



Violence in Youth

Every 21 Seconds, One Person in the United States Sustains a Traumatic Brain Injury

A brain injury can result in impairment of thinking skills, emotions or the body's ability to function and move.

Incidence of Violence in Youth

Recent studies by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Justice indicate that overall school crime is declining; however, many students say that they still do not feel safe.¹

- ◆ For students aged 12-18, overall school crime, including theft, rape, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated sexual assault and simple assault, decreased by nearly a third.
- ◆ Although rates are declining, school violence still exists and violent behavior can lead to devastating consequences.
- ◆ According to a survey of 15,686 public and private school students, nearly one-third of U.S. students say that they had been involved in bullying.²
- ◆ A majority of U.S. teens say they used violence in the past year, and one in five high school-age boys took a weapon to school.³

Violence Can Cause a Brain Injury

- ◆ Violent behavior is especially dangerous to the brain because hits are often directed to the head. Furthermore, violence involving guns and other weapons can result in a penetrating brain injury.
- ◆ Firearm and non-firearm assaults together make up for 17% of all Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI).
- ◆ Firearms are the leading cause of death from brain injury.
- ◆ 1.5 million people will sustain a TBI annually.
- ◆ 50,000 people will die annually as a result of a TBI.
- ◆ 80,000 people annually experience the onset of long-term disabilities following a TBI.
- ◆ There are currently at least 5.3 million Americans living with a disability as a result of a TBI.

Creating a better future through brain injury prevention, research, education and advocacy

Warning Signs That May Help To Predict Violent Behavior in Students⁴

- ♦ Violent Drawings or Writings
- ♦ Threats of Violence Toward Others
- ♦ Past Violent Behaviors or Aggressive History
- ♦ Animal Torturing
- ♦ Recent Relationship Break
- ♦ Isolation
- ♦ Teased or Perceptions of Being Teased, Harassed, or "Picked On"
- ♦ Social Withdrawal
- ♦ Inappropriate Use or Access to Firearms
- ♦ Substance Abuse
- ♦ Familial Stressors
- ♦ Noted by Peers as Being "Different"
- ♦ Low School Interest

Ways to Prevent Violence in Youth

The most effective programs for curbing violence in youth combine efforts to:⁵

- ♦ Make an accurate assessment of the existence of violence and, especially, gang activity.
- ♦ Use all the resources in the community, including social service and law enforcement and not just rely on school officials to deal with the problem.
- ♦ Incorporate family services into both community and school programs.
- ♦ Intervene early in a child's life.
- ♦ Include not only anti-violence strategies but also positive experiences.
- ♦ Create and communicate clearly defined behavior codes, and enforce them strictly and uniformly.
- ♦ Engage in a long-term effort.

Sources:

1 2000 Annual Report on School Safety

2 "Bullying Behaviors Among U.S. Youth: Prevalence and Association With Psychosocial Adjustment" Journal of the American Medical Association, April 25, 2001, T.Nansel, M. Overpeck, R. Pilla, W. Ruan, B.Simons-Morton, P. Scheidt

3 "Report Card on the Ethics of American Youth 2000 Report #1: Violence, Guns and Alcohol, Josephson Institute of Ethics, www.charactercounts.org

4 1999, Juhnke, Gerald A. - Charkow, Wendy B. - Jordan, Joe - Curtis, Russell C. - Liles, Robin G. - Gmutza, Brian M. - Adams, Jennifer R. ERIC Clearinghouse on Counseling and Student Services Greensboro NC.

5 Schwartz Wendy, ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education, 1996