

Violence in Children's Play

In the past few months especially, we have encountered a definite increase in violent and violent-like behaviour. Our centre demographic at this time is predominantly boys, and with the huge popularity of characters like Spiderman and other superheroes, we are requesting assistance from the parents and families to help discourage this type of behaviour as much as possible.

This is not to say that this is only something we see with the male population in the centre, as we've experienced the girls 'fighting', 'shooting' and 'blasting' one another, but this is a concern for us regardless of who is doing it. This behaviour is more typical for our preschoolers, but we also see this with our toddlers.

Young children have the inability to differentiate fantasy from reality and so, a well choreographed or drawn scene with weapons flailing and bad guys fighting is the same thing to a preschooler who is throwing lego blocks and swinging his arms and legs at his friends. The end result is not really very different, except for the fact that with the preschooler, we truly have injured individuals, and they don't just get up and keep going.

I'm certain every parent has encountered the "He hit me!" episode, some likely a little bit more dramatically than others. At any rate, this is not typically a very pleasant series of events that unfolds...and it more often than not involves tears.

What we are requesting is a united effort in discouraging violent-like behaviour with all the children. We find that we are constantly reminding the children to use kind words, nice or gentle touches and that weapons and fighting are not appropriate for children or in the centre.

If you are able to review these guidelines with your child at home, and maybe even adopt similar guidelines, we hope to see a decrease in the 'fighting', 'shooting', and 'blasting' behaviour we see on a daily basis.