

VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN IN MACEDONIA

Dimitrinka Jordanova Peshevsk, University of American College,
Skopje

Kadri Hadzi Hamza, Medical Faculty, University “St Cyril and
Methodij”, Skopje

Outline

- Definitions
- Risk factors, consequences and life course
- Scale and burden
- International and national policy and legal framework
- What works for prevention
- Research and action agenda ahead
- Conclusions

International focus on prevention of violence against children

- The United Nations General Assembly resolution 44/25 on Convention on the rights of Child (CRC) 1989
<http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/crc.pdf>)
- 2001/220/JHA: Council Framework Decision of 15 March 2001 on the standing of victims in criminal proceedings (*Official Journal L 082, 22/03/2001 P. 0001 – 0004*), <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32001F0220>
- *World Health Assembly resolution WHA56.24 on implementing the recommendations of the world report on violence and health*. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2003
(http://apps.who.int/gb/archive/pdf_files/WHA56/ea5624.pdf)
- *WHO Regional Committee for Europe resolution EUR/RC55/R9 on prevention of injuries in the WHO European Region*. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2005
(http://www.euro.who.int/data/assets/pdf_file/0017/88100/RC55_eres09.pdf)
- United Nations study on violence against children, 2006

International focus on prevention of violence against children

- Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, Lanzarote 2007 (<http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/EN/treaties/Html/201.htm>)
- The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union In the light of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and of the European Social Charter (revised) 2008 (https://www.coe.int/t/ngo/Source/reading_guide_charter_en.pdf)
- Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and the Council of 13 December 2011 on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography and replacing Council Framework Decision 2004/68/JHA (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32011L0093>)
- European report on preventing child maltreatment, 2013
- *WHO Regional Committee for Europe resolution EU/RC64/R6: Investing in children: the European child and adolescent health strategy 2015–2020 and Investing in children: the European child maltreatment prevention action plan 2015–2020*. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2014.

Comprehensive definition

Main focus Child abuse and neglect

Abuse

- Emotional – recurrent humiliation
- Physical – beating, not spanking
- Sexual abuse

