The National Academies of MEDICINE

# FORUM ON GLOBAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION

**Activities and Future Directions** 

#### A LETTER FROM THE FORUM

## Violence is a Major Global Public Health Problem

Violence is a major global public health problem, with not only victims impacted, but also families, communities, and societies. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), violence accounts for 1.4 million deaths each year—of these, 56% are suicides, 33% are homicides and 11% are the direct result of war or other collective violence. Globally, an estimated 30% of ever-partnered women have experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner, and 22.6% of adults worldwide suffered physical abuse as a child. In addition, 6% of older adults globally reported significant abuse in the past month.

The exact costs of violence, which include adverse health outcomes; lost productivity and economic opportunity; community deterioration; and transgenerational effects, are difficult to determine; however, there is little doubt that the direct and indirect costs are substantial. We also know that the pain and suffering of violence can affect human and social development and increase the risk of chronic outcomes later in life.

#### Violence Can be Prevented

Defining the problem, identifying both risk factors and protective factors, testing prevention strategies based on these factors and implementing programs based on evidence has been shown to decrease violence. The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's Forum on Global Violence Prevention works to reduce violence worldwide by promoting the conversation on protective factors and risk factors, and encouraging evidence-based prevention efforts. Violence is not inevitable, and prevention is possible through collaboration among researchers, practitioners, and policy makers.

#### Aims and Goal of the Violence Prevention Forum

The Forum has aimed to facilitate dialogue and exchange by bringing together experts from diverse areas of violence prevention, including: behavioral scientists, policy makers, criminal justice professionals, social service providers, economists, legal experts, journalists, philanthropists, faith-based organizations, and corporate social responsibility officers. In keeping with the overall goal of the Forum to reduce the burden of violence and promote the healthy development of individuals and communities, the Forum has been able to open up the potential for prevention in all parts of the world. Since 2010, the Forum has held 14 workshops on topics ranging from elder abuse, to mental health and violence, to the neurocognitive impacts of violence. All of these workshops brought diverse experts together to advance the discussion on best violence prevention methods - moving the discussion out of silos and into a collaborative field.

#### Vision for the Future

As we learn more about the causes of violence and effective prevention methods, the Forum is continually evolving to provide an impartial, independent way to share evidence-based science to further the discussion and practice of violence prevention. As we look forward to the Forum's future endeavors, we aspire to create new partnerships and continued collaborations to effectively meet the challenges ahead. We hope that you will join us in creating a healthier and safer world!

#### IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

Below are some of the ways the work of the forum impacts the nation and the world.



#### INFLUENCE

Policies and Programs

Our work can inform policy and legislation; programmatic planning, direction, and budgets; educational initiatives, such as curricula and training programs; and other activities.



#### FOSTER

Relationships and Collaboration

By bringing together a diverse group of participants around a particular topic, our activities foster new professional relationships, facilitate cross-sector collaborations, and enable professional development and networking, including the cultivation of new leaders.



#### INSPIRE

New Ideas and Shape the Field

Our work can advance and shape the field by framing issues and shining a light on important topics, and by generating novel approaches to overcome existing challenges, spurring progress and inspiring action.

