



Protecting Children from Harm

We all want children to have happy childhoods. We want them to feel safe, secure, loved and valued. We want them to enjoy life, laugh, have fun, believe in magic and make believe.

However too many of the children in our world do not have a happy childhood. Instead of feeling safe they live in fear and pain, Instead of feeling loved they feel abandoned and rejection. Instead of experiencing joy they experience despair and hopelessness.

As adults it is our job to protect children, to make a difference in their lives and to change the situations that harm them. We must do this in our homes, communities, counties and the world.

If we do not make the necessary changes then who will? What must we do? Consider these options:

- 1) **Look at your family.** Are the children well cared for, loved, joyful, secure and protected? If not, then consider your options in helping relatives with positive and supportive relationships, resources, child care, financial assistance for basic needs or the “little extras”, understanding and a listening compassionate ear. These go a long way in offsetting neglect, abuse and violence. If greater support is needed then consider referrals to agencies which offer resources.
- 2) **Learn about needs and resources in your community.** Does your community offer parenting classes, domestic violence support services, child abuse prevention programs, child care services, family counseling and family activities? If so, then consider how you can support these services and agencies with financial assistance, volunteering, referring others and participating in appropriate activities. If your community lacks services consider working with others to expand services and resources
- 3) **Advocate in your state and nation:** Programs and services are developed based on documented needs, recognized positive effect and financial support. Study the reports on child abuse, domestic violence, child trafficking, the impact of war and the lack of basic resources on children’s growth and education. Talk with your Legislators and Community/Church leaders to determine new laws and systems that can change situations detrimental to children. Raising funds, developing drives to collect needed materials and educating others about the issues and ways to help all make a huge difference for the children and our world.

Remember the words of Margaret Mead: “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”

Now is the time to save and protect our children. Our future depends on them.

Educate yourself.....Take a stand.....Decide on an action.....Follow through....Make a difference