

Factsheet– Violence Against Children

3/4 children aged 2 to 4 experience violent discipline by their caregivers on a regular basis

More than 1/3 students between age 13 and 15 experience BULLYING Every 7 minutes,

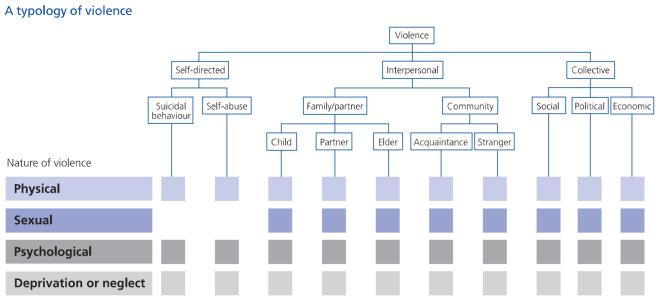
somewhere in the world, an adolescent is killed by an act of violence

All children have the right to be protected from violence. However, the statistics reveal that children experience violence across all stages of childhood, in diverse settings, and often at the hands of the trusted individuals with whom they interact on a daily basis.

Violence against children is a phenomenon that could no longer be tolerated and ignored.

Definitions

The World Health Organization defines violence as: *The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation.*¹



Source: Adapted from World Report on Violence and health, WHO

¹ Krug et al. (2002) World Report on Violence and health, WHO



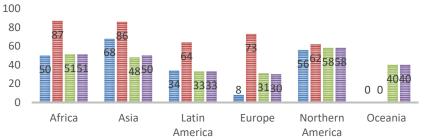
Prevalence

A recent systematic review of a number of population-based surveys on the prevalence of past-year interpersonal violence against children estimated the number of children exposed to violence in the past year exceeding 1 billion, or half the children in the world.²

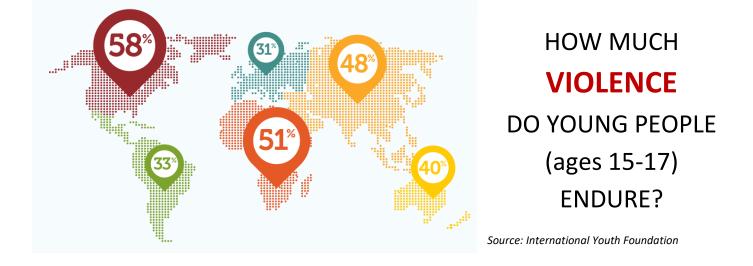
However, despite its high prevalence, Violence against children is still a hidden and unreported phenomenon.

ESTIMATES (%) VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN 2014-2015

- 2-14 y excluding moderate violence 2-14 y including moderate violence
- 15-17 y excluding moderate violence 15-17 y including moderate violence

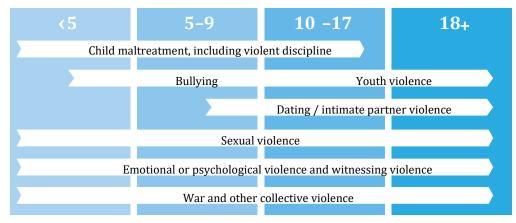


Source: Adapted from Global Prevalence of Past-Year Violence Against Children



Type of violence by age group affected

Evidence suggests that children are more likely to experience certain forms of violence at different ages and prolonged exposure to multiple forms is often linked to more adverse effects.



