

# EVIDENCE BRIEF

## School-Based Interventions to Prevent Violence Against Women & Girls



**Australian Government**

**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

**The Global  
Women's Institute**

**THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY**



## Background

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is a human rights violation that affects millions of women worldwide. According to the most recent estimates from the World Health Organization, more than one in three women globally have experienced physical and/or sexual partner violence or sexual violence by a non-partner at some point in their lifetime.<sup>1</sup> Historically, the international community has focused heavily on responding to VAWG by providing support services for survivors. In recent years, however, there has been an increase in attention to interventions that aim to prevent violence before it starts.<sup>2</sup> While the evidence base is still in a relatively early stage, rigorous evaluations have been conducted that demonstrate sustainable ways to reduce VAWG. Existing reviews suggest that there are common elements to these effective interventions<sup>2,3</sup>:

1. Collaborating with entire communities (both men and women, boys and girls) in an interactive and participatory way during all phases of the intervention;
2. Engaging communities in a culturally sensitive and relevant manner to address structural drivers of violence, such as deeply entrenched social norms that perpetuate gender inequalities;
3. Using a multi-sectoral approach that is both comprehensive and integrated;
4. Exposing participants to subject matter through multiple intervention components over a sustained period (at minimum six months);
5. Conducting rigorous evaluations using mixed-methods approaches and disseminating results widely to inform current and future prevention programs.

One of the most important sectors in the efforts to prevent VAWG is that of education. ***The intersection of education and VAWG is particularly relevant as schools are environments where children and adolescents learn and develop social and behavioral norms.*** By working with the education sector at multiple levels, we are presented with a unique entry point to help shape future generations' (both boys and girls) ideas of healthy relationships and balanced power dynamics.<sup>4,5</sup> At the highest level, policy makers can develop and enforce laws and policies that outline how education systems will work in an integrated manner with other sectors to prevent VAWG. At the institutional level, administrators can implement training curricula for teachers and students that focus on fostering gender equitable attitudes and norms. Reforms can be instituted to create a safe environment for VAWG survivors to access necessary counseling and referral services.

Finally, at the community level, teachers and school administrators can work with other influential community members to hold conversations, workshops, and other activities that will strengthen community knowledge and capacity to respond to and prevent VAWG, potentially leading to broader social change.<sup>5</sup>

It is important to recognize that in order for schools to be sites of social and intellectual empowerment, they, themselves, must be free of violence. Too often, schools are sites where violence is perpetrated, whether as corporal punishment on behalf of a teacher, dating violence among classmates, sexual assault, or bullying, among others.<sup>4</sup> Girls are particularly vulnerable to violence. As of 2012, it was estimated that approximately 60 million girls are sexually assaulted on their way to or at school every year. ***In some countries, this translates to a higher probability for a girl to experience sexual violence than to become literate.***<sup>6</sup> Within the United States, a report for the National Institute of Justice revealed that approximately 14% of female students (aged 18-25) had experienced sexual violence during her time at university.<sup>7</sup> Violence against women and girls at school is a pandemic issue that must be resolved globally in order to avoid and alleviate the detrimental effects of violence on individuals and communities. Concerted efforts must focus on breaking the intergenerational cycles of violence, poor education, ill health, and poverty.

## About This Policy Brief

***The objective of this brief is to provide a concise overview of select school-based interventions that aim to prevent VAWG or improve knowledge and attitudes that perpetuate VAWG***

For the purpose of this brief, we only focus on the following types of VAWG: intimate partner violence (IPV), dating violence, and non-partner sexual assault. . It is important to note that this is not an exhaustive review of the literature. While we recognize the immense complexities associated with the multiple forms of violence that occur within schools and the various ways in which they manifest, we will solely address VAWG in this brief.<sup>4</sup> Relevant school-based interventions were pulled from nine recently published reviews.<sup>2-4,8-13</sup> Targeted hand searches were also conducted. The interventions that are highlighted are categorized as effective, promising, or emerging.

For the purpose of this brief, we will be looking at a range of outcomes in addition to the reduction of perpetration/victimization of VAWG. It can be problematic to solely measure VAWG prevalence, as effective programs may initially cause an increase in reporting of violence due to a variety of reasons, including higher confidence among participants, knowledge of formal reporting mechanics, among others.<sup>14</sup> Since VAWG is an extreme manifestation of systemic gender inequality, it is important to examine a program's impact on gender equitable attitudes and related behaviors that drive VAWG.



## School-Based Interventions

### Effective interventions

The effective interventions are those that have been rigorously evaluated\* and show significant reductions in VAWG and/or improve behaviors, attitudes, and knowledge that promote gender equality and healthy power dynamics. A total of nine interventions were found that fall under this category (**Table 1**). The majority of these interventions included elements similar to those identified in the background section (engaged communities with a gender approach using a comprehensive methodology over a sustained period of time).

