

NEWSLETTER

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PEACE ON EARTH

Wouldn't it be wonderful if any of us could wave a magic wand and bring peace to our world!

But there is no magic. Realistically speaking most of us can only hope and pray for peace. Yes, we have a voice at the ballot box and we live in a free country where we can speak our mind. But as individuals we have little say in those big political decisions that make the difference between peace and war.

As parents, however, we do have a role in making a peaceful home for our children. And in one sense, peace starts with each of us acting peaceful.

A peaceful home is one where love abounds but love is not enough. Each person must also be treated with respect. I think of "Respect thy children" as the eleventh commandment. Sadly I often see darned good parents who love their children but they don't talk to their kids with respect. Sure it's hard to remember to say, "Let's get a cloth and clean it up together." instead of, "You clumsy idiot! You spilled your milk again!" But the way you talk is important to your child's sense of being valued and respected.

Learn how to calm yourself down when you feel anger mounting. The way life works every parent will get angry at every child at some time. Take a parental time-out when you need one. Better for your child to see you leave the room than explode. And of course in a peaceful home marital spats are resolved without harsh talk or yelling. Learn family clue words to calm each other down when things are heating up.

The goal is to make your home a No-Violence Zone. No violence internally won't work unless you also keep external violence, via TV and computer screens, out of the house.

Keep the noise levels down. A family reading hour not only means togetherness but also the soft sounds of one person speaking at a time instead of the blare of voices and music on TV. And speaking of togetherness, nothing helps children who are worried about war or terrorism more than being with their parents who are a source of reassurance and safety.

My personal roads to inner peace include music (I prefer classical but

any soft, non-frenetic music will do), going out of doors to appreciate the beauty of the world, and slowing down the pace of my daily life.

Let me wish all my readers Happy Holidays and a Happy, Healthy, Safe, and PEACEFUL New Year!