## INFLUENCE POLICY AND PROGRAMS

- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Administration on Aging (AoA) reported that the global focus of the Elder Abuse and Its Prevention workshop created interest from the White House for World Elder Abuse Day and the allocation of \$2 million in additional funding to AoA for public health surveillance for elder abuse in the United States and a national reporting center for Adult Protective Services.
- The 2011 GVP Forum workshop on Preventing Violence Against Women and Children included key leaders and
  researchers in trauma-informed care and contributed to increased efforts by groups such as the Substance Abuse
  and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the National Council on Behavioral Health to incorporate these learnings into primary care settings. It also informed a 2013 HHS Research Symposium to identify new
  intimate partner violence (IPV) research priority areas.
- Informed by the National Institutes of Health participation in the forum, a funding opportunity announcement was published in 2013 calling for research on violence with particular focus on firearm violence, with the intent to add to research on important underlying behavioral, neurobiological and genetic mechanisms of violence; its impact on public health, including individual-level and societal costs of violence; mental health and substance-related causes of violence; risk and protective factors at the individual, family and community levels; safe, effective and cost-effective interventions to reduce and/or prevent violence and its triggers; and finally, best strategies to increase adoption and implementation of evidence-based interventions.
- The GVP Forum has framed violence prevention issues in ways that important topics, formerly not considered in Mexican violence prevention initiatives, are now being incorporated in novel programs and renewed efforts for violence prevention in Mexico. For example:
  - The National Injury Prevention Center of the Ministry of Health cited the GVP Forum's influence in creating the National Specific Violence Prevention Program 2007-2014.
  - In November 2013, the Ministry of Health of Mexico cited the work of the GVP Forum in their plans for hosting an international meeting of violence prevention with 700 participants from 43 countries.
  - Citing information discussed at GVP workshops on multisectoral approaches, ecological frameworks and supporting costing and evaluation studies, the Mexico Ministry of Health enacted national policies such as the General Law for Social Prevention of Violence and Delinquency, which was adopted in January 2012.



- Based on experiences with the GVP Forum, in November 2013, the Ministry of Health of Mexico organized and hosted a week long international meeting of violence prevention with 700 participants from 43 countries.
- The use of communications and technology for aiding violence prevention initiatives, such as the development of specific mobile applications for the prevention of violence against women and girls, used theories and methods discussed by the GVP Forum.
- Citing materials from GVP workshops, Mexico enacted national efforts and programs to end violence against children, with the country's incorporation as a "pathfinder" for the Global Campaign to End Violence against Children.

#### FOSTER RELATIONSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

- One of the defining aspects of all of the GVP Forum workshops has been the inclusion of multi-disciplinary experts from health, criminal justice, education, social policy, faith-based organizations, economists, behavioral scientists, policy makers, and philanthropy.
- In November 2013, workshop planning committee co-chair XinQi Dong presented on elder abuse prevention at the WHO Milestones toward Violence Prevention bi-annual meeting in Mexico City, the largest global gathering of violence prevention experts. Dr. Dong was invited in part because of his leadership role in the workshop.
- In May, 2012, Deepali Patel, then Director of the GVP Forum, spoke about the 2011 GVP Forum workshop on Communications and Technology for Violence Prevention at a preconference session for the Society of Prevention Research. The session focused on the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) for prevention science and two workshop speakers also participated. The session's organizer indicated the session was inspired by the GVP Forum workshop and its exploration of integrating seemingly disparate fields.

#### INSPIRE NEW IDEAS AND SHAPE THE FIELD

- In February 2014, workshop planning committee co-chair Jacquelyn Campbell presented key messages from a GVP Forum workshop at the Elder Justice Roadmap meeting in Washington, DC. This presentation was an opportunity to further share insights from the GVP Forum workshop to a group who is carrying forward the elder abuse agenda nationally.
- A link to the May 2012 GVP Forum workshop *The Contagion of Violence* was included in a Slate.com article titled, "Viral Violence: Do violent attacks occur in clusters?" that explored the idea that violence is contagious and can exhibit epidemic-like cycles.
- The 2012 Institute of Medicine Forum Member Spotlight, "Violence Prevention: The Role of Health Care Systems" provided background for Kaiser Permanente Institute for Health Policy articles (2012, 2015) as well as the following publication: Young-Wolff, K., K. Kotz, and B. McCaw 2016. Transforming the health care response to intimate partner violence: Addressing "Wicked Problems." *JAMA*, 315(23): 2517-2518.
- One of the practical impacts of the 2011 GVP Forum workshop on Communications and Technology for Violence Prevention was an easily accessible short video by Kaiser Permanente Thrive and available on YouTube which highlighted key experts, presented the paradigm shift "violence is not inevitable, it is preventable," and provided examples of positive uses of communication technology for violence prevention. This video inspired the inclusion of this topic in a congressional briefing sponsored by the National Collaborative on Violence.