Both the *Stop Violence against Girls in Schools (SVAGS)* and *Safe Schools* programs demonstrate how multi-faceted and culturally-relevant school-based interventions implemented over a longer period of time can affect change not only among students and teachers, but also within the surrounding communities. Within these interventions, religious and community leaders, parents, and community organizations, among others, were engaged in sensitization training and broader discussions about gender, different types of violence, and girls' education. Students and teachers showed significant improvements in knowledge, attitudes, and key behaviors (i.e. help-seeking behaviors) related to the structural drivers of VAWG.<sup>14,15</sup> Looking specifically at the Girls' Clubs in the SVAGS program, participating girls had higher mean attitude index scores (only students in Kenya and Mozambique showed statistically significant differences in the mean attitudes index score)\*\*and significantly improved knowledge on relevant laws and policies, reporting mechanisms, and support organizations at the end of the intervention. SVAGS has been adapted to the Tanzanian and Nigerian context, *Transforming Education for Girls in Nigeria and Tanzania (TEGINT)*, extending beyond the focus on violence against girls to encompass more of a “whole-school approach” to address other forms of school-related violence.<sup>14,16</sup>

Similarly, the rigorously evaluated *Gender Equity Movement in Schools (GEMS)*

\*By rigorous evaluation, we refer to experimental or quasi-experimental evaluations.

\*\*“Challenging violence and gender equality index”: score between 0 (does not challenge attitudes on gender inequality) to 1 (challenges attitudes on gender inequality) based on a series of 8 statements.

program in India involved multi-modal and gender-specific interventions over a relatively lengthy period of time. They did not, however, explicitly involve activities that engaged the broader community outside of the school.\* *GEMS* consisted of a series of educational activities for groups of boys and girls centered around gender, healthy relationships, health, and violence. In addition, a week-long school-wide campaign was launched to engage all students in participatory activities on issues related to VAWG. Students in the intervention groups obtained higher gender equality scores and there were improvements in self-reported positive behavior changes.<sup>17</sup> It is important to note that while one of the main objectives of the effective interventions mentioned thus far was to reduce VAWG, methodological challenges, especially for community-wide and multi-level interventions, limit measurability.

The *Fourth R* program, on the other hand, was a comprehensive program implemented in Canada that did show a sustained decrease in the prevalence of VAWG. There were significantly lower odds of perpetrating violence for boys in the intervention than those in the control after 2.5 years of follow-up.<sup>18</sup> The healthy relationships approach, which is the foundation of the *Fourth R* program, has also been applied in a variety of other settings across Canada through programs such as *Making Waves*, *Respectful Relationships (R+R)*, and *Healthy Relationships in Rural Youth*, although evaluation results for these three programs have not been published.<sup>19</sup> The *Youth Relationships Project*, which utilized a similar *Fourth R* approach, has been rigorously evaluated and also resulted in a reduction in the perpetration of dating violence by boys against girls.<sup>20</sup>

While the body of evidence is still largely conflicting, there have also been targeted interventions directed specifically towards college students that aim to prevent sexual assault. After reviewing the evidence, there were two programs that were shown to be effective in reducing rates of sexual violence: an *Acquaintance Rape Prevention Program* and a *Revictimization Prevention Program*, both implemented in the United States.<sup>21-22</sup> The first intervention led to a significant decrease in sexual assault incidence among participants who had never previously experienced sexual assault.<sup>21</sup> The second intervention measured significant differences in the level of rape revictimization among participants who had received the program compared to those who had not.<sup>22</sup> These programs shared some similar characteristics, such as a focus on underlying risk factors. Nevertheless, these interventions worked with very specific populations (white, middle-to-high income, college-educated women), making it difficult to draw strong conclusions about generalizability to different contexts.

\*Although they were not measured, this does not mean that ripple effects of the intervention into the community were not possible.

## BOX 1: Child Friendly Schools

*Child Friendly Schools (CFS)* is a UNICEF-led initiative that has now been implemented in 95 countries and is premised around the principles of child-centeredness, democratic participation, and inclusiveness. By applying the *CFS* framework, schools can develop a series of actions to better improve learning conditions for students, thereby ensuring a safe environment in which their rights are protected. A recent evaluation showed that the *CFS* model was effective in creating a space for engaging stakeholders in the development of child-centered curricula and programs, providing a concrete framework to guide policy decisions at the Ministerial level, and generating positive attitudes around inclusive learning. Some of the main challenges include: limited accommodation for students with disabilities, inability to create fully safe environments, and lack of fidelity to program guidelines. Challenges aside, the *CFS* initiative provides an overarching framework to develop and implement school-wide programs to ensure safe schools for all students. This type of holistic approach that seeks to create a safe space for girls can have very important implications in the prevention of VAWG.

Other targeted school-based interventions include those that have engaged coaches and male athletes to reduce perpetration of violence as well as improve gender equitable attitudes. *Coaching Boys into Men (CBIM)* is an innovative intervention, which trains coaches to facilitate discussions about norms and attitudes on gender inequalities to high school athletes. A rigorous evaluation showed increases in reported intentions to intervene and positive bystander intervention behaviors.<sup>23</sup> The program is currently being expanded to middle schools and universities throughout the United States.<sup>24</sup> *CBIM* has also been adapted to the Indian context into a program known as *PARIVARTAN*, which engages cricket coaches and their athletes on gender and VAWG prevention in both schools and the community. An initial rigorous evaluation of the school-based programs showed significant increases in positive attitudes on gender equality.<sup>25</sup> The program is now being expanded to include girls in an effort to empower and create safe spaces for participants.<sup>26</sup>

***It is important to note that most of the effective interventions used a gender-specific approach with a focus on empowerment, providing participants with the tools to question and challenge attitudes and behaviors that perpetuate gender inequalities and drive VAWG.***

### **Promising interventions**

There were several interventions (**Table 2**) that showed promising results that were either **(1)** not rigorously evaluated/did not provide enough information on the evaluation methodology or **(2)** they were rigorously evaluated but did not disaggregate results by sex. Either way, it is difficult to draw conclusions on the programs' effectiveness on the reduction of VAWG and/or improvement of related knowledge and attitudes.

