



Violence and school

Disclaimer

This booklet was written by Dr June Kane AM, in collaboration with the Daphne Programme management team of the European Commission. Its contents do not necessarily reflect the policies of the European Union or the positions of its Member States.

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Introduction

It is impossible to overstate the importance of education. We know that it is crucial to the lives and well-being of children but it is also, of course, important to the adults they will become. Education is the platform on which we can build success, achievement, financial stability, career progress and personal growth in our lives.

All over the world, organisations work to ensure that children get an education, in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Many children of school age are excluded because they cannot afford to go to school, either because education is not free in their country or because so-called 'free' education brings with it charges for uniforms, books, basic items such as pencils or services like photocopying or even, in some cases, the teacher's wages or heating when the weather turns cold.

In some countries, girls are kept out of school because their parents do not see the value of educating their daughters in communities where girls are expected to marry and take care of the house, rather than work outside the home. In other places, parents do not send their children to school because the teaching is so poor or the curriculum is not perceived as relevant and the education they receive does not equip them to find work and survive. Children, who are marginalised because of their ethnic origin, religion, disability or status, miss out on many things but most of all on education, denied them mostly because of discriminatory attitudes.

Europe strives to ensure that every child has access to free, quality schooling, in a region that has some of the world's best educational institutions and teachers. Education in its broadest sense is available to prepare children for the path they choose, whether that be vocational training leading to trade qualifications or a university place that leads to a higher degree. Sustained and ongoing attention to the educational needs and aspirations of Europe's children means that they have the best possible opportunity of living the life they choose.

How distressing it is, then, to see the words 'violence' and 'school' in the same phrase. How worrying it is, also, to learn that schools in a number of European Member States feel obliged to exclude pupils because these children have brought violence into the classroom or playground. In some Member States, steps have had to be taken because of an increase in the number of knives being brought into the classroom, with students claiming that these are for their protection.

Protection is what we have always expected our schools to provide alongside education and now, it seems, some children – and indeed their parents – are afraid that this expectation is not being met and that they have to take matters into their own hands.

In the face of media reports of school violence, I believe that Europe should not panic and that we must continue to strengthen and promote both the education and the protection that our schools can and must provide.

This is what the European Commission strives to do through initiatives such as the Daphne Programme, which is now in its eleventh year. Daphne is known throughout Europe, and indeed in many countries of the world, for its focus on learning and sharing lessons to reduce and eliminate violence against children, young people and women. A number of Daphne-supported projects since 1997 have focused on analysing and working to end violence in the school environment. Some projects have also used the opportunity that schools offer by working with children and young people to promote messages that violence is not acceptable, by developing methods to help children and teachers to identify situations in which violence might occur, and to both act to stop it happening and protect themselves if it does.

This eighth booklet in the series of thematic publications on different aspects of violence addressed by the Daphne Programme focuses on these projects and the lessons they offer. They are crucial lessons, not least because we must continue to look upon education as the key to our future success as a region and as individual Europeans, and thus must make every effort to ensure that school is a positive experience for every child.

Jacques Barrot
Vice-President of the European Commission,
in charge of Justice, Freedom and Security

Foreword

Millions of children spend more time under the care of adults in educational settings than anywhere else outside their homes. Like parents, the adults who oversee, manage and staff these places have a duty to provide safe and nurturing environments that support and promote children's learning and development. Sadly, although schools have an important role in protecting children, many children are exposed to violence at school, and are therefore denied their right to education. Violence in and around schools makes it difficult for children to get to and from school, to learn effectively, and to remain in school long enough to reap all of the benefits of education.

The United Nations Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children, the results of which were presented to the UN General Assembly in October 2006, found that across the globe violence is perpetrated by teachers and other staff. In every region of the world, in stark contradiction of human-rights norms and children's developmental needs, much violence against girls and boys remains legal and socially approved – even in places that are supposed to protect them, like schools. Corporal punishment, such as beating and caning, is standard practice in schools in many countries. It includes physical violence, humiliating forms of psychological punishment, sexual and gender-based violence. While corporal punishment in school has been banned in 102 countries, enforcement of the ban is uneven.