Neglect

- * Physical
- * Emotional

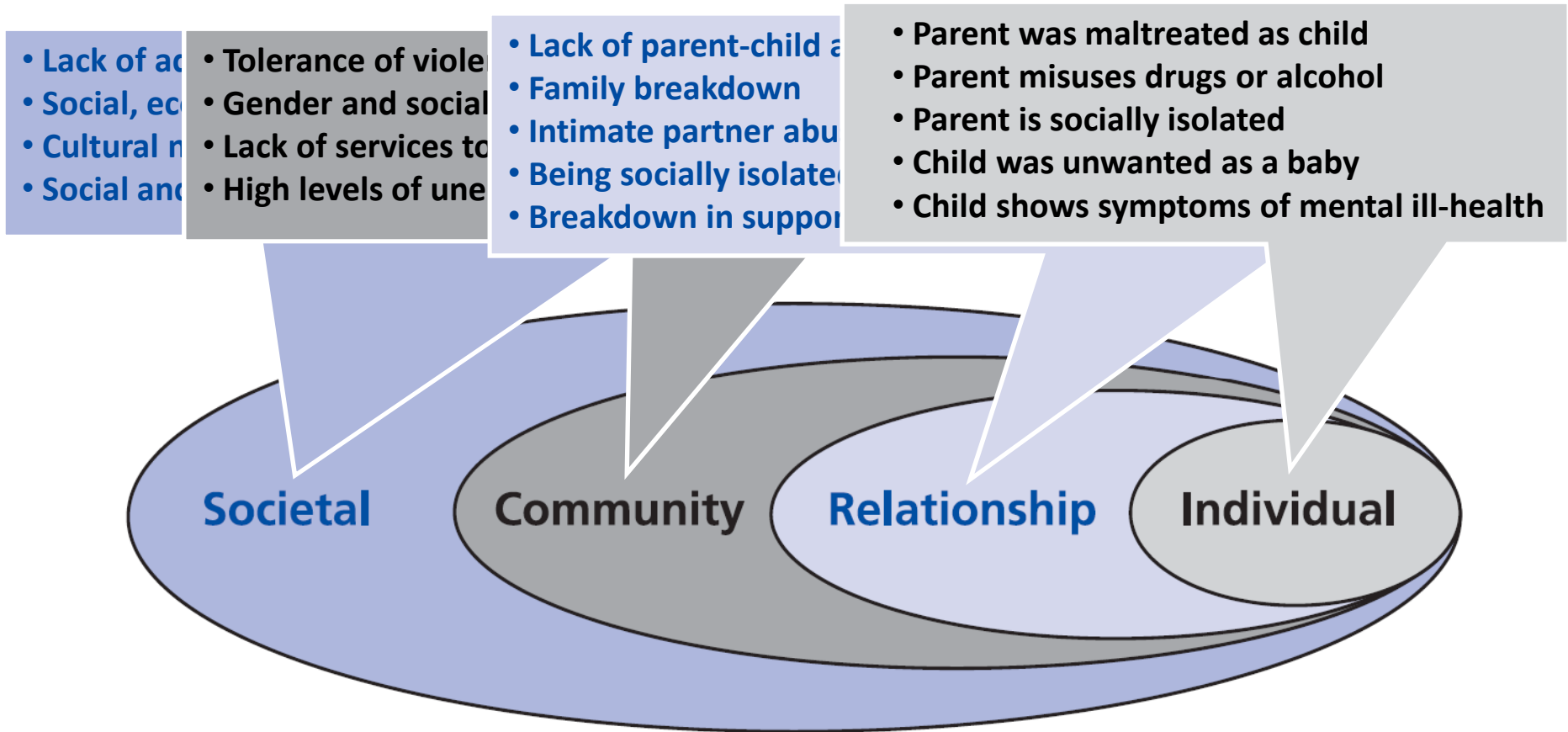
Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)

A broad concept that includes child maltreatment and household dysfunction:

- Mother treated violently
- Household member is alcoholic or drug user
- Household member is imprisoned
- Household member is chronically depressed, suicidal, mentally ill, in psychiatric hospital
- Child not raised by both biological parents

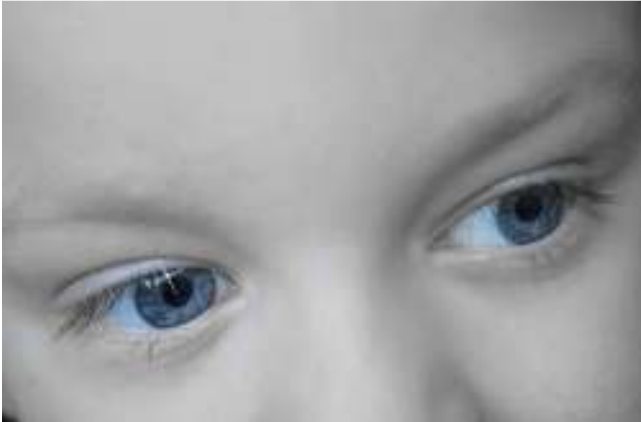
Household dysfunction is a risk factor for child maltreatment

