

# Family Covenant of Non-Violence

By Dr. Gary L. Hulme, D.Min.

(703) 449-1944 x261

Violence seems to be everywhere these days. From the images of war that fill the screens of our TV's and computers to the pages of our newspapers, it is impossible to escape the scenes of violence that permeate our world. But violence isn't confined to events half way around the world. In our own community of Northern Virginia there are reports of increasing gang violence and incidents of domestic and other forms of violence. The effect of all of this exposure to violence takes its toll on all of us in one way or another. PCNV would like to offer some resources to help individuals, families and children cope with the violence of our culture.

Below you will find a "Family Covenant of Nonviolence" that provides a structure in which a couple or family can live in a more peaceful and respectful way of life in relationships. Feel free to [download the covenant in pdf format](#). Alternatively, you can simply copy it from this article by highlighting the text, selecting "Copy" and then using the "Paste" command to put it into a document on your word processor.

You will also find many useful resources for parents in relating to their children through the following link to the New York University Child Study Center: [www.aboutourkids.org/aboutour/articles/images\\_war.html](http://www.aboutourkids.org/aboutour/articles/images_war.html). We would especially call to your attention the new article on "Talking to Kids About Violent Images of War." (Note: if this page does not display well on the Netscape browser, switch to the Microsoft Explorer browser.) We hope that you will find these resources valuable as you make your way through these difficult times.

## FAMILY COVENANT OF NONVIOLENCE

Being at peace can start with our family. Each of us, members of the \_\_\_\_\_ family, commits ourselves as best we can to become respectful, nonviolent and peaceful in our relationships with each other.

### TO COMMUNICATE BETTER

To share my feelings honestly, to look for safe ways to express my anger, and to work at solving problems peacefully.

### TO LISTEN

To listen carefully to one another, especially those who disagree with me, and to consider others' feelings and needs rather than insist on having my own way.

### TO RESPECT OTHERS

To affirm one another and to avoid uncaring criticism, hateful words, name-calling and physical attacks.

**TO FORGIVE**

To apologize and make amends when I have hurt another, to forgive others and keep from holding grudges.

**TO RESPECT NATURE**

To treat the environment and all living things, especially our pets, with respect and care.

**TO PLAY CREATIVELY**

To select entertainment and toys that support our family's values and to avoid entertainment that makes violence look exciting, funny or acceptable.

**TO BE COURAGEOUS**

To challenge violence in all its forms whenever I encounter it, whether at home, at school, at work, or in the community and to support others who are treated unfairly.

**TO INCLUDE GOD**

To include God however we understand God at this place in our spiritual journey in all of our work, home, play and life together.

This is our covenant. These are our goals. In order to nurture these habits, we agree to keep this covenant in a prominent place in our home and to discuss this covenant statement at least once a month for the next twelve months.

Members of the Covenant:  
(sign below)

**Adapted from Baptist Peace Fellowship**

This article appears on the web site of Pastoral Counseling of Northern Virginia: [www.PastoralCounselingNV.com](http://www.PastoralCounselingNV.com). You are welcome to copy and/or distribute this article, provided the author's name and original sources are retained, including this statement. Thank you.