



SCHOOL SAFETY: What can parents do?

Recent research proves that schools are safer than they were just a few years ago, despite mass media reporting of horrific events. We exist in a world that quietly condones bullying behaviors. Statistics indicate that most of the time, no one intervenes when a student is bullied.

But Bureau of Justice Statistics still show that:

- 1 out of 4 kids is bullied.
- 1 out of 5 kids admits to being a bully, or doing some “bullying.”
- 43% fear harassment in the bathroom at school.
- 100,000 students carry a gun to school.
- 282,000 students are physically attacked in secondary schools each month.
- Playground statistic – Every 7 minutes a child is bullied.
Adult intervention – 4%, Peer intervention – 11%, No intervention – 85%

Top 10 Kentucky Center for School Safety Recommendations for Parents:

1. Give your children consistent love and attention. Be consistent about rules and discipline, and involve them in setting rules/consequences whenever possible. Explain to children what you expect and what the consequences will be for not following rules **BEFORE** they are enforced.
2. Make sure your children do **NOT** have access to guns. Teach them about the dangers of firearms or other weapons if you own and use them. Unload and lock up separately guns from bullets.
3. Know the TV shows, movies and video games your children watch, and talk to your children about them. Help them understand how painful violence really is and the serious consequences for violent behavior.
4. Use a positive approach to changing behavior by emphasizing good behavior rather than punishing bad behavior. Praise and affection can be the best rewards for children. Too many rewards, however, discourage development of internal values systems.
5. Make sure your children are always supervised. Know where your children are at all times and get to know their friends well. Encourage your children to participate in well-supervised volunteer service activities and organized programs. Enroll them in programs run by adults whose values you respect.
6. Accompany your children to supervised activities and watch how they get along with others. Teach them how to respond appropriately when others use insults or threats to deal with anger. Explain these are not appropriate behaviors, and teach them how to deal nonviolently with children who do behave that way.
7. Teach your children nonaggressive ways to solve problems by discussing problems with them, asking them to consider what might happen if they use violence to solve problems and talking about what might happen if they do not use violence.
8. Demonstrate values of respect, honesty and pride in your family and heritage with your actions. These are important sources of strength for children, especially when they are confronted with negative peer pressure.
9. Model involvement and service to your community to your children by volunteering in a variety of activities as an individual and as a family.
10. Join the KCSS “Safe Schools Begin with Me!” Pledge Against School Violence campaign, which brings awareness to the entire community that safe schools exist in safe communities.

To learn more about how you can help Kentucky schools be safer places in which to learn and work, contact the Kentucky Center for School Safety toll free or visit our website today.



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