

Prevalence and risk factors of violence among elementary school children

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public health

By

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List of abbreviation

- ADHD:** Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
CBCL :child behavior check listing
IQ: intelligence quotient
ODD : Oppositional Defiant Disorder
PATHS :Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies
AAP: American Academy of Pediatrics
EMRO: Eastern Mediterranean Region Office
PTSD : post traumatic stress disorder
USA :United States of America
WHO: world health organization

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Introduction

Violence among young people in society is increasing dramatically. Perhaps what is most alarming is that these violent acts are not only occurring on the streets, but in the school systems as well. School violence is defined as any physical or verbal attack on a person while on school. School Violence is an issue that has received widespread attention, but no real solutions have been found to combat the problem. The growing problem of violence in schools has become a cause for concern in the twenty-first century. Part of the reason, some believe, is that schools do not pay much attention to those students that seem to have a problem (**WHO 2002**).

Young children face a vast and increasing array of challenges as they attempt to develop prosocial competencies and a conciliatory, nonviolent approach to life. They suffer from a lack of closeness with adults, but also from an overabundance of exposure to graphic violence in the news and entertainment media and, increasingly, in their homes and communities. All these forces affect the temperament of children, and each child expresses a unique set of responses to potentially inflammatory situations (***Rifken & Anthony, 1995***).

Mental health and education professionals generally agree that it is essential to begin developing prosocial attitudes and behaviors in children at a very young age because

aggression that is not remedied nearly always leads to later acts of delinquency (*Slaby et al., 1995*).

Violent behavior for young elementary school children primarily consists of aggressive behaviors such as kicking, hitting, spitting, or name-calling. As children grow older, behavior becomes more serious, characterized by bullying, extortion and physical fighting. The term school crime has been used to define different types of criminal behaviors at school including theft, property offenses and vandalism (*Goldstein et al., 1984*).

Violence has been increasingly recognized as a public health problem, and epidemiological techniques are being used in the development and implementation of preventive strategies (*Rifken & Anthony, 1995*).

The problem of violence has been dominated in the public mind for the past few years. In part this is because of the steady increase in criminal offending in general, but also because there is evidence that the seriousness of aggression and antisocial behavior among adolescents has increased (*Coie, 1996*).

Traditionally, violence has been viewed as a social problem confined to certain populations. Nowadays violence has been recognized as a major health problem in all over the world, requiring the efforts of health care professionals (*Mohamad 2003*).

Aim of work

- 1-To measure the prevalence of violence in a sample of schools in North Cairo educational Zone
- 2- To identify different forms of school violence and relate them to age, sex and socioeconomic status.
- 3- To determine risk factors inside and outside schools which influence number of violent acts committed by school children.
- 4- To identify some odd behaviors in elementary school children.