



School-based approaches to tackling violence

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Query: What are some successful programmes which have been employed in schools at the primary and secondary level and have proven to be successful in tackling school-based violence and changing attitudes and norms towards violence. Please include a focus on male-on-male violence as well as violence against girls (VAG)

1. Overview

Schools provide an important entry point for preventing violence not only in schools, but also in the wider communities they serve. School-based interventions provide an important opportunity to prevent violence at scale, given their potential to reach many students, teachers and parents. Schools have considerable influence on children's learning about respectful relationships with their peers, potential partners and in the wider community. With carefully designed and implemented interventions, schools can transform harmful attitudes and norms towards violence.

This query is based on a mapping of successful programmes which have been employed in primary and secondary schools and have proven to be successful in tackling school-based violence and changing attitudes and norms towards violence (see Annex 1 for methodology). It includes a focus on male-on-male violence as well as violence against girls (VAG). It is based on rapid evidence review (up to six days) and therefore draws upon systematic reviews and other evidence reviews to identify the most successful programmes, which have been rigorously evaluated to demonstrate evidence of success.

In total, 36 school interventions were identified. These were allocated to a category based on their primary focus on preventing violence. Most interventions focus on specific types of violence or measure only one type of violence outcome (e.g. dating violence), which (as noted in the section on 'gaps' below) has created a 'siloed effect' and risks creating missed opportunities to work in synergistic ways to prevent violence (Fleming et al., 2015). To note, where interventions could fit in more than one category, it has been allocated to the category with the primary focus.

A summary of the mapping is provided in the table below. Most interventions tackle primary prevention to change attitudes and stop violence before it begins, although a few also focus on at-risk groups of students with more targeted prevention approaches.

	Examples of successful interventions	Case studies
Interventions to prevent child sexual abuse	Hands Off Our Children (South Africa) Story books (Turkey) Knowledge Increasing Program (Indonesia) Body Safe Training program (China) Peer education (Indonesia)	Knowledge Increasing Program (Indonesia)
Interventions to prevent peer violence with a gender component	Good Schools Toolkit (Uganda) Positive Child and Youth Development (Pakistan) GEMS (India, Bangladesh, Vietnam) Help the Afghan Children (Afghanistan) Taaron di koli (India)	Positive Child and Youth Development (Pakistan) Good Schools Toolkit (Uganda)
Interventions to prevent male-on-male violence (typically framed as 'youth', 'gang' or 'peer' violence)	G.R.E.A.T. (US and Central America) Cure Violence (US) PATHS (US, but adapted elsewhere) Olweus Bully Prevention Program (Norway, US) LST Life Skills Training (US, but adapted elsewhere) Good Behaviour Game (US, Holland, Belgium) Incredible Years (US, but adapted elsewhere)	G.R.E.A.T. (US and Central America) Olweus Bully Prevention Program (Norway, US)

	Violência Nota Zero (Brazil) Miles de Manos (Thousands of Hands) (Honduras (and extended to El Salvador and Guatemala) Programa Nacional de Convivencia Escolar (National Program of School Coexistence – ProNaCE (Mexico) School Wide Positive Behaviour Intervention and Support System (SWPBIS) (US, but been adapted to Jamaica) Emotional Intelligence model (Spain) Positive Action (US) SANKOFA Youth Violence Prevention (US)	
Interventions to prevent dating/sexual violence	Stepping Stones (South Africa) Fourth R (Canada) PREPARE (South Africa) Safe Dates (US) It's Your Game ... Keep it Real (US) Green Dot (US)	Stepping Stones (South Africa) PREPARE (South Africa)
Interventions that work with boys to prevent violence against girls	Your Moment of Truth (Kenya) Young Men Initiative (Balkans) Coaching Boys into Men (US) Parivartan (India)	Young Men Initiative (Balkans)
School-based self-defence training	IMPower (Malawi and Kenya) Women's Self Defence Network - Wāhine Toa (New Zealand)	IMPower (Malawi)

In the case studies, any examples of promising practice of working with national or local governments, or how these interventions have been integrated into government systems is discussed. For example, the UK-funded play-based curriculum 'Positive Child and Youth Development' worked closely with the Government of Sindh's School Education and Literacy Department, who have been convinced by the positive impact on changed attitudes and reduced violence to integrate the approach into the Physical Education curriculum throughout government schools. However, it should be noted that discussions of working with or integrating interventions into government systems is rarely or only briefly discussed in most evaluations, making it difficult to draw out lessons for future programming.

Key gaps in the evidence on successful programming includes:

- **Geographic gaps:** Despite the high rates of violence for children and young people, most school-based programmes are implemented and evaluated in North America, particularly the US. These interventions have been more rigorously evaluated to date, although over the last decade there has been a growing evidence base in Africa and South Asia. Despite this, changes in violent behaviour are rarely assessed as an outcome (Kovalenko et al., 2020).
- **Lack of evidence from humanitarian contexts:** The report did not identify any successful, rigorously evaluated school interventions in humanitarian contexts, although it is worth noting that there are several examples of more holistic approaches which offer useful lessons of how

to work with school-aged children on violence prevention at multiple levels with multiple stakeholders, such as COMPASS (DRC, Pakistan, Sudan/Ethiopia border) which includes adolescent girls' life skills sessions, parent/caregiver discussion groups and service provider support (Tanner and O'Connor, 2017).

