

# Some kids are more prone to violence than others

Is youth violence just another fact of life? Some kids are resilient and some kids are at risk.

Are some children just prone to violence? What do we know about preventing violence in children who seem most vulnerable? What keeps some children who have been raised in violent circumstances themselves from becoming violent?

The questions just seem to grow. There is no gene for violence. Violence is a learned behavior, and it is often learned in the home or the community from parents, family members or friends. Children are more aggressive and grow up more likely to become involved in violence — either as a victimizer or as a victim — if they witness violent acts.

The home is the most fertile breeding place for this situation. For



## cris lovington

• prevention center

example: A child who sees a parent or other family member abused is more likely to see violence as a way to solve problems and subsequently be more likely to abuse others.

However, studies do suggest there is a connection between violent behavior and some inherited traits. Research has shown that impulsive behavior, learning difficulties, low IQ or fearlessness can make someone prone to violence.

Additionally, rates of violence vary in all groups, but are highest among males.

What do we know about preventing violence in children who seem most vulnerable? P s y c h o -

logical research has not only demonstrated that violence is learned. It has also identified the factors that put children at the greatest risk of perpetrating or being victimized by violence, along with the prevention and intervention programs that work.

Aggression is often learned at an early age. In fact, according to “Reason to Hope,” the 1994 report by the American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth, it is possible to predict from an eight-year-old’s aggressive

behavior in school how aggressive that child will be in adolescence and adulthood, including whether he will exhibit criminal and antisocial behavior.

This is why prevention programs that start early in childhood and continue throughout adolescence have the best chance for success.

Ideally, the prevention program should even begin before birth; proper pre- and postnatal care can reduce the risk of birth defects that could cause learning difficulties, one reason a child may be susceptible to violent behavior.

The prevention plan must include numerous components of the child’s environment, including family members, teachers, peer groups and media.

Effective violence prevention and intervention programs also share three primary characteristics:

• The programs zero in on developmental and sociocultural risk factors that often lead to violence.

• The programs use theory-based intervention strategies with proven track records. These measures are generally less costly and far more effective than building more jails.

• The programs sustain their preventive approach over time.

There are methods that can achieve enduring effects, for example:

• The High/Scope Perry Preschool Program, designed to help 3-4 year-olds at risk for failing school, included a 2-year classroom program and weekly teacher home visits.

At age 19, fewer youth who had participated in the program had come to the attention of juvenile authorities or had been arrested. Participants also showed greater lit-

eracy, higher employment levels, and greater attendance at college or vocational school.

• Providing young parents help in dealing with stress has shown promise in preventing later aggressive and antisocial behaviors by their children.

In one study, the children of a group of parents who received help for 2 1/2 years — including assistance with finances and housing expenses, day care and pediatric exams for their kids — attended school more, required fewer special services, and were rated more positively by their teachers.

The children of the parent group that didn’t receive assistance were more likely to stay out all night without their mother’s knowledge, were cruel to animals and exhibited aggressive behavior toward their siblings and parents.

## Students ‘hunting’ at Project Graduation



Some of the graduated seniors did a karoke skit at the Project Graduation all night party at the Elks Lodge on Saturday, May 17.

Games, activities and free refreshments were provided, and 97 percent of the class attended.

## Parents need break during summer

Dear Plain Sense: Summer is here, and my three school-age children are underfoot. I’m already feeling relieved that they will be attending sports camp and other activities that get them out of the house. Am I an uncaring parent?

Summer vacation is a challenge for both parents and children. Parents are still on the job, while the children are taking time off.

The structure of the school year is no longer in place for either. Increased contact throughout the day contributes to disagreements and conflict in all ages.

Various activities such as sports camps can provide a reprieve for all family members. Parents get a break and some peace and quiet around the house for a few days, giving them a chance to renew their relationship, or have time for friends.

The experience of children’s camps offers a variety of opportunities at any age. Preparing large meals together at camp may be the only time that some children have that experience, followed by actually eating the results of their work.

Making-do with the basic essentials of living also provides children with further appreciation of what parents provide at home.

Learning how to get along with others is probably the most important part. Sharing a room with sev-



## high plains mental health

• plain sense

eral others encourages good relationships and often results in an increased appreciation of having a bedroom of their own at home.

The relationships developed at camp can be long-lasting, from the camp bully who finally gets subdued by the experience, to the “summer love” that is remembered for a lifetime.

So, you are not being an “uncaring” parent when you are looking forward to the children being away at camp. You’re just awaiting a little time for yourself, something that parents often have a hard time achieving.

Make good use of the break. Do something special for yourself; enjoy the peace and quiet. Because life will be back to “normal” when they get home!

Contributed by Karen Beery, manager, Consultation and Education Department.

The views expressed here are those of the individual writer and should not be considered a replacement for seeking professional help.

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## Wind ripens wheat faster; harvest looks to be a bumper crop

The wind has made itself known for the first time in several weeks, and the farmers are probably glad, as it is ripening that wheat much faster than those cool rainy days.

I have to admit, I kind of miss the cool, calm spring that we were blessed with this year, but now it is time to get on with the summer.

Harvest will probably be well underway, before July 1st, and it would appear to be a bumper crop.

Betty Jo and Johnny Carpenter have been enjoying their beautiful yard to the full extent while entertaining family members and guests recently.



## sally michael

• brewster beacon

On Monday, June 16, they served lemonade and cookies to the five children of Lee Baird and their families, who were on hand for their father’s memorial service.

The children were Roger Baird of San Jose, Calif.; Pam and Joe Meis of Denver; Anita and Jeff Henderson of Goodland; Gloria and Bob Endyt of Lakewood, Colo.; and

Laura and Andy Smith of Knoxville, Tenn.; plus the children of these family members.