Other children can be cruel too, causing pain and distress through bullying. This can include not only physical aggression but also the daily, repeated harassment that leaves deep psychological scars. Bullying is a pattern of behaviour between students, much more than the sum of a series of incidents. It usually involves constant verbal taunts designed to embarrass, humiliate and disempower, and can easily spill over into physical violence. Whether perpetrated by adults or children, almost all violence in schools reflects a 'hidden curriculum' that promotes gender inequality and stereotyping. This makes lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans-gendered young people especially vulnerable, but also routinely involves pursuing girls with sexual taunts and harassing boys for not being masculine enough. Bullying is often linked to discrimination against students from poor families, marginalised groups or those with particular personal characteristics, including those with disabilities. All too often, school authorities do not take bullying seriously, either considering it somehow part and parcel of school life, or being content to deal with it incident by incident rather than seeking to prevent the pattern in the first place.

The consultation preparing the European region's input to the study, which was held in Ljubljana, Slovenia, in July 2005, found that in many ways Europe leads the world in legislating to end violence against children and to protect children at risk. For example, all the Member States of the European Union have prohibited corporal punishment in schools.

However, violence among young people is a growing concern in Europe and the region cannot afford to be complacent. Knee-jerk reactions to isolated incidents of extreme violence in the school environment, though, are not helpful. What is needed is a clear stand against violence supported by policies and related practices to prevent and respond to it, and which is communicated to everyone in the school environment, with teachers and students both taking responsibility.

The Study on Violence against Children made a number of recommendations that are relevant to Europe. For example, it called for countries to put in place safe, well-publicised, confidential and accessible mechanisms for children and their families to report violence against children, and to ensure the use of non-violent teaching and learning strategies and positive disciplinary measures that are not based on fear, threats, humiliation or physical force.

The study recommended the creation of programmes to address the whole school environment, including such things as non-violent conflict resolution and anti-bullying policies. It also stressed that every child has the right to a life free of violence, and that violence against children can never be justified. Inflicting violence on a child, in whatever form, teaches that child that violence is acceptable as a legitimate tool in negotiation, and so perpetuates the cycle of violence. Violence can and has been prevented in many schools. By preventing violence today, we are helping to build a future where violence will no longer be tolerated.

Above all, the study emphasised that violence against children is not inevitable. It can and must be prevented.

Dr Amaya Gillespie
Coordinator, Follow-up to the
UN Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children

The problem

Violence in schools and on university campuses has loomed large in the headlines in the past few years. There can be very few Europeans who have not heard of 'Columbine'. This name has passed into the English language; the 15 year-old student imprisoned for the Santana High School shootings of March 2001, for example, is widely quoted as saying he intended to 'pull a Columbine' before he entered the school and killed two students, wounding 13 others.¹

The tragic events of April 1999 at Columbine High School in the United States, however, and similar school killings before and after, are rare and memorable, at least in part because they are shocking aberrations.² Data and analysis in the United States³ over many years on violent incidents that take place in the school environment indicate that the rate of school crime (aggravated assault, rape, sexual assault, racketeering, robbery and destruction of property) has been stationary and indeed that the percentage of students being victimised at school has declined markedly in recent years.

In Europe, it is reported⁴ that physical violence in the school setting has been static in recent years but that 'minor violence' (rudeness and verbal harassment, for example) is increasing. Generally this minor violence is labelled as 'lack of discipline', but it is important to note that the research suggests that minor violence can spiral and lead to serious acts of violence.

In reality, however, it is not the headline-making school shootings that should be the focus of concern but the everyday repeated acts of what might be called 'small-scale' violence that take place in most schools, in particular bullying (sometimes called 'peer violence') and violent behaviour towards teachers and by teachers that does not necessarily involve physical aggression but nevertheless can have severe repercussions.

