

American Medical Association Alliance, Inc.
“Hands Are Not for Hitting” Place mat
Teaching Suggestions



To Teachers and Parents:

This place mat teaches preschool through third grade children positive, nonviolent activities and acceptable ways to treat others. “Hands” is a simple hand-tracing exercise with a fun activity on the back for parents and teachers to work through with children. It provides a thought-provoking, creative look at nonviolent actions.

Starting the discussion

Talk to the children about why hitting or hurting others in any way is unacceptable behavior. Ask the children to describe ways in which their hands should not be used and explain to the children or ask the children to explain why these actions are harmful or hurtful.

During the discussion

Focus on positive activities. Ask the children to describe some good things they can do with their hands. A list of ideas on the back of the place mat can help you start the discussion. Be sure to ask the children to think of other positive activities that are not listed on the backside of the place mat.

After the discussion

Ask the children to trace their hands in the drawing space provided on the front of the place mat.

When their hands are traced, ask the children to...

- Write a poem or story
- Color their hands
- Print their names on the front of the place mat
- Draw pictures of their family, friends and pets

Teachers and parents can...

- Display the place mats in the classroom as a daily reminder that “Hands Are Not for Hitting”
- Hang it on the refrigerator at home to remind the entire family to choose nonviolent ways of communicating
- Laminate it and use it as a real place mat
- Frame it and hang it in the child’s room
- Put it in the child’s scrapbook after it has been displayed
- Post it on the family bulletin board

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