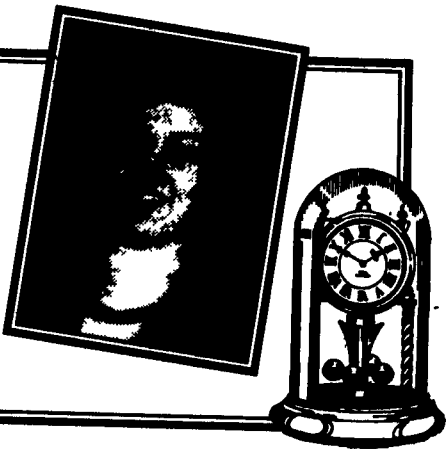


Taking Time by Rebecca Escott



Building Peace
"A week without violence"—that's the challenge for many communities for October 15 to 21. Violence increasingly threatens the physical, emotional, and educational well-being of children, adolescents, and adults. Sadly, most acts of violence are not committed by strangers but by family members, friends, and acquaintances. This problem is not exclusively an urban one. Rural areas and the suburbs also show their scars from violence.

According to a National Crime Survey, one in seven students is affected by bullying, and one in five high school students carries a weapon. In 1993, 41 percent of high school students reported being the target of a racial, religious, or gender-related incident in a study done by the Department of Justice.

This coming week, many families, schools and community organizations will actively oppose the violence around them. Some places are asking families to turn off the violence (on TV, movies, computer games); others are

showing people how to build peace through seminars and work projects.

You can be a part of this important effort. Researchers document that violence is learned which means that it can also be unlearned. In 1950, our children reportedly were influenced by the home, school, church, peers, and media in that order. In 1990, the media was the primary influencer followed by peers, home, school, and church. The amount of time parents spend with their children has dropped 40 percent during the last 25 years.

If you're wondering if what a person sees in the media really matters, consider this fact: Forty years of research confirm that higher levels of viewing violence on TV increases acceptance and use of aggressive behavior, increases fear of becoming a victim of violence, increases desensitization to violence, and decreases the likelihood of taking action on behalf of a victim of violence.

Each of us can make a difference and take a stand against the violence around us. Here are some

ideas. Try one each day this week.

•Turn off the TV, movies, music, video or computer games that make violence look exciting, humorous or a means for gaining power and respect. Also turn off media that mock or stereotype a race, gender, or culture. Instead turn on entertainment that encourages people to be better family members, friends, students, workers, citizens.

•Go one day without saying angry words to the people in your life. Count to 20 silently before speaking at all. Attack a problem, not a person. Try to settle difficult situations by brainstorming lots of choices and by compromising.

•Write down names of local, national, and international people both present and past who worked for peace. Do you know much about them? If not, check out a book or ask questions to learn more. What trait do you admire about each of them?

•Teach your children the wait strategy against violence: Walk away from fights that aren't yours. (A crowd usually intensifies violence.) Avoid things, places, and people that you know are dangerous. Ignore things that don't really matter. Talk when the problems or the friendship really does matter.

•Make a list of at least twenty games or activities where there are no winners or losers. Biking and putting together a jigsaw puzzle are two ideas. Do one of these.

•Notice and thank each member of your family for something positive that he has done. Too often we focus only on the negative. Better yet, write each thought on a slip of colored paper. Collect them throughout the week and make a

chain of good thoughts about your family.

•Do one act of kindness together as a family, like visiting a friend in a nursing home, helping a neighbor with a task, or babysitting for some new parents.

•Introduce yourself to a neighbor you haven't met or visit one you haven't seen recently. Having strong community ties helps prevent violence.

•Write a complaint to a toy company, TV station, magazine or other business that benefits from violent entertainment. Express your support for positive programming, reporting, and entertainment options.

For this week, accept the challenge to make your home and your community a less violent place to live.

Wool Sewing Contest

SOMERSET (Somerset Co.)—The Make-It-Yourself-With-Wool Pennsylvania Competition will be held at the Somerset Ramada Inn on December 2. The deadline for entry forms is November 5. There will not be district contests in the state this year.

Persons who enjoy sewing, crocheting, knitting or weaving can show their talent by entering the 1995 Make It Yourself With Wool competition. The age categories are: Pre-teen-12 years and under; Junior-13 to 16 years; Senior-17 to 24 years; Adult-25 years and older.

Valuable prizes will be awarded including gift certificates for fabric; select pieces of name-brand wool and top quality yarn.

The state pre-teen winner will receive a Baby Lock sewing machine and the adult winner will receive a Baby Lock serger machine.

Pennsylvania's top junior and senior winners will be eligible to compete in the national competi-

tion next January in Albuquerque, N.M. Availability of funds will determine if one or both state winners will have their way paid to the national contest.

Pennsylvania's adult winners will participate in a national photo contest.

Judges look for current fashion, fabric coordination to pattern, garment suitability to contestant, poise and presentation, and skill in sewing, knitting, crocheting or weaving.

Sponsors of the Make It Yourself With Wool competition are the Pennsylvania Sheep and Wool Growers Association; Pennsylvania Sheep and Lamb Marketing Board; American Sheep Industry Women; American Sheep Industry Association and Baby Lock, U.S.A.

To request entry forms contact Barbara Shaffer, RD 1, Box 10, Hooversville, PA 15936; Telephone (814) 754-4547, or Marie-France Reyes, 2103 Timberglen Drive, Imperial, PA 15126, Telephone (412) 695-0878.

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