

# 9TH INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CONFERENCE ON LOCAL SAFETY AND SECURITY



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## PEER VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS AND PREVENTION

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# INTRODUCTION



- **Violence** → issues related to the individual, the family, and peers, all the way to broader social and global influences.
- **Adolescence** → a time of change, self-discovery, and exploration, during which individuals are exposed to vulnerable situations
- **Violence in schools** → requires greater attention from educators, policymakers, and researchers
- Violence and aggression harm victims, perpetrators, and bystanders
- Affecting academic performance, mental health, and an individual's overall daily well-being

# CAUSES OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

BIOLOGICAL FACTORS → age and gender, psychological traits, academic performance



- Physical violence decreases with age, while cyberbullying increases
- Boys are more frequently involved in physical violence, while girls report verbal and cyberbullying
- Young people with low self-esteem and mental health issues are more likely to experience or perpetrate violence
- Anger and the nature of their social relationships
- Students with lower academic achievement who perceive school as a place of failure

# CAUSES OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

FAMILY → parenting, family dynamics, and socioeconomic status

- Both strict and permissive parenting increase subsequent problems with the child's behaviour
- A lack of supervision exacerbates difficulties in the child's academic and social development
- Parental conflict, a lack of warmth and poor communication within the family
- Unemployment, substance abuse and low educational attainment

PEERS

- belonging in deviant peer groups that reinforce antisocial and aggressive behaviour

# CAUSES OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE



## SCHOOL

- A positive school climate, respectful relationships, and supportive teachers can help reduce risk
- Fair treatment, clear rules, and consequences can act as protective factors

## MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY

- Do too little to protect young people from violent content

# TYPES OF VIOLENCE AT SCHOOLS

Physical violence

Psychological  
violence

Social exclusion

Theft of money or  
damage to property

Coercion, and racial  
violence or violence  
based on other  
characteristics

Sexual violence

Cyberbullying

Child-to-elder abuse

# PREVENTION AND MEASURES

Strict, harsh punishments and disciplinary measures have not proven effective in fostering a school environment conducive to preventing school violence



School discipline program must include:

- a) preventive strategies that foster responsible behaviour
- b) corrective strategies that address unacceptable behaviour
- c) programs that address chronic behavioural problems

# PREVENTION AND MEASURES



Physical location and condition of the school building can influence students' motivation, attitudes, and behaviour

A school team: teachers, administrators, social workers, school psychologists and counsellors

Train other staff members in standardised, child-centred methods for addressing behavioural issues

A community-based organisation → planning violence prevention, analysing problems, proposing responses to problems, implementing responses, and finally evaluating strategies

Communication between students and teachers

# The latest case: Murska Sobota Secondary School of Health Science

- A 15-year-old student attacked a female student with a knife, causing minor injuries to her face and back
- Protocol: → locking themselves in their classrooms and waiting for further instructions  
→ professional psychological support was provided to all
- The investigating judge ordered the suspect to be held in custody for 30 days, later extended
- Peer violence also occurs outside of school
- Slovenia has a zero-tolerance policy toward violent incidents
- Depending on the situation in individual school environments, schools can request funds for a security guard and/or technical security equipment

# CONCLUSION

- Schools runs counter to what schools as institutions stand for — a safe place for socialisation, education, personal development and protection
- Important to promote dialogue in schools, enforce a zero-tolerance policy toward bullying and violence, and prevent aggression among young people
- Necessary to monitor children's behaviour and expressions, study the effectiveness of prevention programs
- Focus on assessing threats, particularly an individual's likelihood of committing a violent act