

STOPPING

Violence in Schools:

A GUIDE FOR TEACHERS



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Acknowledgements

The production of this guide benefited greatly from the contribution and support of several experts and UNESCO colleagues at HQ and in the field.

Particular thanks go to the experts from the Scientific Committee of the International Observatory of Violence in the School Environment for their critical review of the first draft.

We are also grateful to Deirdre De Bruyn and Linda Tinio for their support in further developing and finalizing the guide.

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F o r e w o r d

Foreword

“Stopping Violence in Schools: A Guide for Teachers” is a UNESCO contribution in support of Education for All and the United Nations International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010). It is also a follow-up to the 2006 World Report on Violence against Children which represents the first comprehensive international effort to examine not only the scale of violence against children but also its impact. It is particularly timely given that this year is the 20th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

If the world is to achieve the Education for All goals, attention must be given to violence in learning contexts. This guide represents an important step forward in the prevention and eradication of school violence, and reflects a concerted effort by a wide range of experts, educators, concerned stakeholders and relevant institutions towards this end. Numerous expert meetings, seminars and conferences were held in support of the development of this guide. Notable amongst these are the Expert Meeting, “Stopping Violence in Schools: What Works?” hosted by UNESCO headquarters in 2007, and the 4th World Conference on Violence at School and Public Policies sponsored by UNESCO and organized by the International Observatory of Violence in the School Environment in 2008 in Lisbon. The Scientific Committee of the Observatory was instrumental in the preparation of this guide providing valuable input and assessment.

Teachers and students can use this guide to address and prevent violence. School violence is an immensely complex issue and thus requires numerous factors to be addressed. Such factors include the need for student participation; a holistic approach involving parents, educators and the community; linking of policy, legislation and practice; the development of indicators on violence; and cultural sensitivity in addressing concepts such as the universality of human rights as part of a human rights-based approach.

The guide offers a key starting point for the international community to take action. The price of inaction is costly as the repercussions of violence continue to affect children throughout their lives, hindering emotional and cognitive development, health, behaviour and ultimately, society at large. No form of violence is justified, and all violence is preventable. This guide was created to bring about substantial changes by assisting school communities and the broader international community to respond to violence and implement measures to prevent it.

Introduction

Transmitting knowledge is only one part of what teachers do. They also make an essential contribution to the emotional and cognitive development of children, and play a central role in social development and change. Although some students may unfortunately experience violence in their homes, teachers can provide them with alternative ways of being by modelling constructive, non-violent behaviour and by fostering empathy and peaceful conflict resolution skills.

“Stopping Violence in Schools: A Guide for Teachers” examines various forms of violence that take place in schools, and offers practical suggestions as to what teachers can do to prevent them. Ten action areas are proposed, each with specific examples that teachers can adapt to address and prevent violence. Excerpts from relevant international normative instruments as well as a list of links to online resources for stopping violence in schools are annexed at the end of the book.

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While teachers have a key role to play in stopping violence in schools, they cannot tackle violence alone. Because the causes of violence in schools are multi-faceted, stopping violence in schools requires multi-dimensional actions engaging all members of a school's community in a holistic manner. Parents, social workers, community leaders and institutions must work side-by-side with students, teachers and administrators. The actions suggested in this guide will be most effective when taken as part of this holistic approach where everyone in the school community is involved.

At the heart of the holistic school approach is a ***human rights-based approach to education***. This addresses the right of every person to quality education and respect for human rights. A rights-based approach increases access to and participation in schooling as it fosters inclusion, diversity, equal opportunities and non-discrimination. It improves the quality of education by promoting student-centred and participatory teaching practices and by creating a safe learning environment, both of which are fundamental for learning to take place. Respect for human rights supports the social and emotional development of children by ensuring their human dignity and fundamental freedoms, which are necessary for students to reach their full potential. Moreover, respect for human rights lays the groundwork for a culture of peace by fostering respect for differences, which is critical to violence prevention. The daily practice of a human rights-based approach leads to the creation of a ‘rights-based school’, a safe environment conducive to learning where teachers and students together enjoy and fully benefit from the educational process.

Forms of Violence in Schools and Their Consequences

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Numerous factors shape violence in schools. They include various cultural understandings of violence, socioeconomic factors, a student's home life and the external environment of the school. For instance, there can be great disparities between cultures and societies in defining what constitutes a violent act or environment. Regardless of the cultural or socioeconomic context of the school, violence occurs in both physical and psychological forms.

The *World Report on Violence against Children*¹ identifies the main forms of violence as follows:

- physical and psychological punishment;
- bullying;
- sexual and gender-based violence;
- external violence: effects of gangs, conflict situations, weapons and fighting.

The following section will describe the above four forms of violence in schools with corresponding consequences for education.

¹ The World Report on Violence against Children was commissioned by the United Nations Secretary-General to provide an understanding of the nature, extent, causes and consequences of different forms of violence against children (physical, psychological, and sexual). It looks at five main settings in which violence takes place – the family, schools, care and residential institutions as well as detention facilities and prisons, in work situations, and in communities and on the streets.

Physical and Psychological Punishment

Physical and Psychological Punishment

The Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)² defines corporal or physical punishment as any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light. In educational settings, it involves hitting ('smacking', 'slapping', 'spanking') students with the hand or with an implement. It can also involve, for example, kicking, shaking or throwing students, scratching, pinching, biting, pulling hair, boxing ears, forcing students to stay in uncomfortable positions, burning, scalding or forced ingestion as in washing students' mouths out with soap. Corporal punishment, in the view of the Committee, is invariably degrading.