# WORKSHOPS AND RELATED PUBLICATIONS

#### 2017



August: The Neurocognitive and Psychosocial Impacts of Violence

Exposure to violence and trauma impact both neurocognitive and psychosocial outcomes. To illuminate the current state of the science, the forum held a workshop focused on exposures to trauma in childhood and the impacts of such exposures across the life-course, including general health and well-being, mental health, substance abuse, and outcomes related to re-victimization and perpetration.

Download the Proceedings of a Workshop-in Brief at www.nap.edu/25077

#### 2016



December: Effective Public Policy Solutions for Global Violence Prevention

In order to enact effective and impactful policy approaches to violence prevention, practitioners in this area need to share their findings and evidence base with policy makers. This workshop included an exploration of policy makers' goals and needs and the ways in which violence prevention experts can best communicate their findings to policy makers, as well as a look at lessons learned globally in this context.

Download the Proceedings of a Workshop-in Brief at www.nap.edu/25031



October: Exploring the Development of a U.S. Department of Labor Research Strategy in Child Labor and Forced Labor in International Settings

More than 168 million children are affected by child labor worldwide, with a predominance of child labor occurring in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. The International Labor Organization estimated in 2012 that 6 million children and more than 15 million adults were victims of forced labor. While strides have been made in understanding the problems of child labor and forced labor, as well as in approaches to reduce the global burden of both issues, this workshop highlighted the research needs to fill the remaining gaps in knowledge.

Download the Proceedings of a Workshop-in Brief at www.nap.edu/24639



May: Identifying the Role of Violence Prevention in the Post-2015 Global Agenda

Adopted by global leaders in September 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals build upon the success of the eight anti-poverty Millennium Development Goals. Violence features prominently in many of the goals, and this workshop focused on the ways in which violence prevention efforts fit into the global agenda and to begin to identify the ways in which governments, non-profits, multilaterals, non-governmental organizations, and industry leaders can engage in and advance violence prevention as a priority within the post-2015 agenda.

Download the Proceedings of a Workshop-in Brief at www.nap.edu/25076



#### 2015



October: Addressing the Social and Cultural Norms that Underlie the Acceptance of Violence

Social and cultural norms are highly influential over individual behavior in a broad variety of con-texts, including violence and its prevention, as norms can create an environment that foster or mitigate violence and its deleterious effects. This workshop focused on the social and cultural norms that underlie the acceptance of violence, with a particular focus on violence against women and children and youth violence.

Download the Proceedings of a Workshop-in Brief at www.nap.edu/25075

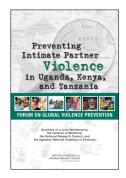
#### 2014



December: Means of Violence

In an average day, there are approximately 4,000 violent deaths across the globe. In 1 week, there are 26,000, and in 1 month, 120,000. These figures are directly influenced by the means and methods selected as tools of violence and their degree of lethality. The more lethal a given mean or method of violence, the more likely that it will cause a higher burden of both self-directed and interpersonal lethal violence. This workshop explored the lethal means and methods of both self-directed and interpersonal violence.

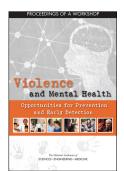
Download the Workshop in Brief at www.nap.edu/21814



August: Preventing Intimate Partner Violence in Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania

The prevalence of intimate partner violence is high in East Africa, with approximately half of all women between the ages of 15-49 in Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania having experienced physical or sexual abuse within a partnership. This workshop focused on informing and creating synergies within a diverse community of researchers, health workers, and decision makers committed to promoting intimate partner violence prevention efforts that are innovative, evidence-based, and crosscutting.

Download the Workshop Summary at www.nap.edu/21756

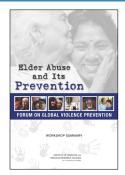


February: Mental Health and Violence: Opportunities for Prevention and Early Intervention

There is a misperception that mental illness plays a greater role in the risk of violence than it does, although under certain circumstances persons with mental illness are at a greater risk of violence to others and, in general, are at greater risk for suicide. In order to explore the relationship between mental health and violence, a workshop was held with the goal of laying the foundation for progress in improving outcomes with respect to mental health and violence embodied in research, policy change, and program development. Approaches to improving both mental health and violence prevention were explored.

