PO Box 73466
Washington DC 20056-3466
202-827-5967
inbox@peacethroughaction.org
peacethroughaction.org
@peaceactusa #PeaceBeginsWithWe

CHOOSE VIOLENCE PREVENTION IN SCHOOLS

What is violence prevention in schools?

Violence prevention in schools is the practice of creating safe, supportive learning environments where students can learn without fear of being harmed, threatened, bullied, or intimidated.[1] School violence includes bullying, cyberbullying, physical fighting, gang-related violence, weapon-related incidents, sexual violence, and other behaviors that disrupt learning and harm students and staff.[2]

Violence prevention focuses on building positive school climates, strengthening relationships, teaching conflict resolution skills, and addressing risks before violence occurs.[3]

How do people learn violence prevention in schools?

Teachers, school leaders, counselors, social workers, school resource officers, and community partners often learn violence prevention through professional training, continuing education, and evidence-based prevention programs.[4] Training may include conflict resolution, restorative practices, bullying prevention, threat assessment, trauma-informed care, and strategies for building positive relationships with students.[3]

Students also learn violence prevention through social-emotional learning, peer leadership programs, mentoring, and opportunities to develop communication and problem-solving skills.[5]

How do people implement violence prevention in schools?

Violence prevention is implemented by creating a school culture where students feel respected, supported, and connected to trusted adults.[6] Schools may use bullying prevention programs, restorative practices, mentoring, mental health supports, social-emotional learning, conflict mediation, and family engagement efforts.[3]

Research shows that strengthening school connectedness can reduce violence and other harmful behaviors while supporting student well-being and academic success.[6] Schools often work with families, community organizations, and local agencies to identify concerns early and provide support before problems escalate.[7]

For what types of circumstances is violence prevention in schools suited?

Primary: Violence prevention in schools is well suited for creating conditions that reduce the likelihood of violence before it occurs.

Secondary: Violence prevention in schools is well suited for addressing bullying, conflict, intimidation, threats, and other behaviors that place students at risk.

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Tertiary: Violence prevention in schools is well suited for helping students, families, and school communities recover and heal after violent incidents have occurred.

Does violence prevention in schools work for preventing or controlling social distress?

Research suggests that school-based violence prevention programs can reduce aggressive behavior, fighting, victimization, and disciplinary problems.[8] Evidence also shows that students who feel connected to their schools are less likely to experience violence and other health risks.[6]

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention identifies school connectedness as an important protective factor that can improve student well-being while reducing violence-related risks.[6] Research also supports comprehensive prevention approaches that combine skill-building, supportive relationships, positive school climates, and community partnerships.[9]

Where else might I go to learn more about violence prevention in schools?

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
https://www.cdc.gov/youth-violence/
National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)
https://nces.ed.gov/programs/crime/
National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)
https://www.nasponline.org
Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)
https://casel.org

Sources

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3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). *School-Based Violence Prevention*. Universal school-based prevention efforts help students develop communication, empathy, conflict-management, and problem-solving skills. [archive.cdc.gov]
4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023). *Youth Violence Prevention: Resource for Action*. Prevention requires coordinated efforts across education, health, public health, social services, and community sectors. [stacks.cdc.gov], [stacks.cdc.gov]
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6. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2024). *School Connectedness Helps Students Thrive*. Students who feel connected to school are less likely to experience violence and other negative outcomes. [cdc.gov], [archive.cdc.gov]
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Author: Olivia Levinton

If you have suggested additions to this information, send to inbox@peacethroughaction.org.

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