Documentary Discussion for Parents/Guardians

Intended Audience: Parents/Guardians with children of all ages

Objectives:

1. To inform adults about the influence of media violence and its effects on children and young adult behavior and attitude.
2. To assist adults in assessing the types and amount of media violence their families experience.
3. To assist adults in formulating a plan to minimize exposure and/or impact of media violence on their family.

Overview: View Virus of Violence and discuss the effects of media violence. Discuss interventions. Adults will develop an action plan for their families.

Needed Materials/Resources: TV/DVD. The Virus of Violence DVD

Video Description/Length: Entire video- 44 minutes

Activities:

1. Present current statistics and research on violence at the local level.
2. View video.
3. Discuss Video.
    a. What is your impression after viewing the video?
    b. Are video games to blame for the increase in violence?
    c. What switches off this safeguard of not killing our own species?
    d. What is it that breaks down the resistance to killing in these children?
    e. Are violent video games teaching our children to accept increased violence as a way of life?
    f. Does news coverage encourage copycat crimes by making celebrities of kids who kill?

4. Discuss interventions.
    a. How can you minimize your children's exposure to media violence?
    b. How can you help your children cope with their exposure to media violence?
    c. How can you help your children make appropriate choices?
        a. In selecting programs, games, etc.?
        b. In friends who influence those activities?
        c. In amount of time spent on those activities?

Follow Up/Next Steps/Actions: Adults will develop an action plan for their families.

1. Watch TV and movies that children watch and be aware of video games played.
2. Establish age-appropriate rules and guidelines for each family member that are adapted as children mature.
3. Discuss the impact of media violence with children and spouses/partners.
4. Model appropriate reaction to media violence.

Resource: www.sosparents.org

- Cantor, Joanne, et al. Media Violence Alert. Center for Successful Parenting, 2000.

- Cantor, Joanne. Mommy, I'm Scared; How TV and Movies Frighten Young Children and What We Can Do To Protect Them. Harcourt, Brace, 1998.

- Grossman, Dave and Gloria DeGaetano. Stop Teaching Our Kids to Kill: A Call to Action Against TV, Movie & Video Game Violence. Crown Publishers, 1999.

- Pipher, Mary. Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls. Ballantine, 1995.

- Pollack, William. Real Boys: Rescuing Our Sons from the Myths of Boyhood. Henry Holt, 1999.