

This information is provided as part of the Cherry Creek School District's commitment to create a safe, secure, and caring learning environment in each school for every child, every day. All staff, students, and parents help create safe schools.

POTENTIAL WARNING SIGNS OF TROUBLED CHILDREN

A Handout for Parents of School-Aged Children

Research has shown that parents and schools working together can identify and get help for children in need of intervention. Recognition of warning signs can also prevent violence from occurring. Perpetrators of school violence during the past decade have shown warning signs over time. If your child shows any of the signs listed below, discuss your concerns with a trained professional who can suggest ways to prevent future violent behavior. Your school mental health team and/or counselors are good resources to access if you have concerns. It is important to note that one isolated sign does not necessarily mean your child will conduct a violent act; however, a pattern of escalating behaviors in conjunction with multiple warning signs may suggest your child needs additional help and support.

Warning Signs:

- has trouble paying attention and concentrating
- often disrupts classroom activities
- does poorly in school
- frequently gets into fights with other children at school (uncontrollable anger, impulsive and chronic hitting, intimidating and bullying behavior)
- reacts to disappointments, criticism, or teasing with extreme and intense anger, blame, or revenge
- watches many violent television shows and movies or plays a lot of violent games
- has few friends and is often rejected by other children because of his or her behavior
- withdraws socially
- makes friends with other children known to be unruly or aggressive
- consistently does not listen to adults
- is not sensitive to the feelings of others
- is cruel or violent toward pets or other animals
- is easily frustrated
- is a victim of violence and/or abuse
- has feelings of being picked on or persecuted
- expresses violence in writings and/or drawings
- has a history of violent and aggressive behavior
- makes suicidal comments or attempts
- makes serious threats of violence (detailed and direct)
- exhibits self-harm behaviors (cutting, scratching, burning, hitting, etc.)
- shows intolerance for differences and prejudicial attitudes
- has inappropriate access to, possession of, and/or use of firearms

This material was excerpted from two sources: 1) A brochure produced through a collaborative project with the American Psychological Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics, 2) US Department of

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Education (1998). *Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools*. Washington, DC: US Department of Education.