Bullying

Bullying has an enormous impact on children. In addition to the risks that physical violence carries, harassment, taunts, insults and threats may discourage victims from attending school, often resulting in their setting out from home but spending the day on the streets, in shopping centres, cinemas or arcades, afraid to tell their parents why they are playing truant. Physical and psychological bullying can cause fear and depression, sometimes leading to a child causing her/himself harm or even committing suicide.

1. Charles Andrew Williams was sentenced to 50 years imprisonment for the Santana High School killings. The reference to 'pulling a Columbine' was widely reported in the media at the time of the incident. Sueng-Hui Cho, the perpetrator of the Virginia Tech campus shootings, also made reference to the two students who carried out the Columbine killings, talking of 'martyrs like Eric and Dylan'. Links to media and official reports analysing similar events can be found at www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Columbine_High_School_massacre

2. In the Columbine High School incident of 20 April 1999, two students – Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold – planned to blow up their school using home-made pipe bombs. When the bombs failed to detonate, they moved through the school shooting students and teachers, killing 12 students and 1 teacher and wounding 24 others before turning the guns on themselves. The first high-profile school shooting in the US, however, dates back to May 1927 (Bath School) and there have been a number of incidents since that have received global media coverage, most notably the Amish school shooting of 2 October 2006 and the Virginia Tech massacre of 16 April 2007.

3. Indicators of school crime and safety, National Center for Education Statistics, US Department of Education, Washington DC 2003. There is no comparable data for Europe. There continue to be repeated calls for such data to be collected across Europe according to common parameters that allow for comparison and the identification of trends. As a result, most of the statistics in this booklet come from US sources and must therefore be read in relation to that country, particularly concerning the use of weapons and the different gun regime in the US compared to Europe. However, the data does give some indication of trends and are validated through comparative studies relating to trends in youth violence in general in other parts of the world.

4. Bodin, D.: Violence at school, Background paper for the Europe and Central Asia Regional Consultation for the UN Study on Violence against Children, Ljubljana, July 2005, p. 7. Bodin quotes here the figures for exclusions from British schools on 'serious grounds' (physical violence, destruction of property), which stabilised between 1993 and 1998 and fell slightly in 1998 and 1999.

In Europe, between 15% (boys and girls aged 11, 13 and 15 in Sweden) and 64% (boys)/65% (girls in Lithuania) reported having been bullied within the two months preceding a 2001/2 survey.⁵ Studies by the University of Bordeaux indicate that, of 35 000 students surveyed in France, 10% had been bullied. Slovenian studies report 45% of pupils being bullied. Girls are more often victims than boys and boys carry out 85% of reported incidents of bullying (although there are few studies on girls as bullies). Eighty per cent of violence is carried out by pupils aged 12 to 16.⁶ Approximately 87% of violence is between students. US statistical reports indicate that bullying is the only form of school-related violence that is increasing.⁷

Peer violence

Other forms of peer violence that flare up in the school environment are related to gangs and are often carried over from street violence. In some countries this is known to include 'reprisal violence',⁸ and sometimes involves racketeering or involvement in drugs. The carrying of weapons to school is of growing concern in some European Member States. In June 2008, the British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, flagged the introduction of new laws to combat a rise in knife crimes following the 16th death by stabbing of a teenager in less than six months. Any teenager over the age of 16 caught carrying a knife would face automatic prosecution and risk a jail sentence of up to four years. This followed pressure from police to enshrine in law what only existed as guidelines.⁹

The presence of weapons in schools was a concern in the United States as early as 1994, when a report into youth violence stated that: "Not much is known about why today's youth, in increasing numbers, are carrying guns. Anecdotal evidence suggests it is to show off, to ensure respect and acquiescence from others, or for self-defence. In part, it appears to be a response to the perception that public authorities cannot protect youth or maintain order in their neighbourhoods or at school."¹⁰

