

Too Good for Violence Home Workout

For Parents and Kids

Kindergarten

Dear Parents,

We are beginning a program called *Too Good For Violence*, a violence prevention/character education program developed by the Mendez Foundation for Kindergarten through Twelfth Grade. This program teaches peaceable attitudes and life skills through activities, stories and songs.

In *Too Good for Violence* For kindergarten, children learn to stop and think about what to do when they feel angry. They also learn to share, listen and take turns.

From time to time you will receive "Home Workouts," home activity sheets that reinforce and extend at home what your child is learning at school. By sharing these activities together, you will help your child learn important social skills to help your child get along well with others and resolve conflicts in peaceful ways.

Thank you for your interest and help in teaching the skills to help us all live without violence. Being responsible for a child is the most difficult and, at the same time, most joyous and rewarding experience. As parents and/or caregivers you have the opportunity to guide the growth and development of a young life in a positive direction. I wish you well in your journey to nurture and support your child.

Sincerely,

Sending Messages to Your Child...

From pre-school through the early elementary years, children are eager to please their parents and receptive to your instruction. These early years of unconditional devotion are a great time to teach and model responsible choices.

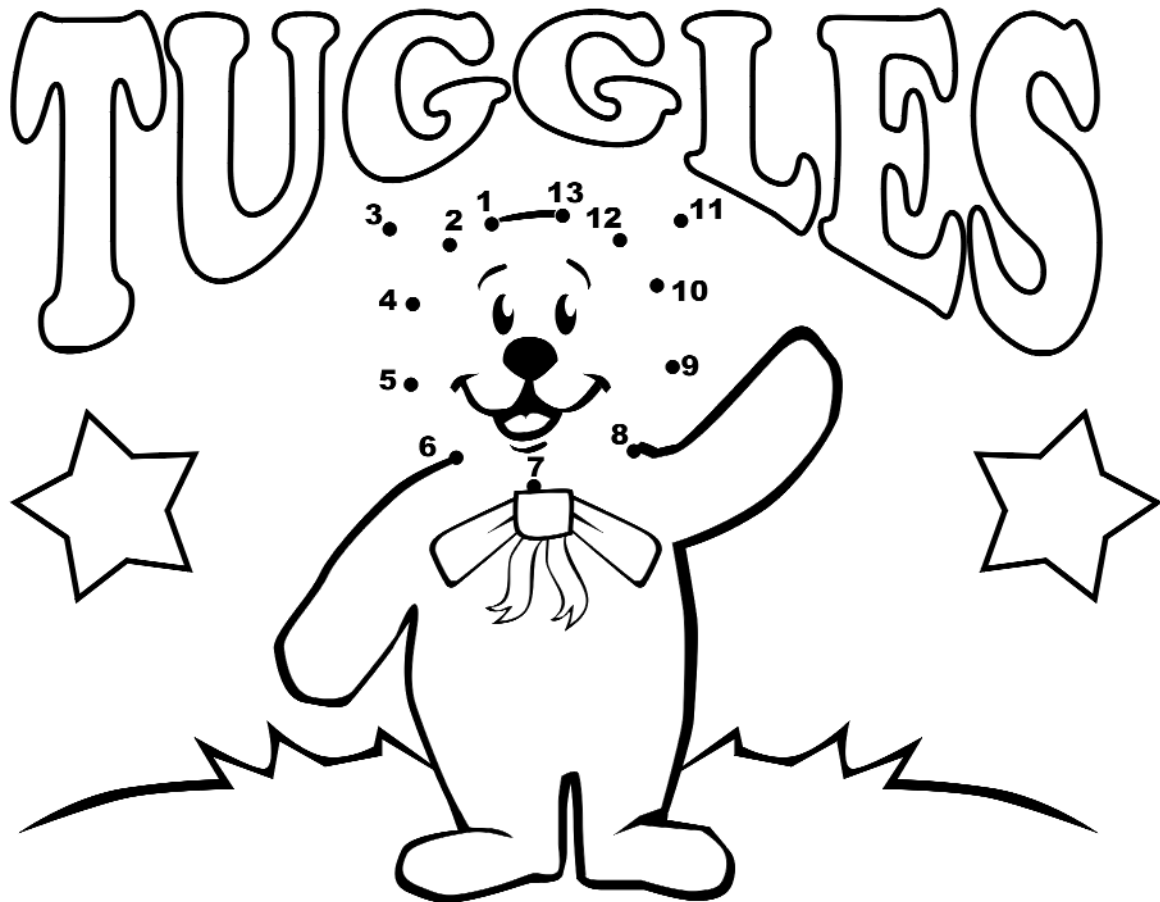
Suggestions for sending the right messages:

