Know the Difference Between Normal and Abnormal Behaviors & Emotions
All children behave in a negative manner at some time or another, and parents need to be able to tell the difference between behaviors that are appropriate for a child’s age (imaginary warfare during the school-age years) from those that are not (biting after age 2). Although it is not unusual for children to show some aggressive behaviors, it is socially unacceptable. If your child shows these types of behaviors, it is important to set limits on them.

Provide Your Child with Plenty of Love and Attention
Lack of attention causes increased aggression in children and places children at risk for becoming hostile, difficult, and hard to manage. Children need attention, even if only 15 to 20 minutes of special time with you every day. Tell your children you love them often, and provide them with a safe and secure home.

Foster Positive Self-Esteem
Children with positive self-esteem typically have an easier time handling conflicts and resisting negative pressures. Praise your children often. Catch your children being good.

Talk With Your Child, Not at Him or Her
Families with poor communication skills are at higher risk for raising violent children. Teach your children good, basic communication skills.

Supervise Your Child Closely
A critical factor in teen violence is lack of parental supervision, especially not knowing the whereabouts of children. Children with minimal parental monitoring have higher levels of problem behaviors than children with proper monitoring. Always know where your child is, with whom, and what they are doing.

Set Limits with Your Child
Children misbehave to get attention, assert power, or act out their frustration, anger, depression, or pain. They misbehave when rules are not clear or consistent. Therefore, parents need to set limits and make sure that their children understand them. Discipline is not the same as punishment; it is teaching children what behaviors are acceptable and not acceptable. Time out as a method of discipline works well for younger children. Appropriate consequences for negative behaviors in older children and teens might include not allowing them to watch TV, play computer games, or spend time with a friend. Be consistent in setting limits with your child.

Teach Responsibility
When children have a number of responsibilities, they learn how to establish priorities and organize their time. Have your child help with household chores and participate in community service activities.
Teach Your Child How to Problem-Solve and Make Decisions
Encourage your child to problem-solve through play if he or she is younger. Older children should be encouraged to make age-appropriate decisions, such as planning what to wear for the week.

Help Your Child to Decrease Stress
Stress overload can cause children to be anxious, withdrawn or depressed.

Help your child to recognize signs of stress and develop ways to deal with stress (e.g., hobbies, humor, relaxation techniques, and pet therapy). Exercise also is a wonderful outlet for stress in children. Remember, your level of stress affects your child.

Help Your Child to Deal with their Anger in Positive Ways
Teach your child how to recognize their own angry feelings, express anger in positive ways, and learn positive ways for dealing with their anger (e.g., counting to 10; blowing the anger away, writing in a journal, exercising).

Teach Tolerance
Help your child to understand and appreciate differences among people.

Enforce Family Values
Share your values with your child regularly (e.g., honesty, compassion, self-discipline).

Minimize the Effects of Peer Pressure
Know your child’s friends and tell your child that being part of a group does not require them to give in to their every desire. Choose battles wisely by compromising on minor issues, such as hairstyles and pierced ears, and by holding firm on the major issues, such as shoplifting, alcohol or drug use.

Monitor What Your Child Watches and the Games He/She Plays
Do not allow your children to watch violent shows or play violent video games. Studies have shown that watching violence can lead to an increase in violent behavior.

Keep Your Child Away from Alcohol and Drugs
Teens under the influence of drugs, especially alcohol, are more likely to commit acts of violence than teens who do not use drugs. Start talking to your child about alcohol and drugs at an early age. Set a zero tolerance for their use.

Keep Guns Away from Your Child
Do not keep guns in your home. If guns are in the home, they must be kept locked away in safe storage. Teach your child what to do if they come across a gun.

Be a Responsible Role Model for Your Child
Children learn best by what they see, not what they hear, and parents serve as their most important role models. Therefore, it is important for you to show your child a healthy self-esteem and healthy ways to handle life’s challenges.
Get Involved in Your Child’s School and Activities
Involved parents send a strong, positive message to their children, and decrease the change that their children will engage in risk-taking behaviors.

Decrease Bullying Behaviors
If your child gets bullied, help him or her to stand up to those who are bullying him or her and report the problem to the proper authorities.

Know the Warning Signs of Violence
Be aware of the warning signs of violence and teach your children the signs as well.

Get Help When Needed
Talk to your child’s physician or nurse practitioner and get counseling for your child if he or she is showing problem behaviors.