- **Few rigorously evaluated interventions to prevent male-on-male violence**, although important lessons can be found from school interventions engaging boys in gender-transformative ways to change attitudes around harmful masculinities and prevent violence against girls. There are also successful interventions which have reduced youth violence or gang violence, although these tend to be less (explicitly) targeted at gendered and/or male-on-male violence. It should be noted, however, that most victims and perpetrators of youth violence are male, although this is rarely explicitly acknowledged or addressed by interventions. 'Youth violence' interventions typically focus on parent-child programmes or social development programmes, whereas interventions used to prevent dating and sexual violence are more likely to address gender norms, including in schools (Fleming et al., 2015).
- **'Siloed' interventions which tend to focus on and/or measure only one outcome**, for example adolescent dating violence or peer bullying, rather than the multiple forms of violence that exist in the school ecosystem (Devries et al., 2021). It is possible that some successful school interventions which have improved gender attitudes and reduced other forms of violence (e.g. sexual violence) may also have had an impact on male-to-male peer violence or other types of violence occurring in the study population, but these have typically not been measured (Fleming et al., 2015).
- **Few studies have explored the impact of interventions on different forms of violence in different places – at school, at home, online, and in the wider community.** Two successful school interventions funded by the UK's What Works programme in Pakistan and Afghanistan not only reduced peer violence, but also had significant reductions on physical punishment at home and students' witnessing mother's abuse (Karmaliani et al., 2020; Corboz et al., 2019). Another interesting example is an evaluation of the Olweus Bully Prevention Programme in the US, which found that a reduction in youth violence in city blocks within the attendance zones of intervention schools (Masho et al., 2019).
- **Lack of evidence on tackling school-based violence against children and young people most at risk of violence.** For example, few interventions measured changes in attitudes and violence for students with disabilities who are known to have a higher risk of violence, with the exception of the Good School Toolkit in Uganda (see case study in Section 2.2). There were no evaluations of interventions addressing violence against LGBTQI+ youth, migrant or refugee youth, in conflict settings, or other groups of students known to be at higher risk of violence in schools.

A summary of the main intervention approaches and their evidence, approach and impact is provided in the following section, with a table mapping successful interventions and a case study.

A box of recommended guidance on how to prevent violence through school-based interventions is also provided at the end of this section. In summary, it appears there are some key features that all successful programmes have in common:

- **Multi-component interventions which engage with the wide range of factors that drive violence in the wider school and community:** The most successful programmes include a whole-of-school or whole-of community approach, which activities that engage students through curriculum approaches, address institutional policies and school management mechanisms, integrated referral for any students who require support, and the wider environment including parents' support to reinforce the activities.
- **Sufficient intensity** to start changing attitudes and norms around violence requires delivery over several sessions, with the most effective programmes of life and social skills training being delivered over several years with 20-150 sessions. Due to the age range and subject material, sessions are often relatively short (sometimes only 15-25 minutes) but occur frequently (at least weekly) to reinforce knowledge and behaviour change.
- **Carefully selected, trained and supported staff** who can deliver the programme. Some programmes are delivered by teachers, others by mentors, sports coaches, or by external staff such as social workers, nurses or even police officers. The key to the effectiveness appears to be sufficient time for selecting and training personnel and providing an accompanying manual to help them.
- **Participatory, group-based pedagogy which allows for critical reflection and building life skills** for example communication skills, empathy, coping with stress and conflict resolution. Most successful interventions were age-appropriate with fun ways of engaging through sports and play.

Guidance on school-based interventions

World Health Organisation [School-based Violence Prevention: A Practical Handbook](#)

World Health Organisation [Preventing Youth Violence: An Overview of the Evidence](#)

World Health Organisation [INSPIRE Handbook](#)

UNESCO and UN Women [Global Guidance on Addressing School-related GBV](#)

Council of Europe [Violence Reduction in Schools: How to Make a Difference. A Handbook](#)

2. School-based interventions

2.1 Interventions to prevent child sexual abuse

Schools provide an opportunity to increase knowledge, attitudes and skills around child sexual abuse, and several interventions have been developed, mostly among preschool and primary school-aged children.

Evidence: 8 interventions were identified, based on two systematic reviews (Russell et al., 2020; Walsh et al., 2018) and one evidence review (Gonzalez et al., 2022). These were in South Africa (x2), Turkey (x2), Indonesia (x2), United States and China.

Approach: These interventions are typically delivered in classes by teachers, although some have also been delivered by nurses (Neherta et al., 2017) or peers (Fitriana et al, 2018). Sessions were typically quite short (often only 25 minutes) perhaps reflecting children’s attention span at that age but were almost always delivered over several sessions to consolidate knowledge and skills. Two interventions were very short – with only one session. Most focus on increasing children’s knowledge about their bodies, their rights and skills to seek help, often using interactive materials such as board games, comics, stories and group discussions. One study focused on preventing child sexual abuse among children with mild intellectual disabilities through increasing their awareness of sexual abuse (Kucuck et al., 2017). Interestingly, none of the studies involved activities outside of classroom settings – with the wider school environment, with parents and the wider community, suggesting a gap in our knowledge of how to prevent child sexual abuse through whole-of-community prevention.

Impact: Evaluated interventions show increased knowledge and/or skills in help-seeking. However, few researchers have used outcomes which measure deployment of these skills or changes in prevalence of child sexual abuse (Russell et al., 2020).