There are also many non-physical forms of punishment that are cruel and demeaning. This includes punishment which belittles, humiliates, scares, threatens or ridicules a student. Moreover, the very use of physical force by a person who is larger and stronger than the student conveys a clear message of power, control and intimidation, reinforcing the fact that acts of physical aggression are intertwined with psychological aggression.

CONSEQUENCES:

Physical or corporal punishment carries serious repercussions for a student's mental and physical health. It has been linked to slow development of social skills, depression, anxiety; aggressive behaviour and a lack of empathy or caring for others. Corporal punishment is therefore not only detrimental to the student or the child at whom it is directed, but also to teachers, caregivers and other students and children as it creates far greater difficulties to overcome. Corporal punishment also breeds resentment and hostility, making good teacher-student and student-student relationships difficult to maintain in the classroom. It makes teachers' work harder, less rewarding and immensely frustrating. Furthermore, it neglects to teach students how to think critically, make sound moral decisions, cultivate inner control, and respond to life's circumstances and frustrations in a non-violent way. Such punishment shows students that the use of force - be it verbal, physical or emotional - is acceptable, especially when it is directed at younger, weaker individuals. This lesson leads to increased incidents of bullying and an overall culture of violence in schools.

² Committee on the Rights of the Child is the body of experts that monitors the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Bullying Bullying Bullying Bullying

A student is being bullied when s/he is exposed repeatedly over time to aggressive behaviour that intentionally inflicts injury or discomfort through physical contact, verbal attacks, fighting or psychological manipulation. Bullying involves an imbalance of power and can include teasing, taunting, use of hurtful nicknames, physical violence or social exclusion. A bully can operate alone or within a group of peers. Bullying may be direct, such as one child demanding money or possessions from another, or indirect, such as a group of students spreading rumours about another. Cyber bullying is harassment through e-mail, cell phones, text messages and defamatory websites.

Children may be more vulnerable to bullying if they live with a disability, express a sexual preference different from the mainstream, or come from a minority ethnic or cultural group or a certain socio-economic background. Bullying sometimes leads to fatal physical attacks.

CONSEQUENCES:

For both the bully and the student who is bullied, the cycle of violence and intimidation results in greater interpersonal difficulties and poor performance in school. Students who are bullied are more likely than their peers to be depressed, lonely, or anxious and have low self-esteem. Bullies often act aggressively out of frustration, humiliation, anger and in response to social ridicule.

Sexual and Gender-based Violence

Sexual and Gender-based Violence

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Gender-based violence may take a psychological, physical and/or sexual form and relates to the enforcing or upholding of power imbalances between the sexes. Gender-based violence works to actively reinforce gender inequalities, stereotypes and socially imposed roles. Although girls are more often vulnerable to sexual and gender-based violence, boys, too, are at risk.

Gender-related violence in schools can be physical, such as corporal punishment of girls who do not act in a 'ladylike' way. It can be sexual, as in rape. It can be harassment or exploitation by other students, teachers or school staff, or it may be psychological as in blaming the victims of rape. Sometimes this violence takes the form of punishing or shaming students because of their sex or sexuality.

CONSEQUENCES:

Data on students' exposure to sexual violence in schools is limited, due to the fact that they are hesitant to report acts of sexual violence for fear of being shamed, stigmatized, not believed or retaliated against.

Sexual assault and other forms of gender-based violence in schools are significant factors in low enrolment and drop-out rates for girls. Gender-based violence not only acts to discourage girls from going to school but may also cause parents to prohibit their daughters from attending school for fear that they too will be victimized. Sexual violence against boys in school can cause particular shame as it is often considered a taboo subject.

Sexual and gender-based violence puts students at risk of sexually transmitted disease, unwanted pregnancy, low self-esteem and diminished performance at school. It also has repercussions on the family and the community.

External violence: effects of gangs, conflict situations, weapons and fighting

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Violence that occurs outside of the school environment, such as gang violence, political conflict, police brutality and domestic violence is often reproduced in the school environment.

Gang violence in schools includes beatings, stabbings and shootings, and tends to be more severe, even deadly, compared to other forms of violence in schools, especially when associated with the trafficking of illicit drugs. Political instability and conflict including police brutality are also examples of external violence that profoundly impact the nature of violence in schools.

External violence in a surrounding school community can likewise infiltrate the school, resulting in weapon-carrying and increased incidents of violence. Students may carry weapons because they feel threatened, or because guns and weapons are accepted as a part of a community's daily life. Fighting generally involves conflict where it is not easy to make the distinction between perpetrator and victim. Bullying can lead to fighting, with or without weapons.

CONSEQUENCES:

When students are involved with gangs or live in communities where gangs and drugs are part of the culture, this can directly lead to fighting, weapons and drug-related violence within the school.

Conflict situations can impair students' ability to learn and to attend school. Conflicts may also impact school infrastructure, availability of qualified teachers, and distribution of and access to learning materials. Reports from countries in conflict have found that the situation exposes students to violence, increasing their risk of being victimized both in and out of school.

Ten Actions to Stop Violence in Schools

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Ten Actions to Stop Violence in Schools

This section offers ten action areas with corresponding practical examples, designed for teachers to address and prevent violence in classrooms and schools. Some are basic actions that teachers can immediately begin implementing in the classroom, such as using constructive discipline and eliminating corporal punishment. Others require greater levels of involvement from school staff and the community, such as implementing school safety mechanisms.