More commonly, however, children at school get involved in fistfights. In Europe, between 37% (boys)/13% (girls aged 11, 13 and 15 in Finland) and 69% (boys)/27% (girls in the Czech Republic) reported having been in a physical fight in the 12 months preceding a 2001/2 survey.¹¹

Violence against teachers

Violence also occurs against teachers. A 2005 report on workplace violence¹² noted that teachers surveyed considered 'nuisance behaviour' and lack of work by students to be violent and threatening. 'It's the insults, the dirty words, the cold insolence of the students that really bothers teachers,' according to Stanley Heller, President of the West Haven Federation of Teachers.¹³ In the US, between 1997 and 2001, teachers were the victims of approximately 1.3 million non-fatal crimes at school, including 817 000 thefts and 473 000 violent crimes (rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, simple assault).¹⁴ Male teachers are more likely to be victims and senior/middle schoolteachers are more often targeted than elementary schoolteachers. Despite these statistics, the report on workplace-related violence indicated that teachers were "relatively safer than the average worker".¹⁵

In Europe, there have been few studies on violence against teachers. A 1997 report on violence against teachers in French schools indicated that physical violence against teachers, mainly by male students, was most likely a 'trial of strength' and an attempt at physical domination. Some 44% of the victims were male teachers and 56% female. Conversely, 58% of the victims of verbal violence were male teachers and 42% female.¹⁶ Among all teachers, those between the ages of 50 and 60 years were over-represented.

5. Pinheiro, P.: World Report on violence against children, United Nations, Geneva 2006, p.124.

6. Bodin, D., op. cit., pp. 8-9. These figures are rounded and calculated from the average of the British, Spanish, Swedish, French, Belgian and German studies.

7. National Center for Education Statistics, US Department of Education: Indicators of school crime and safety, Washington DC 2003.

8. This is known to occur, for example, in some communities that have Caribbean roots. Although the children of these communities (and often their parents also) have been born in Europe and may never have set foot in the country of origin of their grandparents, they are singled out as targets in revenge for acts of violence that have taken place in that country involving distant family members.

9. Tataro, P.: "Britain to get tough on teens carrying knives", The Age, 6 June 2008, p.14.

10. Youth violence: an overview, Centre for the Study of Youth Policy, University of Pennsylvania, 1994, p.10.

11. Pinheiro, P.: op.cit, p.127.

12. Schonfeld, I.S.: Sources and forms of workplace violence, New York 2005.

13. Quoted in Time's The ABCs of school violence.

14. National Center for Education Statistics, US Department of Education: Indicators of school crime and safety, Washington DC 2003.

15. Schonfeld, op. cit., p. 179.

16. Quoted in Bodin, D.: op. cit., p. 9.

Violence by teachers against students

Violence by teachers against students includes sexual harassment and both physical and psychological abuse. Such instances are rare enough to attract media coverage when they are uncovered, however. Much more frequent is corporal or humiliating punishment. All 27 EU Member States have prohibited corporal punishment, but verbal humiliation is a reality of school life for some students and difficult to police.¹⁷

The European regional consultation preparing input to the UN Secretary-General's study on violence against children suggested that there are a number of reasons why violence perpetrated by teachers is rarely mentioned in the literature: teachers are rarely involved in the most frequently reported type of violence, which is physical assault; teachers are assumed by dint of their status as educators to be non-violent people; there is general rejection of the very notion that teachers might be violent; and the violence perpetrated by teachers is generally more subtle (exclusion from class, hidden racism, moral harassment) or is seen as 'discipline' and so is rarely reported.

A Eurobarometer survey on attitudes to violence against children undertaken in 1999¹⁸ showed that 75% of Europeans believe that psychological punishment by teachers or childminders is a form of violence; 18% of respondents did not believe such behaviour to be violent. When asked whether it was likely that a child who had been a victim of violence had suffered this violence at the hands of a teacher or childminder, the 'yes' answer score was above 60% in only four countries: Luxembourg, France, Greece and Spain.