Examples of successful school-based interventions to prevent child sexual abuse							
Name	Country	Grades / Age	Length	Location	Approach	Findings	Reference
Hands Off Our Children	South Africa	4 (age 9-12)	1 session	In class	Board game	Significantly improved knowledge regarding appropriate and inappropriate touch	Dunn, 2011
Story books	Turkey	(age 10-14)	-	In special educational settings	Story books in class and with homework	Increased knowledge – especially for target group (young people with mild intellectual disabilities)	Kucuck et al., 2017
'Knowledge increasing program'	Indonesia	1-6 (age 6-12)	4 sessions over 7 weeks	In school	Movies, role plays, discussions, local songs, leaflets	Improved knowledge and assertiveness, although the group led by nurses more effective than by teachers (see case study below for explanation)	Neherta et al., 2017

Body Safe Training program	China	Pre-school (age 3-5)	5 sessions (each 15-25min) over 5 days	In preschool	Teaching personal safety skills using stories of children in unsafe situations	Significantly higher levels of knowledge about sexual abuse and scores on their skills for avoiding abuse	Zhang et al., 2014
Peer education	Indonesia	4-5 (age 9-11)	over 2 weeks, sessions lasting 25min	In class	Education by peers using games, flipcharts, videos	Improved knowledge and self-efficacy on sexual abuse prevention	Fitriana et al., 2018
Body Safe Training	Turkey	Pre-school age	7 sessions, 2.5 hours	In preschool	Teaching personal safety using stories	Increased recognition of appropriate and inappropriate touch and skills to ask for help and report it	Citak Tunc et al., 2018
Enough! Preventing CSA in My School	US	K-12	1hr	Online	Online training course for teachers and school staff	Increased teachers' knowledge, awareness and willingness to take action	Gushwa et al., 2018
Let Us Protect Our Future	South Africa	6	6 sessions, 12 hours	In class	Games, comics, brainstorming, role-playing, group discussions	Reduced self-reported rape perpetration up to 54 months after.	Jemmott et al., 2021

Case study in prevention of child sexual abuse in schools in Indonesia

This intervention was delivered to primary school children in the city of Padang, Indonesia. It aimed to prevent child sexual abuse through a Visual Auditory Kinesthetic (VAK) learning model with movies, songs, role plays, stories and group discussions. A study explored the impact of delivery by two different professions – community nurses and teachers. Children's knowledge and assertiveness to say 'no' or ask for help from a trusted adult increased in both groups. However, the community nurses had greater impact than the teachers. The researchers concluded that community nurses were more effective due to their greater experience in delivering health education and more intensive training. However, it was possible for the model to be delivered by other professions such as teachers with more training (Neherta et al., 2017).

2.2 Interventions to prevent peer violence with a gender component

Many interventions have been developed to prevent bullying and peer violence in schools – not all of them with a gender component. This rapid mapping focuses on peer violence interventions that have attempted to change attitudes and norms around gender inequality and violence.

Evidence: 5 rigorously-evaluated school-based interventions were identified that aimed to prevent peer violence with a gender component, plus one intervention that aimed to improve gender attitudes and create safe spaces in schools (Breakthrough's Taaron di Kala).¹ These were identified using the systematic review of reviews (Lester et al., 2017), systematic review (Gavine et al., 2016) and the What Works evidence review (Kerr-Wilson et al., 2020). These were mostly from South Asia (Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Vietnam), with one from Uganda.

Approach: Peer violence prevention interventions have been implemented at different levels of the school system, but most typically focus on early adolescence (age 11-15). The most effective interventions are holistic, involving activities in class, in the wider school environment, and with parents and the community. Most interventions also involve facilitated sessions of mixed or single-sex peer groups, which involve critical reflection on gender roles, attitudes and behaviours. Games and play-based learning are also used, most notably in the intervention in Pakistan.

Impact: Analysis of the findings shows that peer violence can be prevented using school-based interventions of sufficient intensity and duration – with the Good School Toolkit being delivered over 18 months and the two What Works interventions in Pakistan and Afghanistan having a two-year implementation period. These studies found significant reductions in peer violence (both emotional and physical), as well as corporal punishment by teachers.

These types of interventions are most likely to have been integrated into government systems or done in close partnership with governments, partly because they involve curriculum type approaches, as seen in the two case studies below of Good School Toolkit (Uganda) and Positive Child and Youth Development (Pakistan). Another example is *Taaron ki toli* (India), which started with a tri-party agreement between Breakthrough (implementation partner), J-PAL South Asia (research partner) and the Government of Haryana's Department of Education. Partnering with the government education department helped ensure consistency of programme implementation across 150 schools, including through training of education officials, school principals and teachers. The pilot was rigorously evaluated with the intention of learning what works and help inform the scale up the programme across the state. The success of the intervention has enabled Breakthrough to reach over 600,000 adolescent girls and boys in five Indian states of Jharkland, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi, as well as Haryana (Menon, 2018).

¹ Note: This intervention does not neatly sit in any category and so has been placed here.

