

A Dozen Things Teachers Can Do To Stop School Violence

1. Report to the principal as quickly as possible any threats, signs of or discussions of weapons, signs of gang activity, or other conditions that might invite or encourage violence.
2. Set norms for behavior in your classroom. Refuse to permit violence. Ask students to help set penalties and enforce the rules.
3. Invite parents to talk with you about their children's progress and any concerns they have. Send home notes celebrating children's achievements.
4. Learn how to recognize the warning signs that a child might be headed for violence and know how to tap school resources to get appropriate help.
5. Encourage and sponsor student-led anti-violence activities and programs ranging from peer education, teen courts, and mediation to mentoring and training.
6. Offer to serve on a team or committee to develop and implement a Safe School Plan, including how teachers and other school staff should respond in emergencies.
7. Enforce school policies that seek to reduce the risk of violence. Take responsibility for areas outside as well as inside your classroom.
8. Insist that students not resort to name-calling or teasing. Encourage them to demonstrate the respect they expect. Involve them in developing standards of acceptable behavior.
9. Teach with enthusiasm. Students engaged in work that is challenging, informative, and rewarding are less likely to get into trouble.
10. Learn and teach conflict resolution and anger management skills. Help your students practice applying them in everyday life. Discuss them in the context of what you teach.
11. Incorporate discussions on violence and its prevention into the subject matter you teach whenever possible.
12. Encourage students to report crimes or activities that make them suspicious.