Risk and protective factors



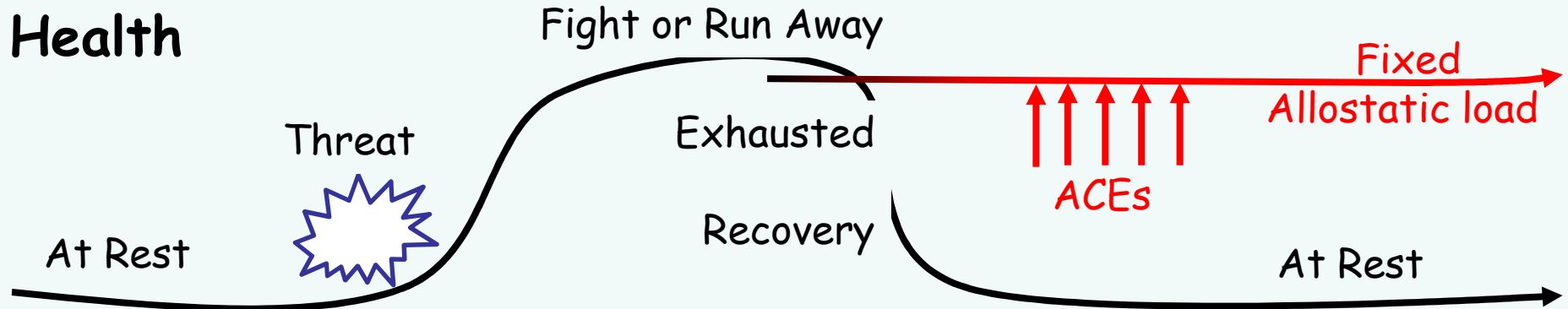
Taken from: *World report on violence and health* edited by Krug, E. et al. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2002.

Early Life Experience and The Brain



Critical Years

- First 2 years - baby's brain grows from 25% to 80% of adult size
- Development continues in childhood learning **empathy, trust, community**



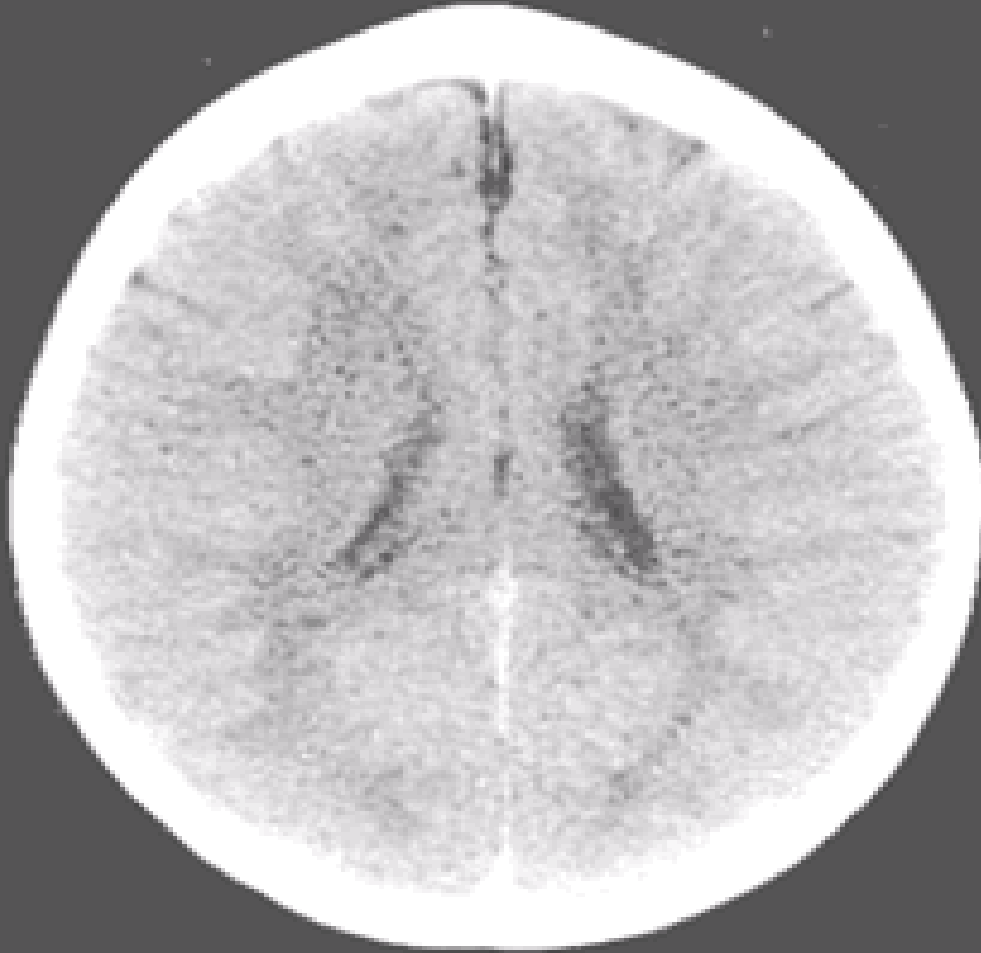
Chronic Stress from ACEs

- Violence - over- develop 'life-preserving' brain
NEUTRAL CUES LOOK THREATENING
- School – anxious, disengaged, poor learner