A total of three interventions fit under the first category.<sup>28-30</sup> Similar to those in the effective category, all three interventions applied participatory approaches that engaged students and teachers over a long period of time. Activities included awareness campaigns and the development of curricula that addressed healthy relationships, balanced power dynamics, human rights, and/or harmful gender norms. The *Young Men Initiative (YMI)*, coordinated by CARE International Balkans, is an adaptation of the innovative and well-evaluated *Program H* developed by Promundo.<sup>28,31</sup> The *YMI* program focuses on adolescent boys and consists of several sessions, integrated into the school curricula, where participating boys learn about gender, sexual health, and violence. An initial evaluation showed a significant improvement in gender equitable attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors in some of the schools.<sup>28</sup> In the United Kingdom, WOMANKIND implemented an education program in several schools by integrating lessons on violence and other gender-related issues into "citizenship lessons".<sup>29</sup> The *C-Change Program*, implemented in the Democratic Republic of Congo, went a step further to involve parents and other community members. While we cannot say for certain that these programs were effective, preliminary evidence shows promising results.<sup>30</sup>

In addition, there were four other interventions that demonstrated very encouraging results, but results were not disaggregated by sex.<sup>32-35</sup> As such, the programs' true effect on the levels of VAWG, specifically, remains unknown. At the middle/high-school level, *Shifting Boundaries* and *Safe Dates* showed overall reductions in the perpetration/victimization of dating violence among participating adolescents as a result of a series of gender-sensitive and multiple component interventions implemented over a long period of time.<sup>32-33</sup> Another program, *Connections*, evaluated in six high schools in California, also showed reduction in the perpetration of violence through teaching high school students about healthy relationships.<sup>34</sup>

The fourth intervention, *Bringing in the Bystander*<sup>®</sup>, is a targeted program that teaches participants potential ways to intervene to prevent sexual assault on university campuses, support survivors, and raise awareness within their communities. A rigorous evaluation showed significant improvements in a series of outcomes, including how confident the participant felt in intervening, whether they believed there were more positives to intervening than negatives, rejection of common rape myths, and other bystander attitudes and behaviors.<sup>35</sup> This program has since been adapted to a variety of



contexts.

### ***Emerging interventions***

Finally, innovative school-based programs exist that are currently being implemented, but have yet to be fully evaluated. In the primary school setting, *Good School Toolkit* is a comprehensive program implemented in several schools throughout Uganda by Raising Voices. Utilizing a long-term approach that involves three phases, administrators, teachers, community members, and students were engaged in discussions around violence and creating safe schools. A rigorous evaluation has been conducted and results will be released shortly.<sup>37</sup>

*Expect Respect*<sup>®</sup>, a long-standing program implemented by SafePlace in Texas, includes school-based support groups to help engage middle and high school students on healthy relationships. A preliminary evaluation demonstrates an improvement in healthy conflict resolution skills among participants.<sup>38</sup> SafePlace is also working in partnership with EngenderHealth on the *Gender Matters* project to reduce levels of teenage pregnancy through discussions and campaigns around healthy relationships, sexual and reproductive health, and support networks\*.<sup>39</sup>

*Dating Matters*<sup>®</sup>, a CDC-led initiative, is also in the implementation phase and includes a series of interventions that help prevent dating violence among young adolescents (aged 11-14 years) in high-risk schools and communities throughout four cities in the United States. This project specifically emphasizes the need to work with children during early adolescence, in addition to engaging their schools, families, and broader communities.<sup>40</sup>

\*An evaluation is currently being conducted.



## Community-Based Interventions with School-Based Components

In addition to the school-based interventions that involve community-based components, there exist several community-based interventions with school-based components, such as *Program H*, *Somos Diferentes, Somos Iguales*; *Stepping Stones*; *SASA!*; and *Soul City*.<sup>31,41-44</sup> These programs have demonstrated significant reductions in the rates of violence against women and girls and/or improvements in related knowledge and attitudes and encompass all elements discussed in the Background section. In Nicaragua, Puntos de Encuentro has implemented the wide-spread communications strategy known as *Somos Diferentes, Somos Iguales (SDSI)* or “We are Different, We are the Same” in English. Included in this strategy are several “edutainment” (education + entertainment) interventions that help raise awareness and build communities' capacity to respond to gender inequalities. The most well-known component is a TV drama, *Sexto Sentido*, which addresses HIV prevention, violence, and other relationship issues, and is broadcast in six countries throughout Central and North America on a weekly basis. The program involved schools through cast tours, during which discussions were facilitated on health and gender and materials were disseminated.<sup>41</sup> *Stepping Stones* is a very well-known community-based HIV-prevention program that has been adapted in numerous countries. By engaging youth through participatory group discussions, mostly held in schools, facilitators are able to address communications skills and sexual and reproductive health, as well as violence against women.<sup>42</sup>

