Warning Signs Of Youth Violence

Categories : Children and Families, Mental Health Care, Youth and Young Adults

If you are concerned about your child possibly committing violence, you need to arrange for him or her to be seen by a child/family mental health professional who is experienced in working with adolescents and their families. School administrators, counselors and teachers may know mental health providers with this expertise. Family doctors or your local mental health association can also point you in the right direction.

If your child is exhibiting a number of warning signs for violence you should get help quickly. In an emergency situation it may be necessary to contact your local police department for assistance or take your child to the nearest emergency room for evaluation.

Also, it is important to realize that many children exhibit these warning signs and never resort to violence.

Warning signs include:

- Past violent or aggressive behavior
- Access to weapons
- Bringing a weapon to school
- Past suicide attempts or threats
- Family history of violent behavior or suicide attempts
- Blaming others and/or unwilling to accept responsibility for one’s own actions
- Recent experience of humiliation, shame, loss or rejection
- Bullying or intimidating peers or younger children
- A pattern of threats
- Being a victim of abuse or neglect
- Witnessing abuse or violence in the home
- Themes of death or depression repeatedly evident in conversation, written expressions, reading selections, or artwork
- Preoccupation with themes and acts of violence in TV shows, movies, music, magazines, comics, books, video games, and Internet sites
- Mental illness, such as depression, mania, psychosis, or bipolar disorder
- Use of alcohol or drugs
- Disciplinary problems at school or in the community
- Past destruction of property or vandalism
- Cruelty to animals
- Setting fires
- Poor peer relationships and/or social isolation
- Involvement with cults or gangs
- Little or no supervision or support from parents or other caring adult

Other Resources:

- Warning Signs of Youth Violence, APA Help Center from the American Psychological Association
- CDC National Center for Youth Violence Prevention

To Find Providers in Connecticut’s Community Resources Database:

Search by service names:

- Anger Management
- Adolescent/Youth Counseling
- Child Guidance

_____

SOURCE: CDC National Center for Youth Violence Prevention
PREPARED BY: 211/mm
CONTENT LAST REVIEWED: June2023