

Illustration by
Billy Nuñez, age 16

EVERYBODY GETS MAD: HELPING YOUR CHILD COPE WITH CONFLICT

HELP CHILDREN TO ACT CALM

- Let them know that it takes more courage to walk away from a fight than to stay and fight.
- Teach them that fights don't solve problems—they make new ones.
- Remind them that when they get mad but don't fight, they have really won.

Sometimes, getting along with other kids is hard. Some kids:

- Get into fights when they are angry.
- Get teased a lot.
- Encourage others to fight.

This can make your child feel bad or get in trouble. Teach your child how to deal with anger and stay out of trouble.

EVERYONE GETS MAD

Anger doesn't usually last a long time, but it is a very strong feeling when it happens.

Children get mad when:

- Their feelings are hurt or they can't do what they want.
- Others don't understand them or lie about them.
- They feel left out or others don't act the way they want.

When children are mad, their bodies react:

- Their hearts beat faster and their faces feel hot and sweaty.
- It might be hard to breathe and they can't think clearly.
- They have a lot of energy and want action.

When children are angry, it is:

- Good to put their feelings into words.
- Not good to hit someone, break things, or say things that hurt.

TEACH YOUR CHILD TO ACT CALM

When children get mad, they can ACT:

Acknowledge.

- Acknowledge angry feelings.
- Notice changes in their bodies.

Calm down.

- Breathe deeply, count to 10, or walk away.
- Punch a pillow, run, or play music.

Think and talk.

- Think about the problem and ways to fix it. If someone doesn't know what children are trying to say or do, they need to explain themselves.
- Talk with someone about being mad and ways to fix the problem without fighting. If there is nobody to talk to right away, stop and think, "This is why I'm mad and what I need to do is ..."



If someone tries to start a fight, your child can be the one to stay CALM:

Calm down.

- Keep a safe distance from the other person.
- Take slow, deep breaths.
- Stay alert and stand tall.

Avoid.

- Avoid name-calling or returning insults. It only makes things worse.
- Avoid other kids who may want to fight. Try to talk in private with the kid who wants to fight.

Listen.

- Calmly listen to what the other kid says.
- Ask, "What does this person really want?"

Move on.

Find ways to solve the problem without fighting.

- Use humor. "I wouldn't want you to catch my cold."
- Give a reason. "We'll both get thrown off the team if we fight."
- Walk away. If nothing else works, it's best to walk away.

Children do what they see others do. You are your child's most important role model.

If your child is still having trouble getting along with other kids, talk with your pediatrician.



Connected Kids are Safe, Strong, and Secure

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The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 66,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists, and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety, and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults.

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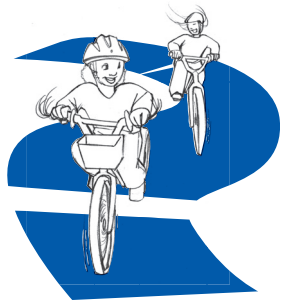


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FRIENDS ARE IMPORTANT: TIPS FOR PARENTS

HOW PARENTS CAN HELP

As your child is making new friends and spending more time with them, you can:

- Get to know these friends and their parents.
- Communicate expectations about friendships in a clear and open way.
- Help your child connect to school and the larger community.

Friendships are important, but your guidance and monitoring of activities are needed for your child to be safe and successful.

Friendships take on new meaning and importance as your child grows. Young people make and break friendships, explore the world around them, and begin to figure out who they want to be.

Friends will become more important to your child during this time. Friends help teach:

- Communication skills
- Self-confidence
- A sense of self

FRIENDS ARE SPECIAL

Friendships are some of your child's most important relationships. Close friendships involve intense feelings, learning how to trust, learning to criticize with honesty, and feeling secure outside of the family.

Friends help define personality and independence. Friendships teach young people how to deal with their own complex feelings and those of others.

With more friends and a wider range of interests and activities, your child may begin to spend less time at home.

**By knowing your child's close friends,
you will learn a lot about your child.**

GET TO KNOW YOUR CHILD'S FRIENDS

- Talk with them on the phone.
- Meet them at neighborhood or school events.
- Find out what they and your child do together.

Let your child know that friends are welcome in your home.

- Review "house rules" with your child prior to the visit.
- Let your child, the friend, and the friend's family know that an adult will be there.
- Know what's going on by seeing, hearing, and talking with them about what they are doing. Be informed, but keep a low profile.