### BOX 2: Child Sexual Abuse

Child sexual abuse (CSA) still remains a widespread problem globally. While school-based interventions that specifically address CSA are not within the scope of the review, they are a fundamental part of creating a safe school environment conducive to learning. Four reviews<sup>45-48</sup> were recently conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions designed to prevent CSA. Most interventions taught children self-protective knowledge: how to recognize CSA and ways to seek help, among others. According to these reviews, the school-based interventions that were most effective in reducing levels of CSA included similar elements as those mentioned in this policy brief. In general, they involved participatory and active learning methods, such as role-play and role-modeling. They were often implemented over a longer duration of time in smaller increments to maximize exposure, while being mindful of attention spans. In addition, these effective interventions tended to involve parents in the discussion. There exist substantial methodological limitations in this field of research. Managing disclosure of CSA is very challenging and difficult to measure with accuracy. The authors of the reviews offer recommendations for future researchers, including examining prevention efforts for ages beyond early elementary school, studying the cumulative impact of CSA over longer durations of time, increasing diversity in the distribution of research, and conducting rigorous evaluations.<sup>45-48</sup>

## Discussion

The international community has made evident the importance of engaging the education sector to help eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls over the past few decades. The *Beijing Platform for Action* (1995) calls for comprehensive approaches to reduce VAWG and specifically outlines the role educational systems have in fostering gender equitable attitudes.<sup>49</sup> The *Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women* (1994) recognizes that VAWG can occur in educational facilities, which is why it is so important to develop appropriate educational programs inside and outside of schools to combat attitudes and behaviors that perpetuate VAWG.<sup>50</sup> In addition, the *Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence* (2011) explicitly states that schools, along with the rest of the education sector, play a vital role in the prevention of VAWG, particularly related to dispelling harmful stereotypes, building capacity and agency, and encouraging non-violent conflict resolution.<sup>51</sup>

As a result of these declarations<sup>49-51</sup>, among others, there have been several sustained efforts to develop and implement holistic approaches to integrate violence prevention programming into school curricula and activities. This policy brief presented a concise review of the evidence that exists and identified common elements that are shared among those that are effective and promising, including a comprehensive and multi-level approach that actively engaged communities over several sessions.

Many interventions, however, have not been evaluated and, as such, the evidence base is still relatively limited. Furthermore, when programs are evaluated, it is common that the data are not disaggregated by sex, making it difficult to draw strong conclusions on how women and girls are specifically affected. This is often a result of the significant methodological or financial challenges that are associated with VAWG data collection.

Overall, a deeper understanding of effective programming at the intersection of VAWG and the education sector is desperately needed. The vast majority of school-related programs have occurred in relatively stable environments, however, it is important to consider how these interventions could be adapted to conflict-affected areas, where girls are often at a greater risk of suffering violence.<sup>52-54</sup> To address this issue, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) has implemented a *Classroom Assistant Program* in Guinea and Sierra Leone, which recruited and trained female classroom assistants to help create a safe space conducive to learning for both girls and boys. While the program has its limitations, results showed some promise despite substantial challenges that were faced.<sup>55</sup> Overall, there is a dearth of information on school-based interventions to prevent VAWG in conflict settings.

Another under-researched area is how best school-based interventions can account for diversity and address inequities in the levels of violence between people of different races, ethnicities, gender, and/or sexual orientation. Evidence shows that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) youth are disproportionately affected by violence, particularly in schools.<sup>4,56</sup> Therefore, a more inclusive approach is necessary for future research and programming.

In addition, questions remain about how to effectively scale-up many of these community-based interventions to the national level. Ultimately, it is our goal to have government sponsored programs that are implemented at a national level to integrate curricula that address VAWG and gender equality in all schools. In the United Kingdom, for example, the *London-wide Schools Domestic Violence Prevention Project (LSDVPP)* was implemented in several middle and high schools throughout London. The program mostly consisted of training staff to develop and implement curricula that address domestic violence. While the evaluation does not provide a great amount of detail on the impact of the program, initial evidence shows an overall improvement in knowledge and awareness on VAWG among both students and teachers.<sup>57</sup>



Within the United States, specifically, there has been a large push towards raising awareness around sexual assault on university campuses and creating effective solutions to prevent sexual violence. Under the Obama Administration, the *White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault* was created in early 2014 to collect and disseminate accurate prevalence data, develop prevention programs that engage both men and women, and establish effective and integrated response systems for survivors that are strongly enforced.<sup>58</sup> While the task force is in the early stages of its work and yet to be evaluated, this national strategy focused not only on increasing transparency and improving services for survivors, but also on preventing violence before it occurs shows promise.



## Conclusion

*The evidence base has improved over the years, yet gaps still remain. We call for increased collaboration among researchers, programmers, and governments to share best practices and work together to scale-up effective and promising interventions, while also leaving room for adaptation to ensure cultural relevance.*<sup>4</sup> Sustainability is at the center of the post-2015 global development agenda. In order to truly achieve the sustainable development goals that are being developed<sup>59</sup>, we need to work within a human rights framework and accelerate efforts across sectors to address pervasive issues that drive inequity. Schools, as part of the education sector, are key institutions that have the power to challenge harmful and discriminatory norms that perpetuate issues, such as VAWG. ***Every woman and girl deserves a life free from violence in a society where she is treated with respect and dignity.***

A background image showing a person's hands weaving a basket. The basket has a distinct spiral or concentric pattern with alternating light and dark stripes. The person is wearing a light-colored, possibly white, long-sleeved garment. The overall scene is brightly lit, creating a soft, ethereal atmosphere.

