

CHILDREN LEARN BETTER WHEN THEY FEEL SAFE AND ACCEPTED AT HOME AND AT SCHOOL.

- **Ask feeling questions.** Encourage your children to think about and express their emotions. Ask them questions such as *How do you feel about your new school or activity?* Listen without responding too quickly.
- **Be aware of the climate at school.** Is it warm and inviting? Is there both structure to keep children safe and freedom to let them grow?
- **Stand up for your children when concerns arise.** Help them resolve conflict and find peaceful solutions to problems. If your children are wrong, help them understand what was wrong, and how to change their behavior. Work with teachers to be sure children change behavior and that teachers support their efforts.

IF THEY ARE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL...

- **Create safe and peaceful places.** Encourage your schools to require safe, respectful behavior. Offer to work together on this goal. As a family, talk about ways your home can be a more peaceful place.
- **Children need to feel good about themselves.** Help them build on their strengths and understand their limitations. Assure them that no one person can do everything well.
- **Praise what your child does well.** For example, *Great! You finished your homework. Now you can go play.*

IF THEY ARE IN MIDDLE SCHOOL OR HIGH SCHOOL...

- **Be ready to talk.** Be ready to listen when your teen wants to talk, even when it is not especially convenient for you. Create frequent opportunities for casual chats with your teen, such as taking a walk, having a snack or meal or doing a household task together.
- **Be involved in your teen's life.** Know what's going on and his or her friends and interests.
- **Teens still need hugs.** Teens need affection, but they are sensitive to what others think. They may not want the affection displayed in front of friends. Respect their wishes about this.