic and understanding as possible. Suspend judgment and look at the situation from the other person's viewpoint. Paraphrase ideas and feelings.
- 3 Agree where you can honestly do so. "Connect" with their logic or passion.
- 4 Ask, "What do you want of me now?" This follow-up, after discussion and empathy, may help someone focus.
- 5 Negotiate to a win-win position. Here you can explain your own viewpoint tactfully and assertively and negotiate differences. If criticism or coercion persists, back away and "let it go."

Preventing Dating Violence

Dating violence, ranging from verbal threats and insults to physical aggression and sexual abuse, has become much more prevalent in the past decade. Less supervision of couples, more permissive sexual standards, and dating among younger, less mature persons increase risks of incidents. A history of sexual abuse or exposure to explicit violence (at home or on TV) distort expectations of healthy relationships. Low self-esteem, contempt for the other gender, and lack of impulse control all contribute to justifying one's own violence or victimization.

Taunting, intimidating, striking, or exploiting can have damaging consequences for individuals--emotional pain or physical bruises; for couples--increasing tension or conflict, limiting satisfaction and growth; for peers--modeling appropriate or acceptable standards; and for extended families--increasing anxiety or anger about a loved-one's partner. Effects can be short-term--a black eye half hidden by make-up. The most profound consequences are long-term--lack of trust, inadequate or distorted communication skills, loss of emotional energy or zest for life, brutal aggression or reaction to threat. In the end, suspicion rules where trust belongs; hurt rules where love was sought; bitterness overcomes tenderness and everyone loses.

Parents, teachers, youth leaders, and peers can and should work together to promote healthy relationships.

Steps to reduce violence and build stronger relationships:

1. **Promoting respect and mutuality as dating standards.**
Put-downs of the other gender, focus on sexual conquest, dominant/submissive roles, or one person's interests should be discouraged by parents and peers.
2. **Teaching communication and conflict resolution skills.**
Classroom or peer-taught ways to show respect, express feelings or ideas, make decisions, say "no," exit when threatened, compliment or apologize, or work out differences expands a couple's options for relating to one another.
3. **Providing opportunities for good clean fun.**
Abuse takes place more often when partners are alone and without constructive activities. Planned events--sports and service as well as dances and parties--offer positive models and a variety of ways to interact with other teens.
4. **Structuring social outlets for pre- and early-teens.**
Parents and youth leaders should restrict junior highs and younger kids' access to unsupervised events (which increase risks for sexual experimentation or violent arguments) and to older, exploitive teens and adults (who most often perpetrate violence and teen pregnancy).

The man who strikes first admits that his ideas have given out
--Chinese Proverb

Mediation: Creating a Workable Divorce

Jane Warren

Jane Warren is Director of the Albany Co. branch of the SE W Mental Health Center and daughter of retired Human Development Specialist MaryO Warren.

Mediation is a systematic process in which the mediator assists divorcing family members to identify the feelings and beliefs which block decision-making and resolution. The process includes problem identification, fact gathering, and options development. The goal is to enable the parents to share their knowledge and power to create a "healthy" divorce.

Divorce can fall into three categories: 1) friendly divorce agreement; 2) bitter, long-term litigation and on-going conflict, and 3) abandonment--the parent just leaves. The research demonstrates that all children can adjust well following divorce, if the parents are willing to cooperate and work as a team. Post-divorce problems are about parents and their unfinished feelings, not about the kids, yet the children often get drawn into the conflict.

There are several ways parents can free their kids from divorce stress: 1) Refuse to talk negatively about and supporting the child's relationship with the other parent; 2) Make all arrangements for visitation between parents, not with the kids in-the-middle; and 3) Using "parenting" rather than "custody" to emphasize that kids are not possessions and that each parent has a right to parent:

*"When parents cooperatively settle their divorce, they have the opportunity to create the terms of this new parenting relationship...Separate parenting, as opposed to single parenting, requires an enormous commitment to cooperate on the part of both parents. They must cooperate to parent their children as best they can, while letting go of all of the other aspects of the former marriage relationship, particularly the negative feelings and deep hurt stemming from the marriage breakup."
--Stephen & Marilyn McKnight. (1992). The Children's Book, CPI Publishing, Minneapolis.*

Finally, differences in parenting styles must be seen as opportunities, not problems or areas of conflict. Couples can choose how they wish to settle their divorce before taking it to attorneys or the Court. Mediation is about consensual decision-making involving mutuality, cooperation, a future focus, trust, and reinforcing positives. The power of decision-making is more effectively placed in the hands of those divorcing.