Violence by others

Few reports consider violence committed in the school environment by 'visitors', that is parents, contractors or others who visit the school for purposes other than education, or by 'strangers' who use the coincidence of children congregating in the school to inflict mass violence. Such incidences are relatively rare. In the case of 'visitor violence', reports suggest that this is often incidental, a result of anger boiling over into aggression or alcohol-related assaults. 'Stranger violence' is even rarer but gives rise to often extreme reactions. A recent and exemplary case is the March 1996 shootings at the primary school in the Scottish town of Dunblane. Sixteen children and one teacher died, in addition to the attacker who committed suicide. The Dunblane massacre remains the deadliest single targeted killing of children in UK history.

The Dunblane incident gave rise to concerns about 'safe schools', including measures to exclude or vet visitors, and register and monitor all those having contact with children. The Cullen enquiry into the incident noted that 'safety at school' is to a large extent covered under workplace laws, since schools are, after all, a workplace for teachers. It also noted also that the responsibility of the 'employer' in these cases – usually national or local education authorities – also covers the safety of others on school premises, including pupils. The report concluded that it is difficult to anticipate or stop unexpected intruders and their actions, but that more could be done to check those legally on the school campus, for example parents or adults attending functions, and to undertake risk assessment to the greatest extent possible.

Importantly, the Cullen report noted that, "it would be unacceptable to carry measures to the point where schools were turned into fortresses". In this regard, it is important to note that US data illustrates clearly that children are safer at school than at home, despite fears to the contrary.¹⁹

17. Corporal punishment is not explicitly prohibited in French law. An 1889 High Court ruling allowed the 'right to correction'; however, a 2000 ruling explicitly stated that this does not cover habitual and non-educational corporal punishment. Ending legalised violence against children, *Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children*, London 2005.

18. Eurobarometer 51.0: Europeans and violence against children, 4 June 1999.

19. Schonfeld, op. cit., p. 172.

Perhaps because school is generally considered a place of protection, the very notion of violence against children in the school environment is universally abhorred. It is important, then, to stress that there is no direct causal relationship between violence and school: school is simply a place where children gather and where hierarchies and relationships play out, both those specific to children and those that reflect conflicts in broader society. These include hierarchies of power (among children but also between children and teachers/staff) and social prejudices, such as racism/xenophobia, or discrimination on other grounds, for example religion, sex, socio-economic status or physical characteristics (hair colour, weight).

Also, however, violence in the school environment is often the expression of a context of social anomie, where there are insufficient or no rules and standards governing inter-personal behaviour, and a loss of reference points and values. Although many school principals and staff would argue that there are rules governing behaviour in schools, these are often unwritten or assumed. To reinstate these benchmarks in a form that is unequivocal and can be promoted to all those involved, there needs to be a 'contract' within the school (whether educational, moral, social or purely rules-based), negotiated and agreed by students, teachers and staff.

European and international initiatives and instruments

There is no EU legal or policy framework regarding violence in schools. The Council of Europe has made an attempt to put in place a negotiated 'contract'. In 2004, it launched a *Charter for Democratic Schools without Violence*. This was drafted by student delegates and then adopted through an electronic referendum with schoolchildren from 82 schools in 19 countries across Europe.²⁰ Articles 5 and 6 of the charter relate specifically to violence and the importance of resolving conflict in non-violent ways. It also stresses the right of all members of the school community to equal treatment and respect. It was intended that the charter should serve as a model for negotiated codes in schools across the region.

There have also been a number of EU initiatives on violence and school, generally focusing on practical actions to prevent or reduce it. The 'Violence in schools' initiative, which ran from 1997 to 1999,²¹ centred on support for the exchange of information and experiences through participation in joint actions. One of its main outcomes was a series of national reports.

