

# Potential Warning Signs for Violence<sup>1</sup>

American Psychological Association

## Warning Signs in the Toddler and Preschool Child:

- Has many temper tantrums in a single day or several lasting more than 15 minutes, and often cannot be calmed by parents, family members, or other caregivers;
- Has many aggressive outbursts, often for no reason;
- Is extremely active, impulsive, and fearless;
- Consistently refuses to follow directions and listen to adults;
- Does not seem attached to parents; for example, does not touch, look for, or return to parents in strange places;
- Frequently watches violence on television, engages in play that has violent themes, or is cruel toward other children.

# Potential Warning Signs for Violence<sub>2</sub>

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## Warning Signs in the School-Aged Child:

- Has trouble paying attention & concentrating;
- Often disrupts classroom activities;
- Does poorly in school;
- Frequently fights with children in school;
- Reacts to disappointments, criticism, or teasing with extreme and intense anger, blame, or revenge;
- Watches many violent television shows and movies or plays a lot of violent video games;
- Has few friends, and is often rejected by peers because of his or her behavior;
- Makes friends with other children known to be unruly or aggressive;
- Consistently does not listen to adults;
- Is not sensitive to the feelings of others;
- Is cruel or violent toward pets or other animals;
- Is easily frustrated.

This material was excerpted from is a brochure produced through a collaborative project of the American Psychological Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics

# Potential Warning Signs for Violence<sub>3</sub>

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## Warning Signs in the Preteen or Teenage Adolescent:

- Consistently does not listen to authority figures;
- Pays no attention to the feelings or rights of others;
- Mistreats people and seems to rely on physical violence or threats of violence to solve problems;
- Often expresses the feeling that life has treated him or her unfairly;
- Does poorly in school and often skips class;
- Misses school frequently for no identifiable reason;
- Gets suspended from or drops out of school;
- Joins a gang, gets involved in fighting, stealing, or destroying property;
- Drinks alcohol and/or uses inhalants or drugs.

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