Public Safety Canada | Sécurité publique Canada

ARCHIVED - Archiving Content

ARCHIVÉE - Contenu archivé

## Archived Content

Information identified as archived is provided for reference, research or recordkeeping purposes. It is not subject to the Government of Canada Web Standards and has not been altered or updated since it was archived. Please contact us to request a format other than those available.

## Contenu archivé

L'information dont il est indiqué qu'elle est archivée est fournie à des fins de référence, de recherche ou de tenue de documents. Elle n'est pas assujettie aux normes Web du gouvernement du Canada et elle n'a pas été modifiée ou mise à jour depuis son archivage. Pour obtenir cette information dans un autre format, veuillez communiquer avec nous.

This document is archival in nature and is intended for those who wish to consult archival documents made available from the collection of Public Safety Canada.

Some of these documents are available in only one official language. Translation, to be provided by Public Safety Canada, is available upon request.

Le présent document a une valeur archivistique et fait partie des documents d'archives rendus disponibles par Sécurité publique Canada à ceux qui souhaitent consulter ces documents issus de sa collection.

Certains de ces documents ne sont disponibles que dans une langue officielle. Sécurité publique Canada fournira une traduction sur demande.

Canada

AIC crime reduction matters

26 August 2003, no. 8
ISSN 1448-1383

# Preventing violence: The public health approach

There is no simple or single solution to violence. It is a multifaceted problem with biological, psychological, social and environmental roots. Therefore, violence must be addressed on multiple levels and in multiple sectors of society simultaneously. In issue no. 7 of this series, the public health approach to the prevention crime and violence was briefly summarised. Here, some examples of specific violence prevention interventions are described. They are based on the understanding that programs and policies can be targeted at individuals, relationships, communities and whole societies, and delivered in collaboration with different sectors of society in schools, workplaces, other institutions and criminal justice systems.

- **Individual approaches** focus primarily on encouraging healthy attitudes and behaviours in children and young people as they grow up, and changing attitudes and behaviour in individuals who have already become violent. Types of individual approaches include educational, social and therapeutic programs. Effectiveness varies, but the most effective appear to be social development programs delivered to pre- and primary school children.
- **Relationship approaches** aim to influence the type of relationships that victims and perpetrators have with the people they most regularly interact with. Programs focus on problems within families, and negative influences from peers. Typical approaches include training in parenting, mentoring programs, family therapy, home visitation programs, and training in relationship skills. All of these have proven effective in some settings. However, properly understanding the setting for the program is vital if they are to be effective.
- **Community-based efforts** are geared toward raising public awareness about violence, stimulating community action, and providing care and support for victims. Types of programs include media-based public education campaigns, physical modifications to the environment (for example, improved lighting), activity programs for young people, training to assist workers and employers to identify and respond to violence, community policing partnerships, initiatives to modify policies and practices in specific institutional settings (such as hospitals), and coordinated community interventions geared towards improving services and programs.
- **Societal approaches** focus on the cultural, social and economic factors related to violence, and emphasise changes in legislation, policies and the larger social and cultural environment to reduce rates of violence in different settings and entire communities. Measures can include legislative and judicial remedies (such as mandatory reporting of child abuse); international treaties; policy changes to reduce poverty and inequality and improve support for families; efforts to change social and cultural norms (for example, attitudes to homophobic violence); and reduced access to weapons (such as gun control measures).

***Further reading:***

World Health Organisation 2002, *World Report on Violence and Health: Summary,* WHO, Geneva.

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF CRIMINOLOGY

Delivering training, evaluation and research services

Visit online: www.aic.gov.au/publications/crm
Email aicpress@aic.gov.au Phone 02 6260 9200