In 2001, a UK-based networking and research initiative called 'UK-001' was run under the umbrella of the Connect initiative with EC support. Seventeen country reports on violence in schools were produced.²² The Visionary project was funded under Socrates Minerva in 2003 and includes a website for exchange of experiences and information. It involves researchers, teachers and organisations in Denmark, Finland, Germany, Portugal and the United Kingdom.²³

Initiatives have also been funded under the Comenius 1 and 2 initiatives of the Socrates programme, as well as a number of transnational projects supported by the Daphne Programme (these are discussed in the next section). Comenius 1 School Partnerships involve a minimum of three schools in three different EU countries working together on common themes; Comenius 2 focuses on training school staff and several of these projects have related to violence and school.²⁴ The Comenius action runs until 2013.

In 2003, the EC commissioned a review of good practices in preventing and reducing bullying in schools from the European Crime Prevention Network (EUCPN).²⁵ The review of school bullying in the EU-15 and some other countries (Norway, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the United States) concluded that there were significant differences in legislation and governmental interventions relating to school bullying across the Member States, as well as substantial differences in expertise and experience among them. The report highlighted two outstanding issues of concern: the lack of nationwide survey data in nearly all the Member States and the fact that anti-bullying intervention programmes and policies are rarely adequately evaluated. The report called for more training for those working in the area and support services for them.

20. The charter can be found at www.coe.int/t/e/integrated_projects/democracy/02-Activities/15_European_School_Charter/

21. The initiative was set up as a result of Conclusion 97/C 303/02 of the Council of the EU. The archive of documents produced can be accessed at http://ec.europa.eu/education/archive/violence/initi_en.html

22. The reports can be found at www.gold.ac.uk/connect/index.html

23. The website is at www.bullying-in-school.info/en/content/about-us/our-projects/visionary-abstract.html

24. More information on the Comenius action of the Socrates programme is available at www.ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/socrates/comenius/index_en.html

25. EUCPN: Review of scientifically evaluated good practices of preventing and reducing bullying at school in EU Member States, 2004. The report can be viewed at www.eucpn.org/library/results.asp?category=6&pubdate=2004

The Congress of local and regional authorities of Europe in 2003 adopted Recommendation 135 on local partnerships for preventing and combating violence in school. This called, among other things, for priority to be given to protecting and helping victims, to striking a balance between prevention and reaction, with a long-term focus, and to the importance of recognising the link between violence in the school setting and external factors by including parents and local communities in partnerships to prevent it. This approach is generally known as the 'whole school approach' and is now widely adopted.

There is a European Observatory on School Violence, based at the University of Bordeaux. In 1998, the observatory took the first steps to creating an international federation of researchers on violence in schools.²⁶ This movement has been behind a number of international meetings such as the first world conference on 'Violence in school and public policies' in Paris in 2001. A second world conference was co-organised by the Centre de Recherche et d'Intervention sur la Réussite Scolaire in 2003 in Quebec, a third in Bordeaux in 2006 and a fourth in the UK in 2007, co-organised by the UK Observatory for the Promotion of Non-violence (www.ukobservatory.com). A fifth conference is scheduled for Ottawa in 2009.

There are no specific international treaties on violence related to the school environment; however three articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) are relevant:

Article 19(1) says that, "State parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse while in the care of parent(s)...or any other person who has the care of the child". This is a comprehensive article that covers the responsibility to ensure that children are also protected in the school environment.

More specifically, Article 28(2) deals with the issue of corporal punishment and humiliating treatment, calling on State parties to "take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity".

Article 29 covers the nature of education itself, saying that it should be directed "to development of the child's personality to its fullest potential, the development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of the sexes and friendship among all people, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin". Although it does not specifically mention violence, it is clear that no child can develop fully if she/he is a victim of violence.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, set up within the framework of the CRC, has stressed the need to strengthen links between the school, family and community, to give children an active role in prevention, and to treat the different forms of violence in a comprehensive manner. It has repeatedly made clear that the use of corporal punishment does not respect the inherent dignity of the child nor the strict limits on school discipline.²⁷ In a landmark General Comment, the Committee stressed that "children do not lose their human rights by virtue of passing through the school gates".²⁸

26. The movement has now been consolidated into an International Observatory of Violence in the School Environment. Its website is at www.ijvs.org

27. General Comment No.8: The right of the child to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment (Articles 19, 28(2) and 37, inter alia), (CRC/C/GC/8, 2006).