## Acknowledgments

This brief was written by Amber L. Hill, MSPH, Dr. Manuel Contreras, PhD, and Emma Louise Backe of the Global Women's Institute, The George Washington University. We would like to thank Dr. Mary Ellsberg, PhD, and Diana J. Arango, MSc, for their comments. We also gratefully acknowledge the support of the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

# References

1. World Health Organization, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, South African Medical Research Council. 2013. *Global and regional estimates of violence against women: prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence*. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization.
2. Ellsberg M, Arango DJ, Morton M, Gennari F, Kiplesund S, Contreras M, Watts C. Prevention of violence against women and girls: what does the evidence say? *Lancet* 2014. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(14\)61703-7](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(14)61703-7)
3. Arango DJ, Morton M, Gennari F, Kiplesund S, Ellsberg M. 2014. *Interventions to prevent or reduce violence against women and girls: a systematic review of reviews*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
4. Leach F, Dunne M, Salvi F. 2014. *School-related Gender-based Violence: A global review of current issues and approaches in policy, programming and implementation responses to School-Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV) for the Education Sector*. Paris, France: UNESCO.
5. Gennari F, Urban AM, McCleary-Sills J, Arango DJ, Kiplesund S. 2014. *Violence against Women & Girls: Education Sector Brief*. Washington, DC: The World Bank, The Global Women's Institute, The Inter-American Development Bank. <http://www.vawgresourceguide.org/>
6. UNESCO. 2012. *Reaching out-of-school children is crucial for development*. GMR Policy Paper 4. Paris, France: UNESCO.
7. Sinozich S, Langton L. 2014. *Rape and Sexual Assault Victimization among College-Age Females, 1995-2013*. Washington, DC: US Department of Justice. <http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/rsavcaf9513.pdf>
8. US Agency for International Development. 2015. *Data for Education Research and Programming (DERP) in Africa: Review of Common Methodologies in Studying School-Related Gender-Based Violence*. Washington, DC: USAID.
9. Lundgren R, Amin A. Addressing Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Violence among Adolescents: Emerging Evidence of Effectiveness. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 2014;56:S42-S50.
10. Miske SJ. 2013. *Exploring the Gendered Dimensions of Teaching and Learning: Background Paper for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2013*. New York City, New York: United Nations Girls' Education Initiative.
11. Ellis J, Thiara RK. *Preventing Violence against Women and Girls: Educational work with children and young people*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press; 2014.
12. DeGue S, Valle LA, Holt MK, Massetti GM, Matjasko JL, Tharp AT. A systematic review of primary prevention strategies for sexual violence perpetration. *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 2014;19:346-362.
13. De La Rue L, Polanin JR, Espelage DL, Piggot TD. School-based interventions to reduce dating and sexual violence: a systematic review. *Campbell Systematic Reviews* 2014;7.
14. Parkes J, Heslop J. 2013. *Stop Violence Against Girls in School: A cross-country analysis of change in Ghana, Kenya and Mozambique*. Washington, DC: ActionAid International.
15. US Agency for International Development. 2008. *Safe Schools Program Final Report*. Washington, DC: USAID.
16. ActionAid International. 2012. *Transforming Education for Girls in Tanzania: Endline research summary report*. Washington, DC: ActionAid International.
17. Achyut P, Bhatla N, Kandekar S, Maitra S, Verma RK. 2011. *Building Support for Gender Equality among Young Adolescents in School: Findings from Mumbai, India*. New Delhi, India: International Center for Research on Women.