Follow guidelines for when your child is invited to a friend's home.

- Find out about the friend's "house rules" and who else will be at home, like parents, another adult, brothers, or sisters.
- Ask about what they plan to do during the visit.
- Talk with your child about things that are important to you: no guns, violent TV and video games, alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. Take this time to review behaviors that are healthy and those that are dangerous.
- Be sure to have the telephone number of where your child can be reached. If you want to call, go ahead and pick up the phone.
- If there is a change of plans, you need to be told.



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GET TO KNOW OTHER PARENTS

- Talk with them on the phone.
- Meet them at neighborhood or school events.
- Greet them when dropping your child off at their home.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

School-aged children need and want more independence. Good communication, with clear expectations, helps parents and children trust that what is going on is safe.

To communicate clearly and openly with your child,

- Make clear and consistent rules.
- Speak in a firm and loving voice.
- Agree on rules, like curfew time, and enforce the agreed-upon consequences when a rule is broken.
- Know where and with whom your child is spending time.

When plans change—and they will—let your child know that you need to be contacted for approval of any changes.

Staying in Touch

- If your child has a cell phone or pager, talk about its proper use.
- For emergencies, your child needs to know, and have written down, your home, work, and cell phone numbers.
- Have a back up plan. If you cannot be reached, your child also needs the contact information for an adult relative, neighbor, or family friend who can be called.

PROMOTE A SENSE OF BELONGING

Young people often do best when they belong to a group.

- Help your child use afternoons, weekends, and summers to find activities that will help develop this sense of belonging.
- Many young people are involved with a sports team, after-school music or arts programs, or Boys & Girls Clubs. Others join the youth group of a religious association.
- Support your child during this time of pursuing personal interests and exploring new opportunities. Know that your child's interests are likely to change frequently!

Sports—Besides playing, your child might help coach, be a student manager, become an official, or be a timekeeper. Talk about good sportsmanship.

- Being a good winner and a good loser.
- Keeping a positive attitude.
- Showing respect for players, coaches, officials, and the crowd. Discuss how important it is to set a good example while watching a game or event.

Clubs—Check with the school and local community groups to find out what is offered. You may be surprised to find out how many different programs are available.

- Get involved as a chaperone or adult member.
- Help your child think about the different activities that are available and to make good choices. But allow space for independent exploration. There is a fine balance here. If you become too pushy, your child may pull back and not want to talk with you.



As your child explores different options, safety is always a concern.

Find out:

- Where will the activity be? Indoors or outdoors? Far from or close to your home?
- How will the activity be supervised? By parents, an older brother or sister, or another adult?
- Is this a structured program or school-sponsored activity?

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Volunteering is a good way for your child to make friends. In turn, the whole community benefits from their talent and energy.

Help your child find ways to give back.

By helping others in the community, young people build self-confidence and learn how to work with others. They can:

- Help younger children learn to read.
- Assist their peers as tutors.
- Help paint a mural or build a playground.

One of the most powerful ways to have an effect on who your child is friends with is when you become involved.

Find community projects that you and your child can work on together. Volunteering may even lead to a paying job!

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Seat Belt Safety Tips

Everything you need to know about kids wearing seat belts.

Let's see, there's "Click it or Ticket!" "No Belt, No Brains," and "What's Holding You Back?" But no matter how you say it, one thing is clear: Buckling up on every ride is the single most important thing a family can do to stay safe in the car. Here are a few tips to make buckling up a part of every car ride.

When Your Child Is Ready for a Seat Belt

Be sure your kids are ready for a seat belt by giving them the following Safety Belt Fit Test:

- Your children's knees should bend at the edge of the seat when their backs and bottoms are against the vehicle seat back; and
- The vehicle lap belt should fit across the upper thighs; and
- The shoulder belt should fit across the shoulder and chest. Children are usually between 8 and 12 years old when the seat belt fits them properly.
- If your children fail the Safety Belt Fit Test they should return to their booster seat.
- Do not place the shoulder belt under the child's arm or behind the child's back.
- Once your children pass the Safety Belt Fit Test, teach them the importance of using seat belts on every ride, whether they're with you or not. This is a habit you can instill at an early age. If they learn this lesson early, they'll be more likely to buckle up when they're older or when you're not around.
- Kids are VIPs – just ask them. VIPs ride in the back seat, so keep all kids in the back seat until they are 13.

