



## ***Fights in School***

***Early Intervention Strategies  
Factors Affecting Intervention Strategies  
Steps for Intervening Alone***



## *Early Intervention Strategies*

- **Don't Ignore Warning Signs** – Anxiety and verbal outbursts can quickly evolve to physical violence. Remember that verbal sparring is often a plea for your help.
- **Get Assistance** – Any sign of volatility should be a sign for you to get help as soon as possible.
- **Remove the Audience** – An audience will intensify the conflict by adding peer pressure. Cheerleaders may also join the conflict, instead of just cheering. Removing the audience will make controlling the combatants much easier.
- **Approach Calmly and Confidently** – Avoid rushing into a situation, but do not be hesitant. Calm confidence will best allow you to control a situation.
- **Use a Supportive Stance** – Assume a supportive stance, off to the side and away from both individuals.
- **Use a Distraction** – Before attempting communication with the participants, shout, blink the lights, clap or drop a book to get their attention
- **Use Firm Nonverbals and Paraverbals** – Tone of voice and body language often send clearer messages than spoken language. Nonverbals and paraverbals should be calm, supportive and rational.
- **Remain Nonjudgmental** – It is important that you do not take sides when you are intervening in a conflict. This will become even more important later, when you will need to maintain a relationship with both individuals.
- **Set and Enforce Reasonable Limits** – You will need to set and enforce reasonable limits on the participant's behavior. One or both of the participants may test the limits you set, so be sure you can enforce the limits.
- **Separate, if Necessary** – If a conflict cannot be settled peacefully, separate the participants and allow them time to calm down.



## ***Factors Affecting Intervention Strategies***

There are a series of factors which will determine the way you approach a confrontation. Before you decide upon a strategy for intervention, you should consider the following:

- Number of Combatants
- Size, Strength and Energy Level of Combatants
- Available Assistance
- Weapons
- Potential Weapons
- Audience
- Other Available Resources



## ***Steps for Intervening Alone***

Physical intervention should not only be used as a last resort, it should be used as a team effort. However, while a single staff member should not intervene alone, they can begin steps towards intervention by:

- Getting Assistance
- Attempting Verbal Intervention
- Removing Onlookers
- Removing Potential Weapons and Dangerous Obstacles