



# CSPV SCHOOL VIOLENCE FACT SHEET

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## An Integrated Approach to Violence Prevention

- Many social institutions traditionally responsible for youth development are "losing ground." This deterioration is a major cause of the youth violence problem and increasingly puts pressure on schools to compensate for other institutional failures.
- "No school is an island," particularly pertains to the waves of violence that sweep from families and neighborhoods into the schools. Understanding and preventing youth violence, therefore, requires attending to the interconnectedness between families, schools, and their neighborhoods.
- The interconnections between social contexts and their impact on schools also have major implications for prevention efforts. This interrelationship must be taken into account when developing and implementing such efforts. A comprehensive strategy that attends to the multiple social contexts in which youth live and function, including schools, has much greater promise for successfully stopping or reducing youth violence.
- Youth development takes place through a dynamic interaction between children and adolescents and their social environments. For example, youth violence can have major consequences for the general climate of schools.
- Violence may express frustration or hopelessness for some youths who are striving but failing to master the tasks relevant for their developmental stage. Violence may acquire functional value as it becomes a method in and of itself for accomplishing developmental tasks when conventional opportunities are unavailable or unworkable.
- The prevention of violence involves building relationships among representatives of all public and private sectors that touch the lives of youth. Comprehensive prevention strategies are needed that address multiple risk and protective factors in the different but overlapping social contexts relevant to the developmental stages of youth.
- The public health violence prevention strategy should be used to assess the nature and extent of the youth violence problem and to plan and carry out violence prevention programming.
- There are three primary intervention strategies for preventing violence in schools: systematic changes for schools, programs for individual youths, and public policy positions.

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The information for this fact sheet was excerpted from the following book chapter. *Violence in American Schools* was developed by CSPV through a grant from the W.T. Grant Foundation:

Elliott, D.S., Hamburg, B.A., & Williams, K.R. (1998). An Integrated Approach to Violence Prevention. In D.S. Elliott, B.A. Hamburg, & K.R. Williams (Editors), *Violence in American Schools: A New Perspective*, (pp. 379-386). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

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