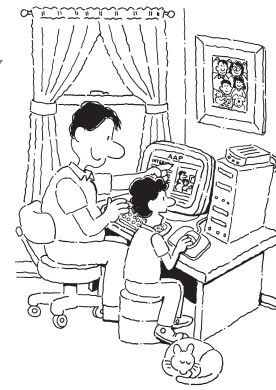


- When adults wear seat belts, kids wear seat belts. So set a good example and buckle up for every ride. Be sure everyone in the vehicle buckles up, too.
- A lap and shoulder belt provides the best protection for your bigger children and should be used on every ride.
- We know kids like to slouch or lean against the windows during the drive, but it makes a difference in terms of safety. Side airbags could be a potential danger if your child is out of position. Have your children sit upright when using seat belts.

Seat belts saved more than 66,000 lives from 2007 to 2011. Compared with other age groups teens have the lowest rate of seat belt use. Only 54% of high school students reported always wearing a seat belt riding with someone else.



The Internet and Your Family



The Internet can connect you and your family to all types of resources. At your computer, you and your family can read the latest news, look up information, listen to music, play games, buy things, or e-mail friends. The possibilities for learning and exploring on the Internet are endless. However, not all information and resources are safe and reliable. Read more about how to make sure you and your family's experience on the Internet is safe, educational, and fun.

About the Internet

The Internet (or the Net) is a vast network that connects people and information worldwide through computers. It's sometimes called the **information superhighway**. The **World Wide Web** (WWW or the Web) is a part of the Internet that includes pictures and sound as well as text. **Online** means being connected to the Internet. **Surfing the Web** means browsing or searching for information on the Internet.

When you and your family surf the Web it's important to keep the following in mind:

- Online information is usually not private.
- People online are not always who they say they are.
- Anyone can put information online.
- You can't trust everything you read online.
- You and your family may unexpectedly and unintentionally find material on the Web that is offensive, pornographic (including child pornography), obscene, violent, or racist.

Setting the rules

It's important to have a set of rules when your children use the Internet. Make sure your children understand what you consider appropriate and what areas are off limits. Let them know that the rules are for their safety.

Safety first

The following are tips you can teach your children about online safety:

- **NEVER give out personal information** unless a parent says it's OK. This includes your name, address, phone number, age, race, school name or location, or friends' names.
- **NEVER share passwords**, even with friends.
- **NEVER meet a friend you only know online in person** unless a parent says it's OK. It's best if a parent goes along and to meet in a public place. (Older teens that may choose not to tell a parent and go alone should at least go with a friend and meet in a public place.)
- **NEVER respond to messages that make you feel uncomfortable** or hurt your feelings. Ignore these messages, stop all communication, and tell a parent or another adult you trust right away.

Time limits

Surfing the Web should not take the place of other important activities, including homework, playing outside, or spending time with friends. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends limiting total screen time in front of a TV or computer to no more than 1 to 2 hours a day for children older than 2 years. An alarm clock or timer can help you keep track of time.

Good behavior

The following is what you can teach your children about how they should act online:

- **NEVER send mean messages online.** NEVER say something online that you wouldn't say to someone in person. Bullying is wrong whether it's done in person or online.
- **NEVER use the Internet to make someone look bad.** For example, never send messages from another person's e-mail that could get that person into trouble.
- **NEVER plagiarize.** It's illegal to copy online information and say that you wrote it.

Other steps you can take

In addition to setting clear rules, you can do the following to create a safer online experience:

- Surf the Web with your children.
- Put the computer in a room where you can monitor your children. Computers should never be placed in a room where a door can be closed or a parent excluded.
- Use tracking software. It's a simple way to keep track of where your children have been on the Web. However, nothing can replace supervision.
- Install software or services that can filter or block offensive Web sites and material. Be aware, however, that many children are smart enough to find ways around the filters. Also, you may find that filters may be more restrictive than you want.
- Find out what the Internet use policies are at your child's school or at your library.

CyberTipline

If you or your children come across anything illegal or threatening, you should report it to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children's CyberTipline. For more information, call 800/THE-LOST (800/843-5678) or visit the Web site at www.cybertipline.com.

AAP age-based guidelines for children's Internet use

Up to age 10

Children this age need supervision and monitoring to ensure they are not exposed to inappropriate materials. Parents should use Internet safety tools to limit access to content, Web sites, and activities, and be actively involved in their child's Internet use.