Examples of successful school-based interventions to prevent peer violence with a gender component (not focused on male-on-male violence)							
Name	Country	Grades / Age	Length	Location	Approach	Findings	Reference
Good School Toolkit	Uganda	5-7 (age 11-14)	18 months	In school	School-wide intervention with teachers, students, parents and school staff	Reduction in peer violence, and corporal punishment	Devries et al., 2015
Positive Child and Youth Development	Pakistan	5-6 (age 11-12)	120 sessions, 80 hours	In school (play activities)	Play-based learning and skills building, with community-based play days and camps	Significant reductions in perpetration and experience of peer violence, and corporal punishment at school	Karmaliani et al., 2020
GEMS	India, Bangladesh, Vietnam	6-8 (age 12-14)	22 sessions, 16 hours	In school	Classroom group activities, school awareness, parent and community outreach	No reduction in peer violence	Achyut et al., 2017
Help the Afghan Children	Afghanistan	7-9 (age 13-15)	99 sessions, 50 hours	In school	Peace education	Significant declines in peer violence perpetration and victimisations, and corporal punishment	Corboz et al., 2019
Taaron ki toli	India	Age 11-14	Over 2.5 school years	In class	Gender equality curriculum	Improved gender attitudes and self-reported behaviour which were sustained at 2-year follow up	Dhar et al., 2018

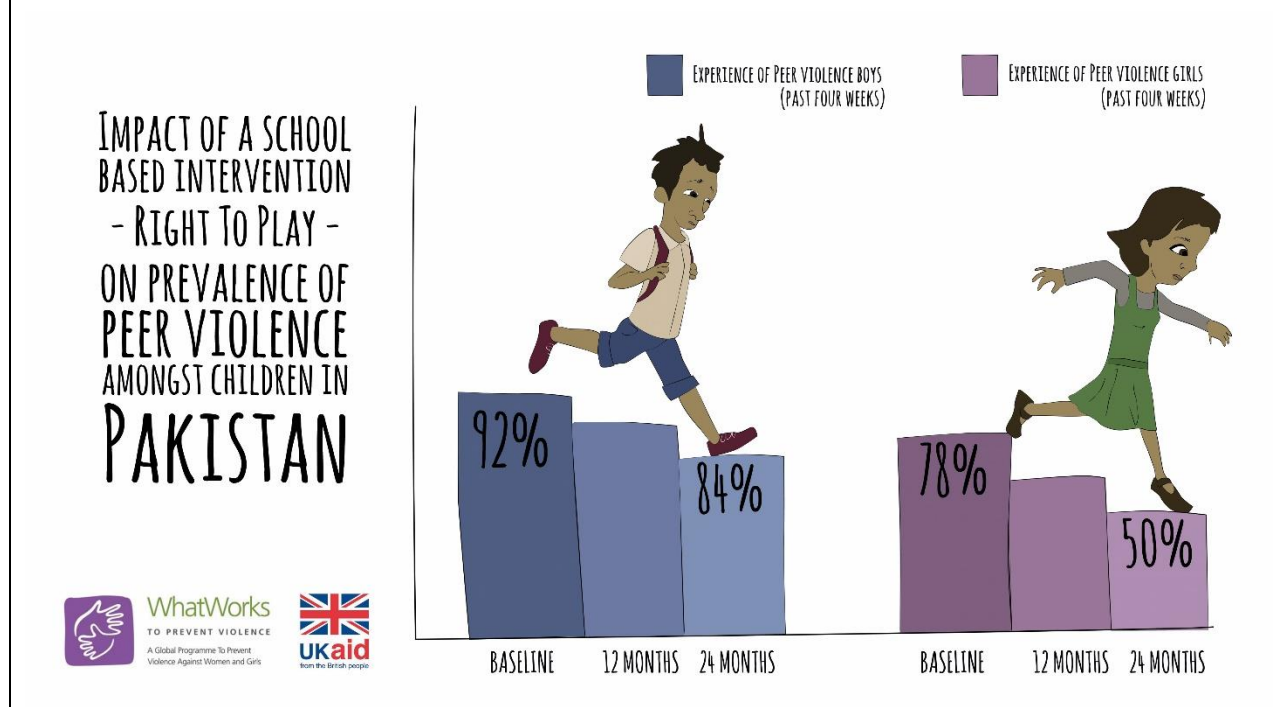
Case study: Positive Child and Youth Development Programme, Pakistan

This play-based intervention aimed to use the transformative power of play and sports to change gender attitudes and reduce violence, and was delivered by Right to Play, an NGO in Pakistan. Over two years, it built social and emotional skills through a weekly curriculum for children in Grades 6-8, aged around 12-14 years. In total, there were around 80 hours of structured play sessions, where students learned communication skills, gender equity, confidence-building, non-violence and leadership. There were also community-based play days, tournaments and summer camps.

As part of the programme, it provided capacity-building for local and national authorities and government, and CSOs, on how to address violence in the education system. Teachers in government schools received training in positive child and youth development, positive

disciplining, and gender and child protection, to create a safer school environment. The programme was done in partnership with the School Education and Literacy Department (Government of Sindh), who were convinced by the results to scale the intervention to all schools in the province through integrating the play-based approach in the Physical Education curriculum.²

An RCT found that the intervention significantly reduced girls' and boys' experience and perpetration of peer violence, as shown in the diagram below. There were also significant reductions in corporal punishment at both home and school, as well as significantly less patriarchal attitudes (Karmaliani et al., 2020).



Case study: Good School Toolkit, Uganda

The Good School Toolkit aims to change attitudes and behaviours across the school setting – with staff, students and parents. Developed by the Ugandan NGO, Raising Voices, it uses a six-step process with over 60 activities to set school-wide goals and action plans, improve teaching, reflect on violence, respect and power relationships.