- Discuss how violence and bad decisions can hurt people.
- Realize that when you use tobacco, alcohol and other drugs you are sending a message endorsing your children's use of these substances.
- Praise your children when they make good choices—eating healthy foods, brushing their teeth, getting enough rest, etc.
- Ask your children what they think about a TV program or story. Discuss how TV/story book characters are like and unlike people they know.

In our first lesson, the children met Tuggles the Teddy Bear. Tuggles is searching for a peaceable place, a place where people care about each other and get along together without fighting. One way to show you care about someone is to call them by name. Ask your child to tell you about Tuggles and show you how he or she learned to introduce one person to another. We learned that our classroom can be the place where peace begins.



Connect the dots...



Resources

Books for You

How to Raise a Child with a High EQ: A Parents' Guide to Emotional Intelligence, by Lawrence Shapiro. Harper Collins Publishers, 1998. Emotional intelligence is the ability to get along with people and make good decisions. Studies show that children of all ages can develop these skills. This book helps parents teach these important skills through activities, games and practical parenting tips.

How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk, by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish. Collins, 1999. This book is filled with ideas for parents on getting kids to open up and communicate. It contains many examples and motivating points sprinkled with humor.

Books To Read with Your Child

I Can't Wait, by Elizabeth Crary. Parenting Press, 1996. Luke learns some different things to do while waiting to take his turn. As you read, ask your son or daughter to help Luke choose what to do.

Wonderful Web Site

Mendez Foundation, www.mendezfoundation.org

This site is produced by the Mendez Foundation, the developers of *Too Good for Violence*. You can order a Tuggles the Teddy Bear puppet for your child and CD's of peacemaking songs.

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Today we learned that even when we feel angry, we can be peacemakers if we will stop and think. To help your child remember this important skill, sing the following song to the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It."

Add gestures to the lyrics to make the song even more fun.

When You're Angry and You Know It

*When you're angry and you know it,
Stop and think!*

*When you're angry and you know it,
Stop and think!*

*When you're angry and you know it,
Then your face will surely show it,
When you're angry and you know it,
Stop and think!*



*When you're calmer and you know it,
Tell a friend!*

*When you're calmer and you know it,
Tell a friend!*

*When you're calmer and you know it,
Then your face will surely show it,
When you're calmer and you know it,
Tell a friend!*