Ages 11 to 14

Children this age are savvier about their Internet experience; however, they still need supervision and monitoring to ensure they are not exposed to inappropriate materials. Internet safety tools are available that can limit access to content and Web sites and provide a report of Internet activities. Children this age also need to understand what personal information should not be given over the Internet.

Ages 15 to 18

Children this age should have almost no limitations on content, Web sites, or activities. Teens are savvier about their Internet experience; however, they still need parents to define appropriate safety guidelines. Parents should be available to help their teens understand inappropriate messages and avoid unsafe situations. Parents may need to remind teens what personal information should not be given over the Internet.

Surfing the Net

When you go to the Internet, you may have a specific address in mind or you may browse through the Web, just as you would a library or a catalog. This is often called "surfing the Net." Following are several ways to get information on the Web:

- **Web addresses.** Every Web site has its own unique address. By typing the address in the space provided, your Web browser will take you there. Make sure you type the exact Web address. Any missing or incorrect characters could create an error or bring you to a totally different Web site. The last 3 letters in a Web site address can tell you what type of organization or company set up the site, for example: .gov (government), .org (nonprofit organizations), .edu (academic or education), .com (commercial).
- **Links (or hyperlinks).** Many Web sites link to information on other sites. By clicking on the highlighted area, you can connect to another Web site without having to type its address.
- **Search engines.** Search engines are programs that can enable you to search the Internet using keywords or topics. For example, to find information about Abraham Lincoln, simply click on a search engine and type "Abraham Lincoln." A list of several Web sites will come up for you to select from.

Keep in mind—The Internet can be a helpful source of information and advice, but you and your children can't trust everything you read. Anyone can put information on the Internet, and not all of it is reliable. Some people and organizations are very careful about the accuracy of the information they post, others are not. Some give false information on purpose.

Begin your search for information with the most reliable, general information Web sites and expand from there. The Web site for the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), www.aap.org, is a good starting point.

Source: US Department of Education booklet "Parents Guide to the Internet."

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From your doctor

Communicating on the Net

The following are some ways people can communicate with one another on the Internet. Keep in mind that information that is shared may not always be appropriate for children. Also, information on the Internet is often not monitored.

Blog (or Web log). An online journal or diary that can include images. They can be found on social networking Web sites and are becoming more popular than chat rooms.

Chat rooms. Chat rooms are a way for a number of computer users to communicate with each other instantly in "real time." For example, if you type a message and send it, everyone else will see it instantly in the chat room and they can respond just as quickly.

E-mail (electronic mail). Messages sent and received electronically between computers.

Instant messaging (IM). Sending and receiving messaging instantly in "real time" over the Internet.

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Turn off the TV or computer and get active

Did you know?

- ★ Spending too much sedentary or 'still' time watching TV, surfing online or playing computer or electronic hand-held games is linked to children becoming overweight or obese.
- ★ Children who watch TV for more than 2 hours every day are more likely to have an unhealthy diet, less likely to eat fruit and less likely to be physically active.
- ★ Nearly half of children aged between 5 and 15 years spend more than 2 hours every day on 'small screen' entertainment.
- ★ Children are more likely to snack on foods that are high in sugar, salt or saturated fat when they're watching TV.

How much time in front of the screen?

When kids and teens spend time in front of small screens – whether it's the TV, computer or hand-held games – it takes away from the time they could spend playing sport, games or being active.

Australian guidelines recommend that kids and teens should minimise the time they spend being sedentary (still) every day.*

Kids and teens should spend no more than 2 hours each day using small screen entertainment. Long periods of use should be broken up as often as possible.

While computers and TV can be valuable for education and learning, the health benefits, skills and enjoyment that kids and teens get from being physically active are just as important.

“Set limits for computer games and being online”



Tips for parents

- Before you switch on the TV or the computer for your children, stop and think – could they spend the time being active and have some 'small screen' time later on?
- Set limits on TV viewing. If there is a specific program that your child wants to watch, turn the TV off once it has finished. Alternatively, record the program and watch it together later on.
- Set limits for computer games and being online – no more than 2 hours a day and not during daylight hours when they could be outside and active.
- Don't allow a TV or computer in your child's bedroom. Keep them in a common area of the family home so you can monitor use.
- Have a list of active indoor and outdoor games or activities for your children, so you can suggest alternatives to watching TV or playing on the computer.

For more information and ideas on healthy eating and physical activity, go to www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au

*The recommendations are based on Australia's Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines for children (5-12 years) and young people (13-17 years).