An evaluation found significantly less physical and emotional peer violence, as well as reduced corporal punishment. Interestingly, the evaluation found a greater impact in boys than girls, which the researchers suggest could be due to girls' exposure to multiple forms of violence outside the school environment. Analysis of the data found that the Good School Toolkit reduced violence

² UN Transforming Education Summit 2022: [Knowledge Hub Collection of Best Practices](#).

against children with disabilities, although there was no analysis of whether it was equally effective for children with and without disabilities.

Raising Voices works in partnership with district, local and national government to ensure the success and scaling of the Good School Toolkit. At the district and local government level, this involves establishing safeguarding structures to refer any children who have experienced violence. At the national level, the Government of Uganda has distributed Toolkit materials to more than 5,000 schools, while Raising Voices has supported the adaptation and use of the Toolkit (Devries et al., 2014, 2015, 2017 and 2018; UN Women and Social Development Direct, 2020).

2.3 Interventions to prevent male-on-male violence

School interventions also hold potential to address peer violence between male students, both at school and in the wider community, often with a 'youth violence' or 'gang violence' lens.

Evidence: Few studies explicitly target male-on-male violence, but rather wider youth or gang violence although often with an implicit focus on male peer violence. 14 school-based interventions were identified that aimed to prevent youth violence, using a systematic meta-review (Matjasko et al., 2012), a systematic review (Kettrey and Marx, 2019; Gavine et al., 2016) and evidence review (Russell, 2021; O'Connor and Waddell, 2015). Most of the evidence on preventing male-on-male violence comes from the US or Latin America, although some has also been adapted internationally.

Approach: Several intervention approaches have been tried, from more universal primary prevention programmes that aim to start violence before it begins, often at a very early age, such as the Incredible Years programme that was adapted to Jamaica as a teacher training programme in preschools as part of the [Irie Classroom Toolbox](#) (Baker-Henningham and Walker, 2018). There are also programmes aimed at targeting high-risk youth and those involved in crime and violence, but the school usually plays a small part of a wider programme, such as Cure Violence which started in Chicago but has subsequently been adapted elsewhere including in Jamaica and Trinidad. In Jamaica, the Cure Violence model was adapted to be known as 'The Violence Interruption Model'³ and formed part of the Citizen Security and Justice Programme (CSJP) but did not appear to have any activities in schools. Indeed, except for a high school in Chicago, the Cure Violence model does not seem to have been implemented in schools.⁴

Impact: Due to the range of approaches used and purposes, these types of school interventions have a range of impacts. Most typically these interventions have shown lower levels of male aggression, violence, criminal behaviour and delinquency, as well as more positive and pro-social attitudes. While most of the school-based interventions worked primarily with children and young

³ The [Violence Interruption Programme](#) was carried out in Kingston and St Andrew, St Catherine, Clarendon, Hanover, and St James.

⁴ See Cure Violence website: <https://cvg.org/where-we-work/#latinamerica>. The adaptation in Trinidad was called Project REASON (2015-2017) and has an [evaluation report](#) which found a 45% reduction in violent crime, 38% reduction in gun shot wound admissions, and a reduction in calls to police. However, it does not appear to have been implemented in schools.

people, at least half engage with parents and include positive activities to reinforce skills development outside of schools (O'Connor and Waddell, 2015).

Examples of successful school-based interventions to prevent male-on-male or peer violence (without gender element)							
Name	Country	Grades / Age	Length	Location	Approach	Findings	Reference
G.R.E.A.T.	US and Central America	Age 8-13	13 sessions	In class	Classroom curriculum delivered by police officers in primary schools	Decreased risk of gang membership, increased positive and pro-social attitudes	Esbensen et al., 2012
Cure Violence – adapted to high school in Chicago	US	9-10 (age 14-16)	Not known	In class	Classroom curriculum with wider community model that works with high-risk families	Students less likely to fight and participate in conflict, reduced number of community shootings and killings	Ransford et al., 2015
PATHS: Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies	US but adapted elsewhere including Jamaica	Age 3-11	2x 20-230 min lessons every week	In class	Life and social curriculum	PATHS students' outcomes remained stable while the control group had increased aggressive beliefs and strategies	Crean and Johnson, 2013
Olweus Bully Prevention Program	Norway, US and elsewhere	Age 5-18	Varies	In school	Whole school approach involving students, teachers, staff, parents and community	Reduced community-level youth violence	Masho et al., 2019; Sullivan et al., 2020
LST: Life Skills Training	US but adapted elsewhere (e.g. South Africa, Venezuela)	Age 12-14	30 sessions over 3 years	In class	Curriculum that addresses risky behaviour (e.g. violence, drug use, alcohol)	Significant reductions in violence and delinquency for intervention participants relative to controls.	Botvin et al., 2006
Good Behaviour Game	US, Holland and Belgium	1-2 (age 6-8)	Over 2 years (10 mins per game up to 3 x week)	In class	Classroom management strategy	Boys with high levels of aggression had lower rates of violence and criminal behaviour in young adulthood.	Kellam et al., 2008
Incredible years	US but adapted including to Jamaican preschools	Age 3-8	Short sessions (20-30 mins) 2x week	In class	Curriculum and teacher training	Reduced violence against children by teachers, but no difference for class-wide child aggression at post-	Baker-Henningham et al., 2021

