

Selfoss, September 4, 2024

Dear Parents/Guardians,

In light of the recent alarming events that have taken place, both in the capital area and here in Árborg, where children have been subjected to serious violence by other children, the Árborg Family Services Division urges parents to discuss with their children the seriousness of using violence and carrying any kind of weapon.

Unfortunately, in recent months, there have been incidents where children have both used and been subjected to serious violence by other children. In some cases, there are suspicions of weapon carrying, deprivation of liberty, and the distribution of footage of the violence.

In school and leisure activities, carrying weapons is strictly prohibited. If a child is found to be carrying a weapon, it will be confiscated, the parents will be contacted, and the matter will be reported to the police and child protection services without exception. It is important for our youth to understand that carrying weapons in public places is prohibited according to Article 30 of the Weapons Act. Violations can result in fines or imprisonment for up to four years. The distribution of footage without the consent of those involved may also be a violation of data protection laws.

The "Safer South" task force has already established a working group that will begin mapping the situation of youth here in Árborg with regard to risk behavior and will present recommendations for solutions. The Árborg Prevention Team's action group has also been convened and will put forward a plan focusing on prevention and education, with special emphasis on youth risk behavior.

The fact remains that parents play a key role in their children's lives. Therefore, the municipality urges and encourages parents to care for their children and discuss the challenges that arise from time to time, with the aim of educating rather than scaring them. Good information for parents can be found on the Árborg website, where there are both guidelines for parents through the 112 website and videos produced by the municipality. There are also procedural rules on how to respond when it is necessary to address or stop unacceptable and/or harmful behavior by students in Árborg elementary schools.

The staff of the Family Services Division will place a strong emphasis in the coming months on stopping and preventing violence and weapon carrying among our children. The cooperation between homes, schools, and leisure institutions is of utmost importance, as we all share a common responsibility for the welfare of our children in Árborg.

Sincerely

Bragi Bjarnason
Mayor

Heiða Ösp Kristjánsdóttir
Director of Family Services Division