

TEN STEPS TO CREATING SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

How organizations and communities can prevent,
mitigate and respond to interpersonal violence



*Ten Steps to Creating Safe Environments, 2nd Edition
How organizations and communities can prevent, mitigate
and respond to interpersonal violence*



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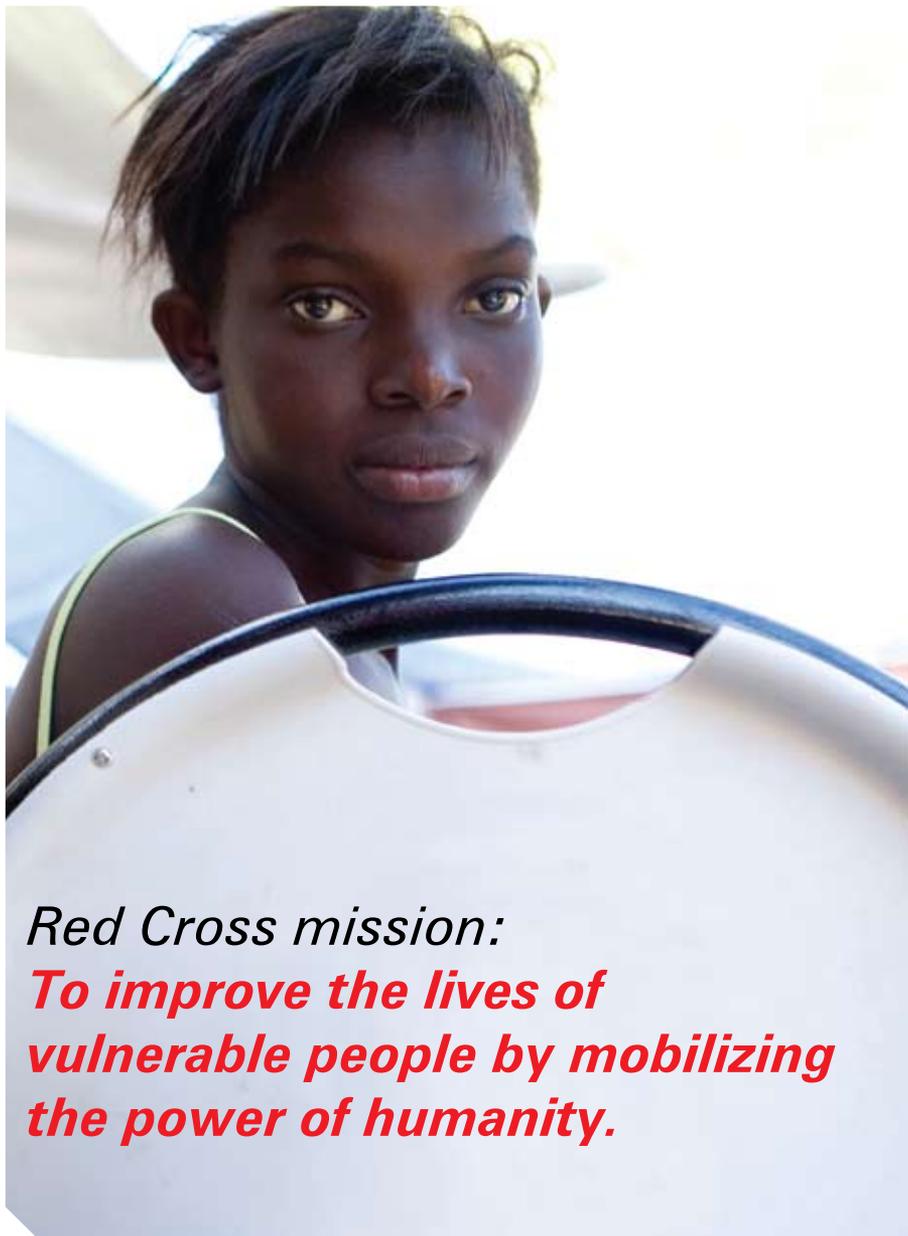


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INTRODUCTION



*Red Cross mission:
To improve the lives of
vulnerable people by mobilizing
the power of humanity.*

INTRODUCTION

WHO THE “TEN STEPS” RESOURCE IS FOR

Ten Steps to Creating Safe Environments is a resource for organizations and communities to help in the development, implementation and monitoring of concrete actions to prevent, reduce, mitigate and respond to interpersonal violence—physical, sexual, emotional and neglect.

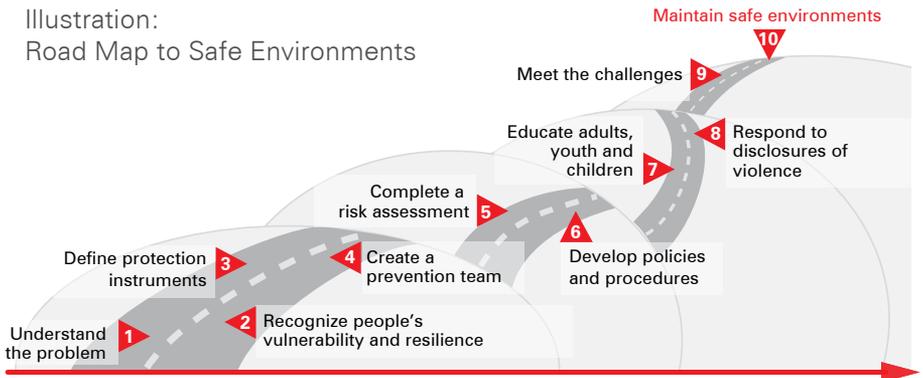
WHY THE “TEN STEPS” RESOURCE IS IMPORTANT

Interpersonal violence—people hurting other people—is a catastrophic problem around the world and often occurs within organizations and communities. The consequences of violence are harmful and staggering for individuals, families and whole societies. To address violence, organizations and communities have a very important role.

HOW THE “TEN STEPS” RESOURCE CAN BE USED

Each of the ten steps is part of a process to reduce the risk of violence and increase protection. As one step interacts with the other steps, the success of one depends on the achievement of all the others. How much time each step, or the whole process, takes is up to each organization or community—however, the goal for all is to reduce risk as soon as possible.

Illustration:
Road Map to Safe Environments



KEY MESSAGES

- Interpersonal violence is a global humanitarian catastrophe with profoundly negative consequences.
- Violence is preventable.
- Organizations and communities have an important responsibility to prevent, reduce, mitigate and respond to violence.
- “Ten Steps” are concrete actions that organizations and communities can take to address violence.

Advancing the Red Cross Red Crescent Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values, we commit to work with people vulnerable to violence, with a particular focus on children and youth; to prevent, mitigate and respond to violence—locally and globally—through advocacy and promoting change in knowledge, mindsets, attitudes and behaviours in order to foster environments that respect human dignity and diversity and are caring, safe and peaceful.

Vision of the IFRC on Addressing Violence¹

10 TEN STEPS TO CREATING SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

STEP 1: UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM

***Violence touches everyone—
it is a global humanitarian
catastrophe that affects all
continents, countries and
communities.***

IFRC Global Strategy on Violence Prevention, Mitigation and Response²



KEY POINTS

- The level of interpersonal violence around the world is catastrophic.
- The International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement has declared violence a “Great Humanitarian Challenge” affecting vulnerable people, especially children and women.
- There are different categories, types and forms of violence that have lasting and harmful impacts on individuals, families and communities.
- Violence results from a combination of factors; abuse of power is a key element in acts of violence.

STEP 1: UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM

Violence has no boundaries and can affect anyone of any gender, age, community, background, belief or status. It often remains a secret, hidden behind closed doors, and occurs in places where people should be safe: homes, schools, workplaces, refugee/IDP camps, communities, and institutions including faith and recreation.

Although the problem of violence is complex, it is something that can be stopped. Prevention and reduction are possible for individuals, families, organizations and communities.

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS RED CRESCENT NATIONAL SOCIETIES' (IFRC) STANCE ON VIOLENCE

Violence is a global catastrophe that diminishes the health, dignity and human potential of each person it touches. The International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement has declared violence a “Great Humanitarian Challenge” affecting people around the world, especially the most vulnerable such as women, children and youth.³ One of the three strategic directions of the IFRC for 2010–2020 is to: “Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.”⁴ This includes integrating violence prevention strategies into the internal systems of every Red Cross Red Crescent National Society.

OVERVIEW OF GLOBAL STATISTICS

- **Each day 4,200 people die from violence** (1.6 million a year); more than 90 per cent of them in low and middle income countries; approximately 2,300 die from suicide, 1,500 from interpersonal violence and 400 from collective violence.⁵
- Each year, 16 million cases of injury, due to violence, are severe enough to receive medical attention in hospitals.⁶
- 500 million–1.5 billion children experience violence each year.⁷
- An estimated one in 20 elderly people experience abuse.⁸
- At least one out of every three women around the world has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime—with the abuser commonly being someone known to her.⁹
- Males are victims of nearly 80 per cent of all homicides, 60 per cent of suicides, and 80 per cent of violence-related injuries.¹⁰

... [B]ehind the numbers there lie precious, vulnerable, ailing human beings...we simply have to get down to work, country by country, with an urgency that knows no bounds.

Stephen Lewis¹¹

DEFINITION OF VIOLENCE

 The IFRC defines violence as *the use of force or power, either as an action or omission in any setting, threatened, perceived or actual against oneself, another person, a group, a community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in death, physical injury, psychological or emotional harm, mal-development or deprivation.*¹²

In essence, violence between people is when one person uses his or her power, in any setting, to cause harm physically, sexually or psychologically to a person or group of people.

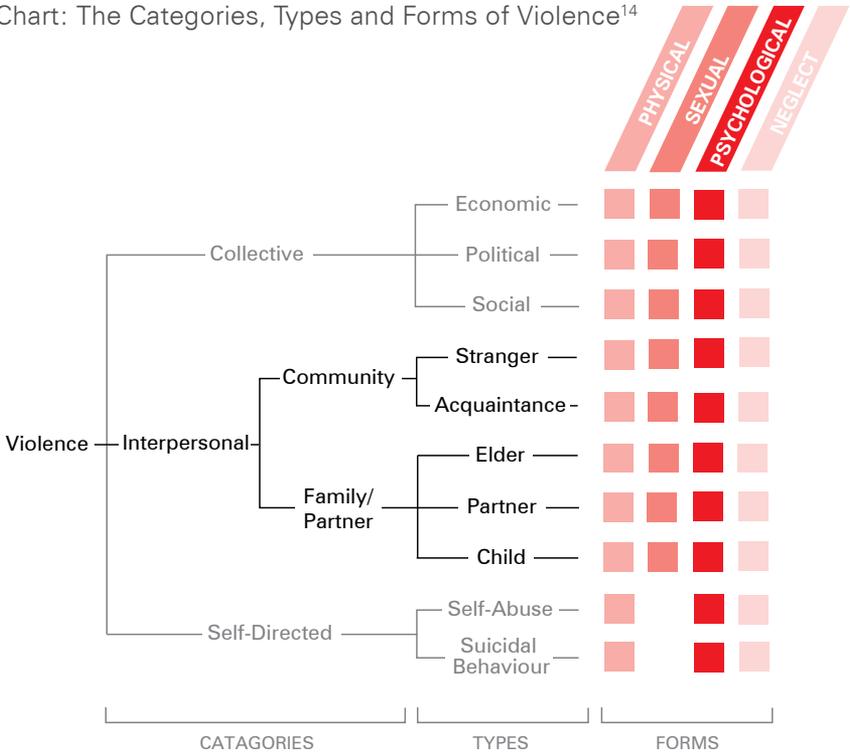
CATEGORIES, TYPES AND FORMS OF VIOLENCE

There are different categories, types and forms of violence. The World Health Organization (WHO) has developed a chart that describes each of the categories—self-directed, interpersonal and collective.¹³ **The “Ten Steps” apply to interpersonal violence.** Each category includes various types of violence. Cutting across these categories and types are different forms of violence: psychological, physical, sexual and neglect.



