Women of Africa Care Pty Ltd

YALO On Air – 05 May 2025

Episode 27

Inspiration brought to you by WOAC on Air

Topic: Youth Violence and Abuse is not the answer to life's challenges

What is violence?
The American Psychological Association (APA) defines youth violence as an extreme form of aggression with the goal of physical harm, injury, or death. Examples of youth violence also include date rape, homicides, and gang violence.- Report by Verywellfamily.com in 2020

Mirriam Webster dictionary definitions:
Violence - the use of physical force so as to injure, abuse, damage, or destroy b : an instance of violent treatment or procedure.

- ✓ Abuse - a corrupt practice or custom the buying of votes and other election abuses
- ✓ Improper or excessive use or treatment : MISUSE drug abuse
- ✓ Language that condemns or vilifies usually unjustly, intemperately, and angrily - verbal abuse a term of abuse
- ✓ Physical maltreatment - child abuse, sexual abuse
- ✓ Obsolete : a deceitful act DECEPTION

- ✓ **Psalm 11.5** The Lord tests the righteous, but his soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence.

Youth are you in an abusive relationship?

https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/abuse.html
Abuse means treating someone with violence, disrespect, cruelty, harm, or force. When someone treats their partner in any of these ways, it's called an abusive relationship. Abuse in a relationship can be physical, sexual, or emotional. Or it could be all of these.

An abusive partner might use mean words, threats, or shaming. They might act with jealousy or controlling behavior. Or with physical or sexual violence. These things can start small and build over time.

If you think you're in an abusive relationship, it's time to get help. There are people to help you get to a safe situation. There are people to help you sort out all the emotions of partner abuse.

Are you in an Abusive Relationship?
Here are some warning signs. You might be in an abusive relationship if someone:

- ✓ harms you physically in any way. This includes hitting, pushing, shaking, or kicking.
- ✓ threatens to harm you if you leave the relationship
- ✓ threatens to harm themselves if you leave the relationship
- ✓ forces you, or tries to force you, into any type of sexual act that you don't want
- ✓ tries to control parts of your life, like how you dress, who you hang out with, and what you say
- ✓ often shames you or makes you feel unworthy
- ✓ twists the truth to make you feel you are to blame for their actions

- ✓ demands to know where you are at all times
- ✓ often acts jealous or angry when you want to spend time with your friends
- ✓ makes mean or rude comments on social media
- ✓ demands or asks for your sign-in information for your social media accounts
- ✓ Get help from a therapist or someone at a helpline if you feel unsure of whether you're in an abusive relationship.

How Can you Get Out of an Abusive Relationship?

"Not speaking was like an emotional cancer …you don't begin to heal until you disclose." Matthew McVarish, survivor and advocate, Scotland
https://violenceagainstchildren.un.org/sites/violenceagainstchildren.un.org/files/documents/publications/final_hidden_scars_lhow_violence_harms_the_mental_health_of_children.pdf

- ✓ Know that you have the right to be safe. You have the right to be treated with respect. Knowing this is the first step.
- ✓ Confide in someone you know. Tell a parent, trusted adult, health provider, or friend what you're going through so they can help. Many adults know how to help in this situation. An adult might be able to get you to safety faster than a friend can.
- ✓ Get help and support from experts. Going through abuse can leave you feeling confused, scared, or exhausted. Find a therapist to help you get your emotional strength back. They can help you sort through the many emotions you might be dealing with.

If you have been physically hurt, get medical care or call your national safety or emergency hotline.https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/abuse.html

Causes of Youth Violence - https://www.verywellfamily.com/causes-of-youth-violence-2611437
By Denise Witmer Updated on June 09, 2020

Media Influence
Research indicates that violence in the media influences teens and can cause them to act aggressively. Although it is difficult to determine whether or not violence in media leads directly to youth violence, studies have shown that playing violent video games increases aggressive thoughts and behaviors.

In fact, one study found that violent video games not only escalate aggressive behaviors. They also increase angry thoughts as well as raise the heart rate and blood pressure of participants.2

Meanwhile, these video games decrease "helping behaviors" and reduce feelings of empathy. What's more, violent video game users tend to interact with other aggressive teens, which makes them feel accepted and validated for their thoughts and feelings.

While video games often get the most attention, violence in media isn't limited to video games. Violent media also can include the Internet, television, magazines, movies, music, advertising, social media, and more. Basically, media consists of anything your teen sees, hears, or interacts with.

Matt 15.18 But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander." How did it come it your heart you might ask, through your eye gate and ear gate. What you hear and meditate on long enough you adapt to.

Communities and Neighborhoods
Where teens live can also have an impact on them and lead them to act more aggressively. The CDC points to several community risk factors for youth violence including diminished economic opportunities, high levels of crime, and socially disorganized neighborhoods.3

Additionally, research shows that youth violence can become a form of "street justice" in response to the lack of police protection in some neighborhoods. When this happens, teens may attempt to secure

the neighborhood by using violence as a way of bringing order to the area. As a result, youth violence often manifests as gang violence, turf wars, gun wars, and other types of violence.4

When teens live in socioeconomically challenged neighborhoods, they may feel like their only option for survival is to join a gang or to engage in violence. When this line of thinking is the norm, teens are likely to act aggressively and participate in violent behaviors.

