

## Violence in the Community

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## From Criminal Justice to Public Health

- Criminal justice approaches attend to violence with secondary and tertiary interventions after violence occurs
- Public health approach implies that violence is a learned behavior that can be changed and prevented

## Types of Violence in U.S. Society

- Violence in the family
  - Domestic violence against women
  - Child maltreatment
  - Elder maltreatment
- Youth violence
- Workplace violence
- Mass violence and war

## Violence in the Family

Main theories of family violence:

- First focuses on abuser and possible behavioral or psychopathological causes
- Second postulates “Cycle of violence” is learned in childhood and transmitted across generations

## Violence in the Family

Main theories of family violence:

- Third theory speculates that stressful situations precipitate violence



## Domestic Violence Against Women

- Domestic violence occurs in all ethnic and cultural groups and in all educational and socioeconomic levels
- Prevalence statistics available but domestic violence severely underreported and underdiagnosed

### Domestic Violence: Characteristics of Batterers

- Often suffer from low self-esteem and have a need to use power and control tactics over victims
- Usually minimize own behavior and blame the victim for the violence
- Tend to be jealous, abusive to children, and sexually aggressive to partners

### Domestic Violence: Characteristics of Victims

- Learned helplessness
- Survivors
- Learned hopefulness



### Domestic Violence Against Women: Indicators

- Recurrent trauma history
- Proximal injuries
- Patterned, multiple, or bilateral injury
- Poor explanations or no explanations for injuries
- Concealing or acting ashamed of injuries

### Domestic Violence Against Women: Indicators

- Delay in seeking treatment with wounds in various stages of healing
- Physical injury during pregnancy
- Signs of depression
- Other psychological cues
- Alcohol or substance abuse symptoms

### Domestic Violence Against Women: Indicators

- Chronic pain with no known cause
- Seeking medical care for minor problems
- Missing scheduled appointments or only coming in for acute care
- Overly protective, controlling partner who visits professionals with client

### Child Maltreatment

- Physical abuse
- Physical neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse



## Incidence of Child Abuse

- Poverty and single parent families are at increased risk
- Younger children are at highest risk
- Underestimated because approximately 85% of deaths from abuse are coded as some other cause on death certificates

## Elder Maltreatment: Categories

- Domestic abuse
- Institutional abuse
- Self-abuse
- Neglect



## Demographics of Elder Abuse

- For every one reported incident of elder abuse, neglect or self neglect, approximately five go unreported
- Age and Income affect abuse
- Females experience more of all forms of abuse except abandonment

## Elder Maltreatment: Types and Indicators

- Physical abuse (26%)
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional/Psychological abuse (35%)
- Neglect (49%)
- Abandonment (3%)
- Financial or material exploitation (30%)

## Forms of Family Violence

- Physical Abuse: Inflicting injury or illness, withholding necessities of health
- Sexual Abuse: Coercing any sexual contact without consent, undermining sexual identity

## Forms of Family Violence

- Psychological Abuse: Instilling fear, isolating, undermining sense of self-worth
- Economic Abuse: Taking funds, making financially dependent

## Youth Violence: Scope of the Problem

- Youth disproportionately affected by violent injury and death in the U.S.
- At-risk group of perpetrators has shifted to younger ages and females appear to be more involved in violent behavior
- Homicide and suicide rates higher in U.S. than in rest of industrialized world (<15)

## Gangs

- Gangs are about power, fear, intimidation, crime, and very often extreme forms of violence
- Gang activities cut across all socioeconomic, racial/ethnic, and gender boundaries and exist in rural, inner-city, suburban communities

## Gangs: Warning Signs

Some items not gang related, but a combination may point to an association:

- Unexplained wealth
- Unexplained change in types and designs of jewelry
- Lack of participation in typical family activities

## Gangs: Warning Signs

- Unexplained and atypical music
- Habitual lying
- Aggressive or violent behavior toward family or former friends
- Drug/alcohol use
- Defiance of authority
- Blaming others for troubles

## Gangs: Warning Signs

- Unexplained tattoos
- Denial of a problem
- Refurbishing or reorganizing room
- Expressing feelings of rejection
- Association with youngsters of similar styles of dress, grooming, writing, and language

## Gangs: Levels of Involvement

- Wannabes, Peripheral, Regulars, Leaders, and Imitators
- Any of these levels of involvement can be dangerous for both participants and those that come into contact with them in the community setting

## Gangs: Response

- Prevention Strategies
- Intervention Strategies
- Suppression
- Two most important issues to overcome:
  - admit that the problem exists
  - overcome agency & jurisdiction issues

## Gun Control

- The proportion of youths committing violent acts has not altered, but the lethality of those acts is greater
- Risk of suicide is three times greater and the risk of homicide is five times greater when a gun is present in the home

## Gun Control

- Ease of access to guns is viewed as contributing to problem of youth violence, and interest in public health policy on gun control has become more intense
- Both ANA and APHA have been advocates for policy proposals to decrease access to guns

## Dating Violence

- Depending on the definition of violence, reported nonsexual courtship violence rates range from 5% to 65%
- 27% female college students have experienced rape or attempted rape
- 80% to 90% of rapes on campuses are committed by acquaintances

## Suicide

- 9th leading cause of death for Americans
- 3rd leading cause of death ages 15 to 24
- 90% of suicides in U.S. among whites
- Males committing suicide almost 4 times more often than females
- Growing problem among African American youth (157% increase)

## Causes of Youth Violence

- Theories on causation focus on the early development of aggressive behavior and tendencies for it to exhibit at earlier ages
- Societal factors that have made youth aggression more destructive:
  - easy access to handguns
  - increasing violence in the media

## Workplace Violence

- Homicide
- Beatings
- Rape
- Assault
- Battery
- Theft
- Robbery
- Threats
- Harassment
- Intimidation

## Mass Violence and War: Scope of the Health Problem

- Physical health
- Psychological health
- Soldiers' postcombat health
- Impact on health determinants



## Roles of Nurses Related to War

- Surveillance and documentation of the health effects of war and causes of war
- Education and awareness-raising programs on the health effects of war
- Advocation of preventive policies and actions

## Roles of Nurses Related to War

- Direct action to prevent war and its consequences
- Direct care of those wounded and dying from combat



## Interventions to Prevent Violence

- Interventions are efforts to break the causal chain between potential violence and actual violence
- Interventions related to violence can be directed to all three system levels
- Interventions related to violence can be representative of a level of prevention