1

Chart: The Categories, Types and Forms of Violence¹⁴



SPECIFIC FORMS OF INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE

- Emotional abuse is *when a person in a position of power, authority or trust repeatedly attacks a person’s self-esteem verbally or non-verbally*. This can be done through a variety of actions including rejecting, degrading, isolating, ignoring, terrorizing, corrupting and exploiting.
- Physical abuse is *when a person in a position of power or trust deliberately hurts or threatens to injure another person*. This includes hitting, throwing, pushing, grabbing, pulling, burning, chemical assaults, etc.
- Family violence is *any action in a family that causes physical, sexual or emotional harm to another person in the family*. This includes hitting, humiliating, or isolating family members. The impact is not only on the victim but on other family members, especially children, who are exposed to the violence.

- Neglect is *chronic inattention to the basic necessities of life*—such as clothing, shelter, nutritional diet, education, good hygiene, supervision, medical and dental care, adequate rest, safe environment, moral guidance and discipline, exercise, and fresh air. This directly impacts those who are dependent on others for these necessities—such as the young and the old.
- Sexual violence is a broad term that *encompasses sexual abuse; sexual assault; sexual harassment; and sexual exploitation, including forced prostitution and trafficking.*
- Exploitation is *when a person is treated as an object to be used, bought or sold for the gains of another person.*
- Bullying and harassment are *behaviours that are insulting, intimidating, humiliating, malicious, degrading or offensive; they can occur directly (in person) or indirectly (using technology).* Harassment is *when these types of behaviours are based on discrimination against age, sexual orientation, gender, family status, disability, race, colour, ethnicity, religion, marital status, etc.* Human rights legislation determines discriminatory bases and varies in each country.

Witnessing violence teaches you violence and makes you hate.

Youth speaking out against violence¹⁵

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)¹⁶

GBV is used to distinguish common violence from violence that targets individuals or groups of individuals on the basis of their gender.

GBV has been defined as violence that is directed at a person on the basis of gender; it is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will, and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between males and females.¹⁷

It includes acts that inflict physical, mental, or sexual harm or suffering; threats such as coercion; and other deprivations of liberty.

GBV includes sexual violence, sex trafficking, forced prostitution, spousal abuse, emotional and psychological abuse, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, infanticide of female children, and discriminatory practices based on gender.

The majority of GBV cases are directed towards women and girls, but boys and men can also be victims/survivors.

THE IMPACT OF VIOLENCE

Violence affects individuals, families, communities and whole societies. The consequences are felt across a lifetime or even generations. Violence has catastrophic human, economic and community-development consequences. Some of these can be measured and quantified, while others cannot; regardless, their impact is lasting, deep and profound.

HUMAN IMPACT

The World Bank has estimated that in industrialized countries, sexual assault and domestic violence take away almost one in five healthy years of life for women aged 15–44.¹⁸

The United Nations¹⁹ reports the impact of child abuse on health includes higher risks for cancer, lung disease, heart disease, bowel problems, liver disease and reproductive health problems.

According to a study of 17,000 middle class patients,²⁰ adults who experienced child abuse, compared to those who have not, are:

- 103 per cent more likely to become smokers;
- 95 per cent more likely to become obese;
- 103 per cent more likely to become alcoholics;
- 192 per cent more likely to become addicted to drugs; and
- 43 per cent more likely to become suicidal.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

- The cost of violence against children can cost countries billions of dollars each year.²¹
- The cost of violence against children in some countries equals 2 per cent of the GDP.²²
- The cost of violence against women each year has been estimated at \$12.6 billion in the United States and \$23 billion pounds in Britain.²³

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IMPACT

- Violence within communities has been shown to increase local businesses' security costs by 50 per cent and the fear of losing investments by 37 per cent. It decreases motivation to expand business ventures by 39 per cent.²⁴
- Communities where homicide rates exceed 100 per 100,000 have been shown to also be characterized by rapidly rising population growth, large concentrations of adolescents and pre-adolescents, high household density, limited access to public sewers, limited job availability, and low educational achievement.²⁵



PREVENTION, REDUCTION, MITIGATION AND RESPONSE

Actions addressing violence

- Prevention means to keep violence from occurring in the first place.
- Reduction tries to decrease the risk of violence occurring.
- Mitigation focuses on decreasing further risk of violence and reducing its impact when it does occur.
- Response refers to an action or intervention to cope with and handle violence, or its consequences, after it has occurred.

Violence is not, however, an inevitable aspect of the human condition. In much the same way as infectious diseases and other threats to public health have been in the past, violence can be prevented and its impact reduced.

World Health Organization²⁷

It sucks and it's too hard to find someone who cares and will do something about the abuse. You can't trust anyone. I drink a lot—and yes, I have tried to commit suicide about three times in the past couple of years. I hate it!

Youth participant of a Red Cross violence prevention workshop²⁶

ACTORS IN VIOLENT INCIDENCES

Victims/survivors

Victims/survivors of violence can include anyone of any background, gender or other status who is subjected to an act of violence. The impact is direct for those who are targeted by violence and causes physical, sexual and/or emotional harm. Indirectly it can also impact the families, friends, neighbours, colleagues, and whole communities of those targeted; secondary or vicarious trauma often results.

Inflictors of violence

Violence can be inflicted by individuals, groups of people, organizations, communities or societies. People who inflict violence may cause harm once or repeatedly; they may have complex motivations for acting out violently. Common to all perpetrators of violence is the misuse of their power. People who choose to inflict violence represent all groups in societies and are as diverse as the victims/survivors. Sometimes those who hurt others have in the past or are presently victims/survivors of violence at the hands of others.

1

Bystanders

Bystanders or witnesses to violence are individuals, groups of people, communities or societies who know, hear, see or are aware that violent acts are occurring. Bystanders are powerful actors—especially those in positions of authority—in determining the response and outcomes of violence. The action or inaction taken by bystanders can (where they have power and are safe to respond but do not) legitimize, fuel or prolong violence, or it can de-legitimize, contain or stop it. Bystanders may also be indirect victims who experience secondary or vicarious trauma.

SETTINGS WHERE VIOLENCE OCCURS

Violence can occur in any setting: homes, schools, institutions, workplaces and communities. It happens both in person and through technology—Internet, cell phones and computers.

Homes: Although homes are often considered the safest of all settings, violence between family members within homes is a common problem in every country and community. In fact, homes are perhaps the settings in which the most violence occurs—physical, sexual, emotional and neglect. Family members hurt each other: adult to adult; adult or elder to child; child to child; adult to elder; child to elder.

Schools: Schools are powerful institutions to shape the future, success, health and safety of children. School is a place where many children spend more time than with their families. Unfortunately, schools can also be places where not all children are safe. In many countries hitting children in school may be allowed by law, or accepted even where laws or policies from governments prohibit it. Students often experience emotional trauma from teachers and other students as in bullying. Sexual abuse against children from teachers, school administrators, other staff, and from other students are regularly reported around the world.

I felt like leaving school. I cried. I feel horrible because before this happened they were my friends. I was thinking, “How am I going to face these guys? We attend class together. How am I going to be myself, like before?” ... I had to write my exams, so I just calmed myself down and tried to forgive them. I passed my exams, but it was hard. I still feel bad but I just take it out of my mind. I would leave this school if I could.

School girl, assaulted by two classmates²⁸



Institutions: Within communities, there are many types of institutions, including places of worship, health care centres, orphanages, prisons and sports and recreation facilities. Within institutions, some people—including administrators, religious leaders, coaches, doctors and nurses—have more power than others and may use that power to hurt people who are less powerful.

Throughout the world, an unknown number of children, most likely in the hundreds of thousands, are kept in orphanages and non-penal institutions. Many of these children have been condemned to live a grim existence, and are subjected to shocking and at times deadly levels of abuse and neglect.

Human Rights Watch²⁹

Workplaces: For many adults, and some children, work is a place where considerable time is spent. Within workplaces people interact with other staff, volunteers, people from partner organizations or the community, and clients and beneficiaries. Violence of all types can occur in these interactions, especially where there are power imbalances.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Private, public and community-based organizations are expected to obey the law, even if it is not enforced, and to respect the principles of relevant norms of international law where national law is absent. Corporate social responsibility is a growing commitment among businesses, shareholders, lenders, insurers, suppliers, regulators, consumers, employees and investors. Among other human rights issues some businesses develop and implement socially responsible policies against violence in collaboration with communities, civil society organizations, governments and intergovernmental organizations.

As the impact of corporations on societies expands, they are being challenged on their respect of international human rights treaties, including violence prevention, and their due diligence through voluntary codes of conduct, self-regulation, external monitoring and legislated conduct.



1

Communities: Places where people live, work and interact make up communities, or are part of communities within communities. Violence in communities can occur in places that are visible and public or in places that are closed and away from the sight of others. All forms of violence can occur within communities.

URBAN VIOLENCE

As of 2007, for the first time in the history of humankind more than 50 per cent of the world's population live in urban areas. The cities of the developing world are expected to account for 95 per cent of urban growth over the next two decades.³⁰

Urban violence is a form of community violence; its very definition is based on the urban setting in which all kinds of violence happens. The violence that occurs behind closed doors of homes, schools and institutions directly impacts the violence that happens on public streets; they are intertwined.

Violence is a concern in urban communities around the world, though the risk is heightened where poverty, unregulated small arms availability and alcohol/drugs fuel the violent behaviours. Urban violence can include gang violence, organized crime and interpersonal violence.

Technology: Not only can various forms of violence occur in in-person settings, they can also occur through technology—Internet, cell phones and computers. This is a new trend around the world. Although the full impact of violence through technology is not yet understood, it is clear that technology is re-shaping the ways that violence can occur, along with its speed and scale.