						intervention (in Jamaican preschools)	
Violência Nota Zero	Brazil	6-9 (age 10-14)	12 session, 18 hours	In school	Meetings with teachers and school counsellors	Significant reductions in students' self-reported perpetration of violence in intervention schools, compared to control schools.	Stelko-Pereira and de Albuquerque William, 2016
Miles de Manos (Thousands of Hands)	Honduras (and extended to El Salvador and Guatemala)	(age 6-14)	18 months	In school	Targets parents and teachers to make them better role models	Lower display of aggressive and antisocial behaviours among parents who participated. Physical peer violence reduced by 20% over 6 months	GIZ, 2019, USAID, 2017
Programa Nacional de Convivencia Escolar (National Program of School Coexistence – ProNaCE)	Mexico	3	2 years	In school	Skills-building sessions for students, digital learning activities	90% of teachers agreed it improved the school environment and provided tools to resolve conflicts peacefully	Chávez et al., 2021
School Wide Positive Behaviour Intervention and Support System (SWPBIS)	US, but been adapted to Jamaica	1-4	5 years	In school	Improve school-wide systems and procedures to promote positive changes in staff and student behaviours	Lower rates of bullying, as reported by teachers	Waasdorp et al., 2012
Emotional intelligence model	Spain			In school	Social and emotional learning on aggression and empathy with male students	Lower levels of male aggression, anger, hostility, personal distress and improved empathy (compared to control group)	Castillo et al., 2013
Positive Action	US	3-5 (age 9-12)	35hrs	In school	Curriculum aimed to support pro-social behaviour	Fewer violence-related and bullying behaviour in intervention group than control group	Li et al., 2011
SANKOFA Youth Violence	US	Age 13-19	Varies	In school	Adolescent curriculum with	Fewer fighting and bullying behaviour and fewer incidents of victimisation in	Hines et al., 2004

Prevention Programme					optional parent curriculum	intervention group than control group, an	
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Case study: Olweus Bully Prevention Programme in Norway and United States

The Olweus Bully Prevention Programme is designed for students aged 5-18 in primary and secondary schools. It is a multi-level, multi-component intervention which aims to improve peer relations and make schools safer at the level of the individual, classroom, school and wider community. All students participate in most activities, with some more targeted activities for students identified as bullying others or being bullied. It is one of the most well-researched school interventions, with evaluations reporting reductions of 20-80% in bullying, as well as marked reductions in antisocial behaviours (fighting, theft, vandalism) and the classroom social climate (improved social relationships and behaviour) (Hazelden Foundation, 2007). Since 2001, it has been integrated into the Norwegian elementary and lower school system as part of the Government's plans for the prevention of violence among children and young people.

The intervention was recently adapted to schools in areas of high youth violence within the city of Richmond (Virginia, US). A bullying prevention coordinating committee made up of school staff met 6-8 times a year, led staff training, held events for parents and students, and reviewed the behaviour and supervision procedures. Teachers delivered the classroom component of 21-23 weekly sessions. There was also an after-school leadership programme. The intervention was combined with a family intervention, 'Staying Connected to Your Teen'.

An evaluation found positive impacts on community rates of violence for youth aged 10-18. Those 'city blocks' within the attendance zones of schools receiving the intervention had a reduced risk of violent crime incidents compared with the control blocks (with no intervention), suggesting there is a potential community-wide benefit from school-level interventions (Masho et al., 2019).

Case study: Gangs Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) in US and Central America

Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) is a school-based violence prevention program that was developed in the US and has subsequently been adapted to Central American countries such as El Salvador, Belize and Costa Rica. The classroom curriculum aims to prevent violent behaviour and teach 8-13 years olds about community crime and how to avoid gang membership. The 13 lessons aim to build students' social and emotional skills in the years before they are likely to join gangs. The programme is delivered by police officers who receive training in working with schoolchildren. As well as the classroom curriculum, there is also a summer camp and families component.

An evaluation in 7 US cities⁵ found that G.R.E.A.T. decreased the risk of gang membership by 39% compared to young people not involved in the programme (at 1-year follow up), and 24% (at 4-

⁵ Albuquerque, Chicago, a Dallas-Fort Worth area district; Greeley, Nashville, Philadelphia, and Portland

year follow up). Although it did not have significant impacts on rates of violent offending, it increased a range of pro-social attitudes, such as: less anger, less self-centeredness, more resistance to peer pressure, more pro-social peers and pro-social involvement, amongst others. The programme also delivered one of its goals of improving relationships with the police, with students expressing more positive attitudes to police.

Although statistically significant, the researchers acknowledge the effect size is relatively modest and is 'no silver bullet' but suggest that G.R.E.A.T. could be used effectively as a schools-based violence prevention component of a larger community-wide effort to reduce youth violence. However, it is difficult to pull out the impact on male-to-male violence as although the sample was evenly split between male/female students, the results are not disaggregated by gender. (Esbensen et al., 2012).

2.4 Interventions to prevent dating/sexual violence

One of the most common types of school-based intervention aims to tackle harmful attitudes about gender and violence to prevent dating and/or sexual violence by partners and non-partners.

Evidence: This mapping highlights 6 studies of successful interventions, based on a systematic review of reviews (Lester et al., 2017), global systematic reviews (McNaughton et al., 2021; Fellmeth et al., 2013; De La Rue et al., 2014) and three evidence reviews (Kerr-Wilson et al., 2020; Parkes et al., 2015; SVRI, 2016). Most of the evidence is from North America, although there are interventions from South Africa and Mexico.

Approach: This type of intervention is typically delivered through formally taught sessions in high school classes with students aged 14-18. It often aims to improve communication and relationship skills through critical reflection about gender and use of violence. Although most use mixed-sex groups, some of the more effective interventions work in single-sex groups.