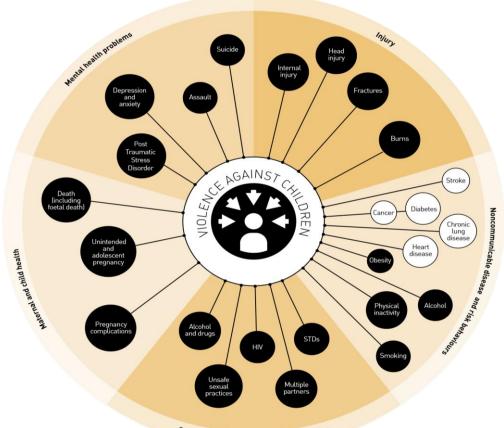
Source: Adapted from INSPIRE, Seven Strategies for Ending Violence Against Children

² Hillis S, Mercy J, Amobi A, et al. Global prevalence of past-year violence against children: a systematic review and minimum estimates. Pediatrics. 2016;137(3):e20154079.



Consequences

Violence against children is a public health, human rights, and social problem, with potentially **devastating and costly consequences**. The outcomes of violence can have consequences throughout childhood, adolescence, adulthood — inter-generationally and for society as a whole.



Communicable disease and risk behaviours

Source: Adapted from INSPIRE, Seven Strategies for Ending Violence Against Children

BODY AND BRAIN			DEVELOPMENT AND RELATIONSHIP		
Brains of abused children can be smaller	They can have damaged immune systems and higher risk of cancer	As adults, they lose more days due to ill health each year	Victims score lower grades and are more likely to drop out of school	Child witnesses of domestic violence are more likely to be aggressive themselves	Repeat victims of violence are more likely to be depressed
RISKY BEHAVIOUR			LOST POTENTIAL		
Physical violence victims are more likely to smoke and abuse drugs later in life	They are more likely to be obese	They are more likely to attempt suicide	Violence costs US \$7 trillion or 8% of global GDP	Victims are more likely to have problems at work	As adults, they are more likely to experience financial problems ¹



Root causes

Violence being a **complex problem with no single cause**, it is important to understand and take into account its root causes in order to implement evidence-based strategies. Though, it is crucial to identify a range of risk and protective factors within the socio-ecological framework and to understand their interaction within a level or between different levels.

STRUCTURAL

The macro-level political, economic and social policy environments

INSTITUTIONAL

Formal institutions, organizations and services that are governed by a set of rules, policies or protocols expected to determine how things function

COMMUNITY

Social capital or networks influenced by particular opinions, beliefs and norms that may affect interpersonal relations, including informal institutions and places of social gathering

INTERPERSONAL

Immediate context of violence and situational interactions between individuals involving household, family or intimate or acquaintance

INDIVIDUAL

Personal history and individual developmental factors that shape response to interpersonal and

institutional/community

INTERPERSONAL RISK FACTORS

* Early experience of violence and conflict before adolescence, including witnessing domestic violence

* Sex selection

* Family stress including poverty and unemployment

* Family structure including marital status, parental absence, double-orphanhood

* Family context such as parents' histories of abuse, substance use, education, occupation(s), financial status, illness/health

* Quality of peer relationships inclusion/exclusion from same age networks

* Quality of family relationships inclusion/exclusion

STRUCTURAL DRIVERS

* Migration both within and between countries, which may increase risk of sexual or physical exploitation or abuse

* Patriarchal norms and resulting inequities

* Socio-economic dimensions such as poverty and inequality

* Effects of globalization including epidemics (HIV/AIDS) and the expansion of digital technologies

INSTITUTIONAL DRIVERS

- * Weak child protection systems or ineffective system response
- * Harmful cultural rites and religious doctrines relating to hierarchy, authority, gender, and punishment

* Quality of school relationships including lack of school connectedness, teachers reinforcing or perpetrating violence

* Poor school governance including lack of adequate training in pedagogical skills and child development, under-resourced schools and teachers, unequal application of school rules * Weak legal structure and/or ineffective policies

to protect children, lack of coordination between formal and informal justice mechanisms and service providers

COMMUNITY RISK FACTORS

- * Urban and/or rural environments may have varying risks of violence
- * Harmful cultural practices and/or social norms that support violence, including taboos
- * Quality of community relationships such as the lack of community connectedness and trust; perceptions of community safety
- * Code of silence around all types of violence