VIOLENCE ONLINE

Rapid and far reaching changes to technology have resulted in many positive gains. These include new ways to access information, such as how to stay safe, and also ways to access help and support for those who have been hurt by violence. However, individuals, especially children and youth, can be at risk of online violence in several ways. They may access or be sent unsolicited material that is inappropriate; people who want to hurt them may lure them through online discussions; or children can be abused and exploited in front of cameras, resulting in images of the violence being posted and distributed online for people anywhere in the world to see.

Emerging trends within violence online³¹ include:

- increasing prevalence of “home-grown” pornographic images that are produced by predators, and include live-streaming video images of children being abused;
- growing use of sophisticated security measures and of peer-to-peer networking where information can be shared without downloading from websites;
- increasingly violent and graphic nature of images involving violence against younger children;
- unprecedented online bullying between young peers; and
- messaging on camera phones and instant messaging, where the invasion and manipulation of images is immediate.

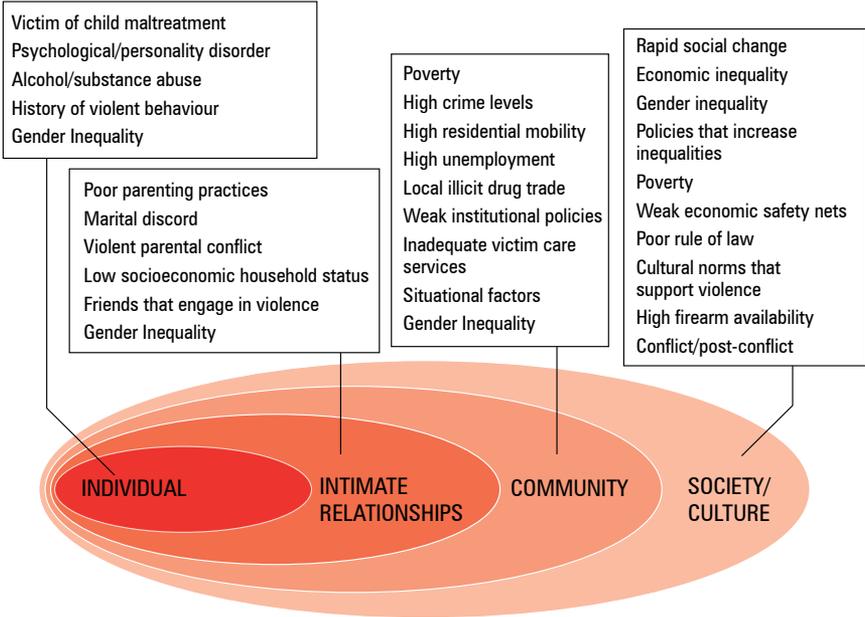
ROOT CAUSES OR SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF VIOLENCE

There is no single cause of violence. People hurt other people due to a mixture of complex dynamics between individuals, their families, communities and societies. Each factor is tied to the others. Factors combine to increase the risk of violence. The “ecological model”³² highlights these linkages.

The factors that mix to result in violence can be described as “social determinants” or root causes of violence: access to lethal means; alcohol and substance misuse; economic inequality and poverty; social distance between conflicting groups; lack of social welfare systems; weak criminal justice systems; gender inequality; and unstable, unsafe relationships between children and their parents and caregivers.³³



1 Illustration: The Ecological Model of Violence³⁴



A combination of factors put women at risk of violence; each of these factors adds up and sends a clear message: because of their [gender], women can be treated in ways that humiliate and hurt them; tarnish and reduce their safety; and make them feel as though their worth is less than that of men.

IFRC³⁵

POWER

Power can be used by people in positive or negative ways. When it is misused is a key root cause or social determinant of violence; one person has more power over another and misuses it to physically or emotionally hurt another person.

SOURCES OF POWER

1. Relationships
2. Gender, age and social class
3. Employment
4. Position in families, communities and society
5. Knowledge and information
6. Control of resources
7. What rewards you can give or control
8. Physical size and strength
9. Skills

POWER QUESTIONS:

1. Where does my power come from?
2. How do I use my power in a responsible manner?
3. What are the power dynamics within my family, organization and community?
4. What kinds of power do other people I live with or work with have, especially those who are very vulnerable?
5. In what ways or in what situations am I vulnerable to misusing my power?

I hope that the Red Cross and other “helping societies” keep on caring for those who cannot help themselves.... I myself have experienced a few forms of abuse, too.... Hearing about child abuse and talking about it with others really helps. I think this is a great idea to go and talk to others about the problem of abuse.

Youth participant of a Red Cross violence prevention workshop³⁶

POWER, CHILDREN & GENDER

Because children are the smallest, weakest and most dependent members of society, they often have the least amount of power. This means that they may be denied their rights to participate in decisions that affect them, may struggle to access help when someone hurts them, and are vulnerable to others abusing their power against them.

Similarly, in communities where women and girls are treated as less valuable than men and boys because of their gender, they can be at risk of violence. Inequality, harmful attitudes about gender, control, and misuse of power can combine to heighten the risk of gender-based violence.

STEP 2: RECOGNIZE PEOPLE'S VULNERABILITY AND RESILIENCE

All communities have groups of people—often hidden—who may be neglected, marginalized or excluded for many reasons.... Many of them may live in circumstances where they are subject to violence, abuse and exploitation.

IFRC³⁷



KEY POINTS

- Violence is a problem in all parts of the world and it affects people of all ages, genders, backgrounds and status.
- Some groups of people are at higher risk of violence than others; these groups can be based on age, gender, population or situation.
- While all people live with some vulnerability to violence, they also have the potential to “bounce back” and protect themselves; they have resiliency.

2 STEP 2: RECOGNIZE PEOPLE'S VULNERABILITY AND RESILIENCE

VULNERABILITIES

Violence is a problem in all parts of the world, and it affects people of all ages, genders, backgrounds and status. However, some groups of people are at higher risk to experience violence than others. In general, people who are excluded, marginalized and treated as “different” or “less than” others are at elevated risk.

VULNERABLE GROUPS	RISK FACTORS	SAMPLE STATISTICS
AGE		
Children	Small size; physical weakness; high dependence; tendency to be trusting; limited understanding and knowledge; limited support systems; unawareness of their rights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 500 million–1.5 billion children experience violence each year.³⁹ 150 million girls (14 per cent of the planet’s child population) and 73 million boys (7 per cent of the planet’s child population) have been subjected to sexual violence.⁴⁰ Only 2.4 per cent of the world’s children are legally protected from corporal punishment in all settings—homes, schools, institutions, workplaces and communities.⁴¹

No violence against children is justifiable, and all violence against children is preventable.
Pinheiro³⁸

VULNERABLE GROUPS	RISK FACTORS	SAMPLE STATISTICS
AGE		
Youth	Physical, emotional, sexual changes; peer relationships; self-esteem issues; limited personal power; unawareness of their rights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On average 565 young people between the ages of 10–29 die each day from interpersonal violence.⁴³ ▪ For every youth homicide there are 20–40 victims of non-fatal youth violence receiving hospital treatment.⁴⁴ ▪ Between 20 per cent and 65 per cent of school-aged children and youth report having been verbally or physically bullied in school in the previous 30 days.⁴⁵
<p>Witnessing violence in the home or being physically or sexually abused, for instance, may condition adolescents to regard violence as an acceptable means of resolving problems.</p> <p>WHO⁴²</p>		
Elderly	Social isolation; physical and economic dependence; limited access to support systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The suicide rates of people 75 years and older are approximately three times those of people aged 15-24 years.⁴⁷ ▪ On average, there are estimated to be two to three attempted suicides for every completed suicide among people over the age of 65 years.⁴⁸ ▪ Globally, an estimated 1 in 20 elderly people experience abuse.⁴⁹
<p>There has been slow but increasing awareness of elder abuse over the past 20 years. As challenging as it is for the population at large to acknowledge, it is even harder for older people to admit that they have been victimized.⁴⁴</p> <p>OCHA⁴⁶</p>		

2

VULNERABLE GROUPS	RISK FACTORS	SAMPLE STATISTICS
GENDER		
Women	Discrimination; unequal power relations; local traditions and customs; financial dependence; societal roles; class structures; race; poverty; ethnicity; age.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least one out of every three women around the world has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime.⁵¹ It is estimated that one in five women will become a victim of rape or attempted rape in her lifetime.⁵² Nearly 50 per cent of all sexual assaults worldwide are against girls 15 years of age or younger.⁵³

Female infanticide and prenatal sex selection, early marriage, dowry-related violence, female genital mutilation/cutting, crimes against women committed in the name of “honour”, and maltreatment of widows, including inciting widows to commit suicide, are forms of violence against women that are considered harmful traditional practices, and may involve both family and community. UN Secretary General’s Study on Violence against Women⁵⁰

Men	Social and cultural norms around masculinity, power, and sexuality; substance abuse; use of weapons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Men are victims of 80 per cent of violence-related injuries.⁵⁵ Men are victims of nearly 80 per cent of homicides and 60 per cent of suicides.⁵⁶ There are three male suicides worldwide for every female suicide.⁵⁷
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The vulnerabilities of men to violence are often neglected and minimized; the unique risk factors associated with their gender are often lost. IFRC⁵⁴



VULNERABLE GROUPS	RISK FACTORS	SAMPLE STATISTICS
POPULATIONS		
Indigenous People	Lost land and resources; loss of language, spirituality and traditions; racism; lack of livelihoods; substance abuse; poverty; histories of violence; collective and individual loss of identity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Inuit of Greenland reportedly have the highest rate of suicide in the world: it is the leading non-natural cause of death among the population.⁵⁹ ▪ In Canada, Aboriginal women are three times more likely to be victims of spousal violence than non-Aboriginal women.^{60, 61} ▪ In Australia, Indigenous people in remote areas are three times as likely as those in non-remote areas to have witnessed violence (30 per cent compared with 10 per cent).⁶²
Xenophobic Violence	Immigration being viewed as a social problem, or perceived as an economic, cultural or political threat to existing citizens; competition for limited resources and opportunities; being different.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In South Africa in 2008, 62 people lost their lives through xenophobic violence and thousands were displaced.⁶⁴ ▪ In the United States in 2007, 2,025 law enforcement agencies reported 7,624 hate crime incidents involving 9,006 offences.⁶⁵

The layers of violence that have contributed to present-day challenges of First Nations [Indigenous] people are a direct result of forced assimilation, colonization and cultural disintegration.

Canadian Red Cross⁵⁸

Increasing migration means ... accommodating peoples of different cultures, races, religions and language. Addressing the reality of increased diversity means finding political, legal, social and economic mechanisms to ensure mutual respect and to mediate relations across differences.

ILO, IOM, OHCHR⁶³

VULNERABLE GROUPS

RISK FACTORS

SAMPLE STATISTICS

POPULATIONS

2

Persons with Disabilities

In some countries, up to a quarter of disabilities result from injuries and violence.