In each action area, a complementary in-class activity that the teacher can propose to her/his students is provided. These in-class activities aim at assisting students in creating and maintaining more harmonious interactions with their fellow students and teachers. They can be presented by the teacher as part of a classroom discussion, or can be used as a starting point for further creative activities, such as role-playing or poster-making contests. By giving specific pointers to students that accompany the teachers' practical actions, a teacher-student dialogue can be stimulated.

These ten action areas for teachers and students do not constitute a panacea for the prevention of violence in schools. They serve to help develop a non-violent school culture, and they should be adapted to every school environment by means of a continuous dialogue between teachers and students as well as the school principal, guidance counsellors, community leaders and parents' associations. A positive, non-punitive and non-violent school environment ensures everybody's rights – teachers' and students' alike.

1. Advocate a holistic approach involving students, school staff, parents and the community

- **Speak** to the school principal, guidance counsellor, colleagues, students, parents and community leaders to achieve a common understanding of the problem of violence in your school. Teachers cannot prevent violence in schools alone. The entire school community must come together to agree on a strong and clear message that violence, sexual harassment, bullying and intolerance are unacceptable in the school environment. When everyone is aware of the different ways that violence occurs, the people it affects and its impact, finding solutions will be much easier.
- **Help** your school develop a plan of action in collaboration with those mentioned above as well as health care professionals, law enforcement officers, businesses and other key community groups. Violence prevention plans developed in broad consultation and cooperation are more likely to succeed than those prepared by a single group of professionals acting alone.
- **Look** at the way in which your school can reduce risk factors, for example, by ensuring a well lit physical environment, or by teaching students non-violent conflict resolution skills. Reducing opportunities for violence and giving students the tools to prevent it are both crucial in creating a safe school.

In-Class Activity: Ask students to talk with one another, their teacher and guidance counsellor about school violence. Who is affected and how? Who within the school and the community could you reach out to for assistance? Make a list of people and organizations that could support them in preventing school violence and discuss ways to reach out to them

2. Make your students your partners in preventing violence

- **Include** human rights and peace education in the school curriculum. Teach students about their human rights as well as the rights of their peers, teachers, family members and members of their community. You can teach about human and children's rights using stories, debates, role-playing, games and current events, all of which engage students in analysing and applying their knowledge of human rights to the reality of their own school and community setting.
- **Use** student-friendly versions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child available in printed and electronic formats. Both documents express everyone's right to education and everyone's right to grow and learn in a safe, environment. Discuss these documents with your students and try establishing ways

that everyone's human rights can be understood, protected and respected in your classroom.

- **Enlist** your students in setting the rules and responsibilities of the classroom. Ask your class to write out a code of conduct with you. What actions are ok, what actions would hurt others or disrupt the class, and what actions are essential so that you can teach and your students can learn in a peaceful environment? Writing a code of conduct together makes everyone's rights and responsibilities clear and furthers student participation.

In-Class Activity: Ask students to discuss with you and one another what is violent and what is not. What specific rights are disrespected in acts of violence? Suggest ways to raise awareness of human rights in school and promote respect and appreciation for differences, for example, through debates, field trips, games, role playing, and story-telling.

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3. Use constructive discipline techniques and methods

- **Keep** classroom rules positive, instructive and brief:

When classroom rules are developed, the list should include no more than five or six rules. Keep the list simple and to the point. Rules should be stated positively, rather than in a negative way, to clearly guide students as to how to behave instead of how not to behave. Make sure they do not contradict school-wide policies.

- **Use** positive reinforcement :

Reinforce constructive behaviour through eye contact, a nod, or a smile. Extra credit points or an extra five minutes of play time at the end of the day may also be awarded. Having a success mentioned in front of the class can be particularly rewarding for students. You may also wish to nominate 'the best behaved group every week and display the group's name in a noticeable area of the classroom. When such recognition is used, they should always be immediate and small yet gratifying.

- **Use** disciplinary measures that are educative, not punitive. Make sure that when you discipline a student, measures focus on the student's misbehaviour and its impact - not on the student him or herself. Depending upon the nature of the ill conduct, some disciplinary methods could be as follows:
 - * Set aside time after school or during break periods to discuss misbehaviour - why it arose, and what should be done to correct it;
 - * Request student to apologize;

- * Change seating placement;
- * Send notes to parent(s) or make home visits;
- * Analyze the seriousness of the situation, and decide to send the student to the principal's office depending on the situation.

In-Class Activity: Propose to students to create a student club against violence. You can help them organize activities to promote a peace campaign and a safe campus for everybody.

4. Be an active and effective force to stop bullying

- **Work** to develop a common definition of bullying among teachers, student representatives, school staff and community members so people may enforce the same expectations consistently. Bullying includes:
 - * physical bullying: hitting, kicking, pushing, choking, punching;
 - * verbal bullying: threatening, taunting, teasing, hate speech;
 - * social exclusion.
- **Consistently enforce** consequences for verbal and physical aggression. Effective consequences are:
 - * small, so they can be used consistently;
 - * increase in severity with repeated aggression
 - * are predictable and immediate;
 - * are based on the same expectations for all students.

Consequences typically involve loss of unstructured times, such as recess, lunch with peers or extracurricular activities.

- **Encourage** school counsellors or staff to provide counselling for bullies alongside the enforcement of consequences.

Support students targeted by bullies. Encourage them to talk to teachers and school counsellors while also working with parents, students and staff to protect them from repeated victimization.

