

EDITORIAL

The issue of violence in society and in families is one which is of concern to all in the community.

Those working directly with children however perhaps have a closer perception of the effect of violence than others not directly involved. It has been shown in research that children who are abused have a higher risk, as adults, of abusing their own children. Children who observed violent behavior between their parents are at a higher risk of being violent towards their own partners.

What then do children make of a society which cannot protect them or others from violence? Whilst stress arising from conditions in society can be blamed for some of the violence, it is also important to explore some of the value messages which children are likely to derive from behavior of adults in employment, sports and general living. Children are encouraged to win through at all costs, to go for it, not to settle for less than gold. But whilst this approach may be admirable in stimulating endeavor if not tempered by an equally strong message that intrinsic worth of an individual does not increase or decrease according to their employment status or their win in sport, failure to achieve can lead to frustration and anger towards self or others. When the anger is turned outward and others are blamed for the perceived failure then we have the possibility of violence as the individual seeks to rid themselves of the anger.

The importance of children being supported to in their developed to develop self esteem untied to material achievements seems essential if we are to do more than cosmetize violence by a few weak gun laws or an expensive enquiry when can make it appear that as a society we are taking action and relieve our collective guilt.

In this issue the assessment of the well being of children has been documented as a profile and the approach takes into account the interaction of children, well being with their social environment. It is to be hoped that this interaction is to be recognized when the community comes to face the problem of violence and consider not only the tangible aspects which are visible but the ever present threat of nuclear destruction which forms part of the social environment of every child.

MARGARITA FREDERICO

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. . . To join a National organisation concerned about children established in 1971.

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