18. Wolfe DA, Crooks C, Jaffe P, Chiodo D, Hughes R, Ellis W, Stitt L, Donner A. A School-Based Program to Prevent Adolescent Dating Violence: A Cluster Randomized Trial. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med* 2009;163(8):692-699.
19. Tutty LM. 2011. *Healthy Relationships Preventing Teen Dating Violence: An Evaluation of the teen Violence Prevention Program*. Toronto, Canada: Canadian Women's Foundation.
20. Wolfe DA, Wekerle C, Scott K, Straatman AL, Grasley C, Reitzel-Jaffe D. Dating Violence Prevention with At-Risk Youth: A Controlled Outcome Evaluation. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 2003;71(2):279-291.
21. Hanson KA, Gidycz CA. Evaluation of a Sexual Assault Prevention Program. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 1993;61(6):1046-1052.
22. Marx BP, Calhoun KS, Wilson AE, Meyerson LA. Sexual Revictimization Prevention: An Outcome Evaluation. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 2001;69(1):25-32.
23. Miller E, Tancredi DJ, McCauley HL, Decker MR, Virata MCD, Anderson HA, Stetkevich N, Brown EW, Moideen F, Silverman JG. "Coaching Boys into Men": A Cluster-Randomized Controlled Trial of a Dating Violence Prevention Program. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 2012;51:431-438.
24. O'Conner B, Jaime MCD, Stocking ME. Implementing evidence-based interventions in real-world settings: The journey of coaching boys into men. *Presented at the National Conference on Health and Domestic Violence*. Washington, DC, 2015.
25. Miller E, Das M, Tancredi DJ, McCauley HL, Virata MCD, Nettiksimmons J, O'Conner B, Ghosh S, Verma R. Evaluation of a Gender-Based Violence Prevention Program for Student Athletes in Mumbai, India. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 2014;29(4):758-778.
26. Das, M. Gender Equity: Redefining Safe Space for Young Women and Girls. *Presented at Gender, Policy and Measurement Webinar*. Washington, DC, 2015.
27. United Nations Children's Fund. 2009. *Child Friendly Schools Programming: Global Evaluation Report*. New York, New York: UNICEF.
28. Namy S, Heilman B, Stich S, Edmeades J. 2014. *Be a man, change the rules! Findings and Lessons from Seven Years of CARE International Balkans' Young Men Initiative*. Washington, DC: International Center for Research on Women.
29. Maxwell C, Chaise E, Warwick I, Aggleton P, Wharf H. 2010. *Preventing violence, promoting equality: a whole-school approach*. London, UK: WOMANKIND Worldwide.
30. C-Change. 2013. *C-Change Final Report*. Washington, DC: C-Change/FHI 360.
31. Barker G, Nascimento M, Pulerwitz J, Segundo M. 2006. *Promoting gender-equity among young Brazilian men as an HIV prevention strategy*. Washington, DC: Population Council.
32. Taylor B, Stein ND, Woods D, Mumford E. 2011. *Shifting Boundaries: Final Report on an Experimental Evaluation of a Youth Dating Violence Prevention Program in New York City Middle Schools*. Washington, DC: Police Executive Research Forum.
33. Foshee VA, Bauman KE, Ennett ST, Linder GF, Benefield T, Suchindran C. Assessing the long-term effects of the Safe Dates program and a booster in preventing and reducing adolescent dating violence victimization and perpetration. *Am J Public Health* 2004;94:619-624.
34. Gardner SP, Giese K, Parrott SM. Evaluation of the "Connections: Relationships and Marriage" Curriculum. *Family Relations* 2004;53(5):521-527.
35. Banyard VL, Moynihan MM, Plante EG. Sexual violence prevention through bystander education: An experimental evaluation. *Journal of Community Psychology* 2007;35:463-481.

36. University of New Hampshire. *Bringing in the Bystander®*, *Know Your Power® Bystander Social Marketing Campaign Prevention Interventions*. Durham, New Hampshire: University of New Hampshire.
37. Raising Voices. 2015. Good Schools. Uganda: Raising Voices. <http://raisingvoices.org/good-school/>
38. Ball B, Tetan Tharp A, Noonan RK, Valle LA, Hamburger ME, Rosenbluth B. Expect Respect Support Groups: Preliminary Evaluation of a Dating Violence Prevention Program for At-Risk Youth. *Violence Against Women* 2012; epub: DOI: 10.1177/1077801212455188
39. EngenderHealth. 2015. *Gender Matters*. New York, New York: EngenderHealth. <http://www.engenderhealth.org/our-work/major-projects/gender-matters.php>
40. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2015. *Dating Matters® Initiative*. Atlanta, Georgia: CDC. <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/datingmatters/>
41. Solorzano I, Bank A, Pena R, Espinoza H, Ellsberg M, Pulerwitz J. 2008. *Catalyzing individual and social change around gender, sexuality, and HIV: Impact evaluation of Puntos de Encuentro's communication strategy in Nicaragua, Horizons Final Report*. Washington, DC: Population Council.
42. Jewkes R, Nduna M, Levin J, Jama N, Dunkle K, Wood K, Koss M, Puren A, Duvvury N. 2007. *Evaluation of Stepping Stones: A gender transformative HIV prevention intervention*. Pretoria, South Africa: Medical Research Council.
43. Abramsky T, Devries K, Kiss L, Nakuti J, Kyegombe N, Starmann E, Cundill B, Francisco L, Kaye D, Musuya T, Michau L, Watts C. Findings from SASA! Study: a cluster randomized controlled trial to assess the impact of a community mobilization intervention to prevent violence against women and reduce HIV risk in Kampala, Uganda. *BMC Medicine* 2014;12(122):1-17.
44. Usdin S, Scheepers E, Goldstein S, Japhet G. Achieving social change on gender-based violence: a report on the impact evaluation of Soul City's fourth series. *Soc Sci Med* 1982;61:2434-45.
45. Davis MK, Gidycz C. Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Programs: A Meta-Analysis. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology* 2000;29(2):257-265.
46. Zwi K, Woolfenden S, Wheeler DM, O'Brien T, Tait P, Williams KJ. School-based education programmes for the prevention of child sexual abuse. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Review* 2007;3:1-39.
47. Mikton C, Butchart A. Child maltreatment prevention: a systematic review of review. *Bulletin World Health Organization* 2009;87:353-361.
48. Topping KJ, Barron IG. School-Based Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Programs: A Review of Effectiveness. *Review of Educational Research* 2009;79(1):431-463.
49. UN Women. 1995. *The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women Platform for Action*. Beijing, China: UN Women.
50. Organization of American States. 1994. *Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women*. Washington, DC: OAS.
51. Council of Europe. 2011. *Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence*. Strasbourg, France: Council of women.
52. Stark L, Ager A. A Systematic Review of Prevalence Studies of Gender-Based Violence in Complex Emergencies. *Trauma Violence Abuse* 2011;12(3):127-134.
53. Holmes R, Bhuvanendra D. Preventing and responding to gender-based violence in humanitarian crises. *Humanitarian Practice Network Paper* 2014;77:1-27.



