Let's Understand Violence

Intended Audience: Fourth and Fifth Grade Students

Prerequisite: Teacher must have viewed Virus of Violence DVD.

Objectives: To bring awareness (of violence) to the classroom, and also to each and every student.

Overview: The lesson will be to allow the children to discuss their thoughts and views on violence and how it affects their individual lives. We will also try to come up with outlets for the kids that do not involve the video games, television, movies, etc, and finally to challenge their daily behavior concerning the media.

Needed Materials/Resources:

1. Markers
2. Construction Paper
3. List of Discussion Questions

Activities:

Activity 1

- Start out the discussion with a preview of the lesson. Make sure to define the word "violence." Engage the class in a dialogue to understand and comprehend what they believe violence is all about.
- Try and understand what type of role television, media, video games, etc. play in our lives (especially pertaining to violence!)
- After creating our own classroom understanding of violence and the media, I would throw out some statistics, to show my validity on the subject.
    1. A preschooler who watches about two hours of cartoons a day is exposed to nearly ten thousand violent episodes each year.
    2. By age eighteen, a typical American child will have seen at least 200,000 dramatized acts of violence and 40,000 screen murders.
    3. Power Rangers contains about 200 acts of violence per HOUR!

- After the children understand that this is a problem we would talk about violent movies/television programs that they have watched….that made them scared. We would try and talk about what the children saw, and their reactions to that video/program.

Activity 2
Review the discussion on scary movies/programs. After repeating what had been talked about, ask them to use their construction paper and markers to draw a picture of what they saw, and their fear about that specific event. This would allow the rest of the class to really understand what the child is talking about. We would then present them to the rest of the class an talk about them together.

Activity 3
Review what had been talked about in the previous classes. After a review, pass out a page of discussion questions. Split up into small groups and answer the questions. Then come back to the whole classroom to discuss and share answers.

Assessment: Children would need some sort of assessment of what we had been talking about. Break them up into groups of 4-5, and give each group a piece of paper and some markers. Ask them to write down some ideas of things that they and their peers could do in lieu of watching television and playing video games. (i.e. rollerblading, playing hide and go seek, riding their bikes, playing cards, etc.)

Then come back together and share ideas, and then hang their words on the wall as a friendly reminder of fun things to do with their free time.

Follow Up/Next Steps/Actions: Challenge students to be more aware of what they are watching and also to be more aware of their actions. Challenge students to the following things:

1. Don't put a TV in your bedroom.
2. Don't watch television if your parents aren't in the room.
3. If you want to play a video game, challenge your parents. (This way the parent is aware of what their child is playing, which will hopefully, in turn, give them the insight to censor what they are playing.)
4. Don't turn on the television before school.