The Academy of Family Mediators, created in 1981 to train and resource mediators, offers a videotape, "Mediation: It's Up to You," audio and video tapes on professional techniques, issues, conference information, a newsletter, and popular brochures. ACFM is located at 1500 South Highway 100, Suite 355, Golden Valley, MN 55416 (612) 525-8670.

RESOURCES for Anger Management, Conflict Resolution, and Teaching Peace

Extension Programs

Lisa Zimmer-Chu

4-H Youth &

Natural Resources Specialist

Conflict resolution, collaboration, group decision-making, or problem-solving--regardless of the name, these terms describe a process that requires sharply-honed interpersonal skills. The following programs for youth utilize an approach to valuing differences and communicating in an open manner that creates win-win solutions to issues--even if interests are seemingly polarized.

SPACES, developed at Michigan State Univ., builds on individuals' knowledge of self as a necessary precursor to working with others. "Inner Space" activities include personal coping skills, ability to get along with others, and ability to deal with changes. "Shared Space" focuses on awareness and appreciation of both differences and similarities among people and exploration of things that tie people together. Activities also help youth build cooperation and communication skills, resolve conflicts locally and globally, and understand communications technology for global sharing. Program materials can be incorporated into ANY 4-H project area and are available at each county Extension office. A "SPACES" workshop will be offered at State Leader's Conference.

On Common Ground comes from National 4-H Council and is designed around the collaborative process. Although created for use on natural resource issues, it is not limited by subject area. Rather, it is about bringing groups of people with diverse perspectives together and facilitating productive dialogue about an issue. Skill development focuses on gathering people; meeting management; group process; communicating effectively through enhanced listening, speaking, and non-verbal skills; idea-generation; resolving conflict; strategic planning processes; and principles of negotiation. This program is appropriate and would be valuable leadership training for older youth. Extension personnel interested in attending this two-day training are encouraged to contact Jim Freeburn or Lisa Zimmer.

TJ's II is on order by the state 4-H office. It was developed with the same funding and writers as TJ's I and focuses on teaching conflict resolution skills via videos, workbooks, posters, and discussion guides. Materials should be in by the end of the year and will be distributed by Betty Holmes.

Other Programs and Resources

Boy's Town Social Skills Curriculum has become popular with many schools, because model goals such as increased school attendance, positive peer and child-teacher interaction, improved self-esteem, and employability/life skills are consistent with many schools' goals. Training is based on five premises: 1) social skills are learned and 2) can be taught; 3) schools ought to teach employability skills; 4) learning should be active, relevant & 5) in (classroom or playground) context.

Skills taught, practiced, and reinforced include "How to...": 1) follow instructions; 2) accept criticism or consequences; 3) accept "no" for an answer; 4) greet someone; 5) ask permission; 6) make a request; 7) disagree appropriately; 8) give negative feedback; 9) resist peer pressure; 10) apologize; 11) engage in conversation; 12) give compliments; 13) accept compliments; 14) volunteer; 15) report peer behavior; 16) introduce self. Dave Williams, Principal at Albany Co. Thayer and Harmony Elementary Schools reports that the order and consistency of the program has reduced conflicts and power struggles. Role plays, discussions, and "on-site" problem-solving have excited teachers and children. Clear rules and explanations increase cooperation and understanding. For information/demonstration, contact Mr. Williams at 721-4410.

American Professional Society on Abuse of Children supports research, education, and advocacy for professionals working in the field of child abuse and neglect. Goals include interdisciplinary coordination, improvement of assessment and treatment of victims, adult survivors, and perpetrators, ethnic/minority issues, and neglect or psychological maltreatment. Write APSAC, 332 S. Michigan Avenue, Suite 1600, Chicago, IL 60604 or call (312) 554-0166.

