

## Talking with Children about Terrorism and War

September 11, 2001

Today's events will certainly be in news for quite some time, and many of our lives may be disrupted in different ways for a long time. As many of us watch the news and talk to others about the day's events, our children will certainly notice that something is going on.

Parents may want to talk with older children about the day's events and what it might mean, but young children (under the age of 7 or 8) may be disturbed by witnessing scenes of destruction on television or by listening in on adult conversations. It may not be unusual if some young children react by being more clinging, seeming a bit more concerned, or having difficulty at bedtime.

Although it might be important to allow older children to participate in viewing and talking about the news, it might be wise to limit young children's exposure to TV news.

It is important that young children be reassured about their own safety and the safety of their parents and loved ones. Subtle changes in parent's moods and behaviors can have an affect on children especially if they witness reactions in their parents that they have not seen before.

Be prepared to spend extra time with children if necessary, and continue normal routines and activities.

Use the opportunity to explain how and why people are reacting the way they are.

In the days that come, we may be witness to preparations for retaliation (or at least threats of retaliation). Certain groups of people may be identified as terrorists. It will be a challenge for all of us to remind ourselves and our children that we value peace.

For more information and suggestions on how to talk with your children about the today's events and the events in the coming days, see:

Talking to Kids About War

AboutOurKids.org

New York University Child Study Center

<<<http://www.aboutourkids.org/articles/war.html>><http://www.aboutourkids.org/articles/war.html>  
><http://www.aboutourkids.org/articles/war.html>

Talking About Conflict and War

The Learning Network

<<<http://www.familyeducation.com/article/0,1120,20-6055,00.html>><http://www.familyeducation.com/article/0,1120,20-6055,00.html>  
><http://www.familyeducation.com/article/0,1120,20-6055,00.html>

Talking with Children about War - Pointers for Parents

The Learning Network

<<<http://www.familyeducation.com/article/0,1120,1-4412,00.html>><http://www.familyeducation.com/article/0,1120,1-4412,00.html>><http://www.familyeducation.com/article/0,1120,1-4412,00.html>

Talking with Kids about the News  
Children Now

<<<http://www.childrennow.org/television/twk-news.htm>><http://www.childrennow.org/television/twk-news.htm>><http://www.childrennow.org/television/twk-news.htm>