- ✓ **Prov 6.16** There are six things that the Lord hates, seven that are an abomination to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil, a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers. - Youth if you notice these qualities in your communities don't adapt to it, rather as a youth allow the word of God to govern your life.
- ✓ **Col 3.**Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. 6Because of these, the w8But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. 9Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices 10and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.
- ✓ **Isaiah 1.17 -** Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause. (Youth leave from the bottom up be a person of Godly influence amongst your difficult community state)

Domestic Violence and Child Abuse

Children who live with violence in the home learn by example and can become violent people as they grow up. They also are more likely to experience teen dating violence, either as a victim or an aggressor.

Other contributing factors include harsh parenting styles, along with chaos in the home, neglect, and rejection. Each of these situations can lead to youth violence later in life because of the lack of stability and structure in the home. Being violent gives teens a feeling of power and control—something they lack at home.

To combat this risk, it is important that parents consider their parenting style and make adjustments in order to reduce the likelihood of seeing violence in their teens' lives later. Educators can lend support by offering parenting workshops. If you are experiencing domestic violence, you can get help by contacting The National Domestic Violence Hotline.

- ✓ **Ephesians 6. 4**And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord
- ✓ **Col 3.19** Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. - why? It has an impact on the kids. Did you now 1 in 4 children under the age of five lives with a mother who is a victim of intimate partner violence. (global stats);
- ✓ **James 1.19-20** Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

Insufficient Parental Supervision

When parents do not provide adequate supervision, teens are prone to engage in aggressive behaviors or criminal activity. Without adult supervision, teens do not have the resources needed to make good choices or to recognize risks.

Consequently, these teens tend to make friends with the wrong people, take unnecessary risks, and experiment with things an involved parent would not allow. When parents are too permissive, their kids often have no motivation to do well in school and may even stop caring about their future.

As a whole, teenagers need fair and firm discipline and consistent interaction with and direction from their parents. When parents take an active role in their teens' lives, it reduces the likelihood of teen violence.

- ✓ **Eph 6.4** Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.
- ✓ **Prov 22.6** Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.

- ✓ **Deu 6.6** And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. (Scripture reveals to us that parents are required to be an example to their kids through deeds and words on how to live according to the ways of God's standards.)

- ✓ **Deu 4.9** Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. Make them known to your children and your children's children
- ✓ **Prov 1.8** Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching (Parents you have a role towards guiding your children in the way they should live)
- ✓ **Prov 11.14** Where there is no guidance the people fall, But in abundance of counselors there is victory.

Peer Pressure

Peer pressure plays a pivotal role in youth violence, especially because kids are more likely to engage in risky or violent behaviors when they act as a group.3 Teens who normally would not be aggressive or violent on their own often feel empowered when in a group.

Additionally, teens are more likely to be violent or aggressive when they feel pressured. They also may become violent in order to maintain their place in the group. Peer pressure can lead teens to engage in risk-taking behaviors.

Did you know: □ The global prevalence of physical teen-dating violence in young people aged 13–18 years is estimated to be around 20 per cent, with the prevalence of sexual teen-dating violence standing at an estimated 9 per cent.

Scripture to avoid peer pressure:

- ✓ **Romans 13.13.**Because we belong to the day, we must live decent lives for all to see. Don't participate in the darkness of wild parties and drunkenness, or in sexual promiscuity and immoral living, or in quarreling and jealousy. 14Instead, clothe yourself with the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. And don't let yourself think about ways to indulge your evil desires.
- ✓ **2 Tim 3.1-18** But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people. Why? **1 Cor 15.33** Do not be deceived: "Bad company corrupts good morals."
- ✓
- ✓ Source: https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/topics/Bad-Friends
- ✓ **1 John 3.18** Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.
- ✓ **Phi 2.14** Do everything without grumbling or arguing, 15so that you may become blameless and pure, "children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation." c Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky 16as you hold firmly to the word of life.

<u>Drug and Alcohol Use</u>

Alcohol and drug use has long been associated with the risk for youth violence.3 Both alcohol and drug use can increase aggression and reduce fear, which increases the likelihood of youth violence.

While teens usually engage in recreational drug and alcohol use to feel good, prolonged use of illicit drugs often brings about feelings of depression, anger, and frustration. These feelings can then lead a teen to exhibit behaviors of aggression and rage.

Scripture to avoid substance abuse:

- ✓ **Proverbs 20.1** Wine produces mockers; alcohol leads to brawls(noisy fights). Those led astray by drink cannot be wise.
- ✓ **Proverbs 23. 29** Who has anguish? Who has sorrow? Who is always fighting? Who is always complaining? Who has unnecessary bruises? Who has bloodshot eyes? 30It is the one who spends long hours in the taverns, trying out new drinks. 31Don't gaze at the wine, seeing how red it is, how it sparkles in the cup, how smoothly it goes down. 32For in the end it bites like a poisonous snake; it stings like a viper. 33You will see hallucinations, and you will say crazy things.