Also attending were Erma and LaVelle Palmgren and Bruce and Donita Baird, all of Brewster. The family had much fun reminiscing of the growing up years and family gatherings of past years.

On Tuesday, June 17, John and Betty Jo entertained at a dinner that included Rodney and Peggy Baird of Salem, Ore.; Bob and Pauline

Baird of Goodland; Erma and LaVelle Palmgren, Bruce and Donita Baird and J.R. and Heath, all of Brewster.

It was another fun evening that was topped off with cake and ice cream to celebrate Bruce’s birthday.

Barbara Springsteen had a six week visit to relatives in Illinois, and other than being under the weather for a good part of the time, enjoyed visiting with sister, nieces and other relatives.

She made the trip via Amtrak out of Garden City and says that it is a very enjoyable way to travel.

It seems like Barbara isn’t the only one that has had some uncom-

fortable ailments. Ruth Jones, and Maureta Musil have had short hospital stays.

Stephanie Eicher, daughter of Brian and Sherry Eicher, had an encounter with a ruptured appendix, and I think she is glad that can only happen once.

We are happy that all of these folks are back home and feeling much better.

There are others that are involved with extensive medical treatments, and we want them to know they are in our prayers.

These include Dawn Schultz, Thesia Aschenbrenner and Willard Moore, all local folks, and also,

Carmelita Clark, former resident who is in Phoenix, Ariz., receiving medical care.

Another one who will begin some treatments soon is LaVelle Michael. We know these folks will soon be feeling much better, and we want them to know we are thinking of them.

I hope everyone has a safe and happy 4th of July.

Just remember what a wonderful country this is that is having a birthday and how it is made possible only because so many have fought to keep it free.

As our president says, “May God continue to Bless America!”

## People eat light during summer heat; spreads, snack mix, salsas fill the bill

Summer means hotter weather and changes in what people eat. Lighter eating includes salads, salsas, cold cuts, relishes, cheeses, spreads and crackers. The following recipes are from the American Dairy Association.

### Spicy Snack Mix

6 cups popped popcorn  
2 cups small corn chips  
1 cup baked pretzel snack crackers or mini pretzels  
8 ounces Cheddar or Jalapeno Jack cheese, cut into cubes  
1 tablespoons taco seasoning mix  
Place popcorn, corn chips and pretzels in a large bowl. Add cheese cubes and taco seasoning mix. Toss lightly. Makes 11 servings.

### Mozzarella Pepper Salsa

8 ounces Mozzarella cheese, diced into 1/4 inch cubes  
1 cup roasted red peppers  
2 green onions, cut diagonally into thin slices  
2 tablespoons thinly sliced fresh basil  
2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil  
freshly ground pepper to taste  
Combine mozzarella cheese, diced



## pat schiefen

• postscript

red peppers, sliced green onion, sliced fresh basil and olive oil in a bowl. Mix well. Season with pepper. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour or overnight. Makes 3 cups. Spread on crackers or eat with chips.

### Tex-Mex Black Bean Dip

1 (15 ounce) can black beans, drained  
1/2 cup thick and chunky salsa  
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin  
2 cup (4 ounces) shredded Pepper Jack cheese  
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro  
2 teaspoons fresh lime juice  
Mash 1/4 of the black beans in a small saucepan. Stir in salsa, ground cumin and remaining whole beans. Bring mixture to a simmer over medium heat and cook for 3

minutes, stirring frequently. Stir in shredded cheese, chopped fresh cilantro, and fresh lime juice. Cook mixture over medium heat until cheese melts, stirring frequently. Garnish with additional cheese if desired. Serve dip warm or at room temperature. Makes 1 2/3 cups.

### Pineapple Salsa

1 cup finely chopped, peeled and cored fresh pineapple  
1/4 cup finely chopped red or green onion  
1/3 cup apricot or pineapple preserves  
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro  
1 tablespoon fresh lime juice  
Toss all ingredients in a small bowl to blend. Season with salt and pepper. Cover and refrigerate 1 hour or overnight for flavors to blend. Makes 1 3/4 cups.

### Honey Mustard-Strawberry Sauce

2 cups sliced strawberries, divided  
2 tablespoons sugar

2 tablespoons commercial honey mustard  
Mash 2/3 cup sliced strawberries with sugar and honey mustard in a small bowl. Stir in remaining strawberries with sugar and honey mustard in a small bowl. Cover and refrigerate 1 hour or overnight for the flavors to blend. Makes 1 3/4 cups.

### Olive Relish

2/3 cup shopped, pitted, brine-cured black olives

1/3 cup chopped roasted red peppers  
2 tablespoons minced flat leaf parsley  
1 teaspoon red wine vinegar  
1 garlic clove, minced  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
Toss all ingredients, let stand at room temperature for 1 hour. Makes 1 cup.

**Swiss Cheese and Grape Salsa**  
2 cups (8 ounces) shredded Swiss

## Calendar sets first day of school for August 25

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is no school the first and second of January with classes resuming on Monday, Jan. 5.

Jan. 15 marks the end of the second nine weeks, and students have the next day, Jan. 16, off while teachers get a half work day and half day for training.

February has one in-service train-

ing day on the 16th, with no school for students.

March 18 is the end of the third nine weeks. The next day is another teacher in-service/workday with no school for students. Spring Break will be the week of March 22-26.

April 2 marks another parent-teacher conference. Good Friday is April 9, with no school scheduled.

The last day of school for seniors will be Wednesday, May 12, with graduation on Saturday May 15.

For other students, the last day of school will be a full day on Thursday, May 27.

Teachers because have a workday on Friday, May 28.

Memorial Day marks the end of the year on Monday, May 31.

Internet tonight! Call 899-2338.