Tau et al, 2010; Mercy, Butchart, Bellis et al, 2014

Brain scan of children with normal development and neglect

3-Year-Old Children



Normal



Extreme Neglect

← Life Course



- Physical injury
- Health problems
- Behavioural problems
- Poor social development
- Poor school performance



- Substance use
- Delinquency and crime
- Violence
- Unemployment
- Poor mental health

- Risky sexual behaviour



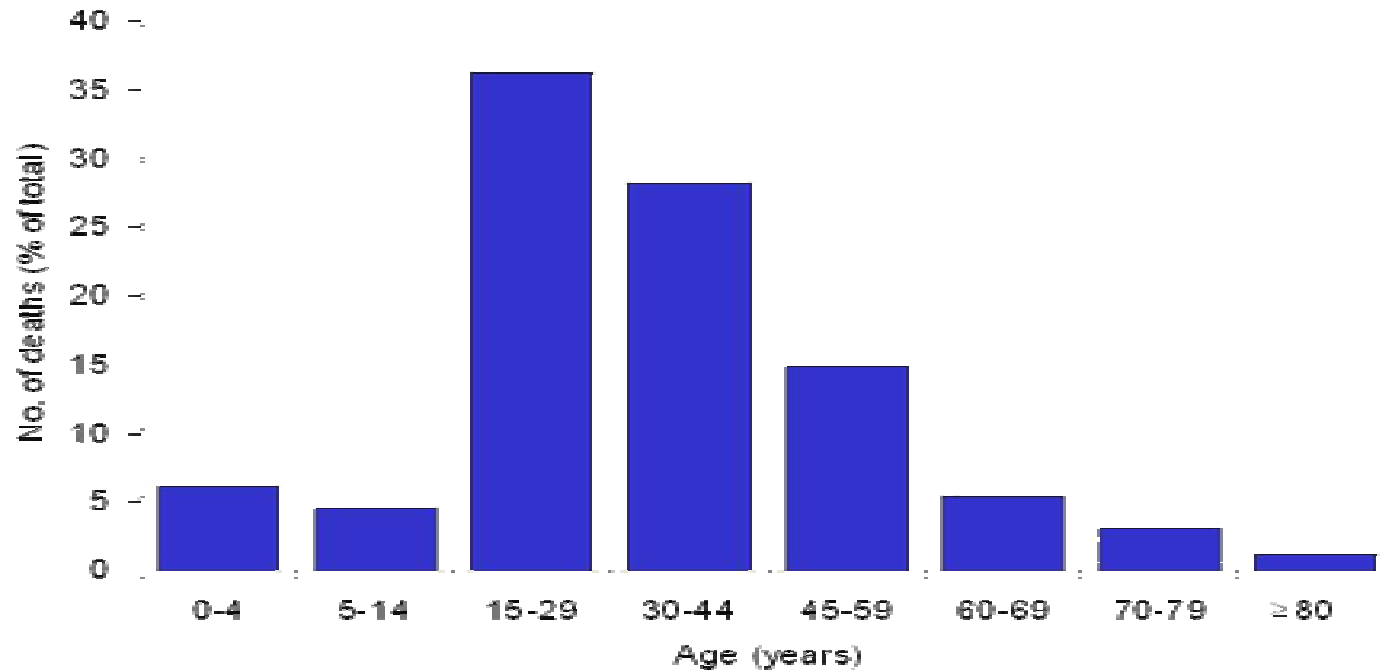
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- Cancer
- Suicide attempt
- Premature mortality