Impact: Analysis of the findings shows a wide variation in impact on preventing dating/sexual violence. The most effective interventions tended to be longer in duration and allow time for participatory learning, critical reflection and skills building. For example, Stepping Stones (South Africa) was 50 hours and Fourth R (Canada) was 28 hours. In comparison, some shorter, less-effective interventions such as RISE intervention (Canada) had only two 45-minute sessions and showed no impact on preventing violence (not included here due to lack of evidence of success). A global systematic review of adolescent dating violence prevention programmes highlighted the need for future interventions to target youth at heightened risk, such as sexual minority youth, pregnant or parenting youth, as well as looking at how to engage parents and communities in these types of interventions to deepen impact (McNaughton et al., 2021).

Examples of successful school-based interventions to prevent dating/sexual violence							
Name	Country	Grades	Length	Location	Approach	Findings	Reference
Stepping Stones	South Africa	9-10	50 hours	After school	Gender transformative, communication, critical reflection	Significant reduction in young men's perpetration of physical or sexual IPV, and fewer men reporting raping or attempting rape (although no impact on women's experiences of violence)	Jewkes et al., 2008
Fourth R	Canada	9	21 sessions, 28 hours	In class	Communication skills, role play, problem-solving	Strong reduction in boys' perpetration of physical dating violence	Wolfe et al., 2009
PREPARE	South Africa	8	21 sessions, 11 hours	After school	Gender transformative, communication	Participants in the intervention arm were less likely to report being a victim of intimate partner violence	Matthews et al., 2016
Safe Dates	US	8, 9	10 sessions, 7.5 hours	In class	Interactive sessions gender norms, dating violence, awareness of services	Significant reduction in sexual and physical violence perpetration and sexual violence victimisation, at four-year follow-up.	Foshee et al., 2004
It's Your Game ... Keep it Real	US	7 (age 13)	24 sessions	In class and online	Abstinence+ programme with emphasis on healthy dating	Reduced 3 of 4 dating violence outcomes for ethnic-minority middle school youth	Peskin et al., 2014
Green Dot	US	All	Multi-year	In class	Whole school presentation, 5hr bystander training	Significant reductions in boys' physical and sexual IPV perpetration and in girls' experiences of IPV	Coker et al., 2017

Case study: after-school interventions in South Africa

PREPARE: This multi-component HIV-prevention intervention included education sessions, a school health service and a school sexual violence prevention programme. It involved 21 weekly sessions, which were delivered in the school premises after school ended. A randomised control trial in 42 secondary schools found that participants in the intervention arm were less likely to report being a victim of intimate partner violence. The sessions were voluntary, with attendance rates ranging considerably in the intervention arms. Analysis of the data showed that students who attended more than 10 sessions were most likely to report less IPV victimisation. The intervention worked in close collaboration with local government departments, with the school health service component being delivered in the school premises by nurses from local health clinics, in collaboration with the Western Cape Department of Health, the City of Cape Town Health Department (Mathews et al., 2016).

Stepping Stones: The South African adaptation of Stepping Stones has been used in schools after hours. It was delivered in 2-3hr weekly sessions (of 10-17 sessions) with single-sex groups. The sessions follow a curriculum around topics such as gender relations, violence, STIs and HIV, and communication skills. An RCT conducted in 70 schools showed a significant reduction (33% less) in young men's perpetration of physical or sexual IPV at endline after 24 months, and fewer men reported raping or attempting rape after 12 months (27% less). However, there was no impact on women's risk of experiencing violence (Jewkes et al., 2008).

2.5 School interventions that work with boys to change attitudes, norms and prevent violence against girls

Some school interventions aim to change male students' attitudes about gender roles, masculinity, and use of violence towards girls.

Evidence: This mapping found 4 interventions from Kenya, the Balkans, US and India, and draws on findings from evidence reviews (Ricardo et al., 2012; Jewkes et al., 2015).

Approach: These types of approach typically use group education approaches to promote critical reflection on gender and violence with boys and young men in either class settings or sports teams. They often use mentoring or bystander activities with male students who may not be violent themselves but encourage intervening with other students who are may be violent or sexist.

Impact: Interventions that explicitly attempt to be gender-transformative have had the most success in improving positive attitudes towards girls and young women, as well as promoting positive bystander actions (intervening when witnessing violence) or reducing negative bystander actions (laughing at sexist behaviour). Some interventions have also seen a significant reduction in violence against girls, as well as other forms of violence (CARE, 2020). The most effective interventions have been ones of sufficient intensity and delivered by trained teachers or mentors using participatory methods to enable critical reflection on gender relations and their use of violence. In contrast, short bystander interventions have tended not to be effective, although these are more typically in college or university settings.

