

VIOLENCE AGAINST THE GIRL CHILD

Violence against children and youth is common globally. An estimated 1 billion children—half of all the children in the world—are victims of violence every year.

Violence against children and youth is costly. The economic impact of violence against children and youth is estimated at hundreds of billions of dollars per year.

Children and youth often experience more than one form of violence. In Tanzania, for example, more than 80% of adolescent males and females aged 13 to 24 years who experienced sexual abuse as a child also experienced physical violence.

Girls and young women are more vulnerable to sexual violence. Between 11% and 26% of adolescent girls and young women in sub-Saharan African countries that completed a Violence Against Children and Youth Survey (VACS) experienced sexual violence in the past 12 months. For 7%–55% of adolescent girls and young women who ever had sex, their first sexual experience was forced or coerced, increasing their risk for HIV infection.

Violence against children and youth can lead to lifelong health problems. Children who experience violence have higher risks for health and social problems, such as chronic disease, HIV, mental health issues, substance misuse, and reproductive health problems. Violence also leads to continued cycles of violence, as young people who experience violence are more likely to perpetrate violence against others later in life.

How can we prevent violence against children and youth?

Violence is preventable. A first step in preventing violence globally is understanding how much it happens, where it occurs, and its impacts on the health and well-being of children and youth. High-quality, timely data on violence provides critical information to develop prevention strategies based on the best available evidence on what works to stop the violence.

BETWEEN



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