



An Ounce of Prevention

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Many perils face our children today. No matter how much we do to prevent danger, we can never achieve a condition of being risk free.

Of the many perils and risks listed below, we will only be able to discuss a few of them. We will attempt to identify the nature of the risk, the extent of the risk, warning signs of existence of the danger, strategies for prevention and early intervention.

Some of these risks include:

- Child Abduction
- Internet predators
- Stalking
- Sexual Abuse / Violation
- School Shootings
- Abuse in dating relationships
- Other violence at home or school
- Terrorism
- Pornography
- Alcohol and drug abuse
- Sexual Harassment
- Bullying
- Fighting
- Rape
- Peer influence
- Sexual experimentation
- Spiritual Harassment or Abuse
- Teen suicide

Though these risks exist, we must develop positive strategies and live by faith that we have been as responsible as is reasonable to reduce risk.

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For each of these perils, it is essential that we promote communication at all system levels, including:

- school administration and staff
- parents and school officials
- teachers and students
- students and parents
- parents to parents

Many resources exist in support of the school administration and teachers, as well as parents.

I have listed some of those resources. This list is a tiny fraction of the enormity of resources available. I do not endorse completely these sources. Each organization, web site, author, etc. has their own agenda. They are useful to consider, however, as starting points, rather than re-inventing the wheel. For links to these and other resources, see our web site at:

www.christianfamilyinstitute.com

Guide for Preventing and Responding to School Violence from International Association of Chiefs of Police,

www.theiacp.org/pubinfo/pubs/pslc/schoolviolence.pdf

A Mom's Guide to MySpace

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/tcw/2007/001/5.30.html>

Boundary Issues in Teacher-Student Relationships by S. Michael Plaut, Ph.D, Associate Professor of Psychiatry and the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs at the **University of Maryland School of Medicine**, Baltimore, Maryland from **The Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy**, 19, p. 210-219, 1993. Copyright © 1993 Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy.

Teach Safe Schools

<http://www.teachsafeschools.org/>

bullying prevention

<http://www.keepschoolssafe.org/>

National School Safety Center

<http://www.schoolsafety.us/>

<http://www.nea.org/schoolsafety/index.html>

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The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) a component of the US Department of Justice

<http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/Default.asp?Item=140>

White House Conference on School Safety

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/education/schoolsafety/>

Recent Worldwide School Shootings

<http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0777958.html>

School massacre

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/School_shooting

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

10 myths about school shootings - MSNBC

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/15111438/>

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

http://www.missingkids.com/missingkids/servlet/PublicHomeServlet?LanguageCountry=en_US

Kids Against Bullying

<http://www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org/>

Stop Bullying Now

<http://www.stopbullyingnow.com/>

Bullying, Harassment, School-based Violence

http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/RG-bullying_harassment_schoolbasedviolence.html

School Bullying and Harassment

www.karisable.com/crssstbul.htm

Street Proofing Kids

<http://www.theparentreport.com/resources/ages/preteen/safety/263.html>

Safe Touch

http://www.healthykidsgang.org/documents/lessons/Unit02_lesson.pdf

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Some programs that have proven to be effective in reducing risk include:

Faith:

- individual faith building experiences
- building relationships with a community of believers
- corporate worship
- corporate commitment to a safe community

Family strengthening Strategies:

- Family life education
- General relationship skill training
 - o Friendship education
- self esteem building
- communication and problem solving skill training
- non-violent conflict resolution
- mediation training
- premarital education (love, sex, and marriage classes)
- premarital testing and counseling
- marriage enrichment
 - o communication and problem solving skill training
 - o keeping love alive, sustaining passion
 - o marriage boundaries, affair prevention

Student relationship improvement

- ethics training
- relationship education, skill training
- harassment definition and prevention
- boundaries training (sexual, general relational)
- well thought out policies and uniform school rules, consistent application
- involvement and empowerment of students
 - o student government involvement in school discipline
 - o student courts

Assessment of individuals

- pre-employment screening, or psychological assessment
- EAP or employer referral for assessment in response to warning signs, misconduct, etc. – purpose of remediation
- therapy provided as part of disciplinary action, or upon termination

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- assessments and / or therapy of suspected or acknowledged victims of inappropriate conduct by others

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