Alternatives to Violence Project

AVP is "a multicultural volunteer organization dedicated to reducing interpersonal violence in our society." Conflict management workshops on skills and personal empowerment help persons heal and move beyond violence. The basic workshop presents step-by-step experiences and exercises in Affirmation, Communication, Cooperation, Creative Conflict Management. The Second Level Workshop focuses on underlying causes of violence: Fear, Anger, Communication, Stereotyping, Power/Powerlessness, and Forgiveness. A Training-the-Trainers Workshop offers team building and leadership skills in Group Process, Team Leadership Methods, and Hands-on Experience. AVP is a non-sectarian, non-political, and non-profit educational corporation, initiated by the Quakers (now including diverse members). WY chapters in Lander-Riverton and Laramie work with communities, schools, and prisons. For more info. contact Jean Jewell, 1309 Palmer, Laramie 82070 (742-8326).

"Make no judgments where you have no compassion.

--Anne McCaffrey

Conflict Resolution Program Resources

Improving Juvenile and Family Courts Handling of Child Abuse and Neglect Cases program sponsored by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Dep't. of Justice, "develops, refines, and implements model training and technical assistance programs to improve the juvenile and family courts' handling of abuse and neglect cases." Procedures for evaluating placement efforts and coordinating info. exchange among legal, health, social work agencies help courts improve casework, reduce recidivism and family disruption. Judges, local bar associations, police/parole officers, or social workers can write the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, University of Nevada-Reno, P.O. Box 8970, Reno, NV 89507 or call (702) 784-6012. Also training and technical assistance on strengthening families to avoid permanent placement of abused children also available.

The Art of Setting Limits is a training program for teaching individuals who work with adults, adolescents, and children how to de-fuse arguments before they become violent. Three keys deemed essential: Recognizing signals for escalation, verbal intervention to avert violence, and listening skills. For videotape, workbooks, and leader's guide, contact the National Crisis Prevention Institute, 3315-K North 124th Street, Brookfield, WI 53005 (1-800-558-8976).

The Boston Conflict Resolution Program a 3-day violence-prevention training for Elementary teachers, administrators, and counselors focuses on collaboration, communication, expressing feelings, appreciating diversity, and conflict resolution skills which can be modeled, explicitly taught, and integrated into curricula and classroom activities. Available through BCRP, 11 Garden Street, Cambridge, MA 02138 (617) 492-8820.

Children's Creative Response to Conflict provides peer-leader-based conflict resolution training to all ages. Topics such as cooperation, communication, problem solving, bias awareness for classroom are emphasized. Workshops, activity book, songbook, newsletter, and course information are available through CCRC, Box 271, 521 N. Broadway, Nyack, NY 10960 (914) 353-1796.

Conflict Resolution Center International produces an index of resource materials and quarterly newsletter on racial, religious, ethnic, and gender conflicts. Find out more at CRCI, 7101 Hamilton Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15208-1828 (412) 371-9884.

Peace Talks is a curriculum compiled by MN Extension, with resources for teams of 4th-12th grade youth and adults to train others to resolve conflict peacefully. Conflict Resolution (anger, what is conflict?, feelings, styles of responding) and Peer Mediation skills taught. Contact Marie Lee Rude, Extension Educator-Professor, MN Extension Service, Social Science 109, Southwest State University, Marshall, MN 56258 (507) 537-6159.

"My Family and Me: Violence Free" and "Skills for Violence-free Relationships" are available from Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women, 570 Asbury, Suite 201, St. Paul, MN 55104.

"Figuting Fair" and "Creative Conflict Solving for Kids" are produced by Abrams Peace Education Foundation, Inc. Write for more info. c/o Grace Contrino, APEF, 3550 Biscayne Boulevard, #400, Miami, FL 33137.

"Set Straight on Bullies" was developed by the National School Safety Center, 16830 Ventura Boulevard, Suite 200, Encino, CA 91436.

"Teens, Crime, and the Community" is a publication of the National Crime Prevention Council, 1700 K Street, NW, Second Floor, Washington, DC 20006.

"Choosing Non-violence" is an activity-based guide for teaching young children to express feelings and solve problems which can be purchased (\$23) from Rainbow House/Arco Iris, c/o Anne Parry, P.O. Box 29019, Chicago, IL 60629 (312) 521-5501.

