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#### REMEMBERING SEPTEMBER 11TH

The third anniversary of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center is approaching.

It was impossible to shield any but the very youngest children from the horrors of that day. TV coverage on the anniversary will reawaken our feelings of both fear and anger.

A recent article in "Pediatrics" by van der Molen pointed out that is not just entertainment programming that brings violence and horror into our homes but also the news. Research has shown that the realistic portrayals of violence as we see on the news almost daily can cause increased levels of fear, aggression, and desensitization in children.

Nothing could be more violent or horrific than watching airplanes deliberately fly into the tallest buildings in New York City. And indeed some children who were not personally affected by the events of 9-11 and who were geographically far removed from the scene showed profound stress reactions and even posttraumatic stress after exposure to news of what happened that day.

I advise you to limit your child's re-exposure to 9-11 on TV. Be sure to be there with your children when they watch the news so you can interpret the events, share your feelings, and ask your kids about their feelings.

But don't try to avoid the subject. In the first place it's doubtful that you will be able to prevent your children from awareness of the anniversary. Second, the victims deserve the memorial of remembrance. Finally we help our children deal with strong emotions by modeling how we deal with them. It's OK to tell your children you are sad and to cry. You also show them that the time comes to dry your tears and get on with life. The parent who always smiles and pretends there's nothing wrong isn't able to teach that important lesson.

Finally, find ways to help your children to talk about what bothers them about 9-11. Have open family discussions

about terrorism and other world problems. Empower your children by showing them how to write letters to elected officials. Interest your older children in history so they can explore the roots of terrorism.