- **Empower and educate** bystanders to tell adults, support those targeted and discourage bullying. One way to achieve this could be through peer mediation and conflict resolution programmes which train students to support each other, report acts of bullying and learn strategies to resolve conflicts.
- **Recognize and acknowledge** the action of students who support each other to stop bullying. Equally important is ensuring that those who report are protected from retaliation.

In-Class Activity: Ask students to discuss with you and one another what is violent and what is not. What specific rights are disrespected in acts of violence? Suggest ways to raise awareness of human rights in school and promote respect and appreciation for differences, for example, through debates, field trips, games, role playing, and story-telling.

5. Build students' resilience and help them to respond to life's challenges constructively

- **Build** students' resilience and their ability to cope with everyday challenges, stress and adversity successfully by helping them build positive relationships with others. Increased resilience reduces the likelihood of a student reacting with violence or falling prey to it. Teachers who demonstrate pro-social, constructive behaviour, provide guidance and offer protection increase their students' resilience by showing a positive, alternative way of responding to life's challenges. Such teachers serve as role models for positive, caring relationships.
- **Involve** your school in a peace education programme to build conflict resolution skills. Peace education programmes allow students to understand how violence occurs, develop capacities to respond constructively to violence and learn about alternatives to violence.
- **Encourage** your school to establish a school counselling programme. Counsellors can support students in dealing with difficulties in their lives and intervene in a preventive manner. They can support teachers, school staff and students in preventing and addressing violence by:
 - * acting as mediators in situations that seem to be regressing towards violence;
 - * assisting in reaching a peaceful resolution before a situation escalates into physical violence;
 - * working with both victims and perpetrators of violence and provide psychosocial support;
 - * by promoting proactive programmes designed to address issues such as bullying, drug abuse and gang activity.
- **Engage** in conflict prevention games with your students. Ask students to role-play a situation, for instance, "What would happen if you were confronted by a bully? What would you do?" By creating situations that are momentarily real, your students can practice coping with stressful, unfamiliar or complex situations. Also encourage games that place students in a new role, one that other students may be facing, in order to encourage empathy. Ask students to discuss how they felt and what solutions worked.

- Let your students know that violent acts and words, no matter how trivial, will not be tolerated. Consistently enforcing disciplinary measures following transgressions at school sends students a clear message that abusive behaviours and disrespect of an individual's rights are not acceptable.

In-Class Activity: Create role-playing activities in the classroom where students act out violent conflicts. Ask students to discuss each conflict and ways to resolve it peacefully.

6. Be a positive role model by speaking out against sexual and gender-based violence

- Be aware of gender biases. They encourage gender discrimination. Sometimes teachers' perceptions of boys are different from their perceptions of girls. For example, some see boys as being inherently better at maths or 'naturally clever' while girls may be seen as 'quiet, hard workers'. Break the perpetuation of stereotypes and different expectations for girls/women and boys/men. Raise awareness of gender biases in the classroom and encourage your colleagues to do the same. Boys are both perpetrators and victims of sexual violence within schools, so teachers should not focus solely on female victimization.
- Make sure that your interaction with boys is similar to your interaction with girls. A lower frequency and/or quality of teacher interaction with girls can diminish their self-esteem and self-reliance which in turn, increases their likelihood of victimization. One way to encourage girls to participate in the classroom may be to break the classroom into discussion groups so that girls form the majority of a group or groups. Girls generally feel freer to express themselves when amongst one another.
- Encourage your school to establish a training programme for teachers, students and the community to understand, identify and respond to cases of sexual and gender-based violence. Training should educate about gender biases which lie at the root of gender-based violence and should recognise the link between violence against girls at school and lower numbers of girls attending and remaining in school.
- Help your school and community recognise the need to protect girls and women within the school environment. In conflict and post-conflict situations, girls and women are especially vulnerable to conflict-related violence.
- Advocate to train the school staff in sexual and gender-based violence and to strengthen women's representation in management structures. Personnel trained in the detection and support of victims of sexual and

gender-based violence enhances violence prevention. Having women in the management reinforces support for victims, and encourage the reporting of sexual violence.

- **Break the silence.** Speak out against violence and make good use of reporting mechanisms. Encourage colleagues and students to name perpetrators of violence both inside and outside schools.

In-Class Activity: Call on students to avoid insulting or teasing each other, especially in regard to sexual differences. Everybody is different, but we are all equal!

7. Be an advocate for school safety mechanisms

- **Support and push** for strong management and effective school leadership. It is important that they work with teachers and education authorities to develop and implement policies to eliminate abuses of power, spot violent activity in its preliminary stage and build community confidence in schools.
- **Help** your school establish a rights-based code of conduct that recognizes everyone's right to learn and teach in a safe school environment, report acts of violence without retaliation and participate in decision-making.
- **Advocate** student-friendly reporting mechanisms that encourage students to speak out against violence. Reporting services should be supportive, sensitive and confidential.
- **Take** students' complaints of violence seriously and keep their well-being in mind. This includes giving due weight to what a student says and not minimizing the situation.

In-Class Activity: Suggest organizing dialogue sessions with teachers, students, the school principal and guidance counsellor to establish a school code of conduct for everybody.

8. Provide safe and welcoming spaces for students

- **Conduct** mapping exercises with students to identify which places in the school are safe, which are dangerous and when students are most at risk. School staff should also be alerted to dark corners, poorly lit areas, unsupervised stairways and toilets where students are at risk of sexual or physical abuse.
- **Draw attention** to the need for private and safe toilets for girls and women. One simple but significant reason that girls do not attend school is a lack of safe and clean latrines and other facilities that ensure privacy.