Fair and softly goes far--Miguel de Cervantes

Teaching Peace (Ruth Fletcher, Winston Press, 1986) is a practical set of 20 activities for teaching conflict resolution, lessons about prejudice, stereotypes, gender age and disability discrimination, and stories about "peace-builders" such as Martin L. King to preschoolers and school-age children.

PEACE Works and Young Peacemakers Project Book are resource/activity books for families and clubs which blend personal and global lessons about conflict resolution with themes of Caring for the Environment, Understanding People, and Problem-Solving skills, Energy, Seasons, Careers, Toys, Games, and Celebrations. Kathleen Fry-Miller and Purdue Human Development Specialist Judith Myers-Walls developed these resources for Brethren Press, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120. and they are used widely for training church and community leaders working with children and families.

Parenting for Peace and Justice developed by James and Kathy McGinnis in the late 1970s to teach global awareness and interpersonal skills in family settings. Book (Orbis, 1981), plus "Partners in Peacemaking" intergenerational workshop guide (1984) and "Building Shalom Families" (1986) video package is available from Parenting for Peace and Justice Network, 4144 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108 (314) 533-4445.

**Discussion is
an exchange of knowledge;
Argument an exchange of
ignorance.**--Robert Quillen

PARADOXES: A PARTING THOUGHT **"Reflecting on Anger and Aggression"**

"The proliferation of guns must be stopped... We must also stop glorifying the materialism that drives people to violence."
--Marian Wright Edelman

Throughout the West, it seems obvious that "Guns don't kill people; people kill people." Perhaps Wyoming values missing in South Central L.A. are 1) A chance to make a living promoted by educational quality; 2) A sense of community which promotes non-violent problem-solving; and 3) A healthy respect for the purposes and dangers of firearms, passed from generation-to-generation. These values work only when people understand them (vs. simply repeating slogans) and apply them in changing conditions. As Wyoming gains new citizens and new media influences, conscious teaching of these values will keep us from becoming a "war zone" like the inner cities.

"Bitterness is like cancer. It eats upon the host. But anger is like fire. It burns all clean."--Maya Angelou

Research shows all too clearly that the hostile are their own worst enemies: Higher blood pressure, heart disease, fewer friends. To forgive and forget may wound the pride, but not the heart. Better to find ways to save face than get revenge. Anger does clear the air if motivated by honesty and love. Communication is the key to making a "clean" start vs "burning out" the relationship (to use the terms of the quote).

"Many people lose their tempers merely from seeing you keep yours."--Frank Moore Colby

Self-control is a virtue when it reflects integrity and sincerity. Since the best prescriptions for conflict resolution is avoiding sarcasm and revenge, "biting your lip" is generally good advice. However, some people pride themselves in manipulating the anger of others while holding their own tempers. The communication style called passive aggression--anger in disguise--uses smiling sarcasm, non-cooperation, two-faced support and gossip, and pretended weakness to control when equality seems impossible. When equals can assert themselves openly and respectfully, neither anger nor passive aggression is typical of life together.

"The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong."--Mohandas K. Gandhi

We tend to believe that power--to resolve conflicts or simply get our way--rests in muscle, position, or brainpower to control situations and people. Yet think of the number of people you admired or followed willingly simply because you were too intimidated to do otherwise. Whether among friends, at work, or international politics, the power to build bridges takes more commitment and strength than the power to burn bridges. In the words of Anne O'Hare McCormick, "The real test of power is not the capacity to make war but capacity to prevent it."

"Character builds slowly, but it can be torn down with incredible swiftness."--Faith Baldwin

Many of us grew up with the "sour" experiences of life explained as "just for our own good." A parent's intentional injustice (no supper for a poor report card) or a coach's cruelty (hitting or humiliating after losing) may have been rationalized as necessary to build our endurance or character. In fact, bullies are made, not born. Abusive parents, bosses, or peers often learned, through bitter experience, the "law of the jungle:" hurt or be hurt. Remarkably, though, research is showing that the majority of abused children do not abuse their own children. Their resilient spirit arises not because, but in spite of, the "character-building" meanness of others. Realizing the effects of being "done unto," they pledge "to do unto others as they would like..." These moral role models and their principles of determination and gentleness are needed throughout our communities to resolve conflicts and nurture the spirit of youth and adults.

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