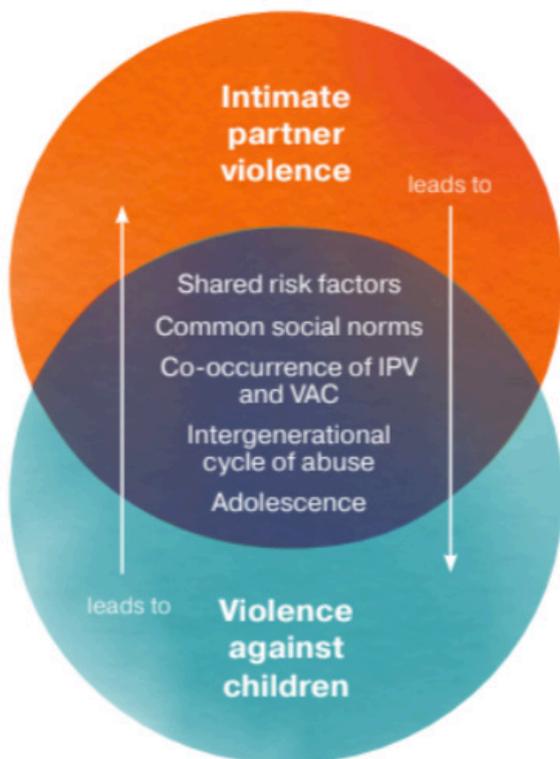


# PARENTING AND CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAMMES TO PREVENT VIOLENCE IN THE HOME

**SUMMARY:** Parenting and caregiver support programmes improve family dynamics and prevent violence against children (VAC), including child maltreatment and harsh physical discipline. We reviewed parenting programmes that have reduced both VAC and intimate partner violence (IPV) and are sharing emerging guidance to take this work forward.



## WHY SHOULD PARENTING PROGRAMMES ADDRESS GENDER EQUALITY, VAC, AND IPV?



- ▶ IPV and VAC frequently co-occur in the home.
- ▶ Child maltreatment and IPV share common risk factors, including marital conflict, economic stress, and alcohol abuse (Guedes et al. 2016).
- ▶ IPV has a negative impact on parenting capacity (Bacchus et al. 2017).
- ▶ The presence of IPV in the household can increase a child’s risk of experiencing harsh discipline, abuse, and neglect (Hamby et al. 2010).
- ▶ Witnessing violence and experiencing harsh physical punishment in childhood are strong risk factors for experiencing future IPV (among women) and perpetrating future IPV (among men) (Fulu, McCook, and Falb 2017).

# EXAMPLES OF PARENTING PROGRAMMES THAT SEEK TO REDUCE IPV AND VAC

Positive parenting interventions are among the most promising approaches to address IPV and VAC, as these examples show.

## Parenting for Respectability | Uganda

21-session community-based programme (10 single-sex and 11 mixed-sex sessions) with education. Discussion and skills-based activities to improve gender-equitable, nonviolent parenting and to reduce IPV.

- ▶ **VAC:** Men reported greater use of nonviolent discipline strategies with children.
- ▶ **IPV:** Men described less spousal conflict and more mutual respect for female partners, but no reported IPV changes.

## Responsible, Engaged and Loving (REAL) Fathers | Uganda

12-session mentoring programme for young fathers (aged 16 to 25) raising a child aged 1 to 3 to promote nonviolent parenting and intimate partner relationships. Combines:

- Monthly group meetings for fathers
- One-on-one meetings with fathers and their partners
- Community poster campaign

- ▶ **VAC:** Significant reductions were found in men's self-reported overall use of harsh physical or emotional punishment of their children at long-term follow-up, but not at endline.
- ▶ **IPV:** Significant reductions were found in men's self-reported overall use of physical, psychological, or verbal violence against female partners at endline and long-term follow-up.

## Geeducation Approach | Burkina Faso

Economic empowerment and child rights intervention for women with children aged 10 to 15 and their families. Savings groups, livelihoods and household management training, and seed capital grants for women, combined with education on child rights and well-being. Targeted to all household members.

- ▶ **VAC:** Significant reductions were found in children's self-reported past-year exposure to emotional violence and physical violence at 24-month follow-up, but not at 12-month follow-up.
- ▶ **IPV:** Significant reductions were found in women's self-reported past-year experience of emotional IPV at 12-month follow-up.

## Program P | Rwanda

15-session discussion-based curriculum for expecting fathers. Aims to improve fathers' involvement in maternal, newborn, and child health; family planning; and caregiving. Also aims to prevent domestic violence.

- ▶ **VAC:** Significant reductions were reported in both women's and men's use of physical punishment against children.
- ▶ **IPV:** Significant reductions were found in women's self-reports of experiencing physical IPV and sexual IPV in the past year.

## Safe at home | Democratic Republic of the Congo, Myanmar

A curriculum-based programme designed to transform gender relations and improve positive parenting. Curriculum includes single-sex, couples, and family discussions.

- ▶ **VAC:** Preliminary results show a significant reduction in men's and women's reports of using physical discipline and harsh psychological discipline against children and a reduction in harsh discipline acceptance.
- ▶ **IPV:** Preliminary results show significant reductions in women's self-reports of IPV and a significant improvement in the gender attitudes of both women and men.

conventions



## GAPS IN THE EVIDENCE

- ▶ Few parenting programmes deliberately address or measure IPV.
- ▶ Measures of both IPV and VAC are inconsistent across studies.
- ▶ Most programmes focus on young children (preschool and primary school).
- ▶ There is limited information about the pathways of change and about which components of parenting interventions have been most effective in reducing VAC and IPV.



## RECOMMENDATIONS AND EMERGING GUIDANCE

Parenting programmes should consider these curriculum components and ideas for approaches, delivery, and format to prevent family violence.

### CURRICULUM CONTENT: PARENTING AND RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

- ▶ Promote nurturing and caring relationships between parents and children.
- ▶ Build skills to manage a child's behaviour through positive reinforcement and nonviolent discipline.
- ▶ Develop parents' and caregivers' emotional self-regulation skills.
- ▶ Promote critical reflections on gender inequality and power imbalances in relationships and family well-being.
- ▶ Build skills to foster positive communication between parents and their children and between intimate partners.

### APPROACH, DELIVERY, AND FORMAT

- ▶ Design interventions that support parents and caregivers to learn from others by observation and to practise new skills in safe spaces.
- ▶ Combine a group format with individual sessions.
- ▶ Balance the programme depth (intensity) with breadth (range of topics and skills).
- ▶ Develop strategies that reach male caregivers.
- ▶ Design targeted messages according to the gender of parents and the age of children.



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## ABOUT US

The Prevention Collaborative works to reduce violence against women and their children by strengthening the capacity of key actors to deliver effective prevention programmes based on feminist principles and evidence- and practice-based learning. We serve the specific needs of practitioners and implementing partners by curating evidence, mentoring organisations, and ensuring that donor funding is channelled wisely.

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