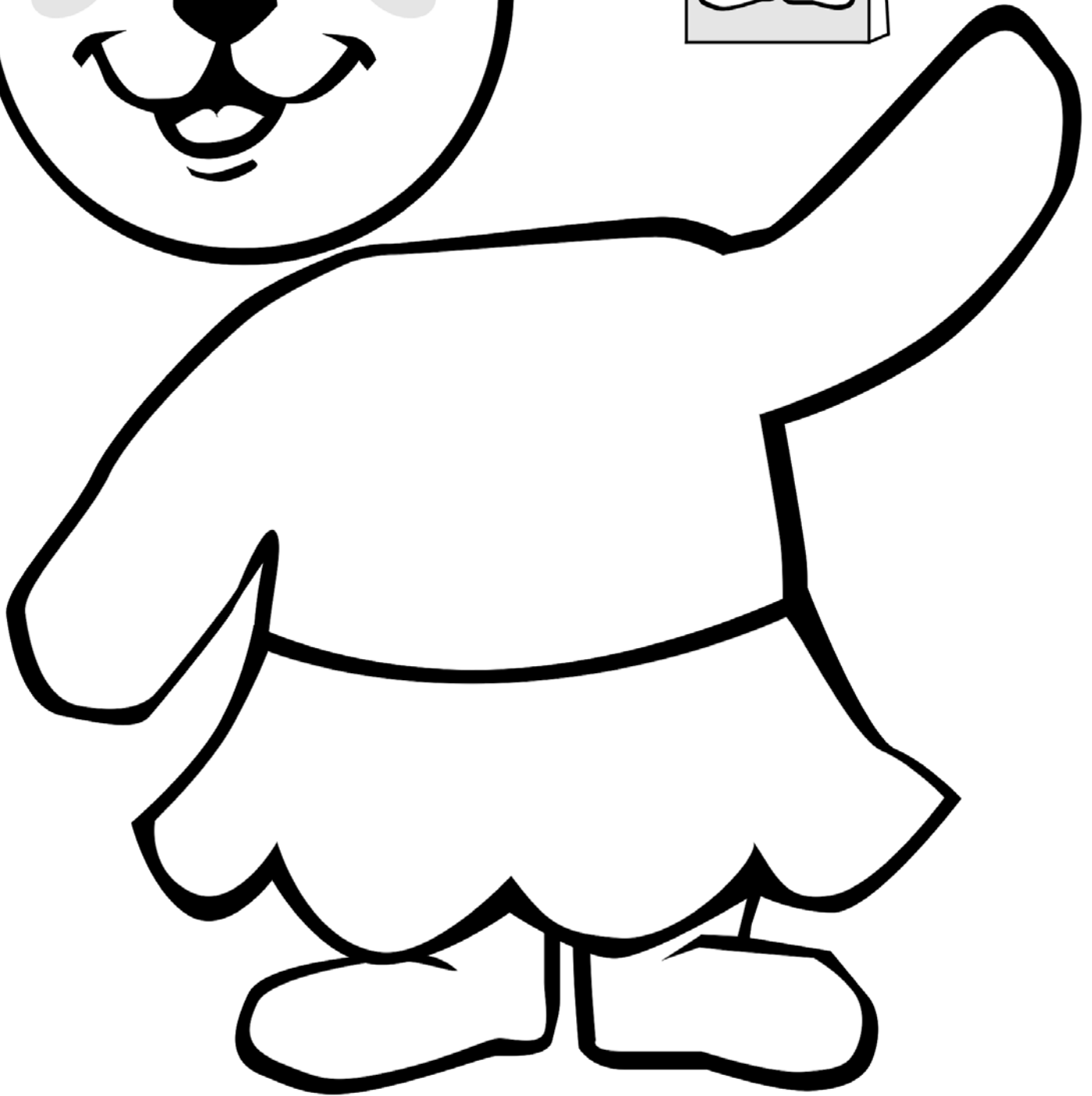
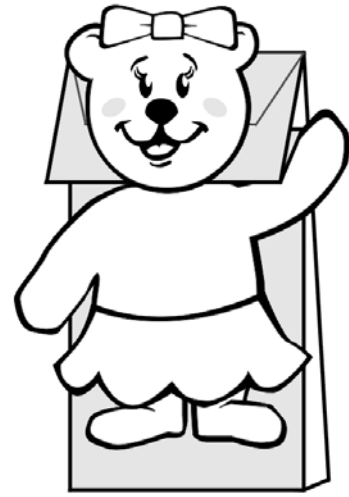
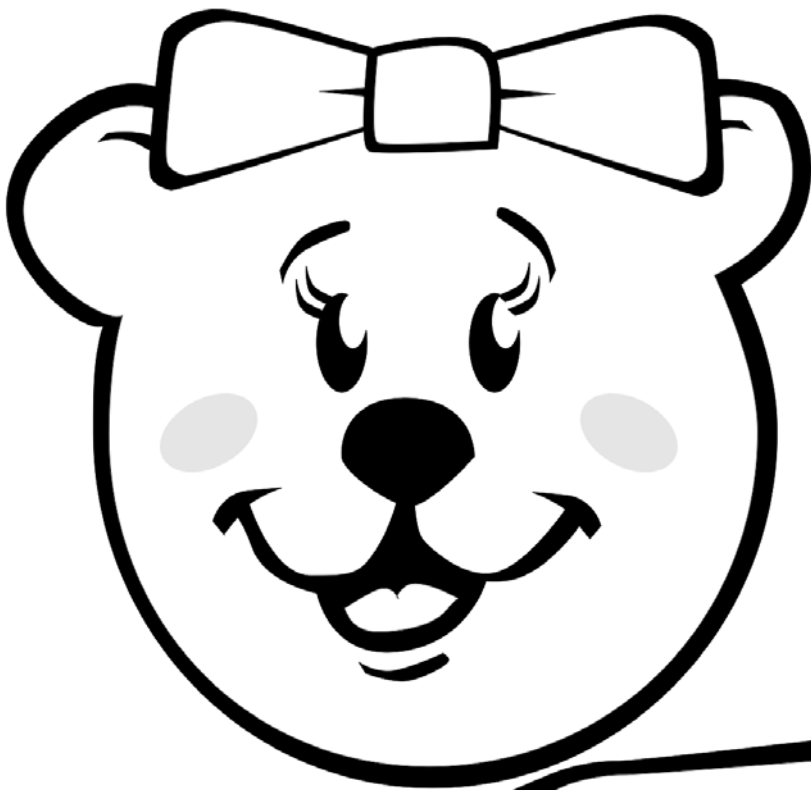