28. General Comment No.1: The aims of education, (CRC/GC/1/2001), para.8.

Other UN bodies, such as the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), have condemned corporal punishment of children in general and specifically in relation to school discipline.

In Europe, the European Court of Human Rights has taken the view that all forms of corporal punishment at school run counter to Article 3 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (amended by Protocol 11 which came into force on 1 November 1998).

The revised European Social Charter (which entered into force in 1999), monitored by the European Committee of Social Rights, provides (Article 7(10)) that children will be protected from physical and moral dangers. The Committee has concluded that this article concerns measures to protect children against physical and moral dangers in the family, at school and in society in general, as well as in the world of work.²⁹

In relation to violence against children in the school environment in Europe, the regional consultation for the UN Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children had some specific recommendations, including calls for an EU initiative on coordinated data collection and analysis, based on a common definition and methodology, and the establishment of a regional instrument relating to violence in the school environment and to the general policies and practices to be implemented.³⁰

29. Bodin, D., op. cit. pp. 11-12.

30. The study also had a series of overarching recommendations in relation to violence against children in the school setting. These can be found at www.unviolencestudy.org

Experiences from the Daphne Programme

Projects in the area of violence and school supported by the Daphne Programme since 1997 fall generally into four main categories: projects aiming to prevent bullying and peer violence; initiatives that use school as a venue for anti-violence education; projects focusing on empowering teachers and educational staff as actors in protecting children; and the development of studies and tools in the area of violence and school.

RESPECT was a year-long project (1997/290/2/C) run by the Methodist Association of Youth Clubs in the UK, with partners in Sweden and Ireland. The aim was to mobilise young people to work against prejudice-related violence and in particular against bullying. Two magazines and a CD were produced for youth leaders, including ideas for combating bullying, reflections about its causes and effects, and encouragement of non-violence. The project culminated in a week of action where young people were encouraged to take the issues of violence and bullying to a wider audience – their churches, schools and local community. A number of specific actions were recommended and taken up across the UK, such as creating anti-bullying posters, taking assemblies, pushing for anti-bullying policies in schools, holding peace vigils, and committing to a five-point peace pledge. In addition to the important awareness raising and mobilisation of youth leaders around the issue of bullying, there were some other very concrete outcomes of this project. The Swedish Methodist Youth Service was introduced to a whole new area of youth work and the UK partner was able to send out anti-bullying posters (designed by young people in a national competition) to every school in the country.

The importance of awareness raising about bullying and peer violence was also underlined in other projects that developed important messages for children, young people and those who work with them. A project led by Jovenes Sin Fronteras (ES), involving partners in France and Scotland, created materials for public awareness campaigns on school bullying (1997/417/2/C) and included partner exchanges and networking. A project coordinated by the German NGO Wildwasser Oldenburg e.V. (1998/159/C) focused on the issue of sexual violence against adolescent girls and women in education and training, and developed information materials, training packages and an awareness-raising conference.

Some awareness projects focused on specific groups of youngsters who are often the target of bullies. Young people with learning disabilities, for example, were both the beneficiaries and the prime movers behind a project to take anti-bullying and anti-discrimination messages into schools (1999/169/C). This project, led by the Scottish organisation ENABLE, had partners in Denmark and Portugal.

Anti-bullying and anti-violence messages were at the heart of the LUCY project (2003/166/YC), which focused on younger children, their families, teachers and communities. Here the message was transmitted through play, sport and theatre performances in community centres. The project leader, Ajutament de Badia del Vallès, had already tested the methodology in Spain and, with partners in Greece, Italy and the UK, looked at how it could be extended to other parts of Europe. This was an important project because it illustrated how solutions to serious problems can be sought in the very environments in which victims and perpetrators of violence move and feel comfortable.