Download the Proceedings of a Workshop at www.nap.edu/24916

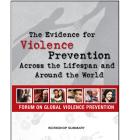
#### 2013



April: Elder Abuse and Its Prevention

Data suggests that 1 in 10 older adults in the United States experience abuse (physical, psychological, and sexual), neglect, or financial exploitation. Elder abuse violates older adults' fundamental rights to be safe and free from violence. With the global population of adults older than 60 expected to double to 1.2 billion by 2025, the number of older adults will exceed the number of children for the first time in history. This workshop discussed this underappreciated public health problem of elder abuse including the prevalence and characteristics of elder abuse around the world, risk factors for abuse, adverse health outcomes, and opportunities for prevention.

Download the Workshop Summary at www.nap.edu/18518



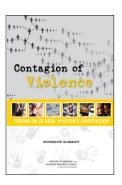
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January: The Evidence for Violence Prevention Across the Lifespan and Around the World

Evidence shows that violence is not inevitable, but rather can be prevented through approaches that have demonstrated measureable effects in the reduction of violence. Successful and promising violence prevention programs exist that target different types of violence, including self-directed, interpersonal, and collective violence; however, the existing evidence base does not necessarily inform practice or policy making. This workshop explored the values and applications of evidence for violence prevention across the lifespan and around the world.

Download the Workshop Summary at www.nap.edu/18399

#### 2012

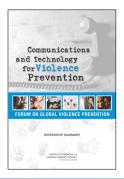


May: Contagion of Violence

In exploring the occurrence of violence, researchers have recognized the tendency for violent acts to cluster, to spread from place to place, and to mutate from one type to another—similar to the infectious disease model, in which an agent or vector initiates a specific biological pathway leading to symptoms of disease and infectivity. This workshop focused on the epidemiology of the contagion, possible processes and mechanisms by which violence is transmitted, how contextual factors mitigate or exacerbate the issue, and ways in which the contagion of violence might be interrupted.

Download the Workshop Summary at www.nap.edu/13489

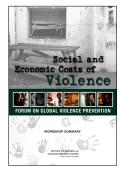
#### 2011



December: Communications and Technology for Violence Prevention

As we learn more about what works to reduce violence, the challenge is how to use all of this new information to rapidly deploy or enhance new programs. At the same time, new communications technologies and distribution channels have altered traditional means of communications, and have made community-based efforts to prevent violence possible by making information readily available. This workshop discussed how these new technologies can be successfully applied to the field of violence prevention.

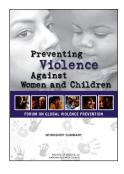
Download the Workshop Summary at www.nap.edu/13352



April: Social and Economic Costs of Violence

Costs of violence extend beyond immediate victimization, affecting families, communities, and societies, and sometimes resulting in consequences along the lifespan. This workshop presented an ecological life-course framework for the impact of violence, exploring how costs can be greater than typically perceived. Speakers explored the economic and social value of prevention as well as the social and economic costs of violence at four levels: individual, family, community, and societal.

Download the Workshop Summary at www.nap.edu/13254



January: Preventing Violence Against Women and Children

Women and children are particularly susceptible to violence because they often have fewer rights or lack legal protection. Many victims know their perpetrators, and are sometimes hesitant to report the crimes. This workshop assessed violence along the lifespan of women and children including intergenerational transmission of violence, the need to address gender norms and roles of men and boys as part of the solution, research gaps in low- and middle-income countries, and the need for multisectoral violence prevention responses.

Download the Workshop Summary at www.nap.edu/13139

#### FUTURE DIRECTIONS

We have learned a great deal about how to prevent violence over the past several decades, but there is much more we need to learn, especially in the global context. Despite the increasing knowledge of the impact of violence in its many forms—including child maltreatment, IPV, youth violence, armed violence, sexual violence, and elder abuse—there is still much to learn about effective prevention methods. What are the appropriate scope, format, audience, setting, and mechanics of violence prevention? Many prevention programs focus on victims who can benefit from risk reduction programs, but prevention must focus on potential perpetrators.

