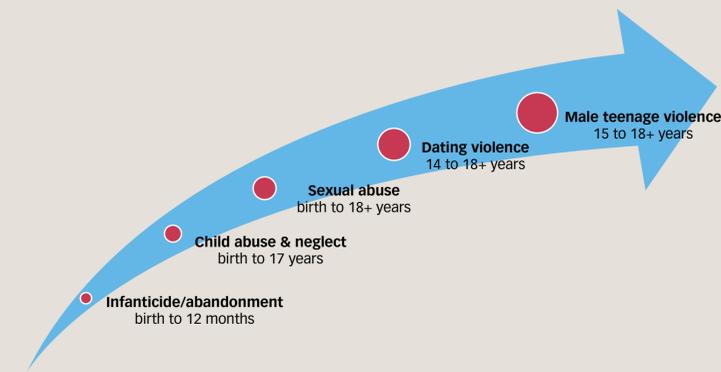


# Violence against children can be prevented

## Break the cycle of violence

- Government has put in place laws, policies and programmes to respond to violence against children. Yet children continue to be violated – physically, sexually and psychologically – in their homes, schools and communities.



- Violence starts in the home where young children witness domestic violence and are exposed to harsh and humiliating punishment. These early experiences increase the chances of girls becoming victims, and boys becoming perpetrators of violence. It is therefore essential to intervene early to break the intergenerational cycle of violence.
- Children are at increased risk as they grow older and move outside the home to attend school and engage with the wider community.
- The impact of violence extends beyond physical scars to cause long-term damage. Violence affects the well-being of children, communities and the next generation, and undermines children's psycho-social development, school performance, employment prospects and life expectancy.
- We do not know the full extent of the problem. Much of the violence takes place within the homes and personal relationships. Children don't report it, and adults turn a blind eye, which allow the cycle of violence to continue.
- Yet it is not natural to hurt or humiliate a child. Violence is a learned behaviour and can be prevented.

## Invest in promising prevention programmes

For more information about promising programmes in the *South African Child Gauge 2014*, see [www.ci.org.za](http://www.ci.org.za). This poster is jointly produced by the Children's Institute, University of Cape Town (UCT); UNICEF South Africa; the Programme to Support Pro-Poor Policy Development (PSPPD) in The Presidency; World Vision South Africa; the FNB Fund; and UCT's Safety and Violence Initiative.

## Reduce the risks and strengthen protective factors

- It is more effective to intervene early and prevent violence before it occurs, than it is to respond to the immediate and long-term consequences.
- Prevention is not just about reducing risk. It is also about strengthening protective factors, and supporting families and children.



## Make prevention everyone's business

Prevention requires strong leadership and intersectoral collaboration. Government, civil society, caregivers and children all need to work together to prevent violence against children.

**Children** can support their peers and encourage one another to speak out to stop violence and abuse.



**Parents** can learn about children's developmental needs, use positive discipline, and seek help when violence occurs.



**Family, friends and neighbours** can offer to help with child care, encourage families to get the support they need, and report abuse.



**Teachers** can use positive discipline in the classroom and build children's life skills and self-esteem.



**Social service professionals** can support and strengthen children and families, and mobilise other service providers to address local risk factors.



**Doctors and nurses** can refer vulnerable women and children to social services or a community health worker and report cases of abuse.



**Political, religious and traditional leaders** can lead by example and speak out against violence and corporal punishment.



**Police officers** can mediate conflict and provide sensitive support to women and children who have been abused.



If you know of a child in need of help, speak to a social worker or call Childline on **08000 55555**.



Parenting programmes build on the strengths of caregivers and families



Safe parks provide safety and supervision for children after school



Men can make a difference in children's lives and promote gender equity



Communication for social change shifts mind sets to prevent violence

Conceptualised by Lori Lake, Lucy Jamieson, Sharnaz Mathews and Charmaine Smith, designed by Mandy Lake-Ogby. For more information see Mathews, S., Jamieson, L., Lake, L. & Smith, C. (2014) South African Child Gauge 2014. Cape Town: Children's Institute, University of Cape Town.

© The Parent Centre [www.theparentcentre.org.za](http://www.theparentcentre.org.za)

© National Association of Child Care Workers [www.nacw.org.za](http://www.nacw.org.za)

© Sonke Gender Justice [www.genderjustice.org.za](http://www.genderjustice.org.za)

© Resources Against Child Abuse and Neglect [www.racan.org.za](http://www.racan.org.za)