



ANNUAL CALGARY TOY STORE AUDIT

LOOKING FOR NON-VIOLENT TOYS AND GAMES FOR YOUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN?

Project Ploughshares Calgary initiated a new annual project in 2013 – a **Toy Audit** of Calgary toy stores. Eleven Calgary toy stores and toy departments were visited in late October 2013 by volunteers from Project Ploughshares Calgary, the peace education group. The toy store shelves were examined for violent and non-violent toys and games, books and videos.

We looked for games and toys that encourage the use of weapons (historical and modern) for solving conflicts; we looked for how the message was communicated on packaging; we checked the location of toys and games on shelves and in displays; and we checked to see if video sections were following the Alberta ranking and age appropriate rules.

We noticed that independent stores tend to avoid violent items while larger chain stores, whose stock is often shipped from head office, are more likely to carry the more war-like items. At times, the issue is with manufacturers and we encourage parents and grandparents to contact any major companies (eg: Lego, Playmobil or Nerf) and comment on particular products.

We will be continuing this project during the month of October/early November in time for the busy holiday shopping season, with results of the audit sent to all Calgary media.

For more information, call Karen at 403-270-7366; email: office@ploughsharescalgary.ca