

seem to continue their behaviors into adulthood, negatively influencing their ability to develop and maintain relationships. Victims of bullying are at increased risk for low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, feelings of insecurity, loneliness, poor academic performance, and psychosomatic complaints, such as feeling tense, tired, or dizzy ([Giesbrecht, Leadbeater, and Macdonald, 2011](#)). School personnel play an important role in implementing anti-bullying interventions in schools; however, research has recognized that involving the whole family in anti-bullying programs greatly increases success ([Arseneault, Bowes, and Shakoor, 2010](#)).

There are also dangers in peer group attachments that are too strong. Peer pressures force some children to take risks or engage in behaviors that are against their better judgment. A child's membership in a gang is associated with marked increases in serious delinquent behavior ([Bradshaw, Waasdorp, Goldweber, et al, 2013](#)). Peer group activities that result in unlawful or criminal **gang violence** are increasing in the United States ([U.S. Department of Justice, 2011](#)). An integration of family-centered and school-based programs is needed to reduce the influences for children to become affiliated with gangs.

Relationships with Families

Although the peer group is influential and necessary for normal child development, parents are the primary influence in shaping their children's personalities, setting standards for behavior, and establishing value systems. Family values usually take precedence over peer value systems. Although children may appear to reject parental values while testing the new values of the peer group, ultimately they retain and incorporate into their own value systems the parental values they have found to be of worth.

In the middle school years, children want to spend more time in the company of peers, and they often prefer peer group activities to family activities. This can be disturbing to parents. Children become intolerant and critical of their parents, especially when their parents' ways deviate from those of the group. They discover that parents can be wrong, and they begin to question the knowledge and authority of their parents, who were previously considered to be all-knowing and all-powerful. Parents can best serve the