Child abuse and neglect is a hidden form of violence in the EU Region: only 90% of it comes to the attention of authorities

Types of abuse and neglect	Prevalence	Children abused and neglected
Sexual abuse	9.6%	18 million
Physical abuse	22.9%	44 million
Emotional abuse	29.1%	55 million
Physical neglect	16.3%	31 million
Emotional neglect	18.4%	35 million

The burden of violence

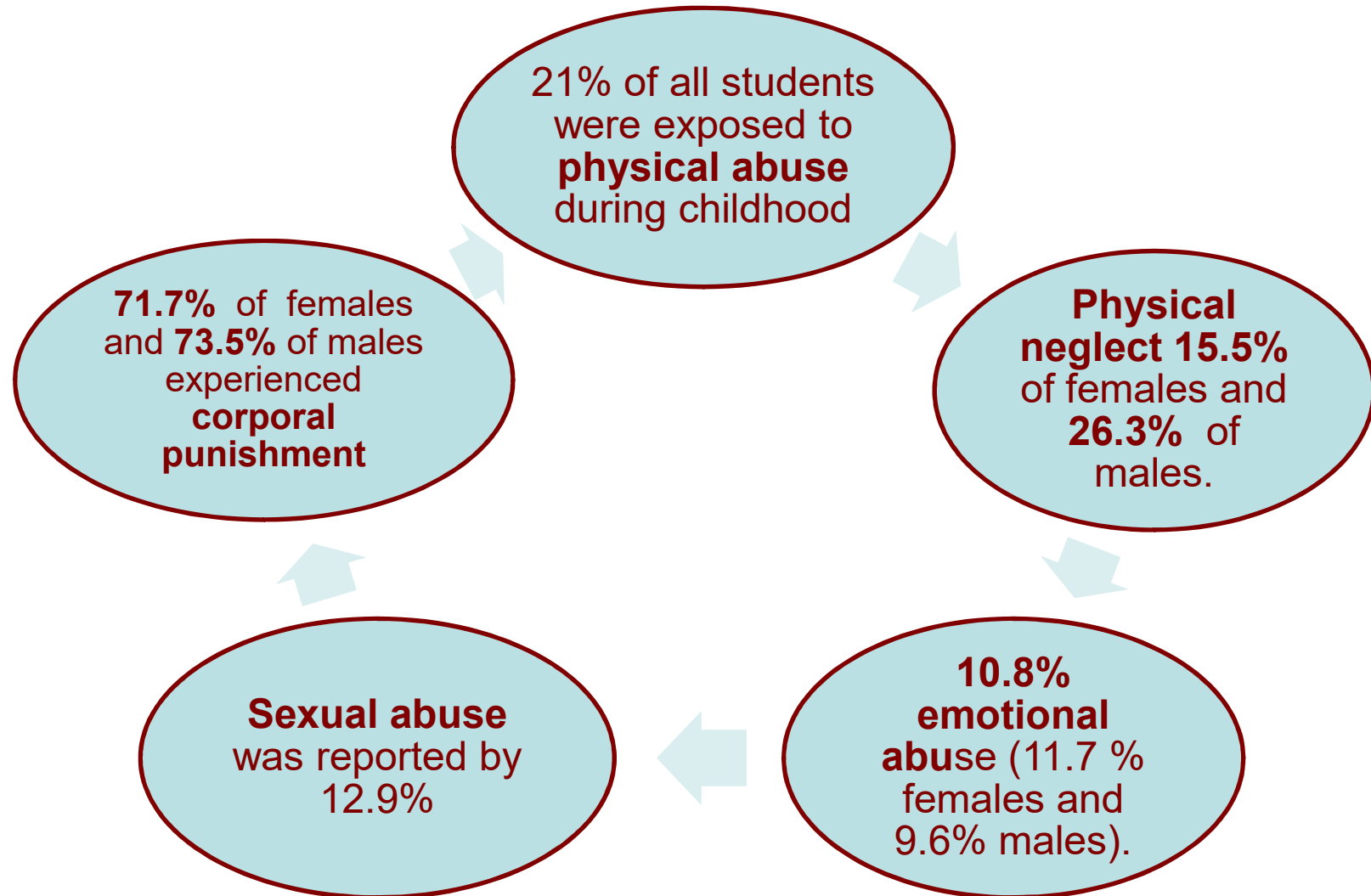
Age distribution of global interpersonal violence mortality, 2000



Over 60% of the global mortality due to interpersonal violence occurs among young persons aged between 15–44 years.

