

# WAR IS NOT A GAME

## Sniper Attacks, School Shooting & War

Should Toys Reflect That Reality  
— Or Even Worse —  
Train Children For It?

War toys and violent video games teach children that the best way to solve conflicts is to eliminate the people with which they are having conflicts. These forms of 'entertainment' teach players conquest, murder, and contempt for other human beings — early "training" that fuels a cycle of violence.

Not only can these toys desensitize people to violence and aggression, but they also making them acceptable and exciting.

War toys oversimplify war into a game that pits a good army (that can do no wrong) against a bad army that deserves the most horrible destruction imaginable. Finally, most of them — created and marketed as "boys' toys" — teach sexism by treating girls and women as objects and rewards.

*Playing with war toys and violent videos numbs people to the terrible truth:*

**War means death and suffering, not fun and games.**

Playing violent video games has been directly linked to increased aggressive behavior.

- ☞ A Harvard School of Public Health Study found significant amounts of violence even in video games rated as suitable for all ages.
- ☞ The US Army has spent two years and \$8 million developing a realistic video game that can be downloaded for free, making war entertaining so youth will want to join up and fight. The Army reports that on any given weekend, *more than 400,000 players join in*. The military can track who scores well. It is more than just good marketing. It is a tool for indoctrinating and recruiting young people.



## What You Can Do 🕊️

- 1.** *Be aware of what toys teach children.* Talk to your kids about why war toys and violent videos are a problem. For more information:
  - ☞ The Lion and Lamb Project— [www.lionlamb.org](http://www.lionlamb.org)  
4300 Montgomery Ave. Suite 104, Bethesda, MD 20814, (301-654-3091)
  - ☞ Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment (TRUCE), PO Box 441261, West Somerville MA 02144, [www.truceteachers.org](http://www.truceteachers.org).
- 2.** *Learn how to talk to your kids about violence, war and terrorism.* Be aware of alternative conflict resolution resources:
  - ☞ Educators for Social Responsibility , 23 Garden St., Cambridge, MA 02138, (800-370-2515, [www.esrnational.org](http://www.esrnational.org))
  - ☞ Rethinking Schools, 1001 E. Keefe Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53212, (800-669-4192), [www.rethinkingschools.org](http://www.rethinkingschools.org).
- 3.** *Reproduce this leaflet and distribute it to your school, daycare center, union, place of worship or wherever people gather.*
- 4.** *Wear a "Don't Buy War Toys" button, send postcards, display anti-war toys poster in the home, classrooms, places of worship or wherever people gather.*
  - ☞ Contact [www.donnellycolt.com](http://www.donnellycolt.com), 860-455-9621 for resources
- 5.** *Write a letter to the editor of your local paper, and encourage friends and family to refrain from buying toys that encourage violence.*
- 6.** *Put on an alternative toy fair, hold a meeting at your school organize a war toys turn in. (check the websites listed here for organizing ideas.)*
- 7.** *Stage conversations in toy sections about war toys — form of 'invisible theater' to raise the issue*
- 8.** *Find out more about nonviolence and alternatives to war and violence by contacting:*
  - ☞ War Resisters League, 339 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012, 1-212-228-0450. [wri@warresisters.org](mailto:wri@warresisters.org), [www.warresisters.org](http://www.warresisters.org)