



SAFE & NURTURING SCHOOLS

SCHOOL AGE & ADOLESCENTS (AGES 11-18)

CREATING SAFE AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS FOR LEARNING

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

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

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

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

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

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

VIOLENCE affects more than ONE BILLION

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

In a recent survey, **7 OUT OF 11**

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

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

Safe and Nurturing Schools

Safe and Nurturing Schools responds to and prevents school-related violence, working to create a positive school environment in which all children are able to fully develop their academic skills as well as increase the emotional confidence they require to thrive within their communities. This evidence-based project model works across all levels of the ecology: with adolescents themselves, the school, the community and the government to ensure schools are safe. The project model has four key components:

- **Girls' and boys' groups** that meet regularly to discuss topics central to their changing identities, building life skills and understanding of gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health.
- **Teacher training and support** on gender-sensitive, inclusive teaching practices and positive discipline methods.
- **School policy development** for codes of conduct for appropriate teacher and student behaviour, developing response and referral mechanisms in the school, and improving the school environment.
- **Community engagement and social accountability**, working with community groups and local government to improve the learning environment and influence policy, including changing social norms around violence against children through school action plans. World Vision also works with local and national faith leaders and groups to identify and encourage positive approaches to developing safe and nurturing schools.

**EDUCATING
CHILDREN *for life***

World Vision 

For more information, please visit wvi.org/education

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

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

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

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

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

⁶ USAID (2015). Fact Sheet: What is the Cost of School-Related Gender-Based Violence?  http://www.prb.org/pdf16/GWG_10.19.16_USAID_Factsheet_Cost-Associated-with-School-Violence.pdf