- **Work together** with other staff to make sure that school playgrounds are safe by ensuring the presence of adults to supervise students. Students need safe places to play between classes and after school.

In-Class Activity: Suggest starting a campaign for a safe school environment by identifying places within the school campus that are unlit or unsafe.

9. Learn violence prevention and conflict resolution skills and teach them to students

- **Receive** training on non-violent conflict resolution, human rights-based approaches to classroom management, and peace education. Ask your principal or local offices of the Ministry of Education about existing training opportunities. Information on materials that offer practical ways to prevent and resolve conflicts in schools can also be found in Annex II.
- **Try** conflict mediation techniques and teach your students how to use them to resolve their own conflicts.
- * Teach students negotiation skills that enable them to:
 - (a) define their conflict (“What are we arguing about? Why and how did the issue arise?”);
 - (b) exchange positions and proposals (“I think it should be this way because ...”);
 - (c) view the situation from both perspectives (through role-playing or debating, for example);
 - (d) decide on options where both students may gain ‘win-win’ solutions (“We’ll try it your way today and my way tomorrow to see which way is better.”);
 - (e) reach a sensible agreement.
- * Teach students how to mediate for a constructive resolution of their classmates’ conflicts.
- * Choose an issue that might arise or has arisen between two of your students. Have two students role-play the issue and ask a third student to help her/his classmates come to an agreement. Instruct the third student to use his/her knowledge about her/his classmates and the issue to suggest what s/he thinks would be a good compromise.
- * Once all students have learned the skills of negotiation and mediation, designate two students each day, preferably one girl and one boy to serve as official mediators/peacemakers. Rotate official mediator roles throughout the entire class to ensure that all students are well-versed in the techniques. The official mediators serve to mediate any conflict that cannot be solved by the parties concerned.

In-Class Activity: Help students learn how to help mediate conflicts between your classmates. Designate a class peacemaker every week so that everybody can learn and practice conflict resolution and negotiation skills.

10. Recognize violence and discrimination against students with disabilities, and those from indigenous, minority and other marginalized communities

- You may need to **explain** to other students the reasons why some children behave differently, have difficulties in learning or have limitations in sports and other physical activities due to their mental, learning or physical disabilities. Emphasize that all members of the class are different in different ways and this is what makes them unique. Differences are to be appreciated. Everyone has the right to be respected for who they are. Similar work may need to be done at parent-teacher meetings.
- **Try** to become aware of possible biases or assumptions that you or your students may bring to the classroom. Ask your students to think critically about the assumptions or stereotyping they may make which underlie their treatment of others who are different from them. Model the behaviour you want to foster in your students.
- **Speak up** at once if students make discriminatory remarks. Talk to your students about how words have the power to hurt. Look out for physical violence, however minimal it may seem, that can accompany discriminatory and racist remarks.
- **Check** the curriculum and textbooks. Do they seek to develop understanding of different cultures in society? Do they develop understanding about differences and encourage learning to live together?
- **Avoid** making individuals spokespersons for their cultural or ethnic group. 'Labelling' will only isolate them from the rest of the student populace. Helping them become integrated as part of the class will raise awareness of the positive value of diversity.

In-Class Activity: Ask students to treat each of their classmates equally the way they would like to be treated, especially those who may be different from them, who may come from different cultures or who may have limitations in their physical or mental abilities. Reminder: Differences are to be appreciated and everybody has the right to be different!

International Standard-Setting Instruments and Normative Frameworks

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International Standard-Setting Instruments and Normative Frameworks

The following international human rights bill, conventions, recommendation and framework, express that everyone - children, young people and adults- has the right to live, work, and learn without physical, psychological or sexual harm. The list below gives a brief overview of these important documents which can be used for teaching about human rights.

International Bill of Human Rights

The International Bill of Human Rights consists of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Political and Civil Rights, all of which guarantee equal and inalienable rights that derive from the inherent dignity of the human person.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the first authoritative international statement on human rights. It is grounded in non-discrimination, equality and recognition of human dignity including that of the children. Article 26 states that everyone has the right to education. It describes two basic functions of education. The first function is that education “shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.” The second function is that it, “shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.”

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cescr.htm>

The Covenant guarantees everyone's right to education in Article 13, and adds a central provision concerning the social empowerment of the individual through education. It states, "Education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society." The importance of working conditions for teachers is also emphasized in the Convention in the following statement, "...the material conditions of teaching staff shall be continuously improved."

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/ccpr.htm>

The Covenant defends everyone's right to life and stipulates that no one can be subjected to torture, enslavement, forced labour and arbitrary detention or be restricted from such freedoms as movement, expression and association. In Article 26, it prohibits discrimination "on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status," and guarantees "to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination."

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm>

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) sets out legally binding standards to protect children's human rights. It is the most widely accepted human rights treaty and has been ratified by 192 States. The Convention emphasizes that all violence against children should be prohibited, including violence in the school environment. Article 28 reaffirms, "the right of the child to education ... with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity." In addition to the right to education, Article 28 also states that, "States parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention."