Source: WHO Health for all 2000

ACE Study in Macedonia, 2013



Peer violence in Macedonia, ACE study 2013

Peer violence N= 664 students	Male		Female	
	Never (rarely)	Often	Never (rarely)	Often
Swear at you, insulted you, or put you down	201 (77.9%)	57 (22.1%)	336 (82.76%)	70 (17.24%)
Hit you hard that you had marks or were injured	255 (98.84%)	3 (1.16%)	405 (99.75%)	1 (0.257%)
Push, grab or throw something at you	247 (95.74%)	11 (4.26%)	396 (97.54%)	10 (2.46%)
Made you afraid that you might be physically hurt	246 (95.35%)	12 (4.65%)	383 (94.33%)	23 (5.67%)

2007/2008 Global School-Based Student Health Results

Representative sample of 2,114 students (male 52.4% and female 47.6%) - 30 schools

Type of violence/activity	Male %(CI)	Female %(CI)	Total %(CI)	13-15 years old	16 years and above
Percentage of students who were bullied one or more days during the past 30 days	10.2 (7.7-12.8)	9.8 (7.5-12.2)	10.0 (8.3-11.7)	10.1 (8.2-12.0)	10.6 (8.6-12.6)
Percentage of students who carried a weapon, such as a gun, knife, one or more days during the past 30 days	8.5 (6.3- 10.7)	1.3 (0.3 - 2.3)	5.1 (3.7 - 6.5)	4.6 (3.0 - 6.3)	6.9 (4.8 - 8.9)

CHILDREN IN MACEDONIA

A Situation Analysis, 2008

Anecdotal evidence from a 2007 baseline study commissioned by UNICEF on educational quality:

- suggests that **6% of girls and 16% of boys** among ethnic **Macedonian children**, take part in abusing other children in school.
- Around **20 % of girls and 9 % of boys** among ethnic **Albanian children** occasionally take part in abusing other children in school.

Studies on prevalence of ACEs in ALB, MKD, MNE, SER

ACE (during the first 18 years of life)	Albania Total (%) (N=1437)	Macedonia Total (%) (N=1277)	Montenegro Total (%) (N=1600)	Serbia Total (%) (N=2381)
Physical abuse	41.5	21	24.3	11.4
Emotional abuse	51.5	10.8	30.4	17.8
Sexual abuse	6	14.1	3.9	5
Physical neglect	6.5	20.9	18.8	9.5
Emotional neglect	11.2	30.6	27	15.5
Household dysfunction				
Illicit drug use	1.6	3.6	3.6	NA
Alcohol misuse	20.5	10.7	11.9	9.1
Mental illness in the family	6.8	6.9	6.1	6.6
Witnessed mother being treated violently	30.1	10	24	18.7
Incarcerated family member	3.8	5	7.8	NA
Separated/divorced parents	6.6	3.8	10.6	12

Policy framework on violence against children in Macedonia

- **National Action Plan for Prevention and Protection of Child Abuse and Neglect (2013-2015)**
- **National Strategy for prevention and protection domestic violence (2008-2011)**
- **National Strategy for prevention and protection domestic violence (2012-2015)**
- **Action Plan for Prevention and Combatting Sexual Abuse of Children and Pedophilia (2009-2012)**
- **National Strategy for the Fight against Poverty and Social Exclusion (2010–2020)**
- **National Plan of Action on the Rights of the Child (2012–2015)**
- **Action Plan for Street Children (2013–2015)**

The Whole-of-the-Government- approach

Policy intervention:

National task force for Violence and health – 2005

Governmental National Coordination Body for domestic violence prevention: representatives of Ministry of Health, Labor and social policy, Interior, Education, Justice, NGOs (2009)

Protocol for treatment of victims of domestic violence—collaboration with Ministry of Health, Labor and social welfare, Interior, Education, Justice, NGOs, UN agencies (2010)

Protocol for intersectoral collaboration of responsible institutions

Protocol for protection of domestic violence (2015)

Protocols for child abuse and neglect, sexual abuse and pedophilia (2015)

Legal framework on violence against children in Macedonia

- **Law on Child Protection** (Official Gazette of the R.M., No. 98/2000, 17/2003, 65/2004, 113/2005, 98/2008, 107/2008, 46/2009, 83/2009).
- **The Family Law** (Official Gazette of the R.M., No 86/1992, 9/1996, 19/2000, 29/2001, 38/2004, 60/2005, 33/2006, 84/2009, 112/2009).
- **The Law on Primary Education** (Official Gazette of the R.M., No. 103/08, 33/10, 116/10, 156/10, 18/11, 51/11, 6/12 and 100/12)
- **Law on Secondary Education** (Official Gazette of the R.M., No.44/95, 24/96, 34/96, 35/97, 82/99, 29/02, 40/03, 42/03, 67/04, 55/05, 81/05, 113/05, 35/06, 30/07, 49/07, 81/08, 92/08, 33/10, 116/10, 156/10, 18/11, 51/11,6/12 and 100/12)
- **Law on Health Care** (Official Gazette of the R.M., No. 17/97; 15/02; 7/04; 3/05; 19/05; 26/05; 16/06; 11/07; 12/07; 16/08; 27/08; 29/09).
- **Law for prevention and protection from DV** adopted (2014) and relevant by laws (2015)

Success story

Institutional set up:

Violence Prevention set up on governmental agenda (priority of collaboration)

National VIP focal point appointed since 2003

Department for violence and injury control and prevention established in the IPH in 2004

IPH VIP Department inaugurated as Safe Community Affiliate Support Center (2012)

Counseling Center for perpetrators established in Clinic for psychiatry (2012)

Evidence Research:

Report on violence and health in Macedonia and guide for prevention with WHO 2006

Global School-Based Student Health Results - Republic of Macedonia with UNICEF – 2008

Community injury survey Report with WHO – 2008

Survey Of Adverse Childhood Experiences among Young People in Macedonia , WHO – 2013

WHO Global Status Report on Violence Prevention-2014

Community survey of elder maltreatment: A report from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia - 2014

Joint UN Program “Strengthening National Capacities to Prevent Domestic Violence”

How the UN helps

By 2011, the UN and its partners expect that victims of domestic violence will be able to access better support services, enabling them to make the changes they need to prevent becoming victims again. The programme targets national policy, victims support, and public awareness in five ways:

Better National Policy by:

- Providing technical advice and training to the National Coordinative Body (tasked with implementing the Protection strategy). Enabling the Body to effectively coordinate the roll out of the Strategy across all relevant ministries and NGOs, and to develop related policies.
- To assist policy makers in gaining a better understanding and to monitor the domestic violence situation, the programme will establish a system for collecting and analyzing data, and train relevant people to manage the system.

Programme at a glance

Duration: December 2008 - August 2012

UN Agencies:

UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO, UNIFEM

Partners: Ministry of Labor and Social Politics, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Science

Funding (US\$):

