

Youth Violence

Defining violence and a typology for practice

What is the current picture?

The [Framework for Risk Assessment, Management and Evaluation: FRAME](#) notes that: “Violence is a broad term that has proven difficult to define precisely”.

The Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth (SAVRY) defines violence as: “an act of battery or physical violence that is sufficiently severe to cause injury to another person or persons (i.e., cuts, bruises, broken bones, death, etc.), regardless of whether injury actually occurs; any forcible act of sexual assault; or a threat made with a weapon in hand.”

In addition to the definitional challenge, “much remains unknown about youth violence in Scotland” as “there is a significant lack of available data on youth offending and the wider experiences of young people in Scotland” ([Fraser et. al, 2010: v](#)).

Meanwhile in [Getting it right for children and young people who present a risk of serious harm](#) (Scottish Government, 2008: 6) the focus includes, “the small number of children and young people involved in...serious violent behaviour who present a risk of serious harm”. Moreover it notes that, “In defining these children and young people it is important not to focus solely on a specific type of offence or behaviour but on the level of risk posed and the needs of the young person”.

World Health Organisation (WHO): Definition

The definition of violence put forward in the [World report on violence and health](#) (WHO, 2002: 5) is:

“the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation”.

WHO: Typology

Usefully the WHO has created a typology of violence which can be accessed by clicking on this link: http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2002/9241545615_eng.pdf (Navigate to Chapter 1, Page 6).

However it is the **Interpersonal Violence** sub-type in which social workers engaged in assessment and intervention work with young people who display violent behaviour are most likely to be interested:

<http://www.who.int/violenceprevention/approach/definition/en/index.html>

David Orr

For further information in relation to the work of the National Development Team (NDT) and specifically the work being undertaken in relation to youth violence as part of the “Managing High Risk” agenda, feel free to contact david.orr@ed.ac.uk.

twitter.com/ndtscotland

www.cjsw.ac.uk

Tel : +44 (0)131 651 1464

Fax : +44 (0)131 650 4046