

Your Employee Assistance Program is a support service that can help you take the first step toward change.

Is our world fascinated by violence?

Articles are written all over about how violent our TV shows, movies and video games seem to be. Is there a reason why all of these forms of entertainment are so violent? Actually there is, the excitement and engagement these types of entertainment create are incredibly stimulating to the human body. People crave excitement and stimulation, and these provide “safe” ways of doing that as we are removed from the actual threat of violence.

This of course raises that concern that violence is an accepted form of entertainment and generally accepted in our society thus leading to violent behaviors or desensitizing us to violence. While the questions have been raised the answers are fuzzy at best.

It is undeniable that there is a great deal of violence in our media from the TV dramas such as American Horror Story, The Walking Dead, Game of Thrones, and The Following, to the nightly news reports which often feature traumas and tragedies that occur in the United States and around the world.

There is also an incredible amount of violence in the world as we have seen recently with so many mass shootings that have occurred and are receiving more media coverage. The question that most people have is, “Are the two linked?” and truly it’s hard to tell if the two are linked or not.

So often we assume that things are connected because we want to be able to explain them and rationalize the experience we are seeing and having. Unfortunately this does not always leave us with the truth.

What perhaps should we do with this information then?

Have a conversation.

It sounds like a simple task right? But we all know it can be far more challenging than it appears. If you have concerns about how the violence you see and experience impacts you talk, to someone about it. Explore your concerns and the impact it has, whether you feel you’re beginning to become numb to it or fascinated by it, if you’re simply not comfortable with it. You can change your relationship with images of violence in the media if you feel it’s your current experience is unhealthy or not what you want.

The same is important with your children and loved ones that you have concerns about. If you think they are enthralled by violence or don’t react to seeing violence on TV or in video games; talk to them about it. It’s hard to know what other people are thinking without asking them, and people react differently to violence and tragedy.

Some internalize their experience and others show their emotions outwardly. Don’t assume you know someone else’s experience until you ask them.

With children it is important to make sure they understand the difference between fiction and reality, especially on TV. Though fictional stories can sometimes be helpful in explaining and understanding topics especially when it comes to violence and tragedy it’s necessary to make sure that they understand the differences.

If you are concerned about your own experience or a loved one and you’re not sure how to approach the situation, call you EAP. We’re here and available to talk with you about your situation and the concerns
© 2026 Morneau Shepell Ltd.

you have. Our counselors can help you understand your specific situation and how to handle it in a way that works for you.