UN Convention on Rights for People with Disabilities⁶⁶

Isolation; discrimination; dependency; being less physically able to defend oneself; communication challenges; cognitive ability; status in society.

- Persons with disabilities are more likely to be victims of violence or rape, and less likely to obtain police intervention, legal protection or preventive care.⁶⁷
- Violence against children with disabilities occurs at annual rates at least 1.7 times greater than for their non-disabled peers.⁶⁸

Marginalized Populations Discriminated Against Due to:

- illness or disease (e.g., HIV/AIDS)
- sexual orientation
- caste or class
- being in detention

Stigma; exclusion; inequality; discrimination; isolation; status in society.

- Men who have sex with men who are HIV positive are more at risk of psychological, physical and sexual assault than their HIV negative peers.⁷⁰
- In India, every hour two Dalits [a group of people traditionally regarded as “untouchable” or of “low caste”] are assaulted; every day three Dalit women are raped, two Dalits are murdered, and two Dalit homes are torched.⁷¹
- Incarcerated women are far more likely to have had traumatic experiences in early childhood than incarcerated men, such as early sexual, mental and physical abuse. Half will also have experienced domestic violence.⁷²

There is emerging evidence connecting the rapidly expanding HIV epidemic and gender-based violence, particularly among young women.

The Foundation for AIDS Research⁶⁹



VULNERABLE GROUPS	RISK FACTORS	SAMPLE STATISTICS
SITUATIONS		
During and After Disasters	Chaotic environments; breakdown of social, financial, environmental (e.g., shelter, safe community places) and/or political support; increased stress on families and communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ After Hurricane Hugo hit the USA, child abuse increased at 3 months, 6 months and 11 months after the hurricane, compared to the proceeding year—in the first three months there was a nearly 300 per cent increase.⁷⁴ ▪ Increases in intimate partner violence levels have been reported in the Philippines after the Mt. Pinatubo eruption, in Nicaragua after Hurricane Mitch, in the USA after the Loma Prieta earthquake and the eruption of Mt. Saint Helens, and also in several refugee camps worldwide.⁷⁵ ▪ In the Great Lakes Region of Africa more than 50 per cent of children in displacement camps have experienced some form of sexual abuse; in one camp the rate is 87 per cent.⁷⁶

2

Disaster after disaster produces irrefutable evidence that with displacement—be it as a result of natural hazards or conflict—the risks of physical abuse to women and girls rises substantially.

IFRC⁷³

Significant levels of abuse of boys and girls [by humanitarian aid workers] continue in emergencies, with much of it going unreported.

Save the Children⁷⁷

RESILIENCE

While all people live with some vulnerability, they also have the potential to “bounce back” and protect themselves from violence and harm; they have resiliency.

 Resiliency is *a blend of individual, relationship, community and cultural factors that help individuals be protected from different forms of violence and the impact of violence if it does occur.*

Chart: Resiliency Factors⁷⁸

<p>INDIVIDUAL FACTORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assertiveness ▪ Ability to solve problems ▪ Self-awareness ▪ Empathy ▪ Having goals and aspirations ▪ Sense of humour 	<p>COMMUNITY CONTEXT FACTORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited exposure to violence within family, community and peer groups ▪ Government provision for people's safety, recreation, housing and jobs when older ▪ Access to school and education, information and learning resources ▪ Safety and security
<p>RELATIONSHIP FACTORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Presence of positive mentors and role models ▪ Perceived social support ▪ Appropriate emotional expression and parental monitoring within the family ▪ Peer group acceptance 	<p>CULTURAL FACTORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tolerance for different ideologies and beliefs ▪ Having a life philosophy ▪ Cultural and/or spiritual identification ▪ Being culturally grounded

We, the Ministers of Health of the Americas... adopt the following “Ministerial Declaration on Violence and Injury Prevention in the Americas”... [We] agree that additional efforts are needed to address these major public health and development issues and therefore commit to... recognize violence and injuries as epidemic public health problems in our countries... [and] increase efforts to prevent violence and injuries, through actions for the promotion of health within a broad perspective of safe, healthy and sustainable environments.

Ministerial Declaration on Violence and Injury Prevention in the Americas
Merida, Yucatan, Mexico⁷⁹

STEP 3: DEFINE PROTECTION INSTRUMENTS

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
Articles 1 and 3⁹⁰



KEY POINTS

- There are international, regional and national legal instruments that protect people from violence.
- Internationally there are legal instruments that apply to all people, and others that are specific for children and women.
- Nationally, most countries have at least some laws to protect people, especially the vulnerable, from different forms of violence.

STEP 3: DEFINE PROTECTION INSTRUMENTS

3 INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK

In recent decades, a variety of international instruments for protection from violence have been developed and agreed to by most countries of the world.

There are some instruments that lay out general rights and apply to all people, while other instruments have been developed with a specific focus on particular populations—most notably children and women.

INSTRUMENTS FOR ALL PEOPLE

- *Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948*
- *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966*
- *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966 (and Optional Protocol)*
- *Geneva Conventions, 1949; Additional Protocols, 1977*
- *Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination, 1979*
- *Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989*
- *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, 1990*
- *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Trans-national Organized Crime, 2000*
- *Convention and Optional Protocol against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 2006*
- *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2007*
- *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007*



INSTRUMENTS FOR CHILDREN

UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (www.unicef.org/crc)

On November 20, 1989 the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. In January of 2002, the UN passed the *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography*.

The *Convention* has been signed by every country in the world (192 countries); only two countries have not ratified it into law. It is the most rapidly and universally accepted international treaty in history.

The *Convention on the Rights of the Child* outlines the many ways that societies are responsible for their children. Its overriding theme is the best interest of the child for survival, protection and safety, health, education and participation.

Five articles deal directly with issues of child abuse and neglect, and four articles address parental rights and responsibilities.

States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 19⁸¹

Other international instruments for the safety of children include: *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Trans-national Organized Crime, 2000*; *A World Fit for Children, 2002*; *UN Guidelines for Alternative Care of Children, 2009*; and *Resolutions of the UN Security Council 1261 (1999), 1314 (2000), 1379 (2001), 1460 (2003), 1539 (2004), 1612 (2005), and 1882 (2009) relating to the use of children in conflict.*

For three years I tried to tell a numerous amount of teachers, friends and adults [that I was being emotionally abused]... Finally last year someone listened—the school nurse... I am coping and beginning to understand. There is hope.

Youth participant of a Red cross violence prevention workshop⁸²

INSTRUMENTS FOR WOMEN

UN CONVENTION ON ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)

CEDAW is often referred to as the “Treaty for the Rights of Women” or the “Women’s Treaty.” It was adopted by the United Nations in 1979 and outlines the rights of women with a focus on non-discrimination and equality.

3

Although violence is not directly referred to in CEDAW, it has significant relevance as issues of discrimination and equality are closely connected to violence. In addition, the monitoring body for CEDAW now interprets the definition of discrimination to clearly include violence:

“...discrimination includes gender-based violence, that is, violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately. It includes acts that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty. Gender-based violence may breach specific provisions of the Convention, regardless of whether those provisions expressly mention violence.”⁸³

Other key instruments for the safety of women and girls include:

- *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, 2000;*
- *Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages, 1964;*
- *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, UN General Assembly, 1993; and*
- *Resolution 1325 of the UN Security Council, 2000, which relates to women, peace and security.*

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Each country also has its own national laws or criminal codes to protect people from violence. Most countries also have human rights legislation. The laws are unique in each country, but often include protections from sexual, physical and emotional violence and harassment. Within countries, there may also be specific state/provincial/territorial/regional laws.



DUTY OF CARE AND LIABILITY

Duty of care is a legal concept that applies in some countries and defines when a person or institution must protect others from harm. In certain circumstances, persons or institutions must exercise reasonable care to ensure that others are not harmed. For example, when an employee/volunteer/officer acting on behalf of a child- or youth-serving organization causes harm to a child in his/her care, that person, as well as the organization being represented, can be found legally responsible to pay damages to the child. In this scenario, the person who causes harm can be found **directly liable**, and the organization can be held **vicariously liable** for the harm done by the person who acts on its behalf.

While a legal duty of care may or may not apply in a country, all adults and organizations everywhere have a moral and ethical duty to protect people in their care.

No argument against gender equality, whether based on traditions, customs or outright bigotry, can disprove the claim that women's rights are good for children and ultimately good for the world.

UNICEF⁸⁴

STEP 4: CREATE A PREVENTION TEAM

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead⁸⁵



KEY POINTS

- Preventing violence and creating safe environments requires a team approach.
- Best practices for creating a prevention team include gaining diverse participation, having an appropriate budget, establishing clear terms of reference and ensuring accountability.

STEP 4: CREATE A PREVENTION TEAM

The first step in designing, implementing and monitoring a comprehensive risk management strategy is creating a safe environments team. This includes identifying a focal point and a prevention team to lead the change-making process and to ensure there is accountability for creating safe environments.

4

A prevention team needs to involve the decision makers within an organization or community and representation from different stakeholders. Although every organization or community has different structures and is unique in size and resources, when choosing a team, it can help to ask the following questions:

- Who are the decision makers?
- Who represents the people?
- Who has knowledge of legal systems—or where can that knowledge be found?
- Who determines budget allocations?
- Who is responsible for communications and messaging within the organization or community?
- Who oversees programs and services?
- Who are the change makers/influencers?

Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision, the ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results.

Andrew Carnegie⁸⁶

From within the prevention team, a focal point needs to be identified. Coordinating the development, implementation and monitoring of comprehensive prevention strategies must be part of their formal job description and role.



Once the group membership of the prevention team is established, terms of reference need to be written with their mandate clearly identified, the frequency of their meetings scheduled, and the overall outcomes of their work determined.

BEST PRACTICES FOR CREATING A PREVENTION TEAM

- Involve leadership and decision makers to ensure decisions are acted on and people are held accountable.
- Select leadership and decision makers from multiple sectors, ages, diverse cultural and social backgrounds, and both genders.
- Ensure all team members are educated on prevention of violence.
- Decide how the focal point will work with the team.
- Consult with and involve community members of diverse cultural and social backgrounds, including women, children and youth.
- Set aside an appropriate budget for the prevention team.
- Establish clear terms of reference with timelines for the prevention team.
- Establish a reporting/accountability system for the prevention team—who will it report to?

4

In addition to an organization's or community's prevention team, it is effective to partner with external agencies. Partnering with child protection or other protection services, women's groups, police and organizations that deliver and support prevention programming can help organizations or communities develop skills to not only prevent violence, but to also learn how to respond effectively if harm does occur.

Partnering with outside legal support, where there is not adequate legal support internally, is very important to make sure policies and strategies are consistent with legal standards and protect the organization or community from liability.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, which monitors implementation of this Convention [Convention on the Rights of the Child], has recommended to governments across the region and the world that they should systematically: Prohibit all forms of violence, including all corporal punishment, however light, in the upbringing of children in their homes, in schools, in care institutions, penal systems and any other place; Undertake—at the same time—educational and awareness raising campaigns to inform parents and others about children’s right to protection and about non-violent methods of disciplining and raising children.