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, the body of experts that monitors the Convention, has issued statements on the aims of education. General Comment No. 1 emphasizes the need for "education to be child-centred, child-friendly and empowering," and highlights the need for educational processes to be based upon the very rights guaranteed by the Convention. This means that all schools should respect, for example, the child's rights to non-discrimination (reflected in article 2 of the Convention), freedom

of expression (article 13), and protection from all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation (article 34). States must also ensure that children are fully protected from exposure to bullying and other forms of violence by other students. The Committee has also noted that failure to protect students from such forms of violence could deny them their right to education (articles 28 and 29).

General Comment No. 1 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child states, "...Children do not lose their human rights by virtue of passing through the school gates." Thus, education must be provided in a way that respects the inherent dignity of the child, enables the child to express his or her views freely in accordance with Article 12(1) and allows the child to participate in school life. Education must also be provided in a way that respects the strict limits on discipline reflected in Article 28(2) and promotes non-violence in schools. The Committee has repeatedly made clear in its concluding observations that "the use of corporal punishment does not respect the inherent dignity of the child nor the strict limits on school discipline..."

General Comment No. 8 emphasizes the right of children to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment. The General Comment highlights, "...the obligation of all States parties to move quickly to prohibit and eliminate all corporal punishment and all other cruel or degrading forms of punishment of children." The Comment also declares, "Addressing the widespread acceptance or tolerance of corporal punishment of children and eliminating it in the family, schools and other settings, is not only an obligation of States parties under the CRC. It is also a key strategy for reducing and preventing all forms of violence in societies."

UNESCO Conventions and Recommendations in the field of Education

The UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960)

http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=12949&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

This UNESCO convention is the first legally binding international normative instrument that provides for standards of education and quality education. The Convention expresses the fundamental principle of equality of educational opportunities and expresses that education must be accessible to all, especially the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. A safe and violence-free learning environment is an essential part of a quality education.

The UNESCO Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1974)

http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13088&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

This UNESCO recommendation is concerned with promoting human rights education with a focus on international education. The recommendation stresses that education “should develop a sense of social responsibility and solidarity with less privileged groups and should lead to observance of the principles of equality in everyday conduct.” Thus the declaration underscores the importance of teaching students about both the content of human rights as well as putting respect for human rights into action.

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**Dakar Framework for Action
Education For All: Meeting Our Collective
Commitments (2000)**

http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/ed_for_all/dakfram_eng.shtml

The Dakar Framework for Action was adopted in 2000 at the World Education Forum held in Dakar, Senegal. The Framework sets out a plan of action aimed at achieving the six Education for All (EFA) goals. Goal 2 states that, by 2015, all children should have access to a free and compulsory primary education of good quality. Goal 3 is to, by 2005, achieve gender equality in primary and secondary education and, by 2015, achieve gender equality in all levels of education.

The Dakar Framework for Action expresses the connection between the right to quality education and the right to safe and violence-free learning environments. It also lays out strategies to meet the EFA goals. Some of these include preventing violence and ensuring a safe learning environment.

“Meet the needs of education systems affected by conflict, natural calamities and instability and conduct educational programmes in ways that promote mutual understanding, peace and tolerance, and that help to prevent violence and conflict... Schools should be respected and protected as sanctuaries and zones of peace. . . Education should promote not only skills such as the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflict but also social and ethical values.”

“Create safe, healthy, inclusive and equitably resourced educational environments conducive to excellence in learning with clearly

defined levels of achievement for all... Learning environments should also be healthy, safe and protective. This should include: (1) adequate water and sanitation facilities, (2) access to or linkages with health and nutrition services, (3) policies and codes of conducts that enhance physical, psycho-social and emotional health of teachers and learners and (4) education content and practices leading to knowledge, attitudes, values, and life skills needed for self-esteem, good health and personal safety.”

Links to Online Information on Stopping Violence in Schools

Links to Online Information on Stopping Violence in Schools

DISCLAIMER: Information on these websites is provided by external sources. UNESCO is not responsible for accuracy, reliability or currency of information provided by external sources. Statements and opinions expressed therein are those of the website owner/sponsor and do not necessarily reflect those of UNESCO.

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Building a Europe for and with children

www.coe.int/t/transversalprojects/children/

This is a Council of Europe programme for the promotion of children's rights and the protection of children from violence. The website informs on the activities of the programme "Building a Europe for and with children." It shows the interdependence of the Organisation's different entities, and also enables users to keep abreast of the activities relevant to children that are taking place throughout the Council of Europe.

Child Helpline International (CHI)

www.childhelplineinternational.org

Child Helpline International was officially launched in October 2003 to build, develop and maintain a network of children's help-lines throughout the world. CHI contributed to the World Report on Violence against Children. The website contains information and websites on child helpline services, helpline guides and publications.

Educating for Peace: Classroom Resources

www.global-ed.org/e4p/rm-teachers.htm

Educating for Peace, a project of the Global Education Network, was established with the support of the Government of Canada through the Canadian International Development Agency. It works with the school system to build a peaceful, just and sustainable world for our children. The website lists peace education materials and a selected bibliography on school bullying intended for teachers, counsellors and parents.

Education International

www.ei-ie.org/healthandsafety/

Education International works to ensure that school is a healthy and safe environment for both education workers and students. This website features links to reports and articles related to school violence.

Eliminating Corporal Punishment: The Way Forward to Constructive Child Discipline

<http://publishing.unesco.org/details.aspx?&CodeLivre=4332&change=E#>

To discipline or punish through physical harm is a violation of the most basic of human rights. This website provides information on the UNESCO publication *Eliminating Corporal Punishment: The Way Forward to Constructive Child Discipline* which looks at how to eliminate corporal punishment.

Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments

<http://www2.unescobkk.org/elib/publications/032revised/index.htm>

Developed by UNESCO Bangkok, this toolkit contains an introductory booklet and eight booklets, each of which contains tools and activities for self-study to start creating an inclusive, learning-friendly environment (ILFE). Some of these activities ask reader to reflect on what his/her school are doing now in terms of creating an ILFE, while others actively guide the reader in improving his/her skills as a teacher in a diverse classroom.

Ethics Education for Children

www.ethicseducationforchildren.org/

Ethics Education for Children is an initiative to promote value-based and quality education for children and young people within the framework of the child's right to education as stated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. This site provides space for members to exchange opinions with each other and others who are interested in joining the initiative to build a better world for children and young people through ethics education. It includes resource materials, best practices and other documents on ethics education.

eTwinning: School partnerships in Europe

www.etwinning.net

A project of the European Commission, eTwinning promotes school collaboration in Europe through the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) by providing support, tools and services to make it easy for schools to form short or long-term partnerships in any subject area. One can choose from ready-made kits for projects on intercultural dialogue, tolerance, etc.

Humane Education Advocates Reaching Teachers (HEART)

www.teachhumane.org

HEART is a non-profit educational organization created to raise awareness of humane education among educators and community leaders. The website contains links to instructional programmes and teacher training, teacher resources and other materials for humane education.

Human Rights Education Associates (HREA) Resource Centre

www.hrea.org

The Electronic Resource Centre for Human Rights Education is an on-line repository of human rights education and training materials, on-line forums, databases and links to other organisations and resources. The materials are provided free of charge. A rich collection of materials are available for teacher training.

Human Rights Education Project

www.aclrc.com/hrep.html

This project of the Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre provides practical assistance to students at the junior high school level, and to their teachers. They are developing resource materials for students, as well as teaching materials, on a wide range of human rights topics.

Human Rights Information and Documentation System (HURIDOCs)

www.hurisearch.org

The Human Rights Search Engine gives access to 4500 human rights websites around the world. It contains links to over 100,000 documents related to school violence.

Human Rights Resource Center

www.hrusa.org

The Human Rights Resource Center is an integral part of the University of Minnesota Human Rights Center and works in partnership with the University of Minnesota Human Rights Library to create and distribute Human Rights Education (HRE) resources via electronic and print media; train activists, professionals, and students as human rights educators; build advocacy networks to encourage effective practices in human rights education; and support the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-2007).

Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies

<http://www.ineeserver.org/>

The Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) is a global, open network of non-governmental organizations, UN agencies, donors, practitioners, researchers and individuals from affected populations working together within a humanitarian and development framework to ensure the right to education in emergencies and post-crisis reconstruction.

International Observatory on Violence in Schools

<http://www.ijvs.org/3-6185-International-Observatory-on-Violence-in-School.php>

The International Observatory on Violence in Schools is a Non-Governmental Organisation whose main aims include: to collect, promote and disseminate around the world inter-disciplinary studies of the phenomenon of violence in the school environment; to make an ongoing assessment of violence in the school environment around the world and publish it regularly; and to assist in the training of teachers and professionals.

Keep Schools Safe

www.keepschoolssafe.org

Keep Schools Safe provides a resource on violence in schools for teachers, school administrators, parents, and students. It contains school safety and school violence prevention information in the form of articles and posts.

Learn Without Fear – Global Campaign to End Violence in Schools

<http://learnwithoutfear.org>

The Learn without Fear campaign, led by Plan, an international child advocacy organization working in 49 countries, aims to end violence against children in all schools. The website makes available reports and research on violence in schools.

LIFT OFF: Cross Border Human Rights Education Initiative for Primary Schools

www.liftoffschools.com

The Lift Off Initiative is designed for primary schools in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and uses human rights principles to support teaching and learning. The website features downloadable materials for use by different age groups developed to promote understanding and respect for human rights.

MINCAVA electronic clearinghouse

www.mincava.umn.edu/

This portal provides an extensive pool of up-to-date educational resources about all types of violence, including higher education syllabi, published research, funding sources, upcoming training events, individuals or organizations which serve as resources and searchable databases with over 1000 training manuals, videos and other education resources.

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights: Training and education

www.ohchr.org/EN/PublicationsResources/Pages/TrainingEducation.aspx

This OCHRH website features a series of downloadable human rights education manuals, training programmes and other publications.

Pathways Courses – the ABCs of Bullying

http://pathwayscourses.samhsa.gov/bully/bully_intro_pg1.htm

The course examines the causes and effects of bullying, prevention techniques and programs, screening, treatment options, and legal/ethical issues surrounding bullying.

The People's Movement for Human Rights Learning

www.pdhre.org/materials/

The PDHRE-International website provides resources and human rights training manuals and teaching materials, and otherwise servicing grassroots and community groups engaged in a creative, contextualized process of human rights learning, reflection, and action.

Save the Children: Teaching Resources

www.savethechildren.org.uk/assets/php/library.php?Type=Teaching+resources

This searchable website contains materials and articles on various topics designed for teachers on children's rights, citizenship education and violence against children.

Safe Schools/Healthy Students (SS/HS)

<http://www.sshs.samhsa.gov/default.aspx>

The SS/HS Initiative is a United States Federal grant-making programme designed to prevent violence and substance abuse among youth, schools, and communities. The website makes available more than 50 documents and websites covering important issues around youth and school violence prevention.