*When you're peaceful and you know it,
Share a smile!*

*When you're peaceful and you know it,
Share a smile!*

*When you're peaceful and you know it,
Then your face will surely show it,
When you're peaceful and you know it,
Share a smile!*





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We are learning to solve problems peacefully by working together. One way to do this is to share. Today we heard a story about Ben and Whitney. They set out on a journey to find a peaceable place. Along the way they saw two birds fighting over a piece of yarn. The children helped them to share.

Learning to share can help a home become a peaceable place also. Sit together as a family and have each member of your family list some ways they can share with each other.

Names of Family Members:

How they can share:



Place your list on the refrigerator or in some other prominent place as a reminder.

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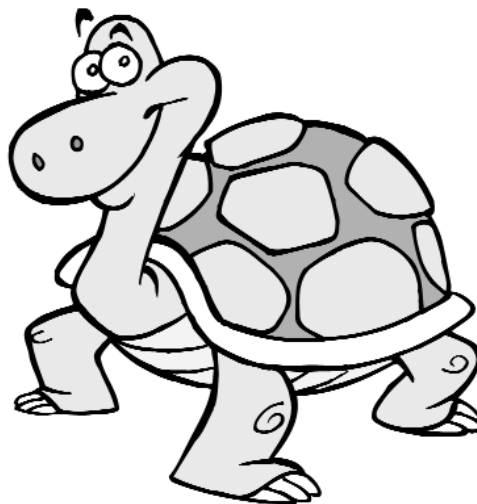
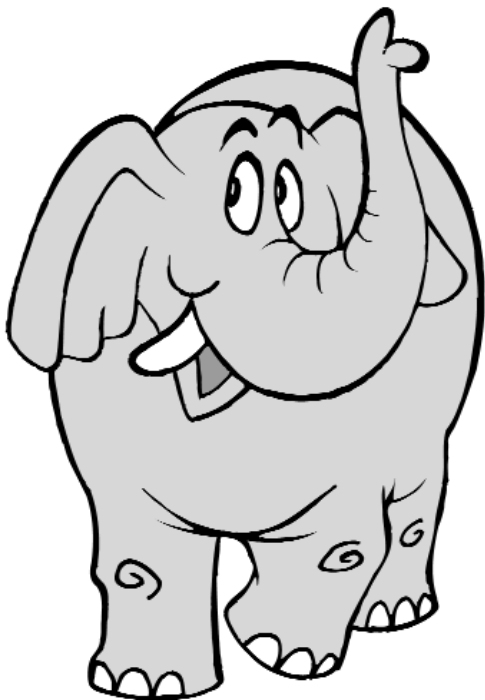
Taking turns is an important social skill and a key to developing the character trait of fairness. Help your child learn to take turns by creating a family story together. The story will be about some animals who learn to take turns.

First, choose a fair way to decide who should add to the first line of the story: draw straws, pick a number, flip a coin or play "Rock, Paper, Scissors." (Ask your child to show you how!)

Then say, "Once upon a time, an elephant, a turtle, a bear and a lion..."

Next, have your family members take turns adding to the story.

Finish the story by saying, "And the animals all lived happily together after they learned to take turns."