4

Save the Children⁸⁷

STEP 5: COMPLETE A RISK ASSESSMENT

*Violence ... is not random.
It is predictable.*

***If it can be predicted,
it can be prevented.***

World Health Organization⁸⁸



KEY POINTS

- Organizational or community mapping is a critical building block for risk assessments.
- Risk assessments measure and evaluate the potential for violence to happen. A risk must be known before it can be managed.
- When risk is not managed, it can have negative ethical, human rights, image, legal and financial consequences for an organization or community.
- There are practical tools that can be used to conduct risk assessments.

STEP 5: COMPLETE A RISK ASSESSMENT

 Risk is *the possibility of suffering loss, a chance that something might happen that will have a negative impact—such as emotional, physical or sexual violence against children, youth, adults or elders—on an individual, organization or community.* It is measured in terms of the consequences and the likelihood or potential for harmful behaviours. Once the risk is known, it can be managed through comprehensive risk management strategies.

5

MAPPING COMMUNITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Before an actual risk assessment is undertaken, it is important to map out the organization and/or community.

KEY QUESTIONS FOR MAPPING ORGANIZATIONS/COMMUNITIES

- What is the physical layout of the organization or community?
- What are the communication systems within the organization or community?
- Who is vulnerable within the organization or community?
- What are the vulnerability, risk, or access points where people can be harmed?
- What are the specific risk factors for vulnerable people?
- Who could possibly harm others?
- What protective systems exist?
- Where are the protective systems or people?
- How do people access the protective systems?



GENDER ANALYSIS⁸⁹

A gender analysis should focus on men, women, girls and boys. A gendered response recognizes that a range of factors cause inequalities between men and women, boys and girls. Around the world these inequalities can result in women and girls having less access to resources, assistance and power within society. Gender-sensitive programs respond to the different needs and experiences of gender in conflict, disasters and emergencies. They also address the issues and structures that result in women and girls, boys and men, being disadvantaged and disempowered in different situations.

Ensure both men and women are represented on assessment teams.

- Include men, women, girls and boys in the sample population being assessed.
- Ensure that data is broken down by gender during collection and analysis to improve quality of programs.

5

What transpired after that shall remain forever inscribed in my mind. I was bloodied and aching all over. Then he was ordering me out of the truck. I jumped into the mud and my school bag landed with a thud at my feet as he threw it after me. In the weeks that followed I had many nightmares about the incident. I found myself hating all men, including those male teachers I had used to admire so much. I felt dirty all the time and could still smell my rapist on me. The result of the [medical] examination shocked me more than the rape itself. Not only was I pregnant but I had also been infected with HIV.

Nine-year-old girl relating her story of becoming HIV positive after being sexually abused by a teacher⁹⁰

RISK ASSESSMENTS

In any organization or community—whether a school, community centre, place of worship, workplace, sport facility, hospital, orphanage or residential camp—people can be at risk of violence. This can occur on an organization’s premises or within a community’s boundaries, including places such as change rooms, showers, bedrooms, vehicles, offices or isolated areas. Risk can even come from an organization’s or community’s own personnel.

Risk can be direct such as acts of violence including abuse, exploitation, bullying or harassment; or a lack of care that causes physical injury or emotional damage (e.g., neglect, forcing children to participate without proper clothing or protective gear; lack of supervision).

Risk may also take an indirect form. This includes:

5

- not developing, implementing and monitoring policies and procedures such as codes of conduct;
- not training personnel or community members on prevention policies and procedures;
- not giving all people involved prevention and safety messages;
- not monitoring and holding personnel or community members accountable for safety policies and procedures; and
- not maintaining equipment, facilities and premises.

CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ASSESSING AND ADDRESSING RISKS

Ethical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jeopardizing the safety, health and human dignity of organization’s personnel and participants or community members.
Human Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Violating human rights as defined by national, regional and international laws and instruments.
Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Damaging the organization’s or community’s own credibility. ▪ Eroding respect and trust granted to the organization and its personnel or community members.
Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Violating laws. ▪ Posing significant risk management and liability concerns.
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Affecting the financial base of the organization or community through liability cases. ▪ Affecting donor/investor/customer/program base.

It is important for an organization to admit that some degree of risk is inevitable in their programs. It is how they handle the risk that is important ... To protect themselves in the event of future litigation, organizations must show that they are taking reasonable measures to reduce risks.

Volunteer Canada⁹¹

RISK MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST

FOR ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMUNITIES

	YES	NO	PARTIAL	COMMENTS
DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION OR COMMUNITY HAVE...				
A prevention team to lead the mapping, development and integration of violence prevention policies, procedures and systems?				
A finished mapping that highlights non-safe and safe areas and helping resources?				
A screening process for all personnel?				
A code of conduct?				
A harassment policy?				
A child protection policy (if your organization interacts with children or youth)?				
A safe, clear, confidential and accessible complaint structure for everyone?				
A clear, well-defined investigation process?				
ARE PREMISES...				
Assessed for areas where vulnerable people may be isolated or at increased risk of harm?				
Adapted to provide safety and prevention strategies—e.g., lighting, communication devices, sanitation facilities?				
Used to visibly display information on safe environments, such as preventing violence?				

5

Communities are made up of a variety of organizations and institutions such as education, business; faith, recreation and culture and health and care centres. Risk assessments may be conducted specifically within organizations or may cover the whole community.

Some risk assessment questions are specific for organizations.

FOR ORGANIZATIONS

5

	YES	NO	PARTIAL	COMMENTS
DO ORGANIZATIONS...				
Complete a full screening process on all their personnel?				
Require all their personnel—staff and volunteers—to sign a code of conduct?				
Provide a copy of and briefing to all of their personnel on their priority policies including code of conduct, harassment policy and child protection policy?				
Publicize their priority policies with full endorsement from senior management?				
ARE ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERS...				
Provided information on the organization’s code of conduct, child protection, and harassment policies and procedures?				
Required to sign agreements to adhere to the same code of conduct and organizational policies?				

FOR INDIVIDUALS

CHECKLIST FOR SCREENING YOURSELF

Do you...

- Think that physically or emotionally hurting other people can sometimes have positive consequences?
- Say degrading or hurtful things to others, including those with less power than you, when you are angry?
- Lose control of your temper and act out in aggressive ways towards others?
- Lose control of your behaviour and emotions when you have been drinking?
- Become angry or upset when you fail to have your own way?
- Accept the emotional and physical boundaries, including sexual, set by others for themselves?
- Become jealous easily?
- Think others are scared of how you will act or what you will do to them or others when you are upset or do not have your way?
- Try to control others by being aggressive, intimidating and by not taking the opinions or emotions of others seriously?
- Use your power in ways that shame, belittle or hurt others?

STEP 6: DEVELOP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Policies provide a road map for the organization and its members.

The value and importance of good policies for an organization cannot be over-emphasized.

Hilary Findlay and Rachel Corbett⁹²



KEY POINTS

- Developing, implementing and monitoring appropriate policies and procedures can help reduce the risk of violence.
- All organizations and communities have a responsibility to ensure that they have appropriate policies and procedures to address violence.
- Key policies include: a process for screening personnel, a code of conduct, a harassment policy, and, if an organization works and interacts with children or youth, a child protection policy.

STEP 6: DEVELOP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Once an organization or community has measured its risk of violence, it needs to manage the risk. This can be accomplished through the development, implementation and monitoring of comprehensive risk management policies and procedures.

THE IMPORTANCE OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Policies and procedures are critical aspects of risk management. Organizations, institutions and communities are not only accountable for adhering to national and local laws and acts, but also should:

- provide a safe environment for all people in their environment;
- follow fair procedures;
- respect human rights;
- comply with relevant laws to report violence;
- avoid criminal actions;
- protect people from compromising situations and false allegations; and
- protect the organization or community from liability.

6

Internal policies and procedures are the laws an organization or community makes for itself. They provide a road map for its members.

BEST PRACTICES FOR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Internal policies and procedures should:

- be clear and accessible for everyone;
- reflect the philosophy and values of the organization or community;
- respect the best interests of the child, if the organization interacts with children;
- recognize gender specific vulnerabilities and promote gender equality;
- establish a standard of behaviour, which exceeds the minimum standard required by law;
- provide continuity as members come and go; and
- ensure that issues are dealt with in a consistent fashion.



The development of risk management policies is a balance between encouraging positive interactions and discouraging inappropriate and harmful interactions. The goal is for children and youth to enjoy their experiences within an organization while also being safe from violence, abuse, harassment and bullying.

The United States Centres for Disease Control and Prevention⁹³

APPROACHES TO IMPLEMENTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

There are two approaches to developing policies on safe environments:

1. Integrate issues into existing organizational/community policies; or
2. Develop separate, stand alone policies.

The strategy used will vary for each organization or community based on their own needs and context.

INTEGRATED VERSUS STAND ALONE POLICY DEVELOPMENT⁹⁴

	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Integrated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minimizes the number of policies. ▪ Avoids confusion among new and old policy formats, messaging and directions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Integrating policies can be difficult if existing policies are not written to allow changes. ▪ Outside assistance may be required to help with integration.
Stand alone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can draw greater attention to safe environment issues—leading to increased understanding of the issues and their importance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A separate policy may not be consistent with other policies—leading to possible confusion, complexity and procedural errors.

Whether integrated or stand alone, policies and procedures are living documents that require ongoing modification, updating and revisions based on organizational or community experience and learning. Designing, implementing and monitoring policies and procedures are ongoing activities.

PRIORITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

There are many policies and procedures that can be developed to build safe environments. A few key ones are critical and become the building blocks for others—a process for screening personnel, a code of conduct, a harassment policy, and, if an organization works and interacts with children or youth, a child protection policy.

1. SCREENING POLICIES

 Personnel are defined as *any paid staff, volunteers, or governance personnel who have involvement with an organization*. In order to ensure that appropriate personnel who are committed to safe behaviour are selected for your team, ten elements of screening are recommended.

 Screening is a *continuum of steps taken over time, designed to reduce risk and identify any person who poses a risk to children, youth or other vulnerable people*. Screening personnel applies to everyone in an organization—no exceptions! All personnel should be screened using the organization's or community's policies and procedures.

Keeping and maintaining screening records—application form, interview form, personal and police reference checks—in a secure storage space is a key step to ensure confidentiality of all personnel. This applies for staff, volunteers and participants.

