

Position Statement on Violence in America Can and Must Be Prevented: A Call for Action from Medicine, Nursing, and Public Health

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From the Commission for the Prevention of Youth Violence
December 2000*

It is time for health professionals to take their place in the growing violence prevention movement – time to join with educators, judges, lawyers, social workers, police, community activists, clergy, and others in taking a firm stand against the violence that is devastating families and communities throughout this country.

With our combined knowledge and voices, we must mobilize a violence prevention movement to overcome those factors that place children, youth, and families at risk for violence and capitalize on factors that promote healthy development and resilience such as close parental bonds, safe and stable communities, and good consistent health and mental health care. More school suspensions and more prisons are not the answer. The answer, rooted in public health, is prevention.

Together we must find the will and the way to:

- Support the development of healthy families
- Promote healthy communities
- Enhance services for early identification and intervention for children, youth, and families at risk for or involved in violence
- Increase access to health and mental health care services
- Reduce access to and availability of guns for children and youth
- Reduce exposure to media violence
- Ensure national support and advocacy for solutions to violence through research, public policy, legislation, and funding

**The Commission for the Prevention of Youth Violence: American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry; American Academy of Family Physicians; American Academy of Pediatricians; American College of Physicians-American Society of Internal Medicine; American Medical Association; American Medical Association Alliance; American Nurses Association; American Psychiatric Association; American Public Health Association; US Department of Health and Human Services.*