54. Vu A, Adam A, Wirtz A, Pham K, Rubenstein L, Glass N, Beyrer C, Singh S. The Prevalence of Sexual Violence among Female Refugees in Complex Humanitarian Emergencies: a Systematic Review and Meta-analysis. *PLOS Current Disasters* 2014;1. doi: 10.1371/currents.dis.835f10778fd80ae031aac12d3b533ca7.
55. Kirk J, Winthrop R. 2005. *Changing the gendered dynamics of refugee classrooms in West Africa: Introducing female classroom assistants*. Washington, DC: International Rescue Committee.
56. UNESCO. 2012. *Education Sector Responses to Homophobic Bullying*. Paris, France: UNESCO.
57. Thiara RK, Ellis J. 2005. *Westminster Domestic Violence Forum London-wide Schools' Domestic Violence Prevention Project: An Evaluation Final Report*. London, UK: Association of London Government.
58. White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault. 2014. *Note Alone: The First Report of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault*. Washington, DC: White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault.
59. UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. 2015. Sustainable development goals. New York, New York: UN.  
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/sustainabledevelopmentgoals>

**Table 1 – Effective interventions that reduce VAWG or improve behaviors, knowledge, and attitudes**

PROGRAM NAME, YEAR*	LOCATION	BRIEF DESCRIPTION & DURATION OF INTERVENTION	POPULATION OF INTEREST	MAIN RESULTS
Stop Violence against Girls in Schools (SVAGS), 2008-2013	Ghana Kenya Mozambique	Over five years (2008-2013), Action Aid implemented a multi-component intervention in 45 primary schools and associated communities, which included girls' and boys' clubs to increase knowledge on gender equality for students, Reflect Circles to engage parents and community members in discussions on gender, sensitization training for community leaders and teachers on VAWG-related issues and with parents on the importance of girls' education, as well as community-wide campaigns and national-level advocacy work.	Primary school students, teachers, community leaders, parents	After the intervention, girls in both Ghana and Mozambique were more likely to report experiencing violence. Positive effects on knowledge and attitudes related to gender were seen among participants of Girls' Clubs.
Safe Schools Program, 2003-2008	Ghana Malawi	From 2003-2008, Safe Schools, implemented by DevTech Systems, Inc., included interventions at multiple levels: national (advocacy campaigns to raise awareness on violence that occurs at and on the way to and from schools), institutional (sensitization training of teachers and supervisors and creating relevant codes of conduct), local (work with local leaders and community organizations to strengthen capacity) and individual (training teachers to train students on attitudes and knowledge on gender-related issues).	Policy makers, teachers, peer leaders, community leaders, and students (upper primary, lower secondary schools)	Among both teachers and students, there were shifts in knowledge of gender-based violence, increased awareness of rights, and reductions in acceptability towards violence.
Gender Equity Movement in Schools (GEMS), 2008-2010	India	A select number of Grade 7 students participated in a one-year intervention (2008-2009) that either involved group educational activities (45 minutes each) + an awareness campaign (1-week long), the awareness campaign alone, or neither. In addition, a select number of Grade 6 students participated in a two-year intervention (2008-2010), divided into the same previously defined groups with enhanced activities. This program was implemented by the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), the Committee of Resource Organizations for Literacy, and the Tata Institute for Social Sciences.	Boys and girls in Grades 6 and 7	At follow-up, boys and girls in the intervention groups had higher gender equality scores. In addition, girls in the GEA + campaign intervention group self-reported positive changes in behavior. Boys and girls in the GEA + campaign intervention group were more likely to report a positive reaction by peers in response to gender-based violence.

\* If program year unknown, year of published evaluation is provided.

**Table 1 continued... – Effective interventions that reduce VAWG or improve behaviors, knowledge, and attitudes**

<b>PROGRAM NAME, YEAR<sup>†</sup></b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>BRIEF DESCRIPTION &amp; DURATION OF INTERVENTION</b>	<b>POPULATION OF INTEREST</b>	<b>MAIN RESULTS</b>
Fourth R: Skills for Youth Relationships, 2004-2007	Canada	Trained teachers implemented a provincially-mandated 21-lesson (3 units of 7 75-minute sessions) curriculum in a Grade 9 health class that focused on fostering knowledge and skills regarding safety and injury prevention and health-related issues.	Students enrolled in Grade 9 (14-15 years of age)	After 2.5 years of follow-up, those in the control group had close to 3-times higher odds of perpetrating violence than those in the intervention group.
Youth Relationships Project, 2003	Canada	Participating Child Protection Service agencies implemented an 18-session intervention that aimed to strengthen participants' problem-solving and communications skills, improve attitudes on gender norms and healthy relationships, and mobilize social action through a series of participatory and educational activities.	Adolescents (14-16 years of age) with history of child maltreatment	There were greater rates of reductions in perpetration of dating violence by boys in the intervention group as compared to those in the control.
Acquaintance Rape Prevention Program, 1996	United States	Participants were exposed to a series of videos and group discussions on rape myths, rape scenarios, and protective behaviors in a session at the beginning of an academic quarter.	Female students enrolled in university	Among women who had never experienced sexual assault, the intervention was successful in reducing levels of sexual violence.
Revictimization Prevention Program, 2001	United States	During two two-hour sessions, participating students were exposed to information on sexual assault, a group discussion on risk factors and warning signs, a video, an interactive group activities, and capacity building on problem-solving skills.	Female students enrolled in university with history of sexual assault victimization	There were significant differences in the rates of rape revictimization among those in the intervention group compared to those in the control.
Coaching Boys into Men, 2009-2010	United States	Trained coaches held brief group discussions (15 min) with athletes on a weekly basis over the course of a sports season (approximately 12 weeks) on knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to violence against women	High school male athletes	Athletes in the intervention group experienced positive changes in intentions to intervene when witnessing dating violence and improved bystander behaviors as compared to the control group.
PARIVARTAN, 2008-2012	India	By collaborating with the Mumbai Schools Sports Association, ICRW implemented an adaptation of the Coaching Boys into Men approach with high school cricket athletes in India. Coaches participated in a 3-day workshop and then facilitated discussions on gender equitable attitudes, bystander behaviors, and violence with their athletes on a weekly basis for four months.	High school male athletes	Greater positive changes in gender attitudes and greater reductions in negative bystander behaviors were demonstrated among those in the intervention than in the control.

