



SAFE & NURTURING SCHOOLS

SCHOOL AGE & ADOLESCENTS (AGES 11-18)

CREATING SAFE AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS FOR LEARNING

Globally, 246 million girls and boys experience school-related violence every year!¹ Among the challenges to keeping children and adolescents in school are a lack of adequate facilities, gender-based violence in schools, and insecurity when going to and from school and related activities.

Ending violence in all its forms, both in and around the school, is a key intervention for achieving universal and equitable educational outcomes, including reaching higher levels of literacy, numeracy and inclusion. Multiple studies have shown that exposure to violence and resulting high levels of stress have been linked to poor learning outcomes and reading deficits amongst children.²

Physical and psychological punishment, verbal abuse, bullying and sexual violence in schools were repeatedly reported as reasons for absenteeism, dropping out and lack of motivation for academic achievement.³ Children can be victims, perpetrators, or witnesses of such abuses.

Children with disabilities or learning difficulties, as well as refugees or indigenous minorities, are often targeted for exclusion, discrimination and bullying.

In many places, violence against children in schools is not explicitly prohibited—it is tolerated as normal practice for disciplining children. Without the recognition of the problem by lawmakers and other community leaders, it is hard for schools to challenge attitudes that condone violence or to help children access support. In countries where corporal punishment is legally prohibited, enforcement of these laws is lacking.

Schools should be a place where all children feel safe. World Vision works with partners to create a positive school environment free from violence in all its forms. Schools are uniquely placed to break the patterns of violence by giving children, their parents and communities the knowledge and skills to communicate, negotiate and resolve conflicts in more constructive ways.

VIOLENCE

affects more than
ONE BILLION

children around the world every year and occurs in every country and every community.⁴

In a recent survey,
7 OUT OF 11

Sub-Saharan African countries listed violence in schools as one of the top three priorities to be addressed.⁵

School violence can be associated with **the loss of one primary grade of schooling**, which translates to a yearly cost of around **\$17 BILLION** to low and middle income countries.⁶

Safe and Nurturing Schools

World Vision's Safe and Nurturing Schools approach responds to and prevents school-related violence, working to create a positive school environment in which all children are able to fully develop their academic skills as well as increase the emotional confidence they require to thrive within their communities. This evidence-based project model, focuses on children in early adolescence, works across all levels of the ecology: with adolescents themselves, the school, the community—including faith leaders—and the government to ensure schools are safe. The program uses a gender transformative approach with the purpose of examining and redressing some of the root-causes (and several risk-factors) for violence against girls and boys.

The project model has three key components:

- **Girls' and boys' groups** – meet regularly to discuss topics central to their well-being, adolescent transitions, building life skills, and understanding of gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health
- **Teacher training and support** – foster positive teacher-student interactions, practice gender-responsive teaching and positive discipline methods
- **Community engagement and social accountability** – working with community groups and local government to reflect on social norms as some of the root causes of violence against children, the role of parents and community members (including faith leaders) as caregivers and engaging men and boys to prevent violence

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CHILDREN *for life*

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For more information, please visit wvi.org/education

¹ UNESCO (2016). Global Guidance: School Related Gender Based Violence.

² Delaney-Black et al. Violence exposure, trauma, and IQ and/or reading deficits among urban children. Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med. 2002 Mar;156 (3):280-5.

³ UNICEF (2016). State of the World's Children http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/UNICEF_SOWC_2016.pdf

⁴ Hillis, Susan, James Mercy, Aduago Amobi, and Howard Kress. "Global Prevalence of Past-year Violence Against Children: A Systematic Review and Minimum Estimates." Pediatrics. American Academy of Pediatrics, 25 Jan. 2016. Web. 28 Feb. 2017.

⁵ Raising Voices (2006). Creating Safer Schools: Lessons Learned, Strategies for Action. http://raisingvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/downloads/resources/Creating_safer_schools.pdf

⁶ USAID (2015). Fact Sheet: What is the Cost of School-Related Gender-Based Violence? http://www.prb.org/pdf16/IGWG_10.19.16_USAID_Factsheet_Cost-Associated-with-School-Violence.pdf