Safe Youth: National Youth Violence Prevention Center

www.safeyouth.org

The National Youth Violence Prevention Center (NYVPRC) is a United States Federal resource for communities working to prevent violence committed by and against young people. The mission of the NYVPRC is to provide key leaders in communities—local government leaders and community leaders—with dynamic resources to help support their efforts to plan, develop, implement, and evaluate effective youth violence prevention efforts. The website includes statistics and data on school violence, prevention programmes, training opportunities, crisis hotlines, articles and factsheets.

School-based violence prevention programs: A resource manual

www.ualgary.ca/resolve/violenceprevention/

This online resource contains information on school-based prevention programmes on violence against girls and young women. It provides practical research and expert-based information on school-based programmes.

Stop Bullying Now

www.stopbullyingnow.com

This website, developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, contains articles and tips for both children and adults to curb bullying. It has webisode story lines and characters available for downloading and printing.

Teaching Tolerance

www.tolerance.org/teach/web/power_of_words/index.jsp

Teaching Tolerance is a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center dedicated to reducing prejudice, improving inter-group relations and supporting equitable school experiences for our nation's children. The award-winning website provides free downloadable curricula, classroom activities for youth, parents and guardians.

The Global Program on Youth: Monitoring School Violence

<http://gpy.ssw.umich.edu/projects/violence/>

Developed by the School of Social Work of the University of Michigan, this collaboration created a monitoring model to enhance the understanding of the occurrence of violence in schools. It contains a rich bibliography and summaries of publications and related research on monitoring school violence.

The Prevention Institute

www.preventioninstitute.org/schoolviol3.html

This website provides strategies, resources and contacts for developing comprehensive school violence prevention programmes. It features information on past and on-going projects on the issue of school violence.

The Right to Education Project

www.right-to-education.org/

This website of the Right to Education Project aims to promote social mobilization and legal accountability focusing on the legal challenges to the right to education. It provides wide-reaching information on education rights in countries around the world.

UNESCO: Human Rights Education

<http://www.unesco.org/en/human-rights-education>

Human rights education is an integral part of the right to education and is increasingly gaining recognition as a human right in itself. This website of UNESCO provides human rights education frameworks and guidelines as well as information on good practices.

UNESCO: Inclusive Education

<http://www.unesco.org/en/inclusive-education>

Inclusive education is based on the right of all learners to a quality education that meets basic learning needs and enriches lives. The ultimate goal of inclusive quality education is to end all forms of discrimination and foster social cohesion. This website provides key documents, guidelines and toolkits for inclusive education.

UNESCO IBE: Learning to Live Together

<http://www.ibe.unesco.org/en/learn-to-live-together.html>

The concept of learning to live together is centred on the development of understanding, consideration and respect for others, their beliefs, values and cultures. This is considered to provide the basis for the avoidance of conflicts or their non-violent resolution and for ongoing peaceful coexistence. The website offers access to the RelatED databank, which provides information on promising initiatives in learning to live together, primarily in school settings.

UNICEF: Child protection from violence, exploitation and abuse

<http://www.unicef.org/protection/index.html>

This UNICEF website provides information on protecting children from violence, exploitation and abuse, including legal frameworks and statistics.

UNICEF: Resources for students and teachers

<http://www.unicef.org/siteguide/resources.html>

This UNICEF website provides links to resources for students and teachers related to the rights of children, including discussion fora, audio/visual materials, and a collection of articles.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in more than 300 languages and dialects

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/UDHR/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

This website features the most comprehensive collection of translations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, with 360 different language versions available in HTML and/or PDF format.

United Nations Cyberschoolbus

<http://cyberschoolbus.un.org/>

The United Nations Cyberschoolbus was created in 1996 as the online education component of the Global Teaching and Learning Project, whose mission is to promote education about international issues and the United Nations. The Global Teaching and Learning Project produces high quality teaching materials and activities designed for educational use (at primary, intermediate and secondary school levels) and for training teachers.

USAID Safe Schools Program

www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/wid/ed/safeschools.html

Safe Schools carries out pilot activities in USAID-assisted countries (Ghana and Malawi), and develops an approach or package of interventions targeting specific activities at the national, institutional, community, and individual levels of society. The website contains various downloadable publications and reports on Safe Schools programmes in different countries.

VISIONARY

www.bullying-in-school.info/

VISIONARY is a European collaborative project on school bullying and violence (SBV), addressing teachers, parents, professionals, pupils and others interested in the topic. The portal aims to help all who search for background information on SBV, project descriptions, good practice, materials and other resources on SBV on the Internet.

World Programme for Human Rights Education

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/programme.htm>

The General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-ongoing). This website of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights provides information on the World Programme which seeks to promote a common understanding of the basic principles and methodologies of human rights education, to provide a concrete framework for action and to strengthen partnerships and cooperation from the international level down to the grassroots.

World Report on Violence against Children

<http://www.violencestudy.org/r229>

This website provides access to the full text of the World Report on Violence against Children in multiple languages, together with background documents and other related information. It also provides access to Safe You, Safe Me, a child-friendly version of the World Report.

Youth Partnership

www.youth-partnership.net/youth-partnership/

A collaborative effort between the Council of Europe and the European Commission, the Youth Partnership aims to teach young people about human rights education and citizenship education with special focus on the Euro-Med region, South East Europe, Eastern Europe and Caucasus. The web portal includes documents on regional training courses, training kits, a good practices database and reports on youth violence prevention.

Stopping Violence in Schools: A Guide for Teachers

For more information please contact:

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