<sup>†</sup> If program year unknown, year of published evaluation is provided.

**Table 2 – Promising interventions**

PROGRAM NAME, YEAR <sup>‡</sup>	LOCATION	BRIEF DESCRIPTION & DURATION OF INTERVENTION	POPULATION OF INTEREST	MAIN RESULTS
Combating School-Related Gender-Based Violence (C-Change), 2010-2012	Democratic Republic of Congo	A multi-level intervention was implemented over 1.5 years that provided students with training, engaged community members (including parents) through awareness-raising campaigns, and supported teachers and administrators in creating codes of conduct to prevent and respond to violence in and out of schools. This program was funded by USAID and implemented by the <i>Initiatives pour le Developpement Integral</i> .	Teachers, students, and parents	Both students' and teachers' knowledge of ways to prevent violence improved dramatically over the course of the project.
WOMANKIND UK Education Program, 2008-2010	United Kingdom	During the second phase of a project (2008-2010), WOMANKIND implemented an intervention in 5 schools using a whole-school approach to address issues related to gender equality and VAWG. Students were taught "citizenship lessons" on a variety of topics, including women's rights, harmful masculinities, and different types of violence against women.	Secondary school students	Qualitative interviews showed that students appreciated learning more about gender issues and violence against women. Schools developed curricula and initiatives to raise awareness on gender equality.
Young Men Initiative, 2007-2013	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia	Trained facilitators led participatory group activities during class time over the course of an academic year. These activities focused on health, violence, risky behaviors, and attitudes on gender.	Male students at vocational high schools (14-18 years of age)	Improvements were seen in gender-equitable attitudes, rejection of gender stereotypes, and knowledge on sexual and reproductive health in some sites.
Shifting Boundaries, 2009-2010	United States	Over 2 years, the <i>Shifting Boundaries</i> intervention was implemented in 30 schools and involved a classroom component (6 sessions/school on healthy relationships) and a series of "building" components, which included school-based restraining orders, increased security presence in student-identified unsafe areas, and awareness raising activities.	Students in Grades 6-7	Reductions were seen in perpetration and victimization of physical/sexual dating violence and sexual harassment over 6 months among students in the combination intervention groups. Results were not disaggregated by sex.
Safe Dates, 1994-1995	United States	<i>Safe Dates</i> is a multi-component intervention implemented in 14 schools and included both school-wide violence prevention activities (10 45-minute lessons, poster contest, and a theater production) and community-wide violence response activities (provider training and support services).	Students in Grades 8-9	Four years after the program, students in the intervention reported lower levels of physical and sexual dating violence than those in the control. Results were not disaggregated by sex.

<sup>‡</sup> If program year unknown, year of published evaluation is provided.

**Table 2 continued... – Promising interventions**

PROGRAM NAME, YEAR <sup>§</sup>	LOCATION	BRIEF DESCRIPTION & DURATION OF INTERVENTION	POPULATION OF INTEREST	MAIN RESULTS
Bystander Approach, 2007	United States	This intervention consisted of a control and two intervention groups (one 90-minute session vs. three 90-minute sessions). Topics ranged from basic information and statistics around sexual violence to how to detect and intervene in risky situations, while prioritizing your own safety. Sessions were provided by trained facilitators.	University student who had never received training on sexual violence (18-23 years of age)	In the 3-session group, respondents showed the greatest improvements in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors compared to those in the one-session and the control.
Connections: Relationships and Marriage Curriculum, 2003-2004	United States	Over the course of 15 sessions (1-hr each), trained teachers and/or counsellors discuss a range of topics, including healthy relationships, positive self-esteem, and communication and life-planning skills, with their students.	Students in Grades 11-12	Reductions in reports of dating violence perpetration decreased in the intervention group (and increased in the control). Improvements in relationship knowledge were significantly better for those in the intervention group.

---

<sup>§</sup> If program year unknown, year of published evaluation is provided.







---

**THE GEORGE  
WASHINGTON  
UNIVERSITY**

---

WASHINGTON, DC