Examples of successful school-based interventions that work with boys to prevent violence against girls							
Name	Country	Grades / Age	Length	Location	Approach	Findings	Reference
Your Moment of Truth	Kenya	Age 15-22	6 sessions, 12 hours	In class	Educational curriculum that aims to change boys' attitudes and norms about sexual violence, and safely intervene in incidents	Improved positive attitudes towards women (at 9 months follow-up), higher % of boys who successfully intervened when witnessing violence than control group	Keller et al., 2017

Young Men Initiative	Balkans	Age 13-19	-	In class and retreats	School-based curriculum for boys and young men (adapted from Promundo's Program H)	Significant reduction in physical peer violence, as well as other types of violence	Namy et al., 2015; CARE International, 2020
Coaching Boys into Men	US	9-11 (age 14-17)	1-hr training and 10-15min discussions over 11-weeks	In sports activities / athletics	Coach-delivered dating violence prevention	Reduced perpetration and negative bystander behaviours that condone dating violence among male athletes	Miller et al., 2013
Parivartan	India	Age 10-16	-	In sports activities / athletics	As above (adapted Coaching Boys to Men to cricket teams)	No significant reduction in sexual violence perpetration at 12-month follow-up	Miller et al., 2014

Case study: Young Men's Initiative in Bosnia and Herzegovina

A key part of CARE's gender transformative programme, Young Men's Initiative, is Program Y (Youth) which aims to address gender inequalities, harmful health practices and with young men and young women aged 14-19. It consists of group educational workshops and social norms campaigns in schools and communities. Trained educators conduct Program Y sessions within the regular class timetable, with a focus on four key areas: (1) gender attitudes; (2) violence; (3) sex, health and well-being; and (4) use of alcohol and drugs. An evaluation of the intervention in schools in nine cities found that it reduced physical violence among boys by up to 21% in some communities. It also improved attitudes towards GBV by up to 30%. Interestingly, Program Y not only reduced physical peer violence between young men, but also cyberviolence, sexual harassment, and verbal or physical violence against LGBTQI people (CARE International, 2020).

2.6 Self-defence training delivered in schools

Self-defence interventions aim to empower women and girls by giving them the skills and confidence to improve their safety in dangerous situations.

Evidence: This mapping found only 3 rigorously evaluated studies of self-defence interventions in primary and/or secondary schools. Most self-defence training is delivered in colleges. The two studies are based on the IMPower intervention in Kenya and Malawi, and Wāhine Toa in New Zealand.

Approach: Self-defence interventions involve interactive training to equip school-aged children with the knowledge and skills to assess risk, as well as avoid attack through verbal and physical strategies. The sessions also aim to empower students with the self-confidence to use these skills.

Schools-based interventions tend to be longer than those in college settings, often with several sessions of between 6-12 hours.

Impact: There is conflicting evidence on the effectiveness of self-defence training in schools, largely due to methodological issues (Kerr-Wilson et al., 2020).

Examples of successful school-based self-defence training							
Name	Country	Grades / Age	Length	Location	Approach	Findings	Reference
IMPower	Malawi	(age 14-21)	6 sessions, 12 hours	In school	Self-defence programme, includes practicing self-defence use of voice, faking compliance	Reduced past-year sexual assault, increased self-defence knowledge	Decker et al., 2018
IMPower	Kenya	(age 14-21)	6 sessions, 12 hours	In school	As above	No difference – but methodological issues mean findings should be interpreted with caution (Kerr Wilson et al., 2019)	Baiocchi et al., forthcoming (cited in Kerr Wilson et al., 2020)
Women's Self Defence Network - Wāhine Toa	New Zealand	7-8 (age 11-12)	5-8hrs	Schools	Self-defence focused on Māori girls	Increased recognition of violence, improved self-esteem and skills for keeping safe	Jordan and Mossman, 2017

Case study: IMPower self-defence training, Malawi

The IMPower intervention was delivered to primary and secondary school girls in rural Malawi. Students received weekly, 2-hour sessions for 6 weeks of interactive, empowerment self-defence training. The intervention also built in a Sexual Assault Survivors Anonymous (SASA) support programme to any participants who disclosed sexual violence and needed emotional support. Instructors were carefully selected based on their experience on working with youth and on issues of GBV, as well as their skills for teaching and community organising. They received an intensive (3-week, 126-hour) training, and after certification, had a 6-month period of co-teaching with an experienced instructor before doing any independent teaching. A randomised controlled trial found a significant increase in knowledge and a reduction in sexual violence victimisation in both primary and secondary schools (Decker et al., 2018).

Funded by UNICEF, IMPower also worked closely with Government officials at both community and district levels around referral pathways. During the self-defence training, several students opened up about the sexual violence they had experienced and required potential support and referral to IMPower's government partners, including police (Victim Support Units), social welfare and Child Protection Officers (UNICEF, 2018).

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Annex 1: Methodology

This rapid research query has been conducted as systematically as possible, under tight time constraints.

Step 1: Search – Successful programmes were identified primarily through existing systematic reviews and rigorous evidence reviews. In addition, searches were conducted using Google and relevant electronic databases using key search terms including but not restricted to: school, curriculum, life skills, GBV, violence, gender based violence, male violence, peer violence, gang violence, youth violence, gender AND intervention, program, evaluation.

Step 2: Inclusion - To be eligible for inclusion in this rapid mapping, reports had to fulfil the following criteria:

- **Focus:** Successful programmes which tackle violence in primary and secondary schools and change attitudes and norms towards violence. Includes a focus on male-on-male violence as well as violence against girls (VAG)
- **Time period:** From January 2010 to present.
- **Language:** English.
- **Publication status:** Publicly available – in almost all cases published online
- **Geographic focus:** Global, with a focus on comparable (middle-income) geographies to Jamaica, especially from the Latin America and Caribbean region and/or contexts of areas with high urban poverty, inequality or crime
- **Format:** Research reports, evaluation reports, peer-reviewed journal articles, systematic reviews

In total, 70+ documents have been reviewed for this report.