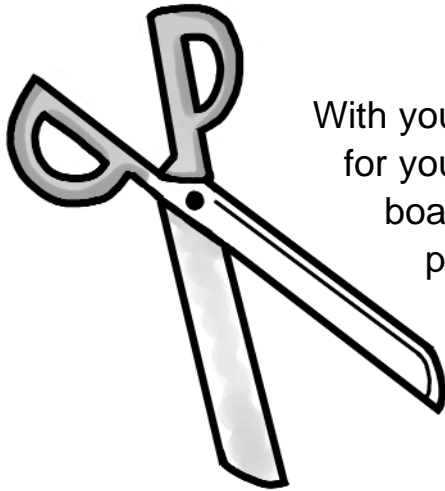


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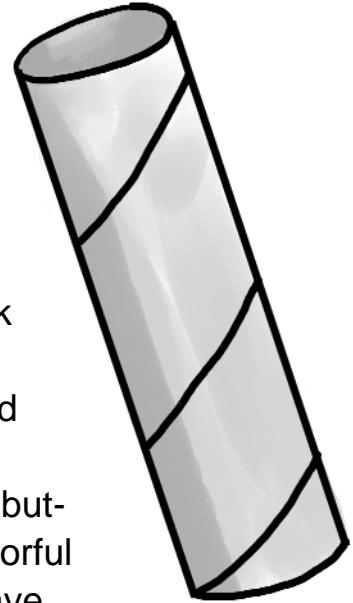
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We are learning that listening to others shows them that their ideas are important. By listening we show others that they are valued members of our families. Ask your child to tell you about the Listening Stick we made today.

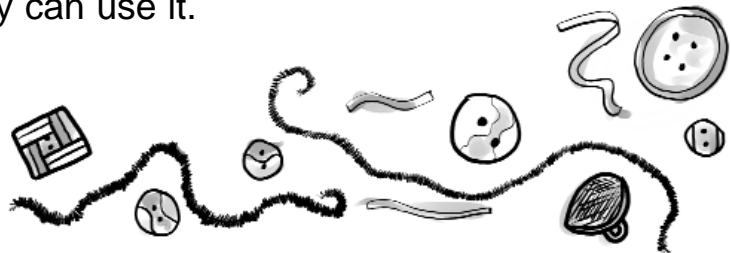


With your child, make a Listening Stick for your family by decorating a cardboard tube such as those that hold paper towels. Use construction paper, glitter, yarn, feathers, buttons or any interesting, colorful materials you happen to have.

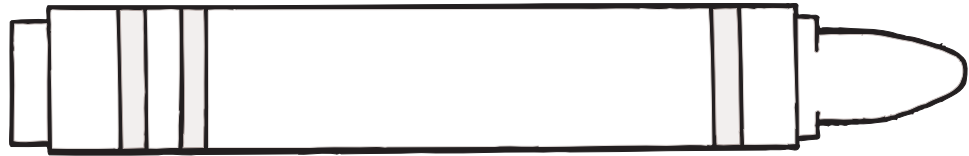


Help your child to learn to listen respectfully. When your child is holding the Listening Stick, listen carefully to what he or she says. When it is your turn to hold the Listening Stick, your child will listen to you.

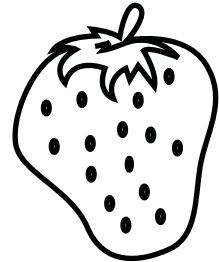
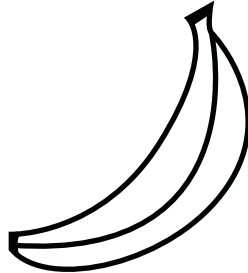
Listening to each other is a good way to keep your home a peaceable place. Keep the Listening Stick in a special place so that everyone in your family can use it.