6

TEN ELEMENTS OF SCREENING⁹⁵

1. **Job Design:** What is the risk factor?
2. **Job Description:** What job is the person to do and is it clearly defined?
3. **Application Form:** Are the applicants required to fill in an application form? Does the form require essential information?
4. **Recruitment Process:** How and where are people being recruited?
5. **Interviews:** Does the interview assess the applicants' responses to safety, diversity and violence prevention issues? Are applicants informed about your organization's values and code of conduct?
6. **Reference Checks:** Are specific questions asked around applicants' suitability for working with vulnerable populations?
7. **Police/Criminal Record Checks:** Are there systems for this in the country? Is it appropriate to use them as a screening option? Is permission given? Are the results documented and kept secure? How often are checks required?



8. **Orientation and Training:** Does training include risk management and reduction? Do the applicants understand that training is part of the screening process?
9. **Support, Monitoring and Evaluation:** How often do supervision and evaluation occur? What is the monitoring plan?
10. **Participant/Client Follow-up:** Are clients asked to participate in the evaluation of the service delivery?

2. CODE OF CONDUCT

Codes of conduct provide the minimum expected behaviour of all personnel within an organization. To be most effective, the code of conduct should be integrated into the organization's culture and operations, such as performance reviews.

For a code of conduct to be effective, it is essential that systems be in place to support it. This requires procedures that ensure:

- ✓ all personnel sign the code of conduct;
- ✓ signatures are documented by the organization;
- ✓ personnel receive a briefing on the code of conduct;
- ✓ there is a clear reporting mechanism that all personnel understand and to which they all have access—providing options for multiple reporting lines is effective to ensure all personnel feel safe and comfortable to report any concerns (common reporting lines include direct supervisor, human resource personnel, ombudspersons, senior leadership, a workplace or protection focal point or a reporting hotline/email address.);
- ✓ reporting of any concerns of violence is mandatory;
- ✓ the investigation process is understood by all personnel, especially managers, and that when concerns arise, there is a clear process to follow;
- ✓ confidential information is kept confidential and stored securely;
- ✓ personnel are monitored and supported in achieving their commitments as outlined in the code of conduct—this can include having information and support accessible through a focal point and integrating the code of conduct into performance appraisals; and
- ✓ all personnel, without exceptions, are held accountable for following the code of conduct.

KEY INCLUSIONS FOR CODES OF CONDUCT⁹⁶

Codes of conduct should clearly define the following:

- abuse of power;
- types of abuse of power/violence: physical, sexual and emotional abuse; exploitation; bullying and harassment;
- discrimination including on the basis of age, gender, disability, religion/faith, ethnicity, political belief, sexual orientation, language and family status;
- appropriate/inappropriate use of media and technology;
- rights and responsibilities of all personnel, including responsibility to report any concerns about violence;
- safe, confidential and clear reporting lines for breaches of the code of conduct; and
- clear sanctions, disciplinary procedures and appeal processes.

Codes of conduct are preventative tools. They are a demonstration of a resolve to self-police and to set and uphold proper standards and discourage behaviours that ... violate human rights, undermine the mandate and bring the organization into disrepute.

6

United Nations⁹⁷

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE COMPLAINT MECHANISM⁹⁸

Safety: A safe complaint mechanism will consider potential dangers and risks to all parties and incorporate ways to prevent injury or harm. This will include ensuring confidentiality, offering physical protection when possible, and addressing the possibility of retaliation against witnesses.

Confidentiality does not mean “keeping secrets.” Confidentiality is a responsibility to handle information in a way that maintains trust and safety for people. It means information given in confidence is only passed on in specific situations and only to those who need to know—according to organizational policies and procedures. Information is secure but not at the expense of legal, ethical and moral obligations.



Secrets involve keeping issues hidden and quiet. Secrets about violence cannot be kept; to get help and keep vulnerable people safe, harm against them **MUST** be discussed and brought out of the shadows.

Transparency: A mechanism is “transparent” when members of the affected community know it exists, have had input into its development, and possess sufficient information on how to access it and ensure it is adhered to.

Accessibility: A mechanism is accessible when it is available to be used by as many people as possible from as many groups as possible in all places where an organization is operational. Communities must be told how to complain and be actively encouraged to make complaints when problems arise.

3. HARASSMENT POLICY

An harassment policy is critical to outline the definition and discriminatory practices of harassment including sexual harassment, personal harassment and abuse of power. The harassment policy needs to be based on international and national human rights legislation.

4. CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

In addition to a screening policy, code of conduct and harassment policy, it is essential that all organizations that work with children and youth have a specific child protection policy. While the code of conduct addresses issues related to safety in a general way, and may highlight the needs of children, it alone is not adequate.

A child protection policy allows an organization to build on and add to the foundations in a code of conduct. It provides an opportunity to specify the vulnerabilities of children to violence, abuse and exploitation; what is acceptable and unacceptable contact with children; the roles and responsibilities of adults in the organization towards children; and reporting options for concerns about child safety. A child protection policy helps to ensure the unique needs of children are properly met by everyone in the organization.

VALUES THAT GUIDE A CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

- The “best interests of the child” are primary.
- All children—girls and boys—of all abilities and backgrounds have equal rights to safety in all settings and locations.
- Violence and abuse against children are never acceptable in any form, location or setting.
- Children are vulnerable to violence and abuse due to their size, age, physical and psychological maturity, dependence and lack of power. While all children may be vulnerable in some settings, some children may have a heightened risk of abuse and violence across all settings.
- Violence against children has damaging and often long-lasting repercussions for children, their families and their communities.
- All organizations and adults are responsible to provide safety for the children in their care.

Key points to include in a child protection policy:

- 6
- 4.1 The age of a child needs to reflect at minimum the local laws and the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*.
 - 4.2 Definitions of violence must include physical, sexual, emotional/psychological, bullying and neglect.
 - 4.3 Appropriate and inappropriate behaviours must be covered, including safe contact:
 - Any contact between personnel and children should be visible to others—include another person when meeting with a child, or if privacy is needed, it can be out of hearing but ensure it is within sight of others.
 - “Two-deep leadership”: at least two personnel accompany children on overnight trips, during activities, while in transport or during any unavoidable out-of-program contact. If two personnel are not available, ensure that at least two children are together with any one personnel.
 - Prohibit touching of any children by any personnel, or limit touching to “safe” areas of the body such as hand-to-shoulder.
 - Never allow touching to occur out of visibility of others, even in the event of tending an injured child. If privacy is needed, have another staff or child present.

- Any touching that is resisted or refused by a young person must be respected.
- Limit staff, volunteers or other personnel from being present while children shower, change or use toilet facilities, unless a child requires assistance due to a disability.
- Prohibit children of considerable age differences from showering at the same time.
- Prohibit the use of alcohol or illicit drugs for children, staff and volunteers at all the organization's functions.

4.4 Access to children must be outlined:

- Limit unsupervised access to the organization's premises.
- Limit unsupervised physical access to children.
- Define areas which are “off-limits” to staff, other personnel and/or children (dangerous or isolated places, storage rooms, etc.), and which areas require staff supervision.
- Do not have individual personnel—staff or volunteers—drive individual children home.
- At the end of an event, be sure that no one child is left behind alone.
- Define appropriate use of and access to shower, toilets and locker room facilities.
- Ensure access routes to toilet and shower facilities are well-lit and visible.
- Prohibit staff from using shower facilities at the same time as children.
- Out-of-program contact should only occur in groups, and never on a one-to-one basis.

4.5 Complaint procedures in the child protection policy need to reflect the same procedures as in the code of conduct.

When I started my teaching career there was a little girl in my class who had been sexually abused. At that time I did not know what to do. If I had this knowledge at that time, I could have done something to help that girl.

Adult participant of a Red Cross workshop on violence prevention⁹⁹

ADDRESSING THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF POWER, INCLUDING SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION, IN POLICIES

Addressing abuse of power is a key issue that applies to policies for creating safe environments free of violence. Organizations can develop a separate policy for abuse of power that highlights unique issues such as sexual abuse and exploitation; or they can mainstream the issues into key policies so that they are highlighted and built into existing or new policies and procedures.

5. SUPPORTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

5.1. Education and training policies

Education and awareness are important ways to ensure all personnel understand how to create safe environments, learn prevention strategies and feel confident in their ability to handle sensitive situations and contribute to building safe environments. Organizations need policies and plans that ensure that all personnel are educated on their code of conduct, child protection and harassment policies, gender equality systems, other related policies and the complaint process.

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When children are in a program or institution, parents, caregivers and guardians need to be educated on the organization's safe policies and procedures. Caregivers have the right to know where their children are at all times, who is with them, who has access to them, and what activities are occurring. They have the right to be informed and consulted.

5.2. Policies for premises

Premises are constantly being used and changed. Monitoring their safety and making ongoing improvements is necessary. Policies can include:

- a clear monitoring schedule for all premises;
- defined levels of maintenance, including lighting, and privacy and cleanliness of shower and toilet facilities;
- defined access to the premises including who, when and where; and
- strategies to improve visibility and safety.



STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE VISIBILITY AND SAFETY¹⁰⁰

- Landscape to ensure open, visible spaces with no possible concealment.
- Have clear lines of sight throughout the building.
- Secure areas not used for program purposes to prevent people, especially children, from being isolated (e.g., lock closets and storage rooms).
- Install windows in doors or ensure some type of visibility.
- Institute a “no closed door” policy.
- Install bright lighting in all areas.
- Ensure there are secure and private showers and toilets for females and males.
- Use prominent spaces to post information on safe environments.

It is not only what we do, but also what we don't do, for which we are held accountable.

Molière¹⁰¹

5.3. Media, photography and filming policies

Participants should have information and provide consent before they are captured on film or photographs or used in other media.

- Ensure participants are asked permission before being photographed or filmed. Respect those who do not wish to be on film.
- If a picture is to be posted in any public place (including bulletin boards, publications or websites), the subject (and parents if the subject is below the age of 18 years) must sign a waiver giving permission.
- Video and digital cameras, including cell phones with cameras, must be prohibited from being used in changing rooms, bathrooms and showers.
- When media want to photograph/film an event or activity, the organization or team should have the option to grant or withhold permission; participants need to be alerted and given the choice to opt out.

Perception is reality. For instance, one person's perceived teasing may be another person's perceived threat. The organization's policies should spell out in clear and simple language what the organization considers violent behaviour and what consequences will ensue if the policies are broken.

Nonprofit Risk Management Centre¹⁰²

5.4. Technology policies

Clear policies for personnel and beneficiaries are needed on:

- camera phone use, including in changing rooms, bathrooms and showers;
- Internet access;
- use of webcams; and
- appropriate and inappropriate information, communication, and use of chat rooms, instant messaging, social networking sites, blogs, Twitter and YouTube.

Policies don't protect people; it's how they are implemented.

Northway, Davies, Mansell and Jenkins¹⁰³

6 5.5. Policies for visitors

Visitors who have, or potentially could have, contact with vulnerable people should be screened and monitored to ensure safety.

