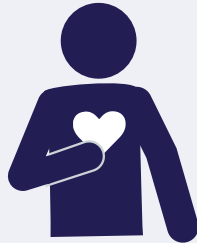


5 WAYS TO DISCUSS VIOLENCE WITH KIDS



Be Honest, Be Sensitive

Shielding children from the truth is tempting, but... it's crucial to be honest in order to maintain trust. Be sensitive to your child's age and understanding of what has happened. Sharing all the details is not as important as talking about the concepts of what occurred.

Allow your child to lead the conversation with their questions. Identify their fears, address their concerns and develop a plan with them. Understanding why they are scared and allowing them to use that nervous energy to develop a plan can lower their anxiety, and give them permission to use the plan.



Discuss the difference between people who hurt you and people who help you. Have them name types of people who may be hurtful and why, as well as the types of people who are helpful and why. You may choose to discuss why some people are hurtful (mental illness, anger, etc.), but be sensitive to your child's age and understanding.

Model a cool, calm demeanor for your child. Avoid extreme emotional reactions, as children will look towards you for strength and answers. Things such as a normal tone of voice, facial expressions, and other body language convey stability. Avoid blame and emotionally charged statements.



Children's movies, cartoons, and books use narrative to introduce scary subjects without instilling fear. By explaining violence through story, you can maintain a lower level of anxiety while being able to discuss critical learning points.

The H.E.R.O.TM Program is an age-appropriate education system designed to help children in grades K-8 understand and survive violent intruder incidents.