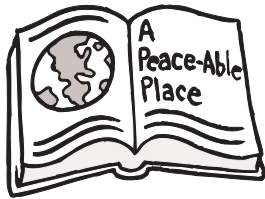
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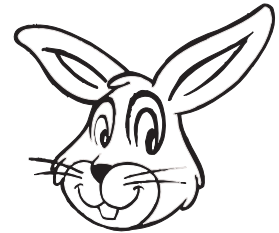
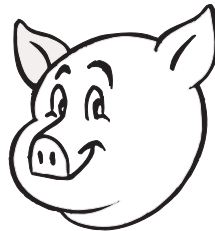
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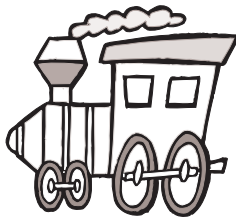
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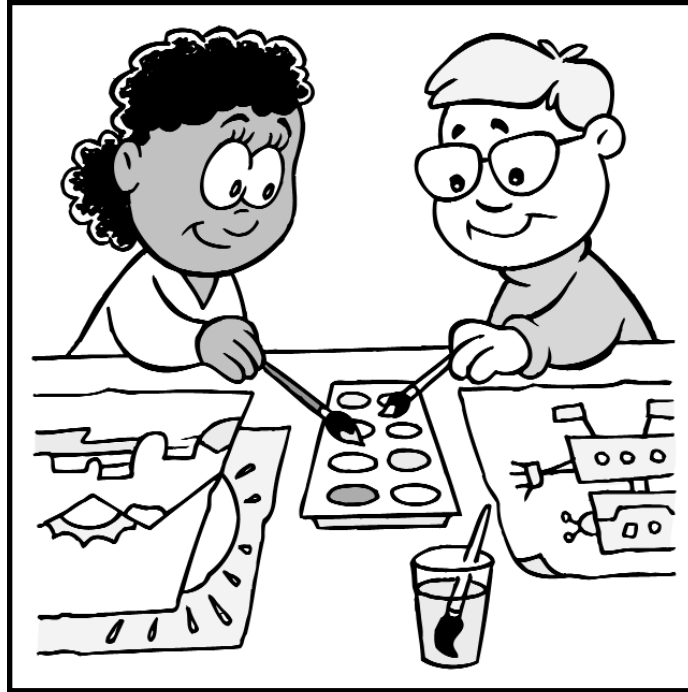
Listening

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We have been learning to make our classroom a peaceable place. One of the things we learned is how to share, like the children are doing in this picture.



Sharing can also help to make your home a peaceable place. Talk with your child about some other things you and your family can do to create peace at home. Together, draw them in the space below.

A large empty rectangular box for drawing.

General Tips for Violence Prevention - What Can Parents Do?

Children learn from what they see. To prevent violence, parents need to model appropriate ways to manage problems, conflict, anger and stress.

- **Give children consistent love and attention.**
- **Make sure children are supervised and guided.**
- **Be consistent with rules and discipline.**
- **Make sure children do not have access to firearms.**
- **Keep children from seeing too much violence on TV, in movies, and in video games.**
- **Teach children how to be safe.**
- **Stay involved with family, friends and neighbors.**

(From the American Psychological Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics)

The National Education Association and the U.S. Department of Justice estimate that 160,000 children miss school each day to avoid bullying.

According to William Voors, author of *The Parents' Book about Bullying*, "Bullying is a term that applies to the behavior of anyone who mistreats another human being by using physical strength, authority, or social/intellectual leverage."

Bullying can cause lasting harm to both bullies and their targets if it is not stopped. If you suspect that your child is being bullied, don't ignore it. Speak to your child's teacher. Explain to your child the difference between tattling and reporting a case of bullying.

"Every day without words, you teach your child lessons about violence through your own behavior. How you handle anger, how you react to situations such as a driver cutting you off in traffic, tells your child more than words ever can about how he or she should behave."

— Shepherd Smith
Institute for Youth Development

ACTIVITY

Read the following word-and-picture story with your child. As you read the words, fill in the blanks with your child's name. Encourage your child to "read" the pictures.

One day Your Child's Name met  for the first time.

Your Child's Name played  with . They took turns rolling the . They played  until lunchtime.

Your Child's Name wanted an  for lunch.  wanted a , too, but there was only one . Your Child's Name and  shared the . After lunch, Your Child's Name listened to  read a . Then  listened to Your Child's Name read.

Your Child's Name and  became good friends.

Key



Resources

Books for You

The Parent's Book About Bullying: Changing the Course of Your Child's Life, by William Voors. Hazeldon, 2000. This book provides information and help for parents of children who are targets of bullying and also for parents of children who bully.

Wonderful Web Sites

National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education: www.ncpie.org.

The NCPIE has information on developing partnerships, finding resources, and disabilities education.

Mendez Foundation, www.mendezfoundation.org

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