

opportunities. If children's personal rights are respected, they are likely to respect the rights of others. Some children simply need more time to learn the rules regarding private property.

Stress and Fear

Children today experience significant amounts of stress. Stress in childhood comes from a variety of sources, such as conflict within the family, parental criminality or psychiatric disorder, and low socioeconomic status (Riley, Scaramella, and McGoron, 2014). The school environment and participation in multiple organized activities can be additional sources of stress. The demands from teachers and parents with school work and standardized proficiency testing, in addition to peer pressure, can cause stress on school-age children (White, 2012). In addition, children in the middle school years are often overcommitted with activities such as dance, music, athletics, and other activities until the cumulative effect is overwhelming.

The increasing violence in society has infiltrated into the school setting. In the present information age in which tragedy is broadcast daily in the media, children come to school knowing more about the latest world events than any previous generation of children. Many children know other children who have been killed or children who have brought weapons to school. School-age children can be victims of bullying, verbal insults, unwanted sexual remarks, damaged or stolen property, and physical abuse in the school environment (King, 2014). Furthermore, children are stressed by conflict within the home and the high number of single-parent families result in altered relationships and increasing responsibilities for children.

To help children cope with stress, parents, teachers, and health care providers must recognize signs that indicate a child is undergoing stress, identify the source of the stress promptly, and refer those children who need specialized treatment. They need to frequently reassure children that they are safe, have honest and open communication, and encourage children to express their feelings.

Nursing Alert