



GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE CREATES AN UNEQUAL WORLD FOR CHILDREN

Every girl and boy deserve to grow up free from harm. Yet gender-based violence continues, effectively ending their childhoods and risking their futures. While both girls and boys are negatively impacted, girls are particularly vulnerable. These types of violent acts against children are specifically committed against their will and are based on gender norms and an imbalance of power in their relationships.

Girls and boys have the basic right to gender equality and a life free from violence. Each child should be protected, have the opportunity to grow up healthy, educated and safe.

Sexual violence against children concerns all countries, all social backgrounds, all cultures and all religions.



Children are the first victims of sexual violence, and among them, children with disabilities are the most affected.



There is no minimum age for being a victim of sexual violence.



Before puberty, girls and boys could be victims in the same proportions.



When a child is sexually abused, the perpetrator is almost always someone close to the child.



When a child is sexually abused, one out of five times a woman is the perpetrator.



When a minor is a victim of sexual violence, one out of every two times it is a minor who is the perpetrator.



TYPES OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

Most violence against children involves at least one of six main types of interpersonal violence that tend to occur at different stages in a child's development.

- Maltreatment (including violent punishment) involves physical, sexual and psychological/emotional violence; and neglect of infants, children and adolescents by parents, caregivers and other authority figures, most often in the home but also in settings such as schools and orphanages.
- Bullying (including cyber-bullying) is unwanted aggressive behaviour by another child or group of children who are neither siblings nor in a romantic relationship with the victim. It involves repeated physical, psychological or social harm, and often takes place in schools and other settings where children gather, and online.
- Youth violence is concentrated among children and young adults aged 10–29 years, occurs most often in community settings between acquaintances and strangers, includes bullying and physical assault with or without weapons (such as guns and knives), and may involve gang violence.
- Intimate partner violence (or domestic violence) involves physical, sexual and emotional violence by an intimate partner or ex-partner. Although males can also be victims, intimate partner violence affects females. It commonly occurs against girls within child marriages and early/forced marriages.
- Sexual violence includes non-consensual completed or attempted sexual contact and acts of a sexual nature not involving contact (sexual harassment); acts of sexual trafficking committed against someone who is unable to consent or refuse.

- Emotional or psychological violence includes restricting a child's movements, ridicule, threats and intimidation, discrimination, rejection and other non-physical forms of hostile treatment.

IMPACT OF VIOLENCE

Violence against children has lifelong impacts on health and well-being of children, families, communities, and nations. Violence against children can:

- Result in death. Homicide, which often involves weapons such as knives and firearms, is among the top four causes of death in adolescents, with boys comprising over 80% of victims and perpetrators.
- Lead to severe injuries. For every homicide, there are hundreds of predominantly male victims of youth violence who sustain injuries because of physical fighting and assault.
- Impair brain and nervous system development. Exposure to violence at an early age can impair brain development and damage other parts of the nervous system with

lifelong consequences. As such, violence against children can negatively affect cognitive development and results in educational and vocational under-achievement.

- Result in negative coping and health risk behaviours. Children exposed to violence and other adversities are substantially more likely to smoke, misuse alcohol and drugs, and engage in high-risk sexual behaviour. They also have higher rates of anxiety, depression, other mental health problems and suicide.
- Lead to unintended pregnancies, induced abortions, gynaecological problems, and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV.
- Impact opportunities and future generations. Children exposed to violence and other adversities are more likely to drop out of school, have difficulty finding and keeping a job.

Help us to identify, detect, report, fight child sexual abuse and raise awareness in your community, Childline Contact Number: 0800 055 555