- Prohibit contact between vulnerable people and individuals who have not been screened by your organization; or
- Provide visiting volunteers or staff with the organization's policies on acceptable conduct. Explain that the policies will be enforced, and provide direct supervision of the visitor while he or she is in contact with vulnerable people in the organization's care.

5.6 Partner policies

- Provide information and training to partner organizations to ensure they understand your organization's commitment to safe environments.
- Integrate into agreements/contracts with partners your organization's expectations for, and commitment to, safe environments.
- Clearly define the actions and consequences that will take place if partners breach their commitment to safe environments.



ACCOUNTABILITY

For policies and procedures to be effective, all people, including managers, need to be held accountable for their role in creating safe environments. To have expectations listed on paper and then take no action when issues arise renders the policies and procedures meaningless.

Many women feel they have few options to stop the violence against them—the camps lack security and the country has very poor systems to address violence once it happens. Police often downplay violence—domestic and sexual—they only get serious when a large number of people support the victim.

Woman in a disaster situation participating in a Red Cross consultation¹⁰⁴

STRATEGIES TO ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Respond to concerns about violence.
2. Ensure all personnel understand and acknowledge their responsibilities and role in creating safe environments.
3. Integrate compliance and implementation of safe environments into all staff performance appraisals.
4. Report progress and gaps on safe environments at least once a year to the board of governors/governance/senior leadership.

6

REMEMBER ... Ensure all your policies and procedures for safe environments are vetted through the organization's legal department or external legal counsel.

Let us focus ... on a more practical, more attainable peace, based not on a sudden revolution in human nature but on a gradual evolution in human institutions.

John F. Kennedy¹⁰⁵

STEP 7: EDUCATE ADULTS, YOUTH AND CHILDREN

*Tell me and I'll forget. Show me
and I'll remember. **Involve me and
I'll understand.***

Chinese proverb¹⁰⁶



KEY POINTS

- Education increases knowledge and allows people to understand how they can address violence.
- Safe, participatory education that builds on the knowledge and experience of participants is the most effective.

STEP 7: EDUCATE ADULTS, YOUTH AND CHILDREN

Education increases knowledge, and informed people have power. As organizations and communities learn how to prevent and reduce violence, the safety of everyone is enhanced.

Educating people on prevention and risk management increases their sense of ownership and develops the attitude of a collective responsibility to create safe environments.

The teacher, if indeed wise, does not bid you to enter the house of their wisdom, but leads you to the threshold of your own mind.

Kahlil Gibran¹⁰⁷

EFFECTIVE TRAINING

Effective training on safe environments requires that members of an organization or community understand the material and feel confident using what they have learned. Some best practices to achieve these goals are:

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- Ensure training is participatory—participants are involved and actively engaged.
- Incorporate different ways of knowing into the training: visual, verbal, body movement, music, problem-solving, group work, etc.
- Build on participant knowledge.
- Ensure material is accurate, current and clear.
- Ensure material is culturally sensitive and relevant to the local context.
- Use experienced facilitators who understand the issues and can engage the group.
- Prioritize the creation of a safe environment where people feel safe to discuss the issues and ask questions.
- Provide refreshers on the training at regular intervals.
- Evaluate the training using standardized evaluation forms.



SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Educating on violence prevention issues requires special attention to safe environments because the issues may:

- trigger memories of being abused or of when a loved one has been abused,
- elicit strong feelings and emotions,
- involve discussing issues that are not normally discussed,
- create discomfort,
- challenge preconceived ideas.

Trust is established through dialogue.

Paulo Freire¹⁰⁸

EDUCATING CHILDREN AND YOUTH

All children and youth need to receive violence prevention education and messaging. To promote understanding and confidence to be safe, it is best to adapt education to be age-appropriate and to address the specific needs of boys and girls. Children and youth should be provided an understanding of:

- their rights—the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*;
- the types of violence: emotional, physical, sexual, neglect, bullying, harassment and exploitation;
- prevention strategies to help keep them safe in the home, school, community or on the Internet;
- how and where to report violence; and
- how to help a friend who is being or has been hurt by violence.

[We commit to] renounce violence, promote non-discrimination and respect for diversity, and a culture of peace in the world.

Youth of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, 150th anniversary of the battle at Solferino¹⁰⁹

EDUCATING ADULTS

Adults include:

- all staff in an organization or community, including managers and senior leadership;
- volunteers;
- board and governance members, elected officials;
- interns;
- persons on contracts of any duration; and
- members of an organization or community.

All adults should receive education on:

- the organization’s code of conduct or the community’s goal to become a “safe community”;
- the types of violence: emotional, physical, sexual, neglect, bullying, harassment and exploitation;
- how to prevent or reduce violence;
- how and to whom to report concerns about violent behaviours;
- the organization’s or community’s violence prevention policies;
- risk management policies;
- healthy motivation/discipline techniques; and
- human rights legislation including the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, the *Convention on Elimination of Discrimination against Women*, and local laws and acts that address violence.

7

Sometimes they ask us to find them girls. They especially ask us for girls of our age. Often it will be between eight and ten men who will share two or three girls. When I suggest an older girl, they say that they want a young girl, the same age as us.

Three youth speaking about humanitarian workers¹¹⁰

THE BENEFITS OF TRAINING ON SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

Training community members and organizational personnel on safe environments can help them to:

- clearly understand and commit to safe environments;
- understand their role in reporting and handling disclosures of violence;
- understand local laws and organizational policies for reporting violence; and
- identify behaviours that may pose a risk to the organization or community, its members, or children, youth and other vulnerable people.

EDUCATING PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

As the leading figures in a child's life and in order to create equal knowledge, parents/guardians need to receive, at minimum, the same level of prevention education as their child or youth. Parents, caregivers and extended family members can be strong representatives and advocates in promoting the safety of children or youth while participating in educational, sport, culture, religious/faith, recreational or community activities.

Empathy is the single greatest inhibitor of the development of propensity to violence.

WHO and Liverpool JMU Centre for Public Health¹¹

STEP 8: RESPOND TO DISCLOSURES OF VIOLENCE

*A wound will not heal
until the matter is given
words and witness.*

Clarissa Pinkola Estes¹¹²



KEY POINTS

- It is the responsibility of adults to respond to disclosures of violence.
- How a disclosure of violence is handled is an important factor in the psychological impact of violence.
- Adults need to understand what they need to know, what they need to do and when they need to do it when a disclosure of violence occurs.

STEP 8: RESPOND TO DISCLOSURES OF VIOLENCE

Many people do not talk about their experiences with violence because they are:

- scared;
- ashamed;
- in denial;
- caring for the person who hurt them;
- not wanting the person who hurt them to get in trouble;
- blaming themselves, thinking the violence is their fault;
- confused; or
- unable to trust.

Studies and experience show that how a disclosure of violence is handled is a significant factor in determining the level of the psychological impact. Therefore, the person responding to the disclosure needs to follow specific steps while asking three basic questions:

1. What do I need to know?
2. What do I need to do?
3. When do I need to do it?

I have been sexually abused four times. I really want help but I'm too scared. My friend had the same thing happen but won't tell anyone. No one understands. I'm scared.

Youth participating in a Red Cross violence prevention workshop¹¹³

8 WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

The first thing all adults in an organization or community need to know are the laws and policies that are in place to protect vulnerable populations and prevent and respond to violence.

Secondly, it is important to know how people disclose their harmful experiences. There are essentially two ways the secret of violence is revealed: purposefully or accidentally. Regardless of how a person tells, disclosures are usually mixed with several strong emotions—relief, guilt, fear and chaos—because now someone knows the secret.



-  Purposeful disclosures are when *an individual decides to tell someone about her/his violent experience either through words, art or drama*. When a person decides to tell, she/he usually wants the situation to change, but is also often afraid of the consequences that the change may bring; this is especially true when it involves children.
-  Accidental disclosures are when *an individual reveals violent experiences through behaviour such as drug use, self destruction, anger, shame, fear, etc.* Behaviours can have many meanings, and are the result of numerous factors. This complicates accidental disclosures as observers try to make sense of what they are seeing, hearing or sensing. Sometimes the behaviours are indicative of violent experiences.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

FOR CHILDREN

When violence is suspected or when violence is disclosed, adults have a responsibility to take ACTION.

Action 1: Acknowledge the child's situation and feelings. Carefully listen to what the child says, but do not interview the child.

Action 2: Comfort the child and ensure that the child is safe.

Action 3: Take notes and document what the child says and/or what you see; take action—report the violence immediately through the appropriate channels.

We are beaten mercilessly in school. As a result we are unable to sit properly.

Child experiencing corporal punishment at school¹¹⁴

REMEMBER ...

You do not have to be 100% certain violence has occurred. If you suspect it, report it. The safety of a child may be at risk. The authorities have the responsibility to determine the facts and evidence, not you.

8

FOR ADULTS

When an adult discloses violence, many of the same steps can be taken as when handling a disclosure from a child: acknowledge her/his situation, ensure she/he is safe through accessing support and help as requested; comfort the person, and

carefully listen to what they say. However, there are also key differences between disclosures from children and adults.

- Protection and criminal laws, where they exist for addressing violence, may be different for adults and children.
- For handling disclosures involving children there may be a duty of care to report regardless of the child’s view; for adults there may not be a duty of care and the adult may have the final choice in what actions are taken.
- While according to international human rights instruments, men and women must have equal rights, in some locations the rights of adults may vary based on gender.

Key questions to consider:

- What are the local laws related to violence against adults, or specific categories of adults, such as women or the elderly?
- What are the formal or informal procedures for reporting violence against adults?
- What are the support systems for adults who have been hurt by violence?
- Does the adult want your help in reporting?

TECHNIQUES FOR RESPONDING: DOs AND DON'Ts

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ DO ask general, open-ended questions: “Do you want to tell me about that?” ✓ DO state observations: “I see you have bruises on your legs.” ✓ DO validate feelings: “I see that you are upset.” ✓ DO express concern: “I need to know that you are safe; let’s try to get some help.” ✓ DO let the person know clearly what decisions and actions need to be taken: “Here are the decisions we need to make and the people we need to talk with.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ DO NOT ask leading questions like, “When, why, where, how did this happen? Who did this to you?” ✗ DO NOT draw conclusions like, “Have you been beaten?” ✗ DO NOT analyze through remarks like, “You must hate your father for doing that!” ✗ DO NOT make promises such as, “Everything will be alright if you report.” ✗ DO NOT become part of the secret, especially if it involves violence against children: “If you tell me, I won’t tell anyone.” |
|--|---|



WHEN DO I NEED TO DO IT?

Concerns of violence against a child or adult should be treated as very serious. It is important to respond as soon as it is safe.

ANONYMOUS ALLEGATIONS

Anonymous allegations are sometimes believed less than reports with people's name attached. No one wants to create rumours circulating within an organization or community, especially when that rumour has the potential to destroy an individual's career or reputation. While it is important to use common sense in responding to the "rumour mill," it is equally important to not neglect potentially serious information. Documenting the allegation is important in order to record and track the alleged happenings.

