

# *Manifesto*

## **FAMILIES AGAINST VIOLENCE ADVOCACY NETWORK**

We are families, schools, faith communities, and other groups and individuals who have joined together to say: "Enough! No more violence! We can do better!" We include all types of people from a variety of racial, economic, and cultural groups. We include those who are involved because of our belief in God and those who are involved because of our belief in humanity. We represent a variety of political persuasions. We transcend our differences and join together as peacemakers in advocating for alternatives to violent behavior and in promoting violence prevention.

We are horrified by the prevalence of violence in our culture. Increasing violence touches every community and practically every family. We live in a culture of violence in which families, and especially children, are the victims as expressed so poignantly in this reflection from the Children's Defense Fund:

Violence romps through our children's playgrounds, invades their bedroom slumber parties, terrorizes their Head Start centers and schools... attacks their front porches and neighborhoods, abuses them or a parent at home, tantalizes them across the television screen... It nags and pricks at their minds and spirits... snuffing out the promise and joy of childhood and of the future.

In the face of widespread violence, many people are frightened, confused, frustrated, angry, and perhaps worst, feeling powerless. We, however, claim both a power and responsibility to respond. We join together in this Advocacy Network to express a moral voice, a voice of outrage, that calls all families and our whole culture to reject violence and violent 'solutions' to problems. We will break the cycle of violence by creating a circle of people who can be strong and bold because we stand together. We say "NO!" to violence in our homes and communities, and "YES!" to countering violence and promoting alternatives to violence in our communities and world.

We are a network of hopeful people, hopeful families, convinced that what we do matters, that together we can make a difference, that peace is possible. Now we begin...

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If you take this Pledge, consider adding a separate sheet on which people can sign their names or duplicate additional copies of the Pledge and use the back side for signatures.

Please send a copy of the list of those who sign the Pledge to us. Let us know if you would like more information on resources that we have available to help you live the Pledge.

**Families Against Violence Advocacy Network  
c/o Institute for Peace and Justice  
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