2,458,000 Netherlands

958,000 UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women

43,000 UN Agencies

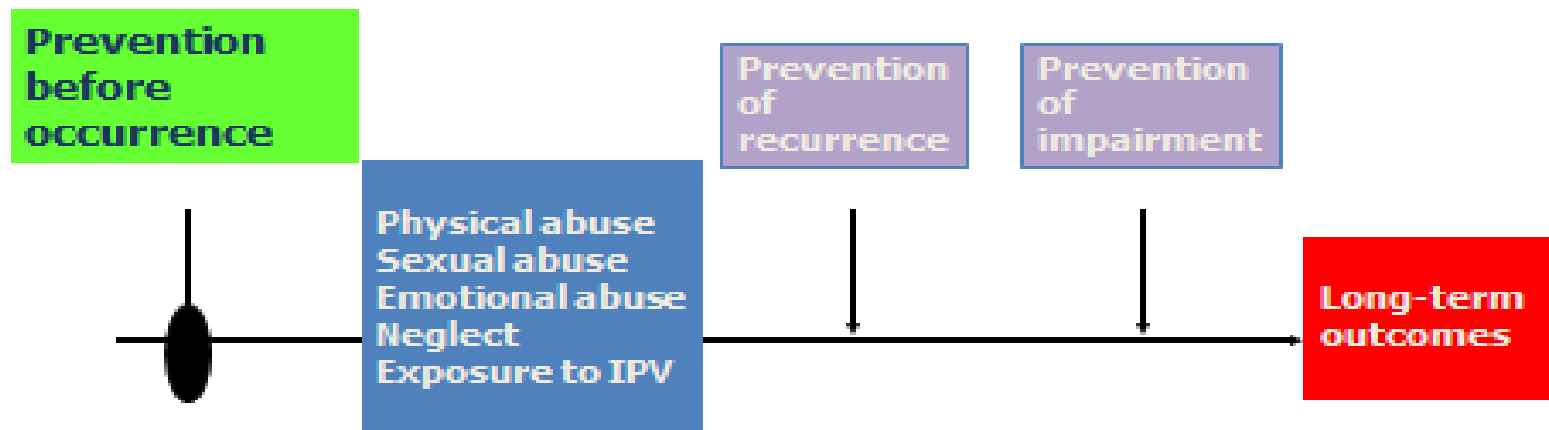
70,000 Government in-kind

Successes story - Advocacy



Why effort on prevention of violence against children?

Where prevention can work



(Adapted from MacMillan et al., 2009)

Approach to violence against children prevention

- Interdisciplinary and intersectoral
- Preventing child maltreatment before it occurs
 - **Child maltreatment prevention** = measures taken to prevent child maltreatment occurring in the first place.
 - **Child protection** = measures taken after child maltreatment has occurred to reduce its consequences and prevent it from re-occurring.
- Focuses on preventing child maltreatment at the level of the population, not the individual
- Ecological model: individual, family/ relationship, community, and societal levels

Evidence-based prevention practices and victim support services in Macedonia

KEY	YES/NO	Once/few times 1	Larger scale 2
Child maltreatment prevention programmes			
Home-visit programmes	YES	1	2
Parenting programme	YES	1	2
Training to recognize/avoid abusive situations	YES	1	2
Youth violence prevention programmes			
Preschool and school enrichment programmes	YES	1	2
Life skills and social development programmes	YES	1	2
Mentoring	YES	1	2
After-school supervision	YES	1	2
School anti-bullying	YES	1	2
Intimate partner violence prevention programmes			
Dating violence prevention in schools	YES	1	2
Microfinance and gender equity programme	YES	1	2
Social and cultural norms-change	YES	1	2
Sexual violence prevention programmes			
School and college programmes	YES	1	2
Physical environment changes	YES	1	2
Social and cultural norms change	YES	1	2
Victim services			
Child protection services	YES	1	2
Medico-legal services for sexual violence	YES	1	2
Mental health services	YES	1	2

Source: Adopted from *Global Status Report on Violence Prevention, 2014*

Conclusion

- Preventing and protecting violence against children is not simply a matter of **parents/teacher doing a better job**, but rather it is about **creating a context in which “doing better” is easier.**
- **Progressive public policy and the replication of evidence-based interventions** are only part of what is needed to successfully combat violence against children.
- It remains important that **violence toward children and a persistent lack of care and supervision are unacceptable.**
- Individuals have the ability to accept **personal responsibility** for reducing acts of child abuse and neglect by providing support to each other and **professional responsibility** offering protection to all children within their family and their community.

Thank you for your attention!



Prevention is
BETTER
THAN CURE!