The GVP Forum has brought many of the unanswered questions of prevention to the front of the scientific and concerned communities' awareness. However, as we see daily in the news, this work is far from complete. The forum plans to continue searching for answers on the best prevention measures at the individual, community, society, and global level for policy makers, and high-priority needs for researchers. Some prevention methods that continue to need evaluation are on the effectiveness of:

- Communication campaigns (including mass media and social media)
  - Decreasing exposure to media violence
  - Mass media campaigns on violence prevention and community strengths
- Criminal justice systems (juvenile and adult) and law enforcement
  - Specialized gang violence prevention programs
  - Optimal balance between criminal justice and law enforcement when dealing with violent perpetrators
- Firearms
  - Regulations that restrict access to firearms
- Health professionals
  - Education for health, behavioral health, and social services workforce on trauma and abuse
  - Mandatory reporting of suspected abusers and protective orders against abusers
  - Promoting well-being and treatment of mental health illnesses as violence prevention
- Implementation science
  - How can we best implement the evidence base with fidelity (ensuring cultural competence) and scale it up?



- Parenting programs
  - Parenting classes, child social development and support, and home visits
- Policy research
  - Impact of economic, firearm, and organizational policies on violence, including how businesses address violence (e.g., sexual harassment)
- School-based programs
  - School programs that address societal norms and attitudes regarding violence
  - Anti-bullying programs and education to recognize abusive situations
- Partnerships
  - Best methods to partner between government, philanthropic, faith-based, and community organizations

#### FORUM PARTICIPANTS

Since its founding in 2010, more than 1,400 individuals from 37 countries have contributed to the forum's activities as members, planning committee members, presenters, reviewers, workshop attendees, or webcast participants. This collective participation has had far reaching impacts in the area of global violence prevention. Our reports have achieved a broad international reach to hundreds of countries with a wide dissemination and thousands of full text downloads, with six of the reports in the top 15% of all downloads for the National Academies Press. Local, state, federal, and military agencies in the United States, such as the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Government Accounting Office (GAO), HHS, Indian Health Service (IHS), Department of State, Agency for International Development (USAID), Department of Justice (USDOJ), and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) have downloaded our proceedings.

Our proceedings have been cited in numerous journals and reports, including:

- Aggression and Violent Behavior
- Aggressive Behavior
- American Journal of Orthopsychiatry
- Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics
- Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine
- Austrian Health Review
- Behavioral Sciences and the Law
- BMC Public Health
- Computers in Human Behavior
- Criminology and Public Policy
- Critical Care Nursing Quarterly
- Elder Abuse: Research, Practice and Policy
- Elder Abuse and Neglect: Annotated Bibliographies
- Elder Justice: A Roadmap for Preventing and Combating Elder Abuse
- Families Caring for an Aging America
- Frontiers in Public Health
- Handbook of Aging and the Social Sciences; Eighth Edition
- International Journal of High Risk Behaviors and Addiction
- Journal of Adult Protection
- Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology

- Journal of Elder Abuse and Neglect
- Journal of Forensic Nursing
- Journal of Women's Health
- Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
- Journal of the American Geriatrics Society
- Justice Quarterly
- Overcoming Domestic Violence: Creating a Dialogue Around Vulnerable Populations
- Peace and Conflict
- Perspectives on Global Development and Technology
- PLoS ONE
- Preventing Bullying Through Science, Policy, and Practice
- Priorities for Research to Reduce the Threat of Firearm-Related Violence
- Proceedings of the World Congress on Intelligent Control and Automation
- The Palgrave International Handbook of Healthcare Policy and Governance
- Violence Against Women
- Women's Health Issues

Online, our reports have been mentioned in news outlets, blogs, tweets, Facebook posts, Google+ users, and policy statements. Newspaper outlets that have cited our workshop reports include the Baltimore Sun, Chicago Tribune, Huffington Post, and the Washington Post.



## FORUM SPONSORS

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- Administration on Children, Youth and Families
- Office of Women's Health
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

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