

Survivors of violence tell their stories

Toolkit for using the videos to bring about change

Background

One out of two children between the ages of 2 and 17 experience violence every year. Strong evidence shows that violence in childhood increases the risks of injury; HIV and other sexually transmitted infections; mental health problems; delayed cognitive development; poor school performance and dropout; early pregnancy; reproductive health problems; and communicable and noncommunicable diseases. Despite the global scale and national impact of violence against children, and the widespread availability of evidence-based solutions such as the INSPIRE strategies, very few survivors ever tell anyone about their experiences, or access services to seek justice and help them heal.

Testimonials raise awareness and encourage action through powerful and emotive storytelling of firsthand experiences. The viewer will be both shaken by the accounts and empowered by the knowledge that violence against children is an unacceptable reality that we must all work together to change. Within this context, the World Health Organization and The Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children teamed up to develop a testimonial video to raise awareness about the life-long consequences of violence against children and issue an urgent call to action. The video features the stories of the following individuals who have courageously shared their experiences of violence, how it affected them, and which interventions helped them.

Those featured include:

- Ruby (Philippines, 20+, female)
- Florence (Kenya, 30+, female)
- Jeremy (New Zealand, 50+, male)
- Stewart (Canada, 50+, male)
- Eugenie (Switzerland, 80+, female)

The personal accounts clearly show that violence against children is a universal issue that takes place in every country and community, cutting across socio-economic and cultural contexts. While the film showcases the common experience of each story, it also gives space for each testimony to place a spotlight on the many different types of violence — physical, sexual, in the home, at school and online. The common thread running through each testimony is the need to speak up and break the silence on violence.

Communications package

The 13-min documentary, which is the centerpiece of the package, is available in English and the other five United Nations languages, Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Additional products point people towards the full documentary always pushing the audience to speak up and help make a change.

- [Survivors of child violence tell their stories](#) - Full version (13 minutes)
- [Survivors of child violence tell their stories](#) - Short version (5 minutes)
- [Five trailers: Survivors of child violence tell their stories](#) (1 minute)

How will the videos be used to bring about change?

Capacity Building. Currently WHO and partners are involved in developing a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC), a Training of Trainers on *INSPIRE: Seven strategies to end violence against children* and a course within the WHO Academy on the health sector response to child maltreatment. The long video is an effective teaching tool to get students immersed into the subject matter before discussing specifics around the prevention and response programs that need to be put in place.

Programming. Similarly, the videos can be used to build capacity of frontline workers in the field of violence prevention. Staff may not be aware of the universal nature or the different types of violence.

Discussion questions for teaching tools

- Describe the co-occurrence of different forms of violence and the link between victimization and perpetration.
- What are the health, social and economic consequences of violence in childhood?
- Which sectors need to be involved to prevent and respond to violence in childhood?
- What is the role of gender in the stories of the five survivors?
- What can government do to accelerate action to prevent violence against children?

Media reporting. From a largely unacknowledged issue (prior to the 1960s), today, the issue of violence against children is regularly covered. Media representations have prompted survivors – largely of sexual violence and clerical child abuse – to come forward and provide testimonies. Nevertheless, media reporting is often sensational, simplistic and sometimes even factually inaccurate. Moreover, the media's recent preoccupation with attacks perpetrated by strangers ("stranger danger") may divert attention from the fact that most abuse is perpetrated by individuals already known to the child. The 13-minute testimonial video can be used by journalists to understand key violence against children issues, its lifelong impact, and the importance of speaking out to create change.

Advocacy. The End Violence Partnership's 18-month global campaign, Together to #ENDviolence, aims to elevate the issue of violence against children to be a global priority and catalyse the political and financial commitments needed to end violence against children at home, online, at school and in communities, and sustain momentum as we move into a phase of accountability and country by country progress. The 13-minute video can be used at national, regional and global levels — in National Policy Dialogues, affiliate events or when launching data and reports — to put violence against children on governments' policy agendas, as part of public conversations and national debates, and to step-up the collective efforts to make the political and financial commitments necessary to see the end of violence against children for good.

Communications. Shifting harmful social norms, attitudes and behaviour that perpetuate violence against children is critical. We must engage a diverse and wide-ranging audience across countries. Traditional communications outlets such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and TikTok can be used to attract the general public to the longer video.

Survivor Networks. WHO country offices and national coalitions and partners of the End Violence Partnership have an opportunity to support survivors to further tell their stories and advocate for change at the national level. This could be supported by existing national survivor networks.