REPORTING

Everyone in an organization and community should know to whom and how to report concerns about violence.

Different forms of violence can require different responses; abuse, harassment and bullying often have unique legal responses according to local laws. Any of these types of violence may involve criminal acts and therefore must be reported to legal authorities. All violence against children must be reported to child protection or other authorities as appropriate. Harassment is a human rights issue while bullying is a relationship issue—each may constitute criminal behaviour in some circumstances. However, many forms of harassment and bullying can be handled internally within an organization using policies and procedures.

They took us into the bush. One raped me, then beat me with sticks and whips. I was unable to walk afterwards. People came and carried us back to the camp.

Internally displaced woman¹¹⁵

SOME SOURCES OF SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE IMPACTED BY VIOLENCE

Training community members and organizational personnel on safe environments can help them to access:

- Traditional support networks
- Local support networks
- Peer support
- Women's groups
- Counsellors
- Alternative therapies

STEP 9: MEET THE CHALLENGES

If ideas are to take root and spread, they need champions... people who have the skill, motivation, energy, and bullheadedness to do whatever is necessary to move them forward.

Ashoka Foundation¹¹⁶



KEY POINTS

- Creating safe environments can have societal, organizational or individual barriers, and there may be unique barriers for children and women.
- There are concrete steps that organizations and communities can take to overcome barriers.
- Overcoming barriers has many benefits, including that safety is worth it!

STEP 9: MEET THE CHALLENGES

The path to a safe environment is full of challenges. However, a committed organization and community can overcome the following barriers.

BARRIERS: SOCIETAL

- Diverse understanding of protection issues and the meaning of safe environments
- Complex issue—violence can be perpetrated by a variety of people in a variety of situations
- Weak or overburdened protection systems within communities and societies
- Many different legal, social and cultural contexts

So much abuse. We need to own it, work it through so it does not come back to haunt us, terrify us in our dreams.

Elder in an Indigenous community¹¹⁷

BARRIERS: ORGANIZATIONAL/COMMUNITY

- Complex or very grassroots organizational or community systems
- Issue not prioritized
- Fear of the issue and disclosures
- Overburdened staff/volunteers or community members
- Lack of funding; the prevention cost is perceived as too high
- Lack of experience in developing and implementing policies

COMMON TENSIONS IN MEETING ORGANIZATIONAL/COMMUNITY CHALLENGES

Confidentiality	vs.	Accountability
Integration	vs.	Program silos
Vulnerability	vs.	Prioritization
Need	vs.	Capacity
Complex issues	vs.	Simplified solutions
Long-term results	vs.	Pressure for immediate, conclusive results

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BARRIERS: INDIVIDUAL

- Emotional issue
- Lack of awareness/training
- Inevitability myths
- Fear
- Shame
- Unsure what to do, where to start

BARRIERS: CHILDREN AND WOMEN

- Not being asked/no participation
- Not trusting the people in their lives
- Not being heard or believed
- Lacking control over the process
- Highly dependent (economically, socially, etc.)
- Lacking knowledge of resources
- Ineffectual responses by people or systems

Everyone has the right to be safe from violence.

IFRC¹¹⁸

RESPONSES TO THE BARRIERS

1. IT TAKES TIME, BUT IS DOABLE!

Responding to barriers and developing a risk management strategy is a process and it takes time. However, once the *Ten Steps* are implemented, greater safety is provided for everyone in the organization and the risk for liability is reduced.

2. WE HAVE A DUTY OF CARE!

This duty imposes a standard of care upon individuals. Conduct that does not meet this objective standard may constitute negligence, and may result in liability for the individual and the organization.

3. IF WE DON'T, IT'S NEGLIGENCE!

Negligence is ...

- when an adult in a position of responsibility refuses to act when they are aware of violence;
- often influenced by the mistaken belief that violence will “work itself out”;
- passing the buck: “that’s what the police are for”;
- condoning or supporting the behaviour; and/or
- taking no preventative action through risk management practices.

4. IT CAN BE REQUIRED FOR INSURANCE ... AND SAVES MONEY!

Many insurance companies are now requiring that organizations/institutions adopt a comprehensive risk management strategy in order to be eligible for insurance. Implementing risk management strategies saves money and reduces risk of liability.

5. WE HAVE A MORAL AND ETHICAL DUTY!

It is our moral and ethical duty to provide safe environments for all vulnerable people and personnel.

6. SAFETY IS WORTH IT!!!

There are both short- and long-term benefits to ensuring everyone within an organization/community is safe. Safety is a very achievable goal. Each individual, organization and community has an important role to play.

I was abused physically, mentally and sexually all through my life. I was sadly disappointed in our government's system...they did not believe me-telling me that I made it up. The help is too slow for children who are asking for help NOW.

Youth participant of a Red cross violence prevention workshop¹¹⁹

[T]here will be rocks in the road ahead of us. They will be stumbling blocks, or stepping stones: It all depends on how we use them.

Unknown author

STEP 10: MAINTAIN SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

*I object to violence because **when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is permanent.***

Mahatma Gandhi¹²⁰



KEY POINT

- Once systems are developed to create safe environments, it is equally important to maintain them.

STEP 10: MAINTAIN SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

1. REVIEW POLICIES EVERY TWO YEARS

- Keep current; adapt as needed.
- Ensure implementation through training and regular refreshers for all personnel and community members.

2. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT BEST PRACTICES

- Involve personnel, community members and beneficiaries.
- Use the lens of “do no harm” and, if working with children, “best interest of the child.”
- Recognize that insurance does not equal risk management.
- Ensure equal rights for all includes community members, personnel and beneficiaries of all ages and genders.
- Evaluate progress through reviews and benchmarking.
- Address challenges.

3. BE A SAFE ORGANIZATION

- Ensure continuous risk management learning.
- Develop clear messaging.
- Be committed to an ongoing comprehensive risk management strategy.
- Nurture an environment of openness and transparency.
- Make the commitment to safe environments visible through posters, brochures, emails and websites.

This is the time for all those working towards violence prevention to renew their efforts, scale up their work and move forward with even more vigour and determination. Confronting violence is not enough—violence must be put in retreat. This is the moment to tip the scales.

Secretary General, Canadian Red Cross¹²¹



4. MONITOR AND SUPPORT PERSONNEL AND PROGRAMS

- Ensure all personnel and community members understand and acknowledge their responsibilities and roles in creating safe environments.
- Integrate compliance and implementation of safe environments into all organizational personnel performance appraisals.
- Review the commitment to the code of conduct during performance evaluations.
- Hold managers accountable for safe environments.
- Develop and keep current a data base system on personnel.

MODEL SAFE, PROTECTIVE, HEALTHY BEHAVIOURS

- Be mindful of your own attitudes, beliefs and behaviours.
- Choose to use your power in positive ways.
- Think about the impact of your actions on others and yourself.
- When making decisions, consider the principle of “do no harm”.

5. MONITOR RISK

- Monitor risk issues, trends and legislation.
- Review the risk assessment checklist every two years.
- Define gaps and develop a plan with timelines to address the gaps.

6. BUILD INTERNAL CAPACITY

- Develop risk management skills and knowledge.
- Define internal “champions.”
- Develop partnerships within communities.
- Use pilot programs and approaches and grow and evolve as an organization.

I vow, as a young person in this society, to put an end to this violence for the next generation. You can stand by me or you can turn your back.

Youth formerly living on the streets¹²²

7. MAKE “SAFE ENVIRONMENTS” A PRIORITY

- Budget for support for creating and maintaining safe environments into all program and services.
- Demonstrate “buy-in” from governance, management and service delivery partners.
- Include the “safe environments” status in yearly reports.
- Celebrate successes!

VIOLENCE IS PREVENTABLE

Interpersonal violence is preventable, not inevitable. It can often be predicted, and as such, it can be responded to through prevention, mitigation and reduction actions.

Violence is a learned behaviour that can be unlearned or not learned in the first place.

Over the past several generations, there have been dramatic improvements in many areas of human health related to illness and injuries. Interpersonal violence needs to be seen in the same way, and addressed comprehensively so it too can be added to the list.

Many who live with violence day in and day out assume it is an intrinsic part of the human condition. But this is not so. Violence can be prevented. Violent cultures can be turned around.

Nelson Mandela¹²³

REMEMBER:

- Interpersonal violence is a global humanitarian catastrophe with profoundly negative consequences.
- Violence is preventable.
- Organizations and communities have an important responsibility to prevent, reduce, mitigate and respond to violence.
- “Ten Steps” are concrete actions that organizations and communities can take to address violence.

*The world is too small, our wisdom too limited, our time here too short to waste any more of it winning fleeting victories at other people's expense. **We now have to find a way to triumph together.***

Bill Clinton¹²⁴



IFRC AND CANADIAN RED CROSS

The Canadian Red Cross is part of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, and together with 186 National Societies around the world it is focused on one strategic goal: To improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity.

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement operates under seven Fundamental Principles. They are:

Humanity The Red Cross endeavours to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found, protecting life and health and ensuring respect for the human being.

Impartiality The Red Cross is guided solely by the needs of human beings and makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class, or political opinions.

Neutrality In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious, or ideological nature.

Independence The National Societies must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

Voluntary Service It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Unity There can be only one Red Cross or one Red Crescent society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

Universality The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.

Virtually every Canadian is touched by the Red Cross sometime in their life:

www.redcross.ca

RESPECTED: VIOLENCE & ABUSE PREVENTION

The Canadian Red Cross, through its RespectED: Violence & Abuse Prevention program, has worked on preventing violence against children since 1984. RespectED programs have reached millions of people in Canada. RespectED programs are now also being implemented by other Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies in different parts of the world.

RespectED programs address violence against children, relationship violence, bullying and harassment, and help organizations create safe environments for children in their care.

RespectED programs for children, youth and adults are available in multiple languages, a variety of delivery formats (including in person and online) and are adaptable for local circumstances. To learn more, visit: www.redcross.ca/RespectED.

EVIDENCE BASE FOR RESPECTED

- RespectED programs are based on a public health approach with a commitment to ongoing, rigorous monitoring, evaluation and improvement of programs.
- All programs are evaluated through partnerships with independent, external partners.
- Evaluations of all programs have shown significant increases in participants' prevention knowledge, attitudes and skills.
- Evaluations of RespectED programs have been published internationally and in specific countries.

RespectED reduces the toll of intentional injuries on our young people and our communities.

Paul Kells, Founder of Sean Kells Community Safety Award¹²⁷

I will work as hard as possible to promote and prevent child abuse through education and providing alternatives to physical punishment. I will protect children at all costs. Children do not have a voice but I can and must be that voice.

Adult participant in a Red Cross workshop on violence prevention¹²⁵

I would like to thank you because I found out things I never knew—it gave me hope.

Youth participating in a Red Cross workshop on violence prevention¹²⁶

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PREVENTABLE!**

