Chapter 7: Preventing Violence Notes

Violence and Health

- **Violence** is the threat of or actual use of physical force against oneself or another person.
- **Homicide** is the intentional killing of one person by another.
  - Other examples of violence are suicide and rape.
- The **victim** is the person who is attacked.
  - Costs to the victim may include death, injury, emotional scars, anger, fear, and depression.
- An **assailant** is a person who attacks another person.
  - Costs to the assailant may include injury, guilt, shame, criminal charges, court costs, lawyer fees, jail time.

Risk Factors for Violence

- Risk factor are
  - Poverty
  - Family violence
  - Exposure to media violence
  - Availability of weapons
  - Drug abuse
  - Membership in gangs

Violence in Schools

- Students who use weapons at school often are acting on the rage they feel as victims of harassment
  - Harassment is unwanted remarks or actions that cause a person emotional or physical harm.

- **Bullying** is the use of threats or physical force to intimidate and control another person.
  - The bully may use name calling and put-downs.
  - He or she may shove or trip the victim.
  - The bully may pressure friends to exclude or isolate the victim.

- **Cyber Bullying** is bullying that takes place by e-mail, instant messaging, text messaging, or at Web sites.
- Vandalism is the intentional damaging or destroying of another person’s property.

Cause and Effects

- As a child, a bully may have learned to feel good at the expense of others.
- Bullying produces a climate of fear and disrespect at schools.
- The most effective way to stop bullying is to get bystanders involved.

Preventing Fights

- Choose Not to Fight
  - Once you recognize that a conflict exists, there are two general approaches you can take
    - You can ignore the conflict
      - Ignoring a conflict is a sign of maturity and self-control
    - You can confront the person
      - Do so wisely

- Be Flexible
  - Deciding to ignore the conflict could make the other person angrier.
  - Be prepared to try a new tactic if ignoring the conflict could make things worse.
  - In deciding how to deal with any conflict, your safety should always be your first concern.

- Learn to Control Your Anger
  - If you are not satisfied with the way you now deal with anger, many people can help you.
Parents, teachers, coaches, school counselors, members of the clergy

Confronting a person Wisely
  o Choose the right time and place
    ▪ When you need to confront a person, pick a time when you can talk face-to-face.
    ▪ It is best to meet in a public area.
    ▪ If you suspect the other person is under the influence of drugs, postpone your discussion.
  o Stay calm
  o Negotiate a solution
    ▪ Communication style can affect the outcome.
    ▪ **Do the Unexpected.** If, instead of being hostile, you are friendly, confident, and caring, the other person may relax his or her guard.
    ▪ **Provide a Way Out.** Present the other person with compromise solutions that you both can live with.
    ▪ **Be Willing to Apologize.** Sometimes a sincere apology can be the quickest way to defuse the situation.

Helping Others to Avoid Fights
  • You can help others prevent fights through
    o **Mediation:** the act of resolving conflicts through a neutral third party
    o Your role as a bystander: get involved to help deescalate a situation instead of acting as an **instigator** (a person who encourages the fight)
    o Involving an adult

Steps to Mediating a Conflict
  1. Emphasize your neutrality.
     a. Explain that you will not take sides or decide who is right and wrong.
  2. Establish guidelines
     a. Keep everything that is said confidential
     b. Be as honest as possible
     c. Don’t name-call or swear
     d. Don’t interrupt the other person
     e. Take an active part in finding a solution
     f. Follow through on any agreed-upon solution
  3. Ask each person to state his or her view.
     a. Allow each person to speak without interruption.
     b. Listen actively.
     c. Don’t go on to the next person until you really understand the first person’s position
  4. Identify each person’s goal.
     a. Try to figure out what principle, or goal, is driving each person’s position.
  5. Explore possible solutions.
     a. If the participants seem relaxed, ask them to work together to brainstorm a list of possible solutions.
     b. If the participants are tense or hostile, help them explore solutions one at a time.
  6. Don’t give up.
     a. Focus on what the parties agree on.
     b. Keep the participants involved in the process.
     c. If you are unable to find an agreeable solution, ask for help from an adult who has the respect and trust of both participants.