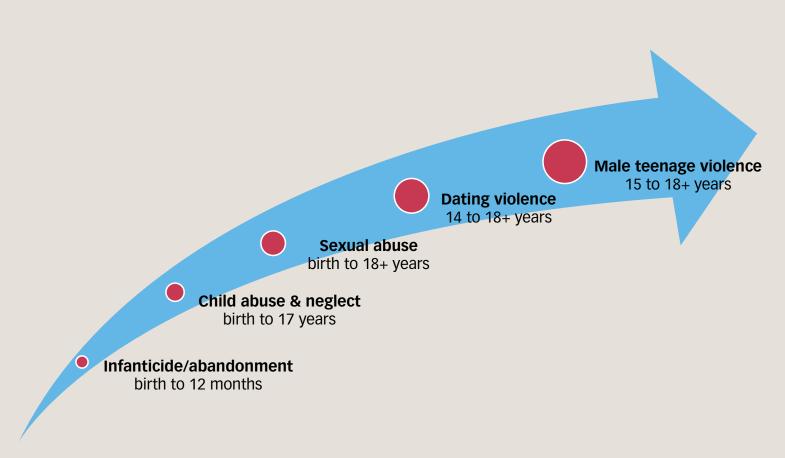


Violence against children can be prevented

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA • UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD

Break the cycle of violence

 Government has put in place laws, policies and programmes to respond to violence against children. Yet children continue to be violated – physically, sexually and psychologically – in their homes, schools and communities.



- Violence starts in the home where young children witness domestic violence and are exposed to harsh and humiliating punishment. These early experiences increase the chances of girls becoming victims, and boys becoming perpetrators of violence. It is therefore essential to intervene early to break the intergenerational cycle of violence.
- Children are at increased risk as they grow older and move outside the home to attend school and engage with the wider community.
- The impact of violence extends beyond physical scars to cause long-term damage. Violence affects the well-being of children, communities and the next generation, and undermines children's psycho-social development, school performance, employment prospects and life expectancy.
- We do not know the full extent of the problem. Much of the violence takes place within the homes and personal relationships. Children don't report it, and adults turn a blind eye, which allow the cycle of violence to continue.
- Yet it is not natural to hurt or humiliate a child. Violence is a learned behaviour and can be prevented.

Invest in promising prevention programmes

For more information about promising programmes in the South African Child Gauge 2014, see www.ci.org.za. This poster is jointly produced by the Children's Institute, University of Cape Town (UCT); UNICEF South Africa; the Programme to Support

Pro-Poor Policy Development (PSPPD) in The Presidency; World Vision South Africa; the FNB Fund; and UCT's Safety and Violence Initiative. Strong legislative framework Gun and alcohol controls

Reduce the risks and strengthen protective factors

• It is more effective to intervene early and prevent violence before it occurs, than it is to respond to the immediate and long-term consequences.

Prevention is not just about reducing risk.

It is also about strengthening **Protective factors** protective factors, and supporting families Healthy communication and children. Use of non-violent discipline Family cohesion and support Sensitive, affectionate, and positive parenting Understanding children's needs and development Close relationships between caregivers and children

> Risk factors Caregiver stress Family violence Alcohol and drug abuse Poor supervision of children Approval of physical punishment Child's age and developmental capacity Inadequate support from family / friends

Risk factors Risk factors Income inequality and social exclusion Social norms that support violence Inadequate criminal justice response Inadequate prevention services Gender inequality

Protective factors

The media promotes positive role models, gender equality

and alternatives to violence Strong community leadership Quality education and employment opportunities Social support and cohesion Support services and infrastructure Access to prevention, early intervention and protection services Implementation of gun control

Protective factors

Safe places to play after school

Supportive school environment Constructive conflict resolution Strong management and teacher training Zero-tolerance approach to violence and bullying

Effective implementation of school safety policies

Risk factors Urban schools

Poor school management Limited reporting mechanisms Access to drugs and weapons

Involvement with delinquent peers Failure to hold perpetrators accountable

Crime, gang and interpersonal violence Access to alcohol, drugs and weapons Poverty and unemployment Low community cohesion Limited support services

Protective factors

Positive activities for children and youth Increased safety measures

Make prevention everyone's business

Prevention requires strong leadership and intersectoral collaboration. Government, civil society, caregivers and children all need to work together to prevent violence against children.

Children can support their peers and encourage one another to speak out to stop violence and abuse.



Parents can learn about children's developmental needs, use positive discipline, and seek help when violence occurs.



Family, friends and neighbours can offer to help with child care, encourage families to get the support they need, and report abuse.



Teachers can use positive discipline in the classroom and build children's life skills and self-esteem.



Social service professionals can support and strengthen children and families, and mobilise other service providers to address local risk factors.



Doctors and nurses can refer vulnerable women and children to social services or a community health worker and report cases of abuse.



Political, religious and traditional leaders can lead by example and speak out against violence and corporal punishment



Police officers can mediate conflict and provide sensitive support to women and children who have been abused.





If you know of a child in need of help, speak to a social worker or call Childline on **08000 55555**.

