

SHOCKING VIOLENCE II

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SHOCKING VIOLENCE II

Violent Disaster, War, and Terrorism
Affecting Our Youth

Edited by

ROSEMARIE SCOLARO MOSER, PH.D., ABPN

and

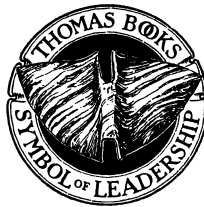
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With a Foreword by

Rush Holt

United States Representative

Member of Congress



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To the future and safety of our youth, and to the adults who protect them.

FOREWORD

In the aftermath of the horrific attacks of September 11, our nation faces an important challenge in helping our children feel safe and loved. We must begin by making sure we understand their fears.

Indeed, the terrorist attacks and subsequent public health threats have challenged us as adults and professionals in profound ways. We not only must confront our own fears; we also have to develop methods through which we can reassure our children. Despite the uncertainty of the world in which we find ourselves, we must provide our children with the confidence and security they need to grow and thrive.

In central New Jersey, there are children whose lives have been directly affected by the events of September 11.

Many of those children who have not been directly affected still have been exposed to terrifying images of destruction on television and the Internet. They have read newspapers and they have heard stories on the radio about the loss of life and possible ongoing threats of chemical and biological terrorism.

In these unpleasant circumstances we must give our children the emotional support they need to cope with this new reality. To meet the emotional needs of our children, we must share information and bolster our mental health infrastructure.

There are some steps that can be taken by the government. For example, government can require that health insurance plans cover mental health treatment on an equal level with other health problems. Most health plans currently deny coverage to patients with mental health needs despite the fact that one in every five Americans suffers from a mental health-related ailment. The government could also help schools hire an adequate number of counselors whose contribution would be beneficial well beyond any response to terrorism.

Dr. Moser and Dr. Frantz stepped forward after the tragic 1999 shootings at Columbine High School. In their book, *Shocking Violence*, Moser and Frantz provided excellent information and techniques that educate adults and children on the warning signs and the healing process associated with traumatic experiences.

I commend them for offering further advice and guidance regarding young victims of terrorism in their newest book, *Shocking Violence II: Violent Disaster, War and Terrorism Affecting Our Youth*. This book, like its predecessor, serves as an important resource and tool to help children and adults deal with trauma.

Our children need certain skills to cope with tragedy, and we as a society have an obligation to help them with this process. All of us play a part in such an effort, whether as parents or teachers or public officials. For the sake of our children, our future, we must work together with a steadfast resolve. *Shocking Violence II* is a welcome beginning.

RUSH HOLT
United States Representative

PREFACE

Shocking Violence II: Violent Disaster, War, and Terrorism Affecting Our Youth provides current academic and practical knowledge from the viewpoints of a variety of expert academicians and professionals to address the most pressing and relevant issues of our recent times. The contributors offer an understanding of the psycho-socio-political factors that impact youth when exposed to violent disaster, war, and terrorism and that explain the phenomena of terrorism and violence. As an invaluable guide, it samples information from the areas of psychology, education, parenting, law enforcement, forensics, and religion incorporating both theory, data, and concrete recommendations, and providing advice to helping professionals, educators, parents, and all those who interface with youth. Key intervention strategies are presented that can be implemented in the field. Readers will find its multidisciplinary focus helpful in gaining a broad perspective on this very complex topic.

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SHOCKING VIOLENCE II

Section I
OVERVIEW

Chapter One

VIOLENT DISASTER, WAR, AND TERRORISM AFFECTING OUR YOUTH: AN INTRODUCTION

ROSEMARIE SCOLARO MOSER

Helen Keller once remarked, “Although the world is full of suffering, it is full also of the overcoming of it.” This phenomenal woman overcame more than her fair share of suffering and terror to lead an outstanding, remarkable life. Her statement could well have been an inspirational message for us today, in the wake of the terrorism that jolted the United States and the rest of the world on September 11, 2001. There are many of us who have never seen the kind of human suffering that terrorism has recently wrought on our country. For our children, human suffering became real and tangible, not just another fact out of a history book. We all became victims of the terror, whether we were the adults or the children, the healers or those in need of healing. In the midst of managing the terror, the suffering, the loss, and the victimization, we also learned and continue to learn how to overcome “it,” to move on with our lives, to continue to heal, grow, and prosper. We are learning resilience and hope.

As the adults and the helpers, it is our responsibility to convey to our youth a sense of control and knowledge in a time when there likely have never been greater feelings of chaos and ignorance. This task may seem insurmountable when we, the adults, are groping to claim our own piece of stability and security. While we are managing our own emotional and behavioral responses to the events and to the terrorism, we must also tend to the reactions, questions, and responses of our