34You will stagger like a sailor tossed at sea, clinging to a swaying mast. 35And you will say, "They hit me, but I didn't feel it. I didn't even know it when they beat me up. When will I wake up. so I can look for another drink?"

- ✓ **1 Cor 10.23**You say, "I am allowed to do anything"d—but not everything is good for you. You say, "I am allowed to do anything"—but not everything is beneficial.

Traumatic Events and Mental Illness-

Dealing with traumatic events and children with mental illness also can cause violent behavior in teens. For instance, teens who lose a friend in a car accident that they also were involved in often get angry at the fact that they were the ones that lived.

Because anger is a normal stage of grief, a violent outburst from these teens may seem justified. But, while anger is a normal emotion, it is not normal to be violent toward another person. When violence occurs, it should always be addressed.

Teens who exhibit signs of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) may be prone to violence. Violent outbursts are typically a symptom of PTSD, and if left untreated, can manifest in significantly violent situations.6 For this reason, it is extremely important for teens with PTSD to get the counseling and intervention that they need.

Parents if your kids have been exposed to trauma and have mental challenges please take them for counselling and deliverance so that they can be released from the bondage of trauma. One of the open doors to demonic influence is trauma which leads to not only violence but rejection, abandonement, depression and suicide.

Scriptures to help you heal:

- ✓ **Psalm 34.18** The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.
- ✓ **Job 3.11** Why did I not perish at birth, and die as I came from the womb? 16Or why was I not hidden away in the ground like a stillborn child, like an infant who never saw the light of day? 24For sighing has become my daily food; my groans pour out like water. 25What I feared has come upon me; what I dreaded has happened to me. 26I have no peace, no quietness; I have no rest, but only turmoil." (Yet 39 Chapters later he received double for all the losses he experienced all because he did not lose heart.

NYDA Status report 2022, YOUTH VIOLENCE, INJURIES AND TRAUMA

Most young people in South Africa are exposed to violence in their homes, schools and broader communities – this includes homicides, intimate partner violence and rape. Exposure to violence and deviant peer behaviour increases the likelihood of high risk and violent behaviour among youth as they seek stronger connections with peers. Further, structural factors such as poor quality education, high levels of unemployment and economic hardship may lead youth to be attracted to gang-related activities. Experiences of violence in South Africa are shaped by age, gender, socioeconomic status and geographical location. Data on external causes of mortality for youth shows that "assault" accounted for 24,2% of deaths in 2018, and was the second highest cause of death for youth (after "other external causes of accidental injury"). Violence is particularly prevalent in poor communities where poverty, unemployment, poor quality schooling and a lack of recreational facilities may leave little opportunity for young men to gain a sense of belonging and "respect". Feelings of frustration and marginalisation may find expression in violent encounters with women and other young men. Sexual and intimate partner violence against girls and women are leading causes of health problems such as unwanted pregnancy, HIV infection, and mental health problems such as post-traumatic stress disorder. In 2019/2020, 42 289 rapes were reported, as well as 7 749 sexual assaults. The Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (YRBS, 2011) provides data on experiences of violence among public high school learners in grades 8-11. The survey reported a third of learners being bullied at school, 17% reported feeling unsafe travelling to school, and 13% reported carrying a weapon. Sexual and intimate partner violence were also prevalent, with 11% of learners reported being assaulted by their romantic partner in the six months preceding the survey; and just under 10% of learners had experienced forced sex.

- ✓ **Prov 12.26 The righteous is a guide to his neighbor, But the way of the wicked leads them astray.**

- ✓ **Psalm 119.9** How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word. 10I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. 11I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. 12Praise be to you, Lord; teach me your decrees. 13With my lips I recount all the laws that come from your mouth. 14I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches. 15I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. 16I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word. Do good to your servant according to your word, Lord. 66Teach me knowledge and good judgment, for I trust your commands. 67Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I obey your word. 68You are good, and what you do is good; teach me your decrees. 69Though the arrogant have smeared me with lies, I keep your precepts with all my heart. 70Their hearts are callous and unfeeling, but I delight in your law. 71It was good for me to be afflicted so that I might learn your decrees. 72The law from your mouth is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold. Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long. 98Your commands are always with me and make me wiser than my enemies. 99I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes. 100I have more understanding than the elders, for I obey your precepts. 101I have kept my feet from every evil path so that I might obey your word. 102I have not departed from your laws, for you yourself have taught me. 103How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! 104I gain understanding from your precepts; therefore I hate every wrong path.
- ✓ **Ephesians 5.3** But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. 4Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. 5For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a person is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. a 6Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. 7Therefore do not be partners with them. V15 Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, 16making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. 17Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. 18Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, 19speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, 20always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- ✓ **1 Cor 13.16-17** Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.
- ✓ **2 Tim 22**Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. 23Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. (Paul is speaking to young Timothy a youth who he is mentoring into being an effective leader)
- ✓ **Prov 13.20** He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will suffer harm.