In a project run by the Italian Gay Association, Arcigay, partners from Italy, Poland, Spain and Austria joined forces to raise awareness of verbal, psychological and physical violence based on sexual orientation in the school setting (2005-1/150/Y). The project used multiplier training to prepare 240 school workers and 480 students to take the message into schools, and developed training materials for this purpose.

Training materials were also developed as part of a project coordinated by the Cooperativa Sociale COOSS Marche Onlus (IT) in 2006 (2006-1/198/C). These were selected by children themselves from a range of media options explained to them by their teachers. The children could choose among painting activities, movies and cartoons, and their chosen materials were compiled on a CD-Rom that formed the basis of awareness-raising activities among 8-14 year-olds. Taking a whole school approach, the project also targeted parents, teachers and local community bodies such as the police and social workers.

An international conference bringing together lessons from European projects to combat bullying was at the heart of project 2005-1/078/C, which also included a training component for school communities and ideas on developing school anti-bullying policies. Over 12 months, the Lithuanian Children's Support Centre worked with project partners in Latvia and Lithuania to organise 50 training and awareness-raising seminars.

Training in social skills, conflict resolution and anger management techniques for students, teachers and parents was the main element of a training and awareness-raising project led by the Greek Association for the Psychosocial Health of Children and Adolescents in 2005 (2005-1/040/YC). The aim was to help these groups to recognise and manage bullying in the school setting in the four partner countries: Cyprus, Germany, Greece and Lithuania.

A 2005 project (2005-1/265/C) run by the Czech NGO Sdružení Linka bezpečí dětí mládeže with partners in the UK, Poland and Slovakia, combined awareness-raising activities with the promotion of peer support schemes. Materials to help students and their teachers to confront issues that young people face – such as physical violence, psychological abuse, drug taking, racism and school bullying – were intended also to encourage young people to talk about these issues with their schoolmates and teachers, and know where to find support. The project promoted action plans for schools and a system of trained trainers to support the schools.

The opportunity provided by the school community for anti-violence education was seized by a number of Daphne-supported projects. The British-based Leeds Animation Workshop developed, with a range of partners across Europe and in different sectors, a series of animated cartoon films aimed at helping children and young people to understand different forms of violence they might encounter in their lives, and to know how to respond. The first of these, *Home truths*, covers the issue of domestic violence (1998/035/C); *Tell it like it is* deals with violence in secondary schools (1999/241/WC); the *Beyond Belief* package focuses on child sexual abuse (2002/062/YC). What the packages have in common is that, in addition to the animated cartoon, they also include classroom notes for teachers who can use the films to prompt discussion in class. This is particularly important because the films all underline the importance of talking about problems to school friends and staff.

Some projects focused on enlarging the knowledge base on violence in the school setting and developing tools for prevention and violence reduction.

A curriculum guide on 'education for a violence-free society' was the major output of a 2002 project led by the Higher Centre of Education of the University of Laguna in Tenerife, Spain (2002/081/WYC). The guide was tested in 20 educational centres by 50 teachers in Germany, Spain, Denmark and Italy. It focused on teaching skills for dealing with conflict in the classroom and for integrating these techniques into the school curriculum. Perhaps not surprisingly, the project partners at first met some resistance from teachers and school principals and a reluctance to admit that violence was a problem in their schools. Through careful management of this reluctance, though, the partners were able to build good working relationships with school staff and found that the teachers became increasingly enthusiastic about the materials as the project progressed.

The problem of inter-ethnic violence in schools was the focus of a 2004 project led by the Centre for Research in Social Affairs (IT) with partners in Spain, Germany and Latvia (2004-1/183/Y). The partners aimed to identify and analyse examples of good practice in dealing with conflict labelled as 'inter-cultural' in secondary schools. They found that when young people of migrant background are involved in school violence, it is often assumed that cultural identity is the cause of the conflict. Because the young people concerned have often experienced exclusion and discrimination, they expect and so emphasise cultural differences and attribute the conflict to them. In reality, the analysis found that the reasons for conflict among adolescents in school do not markedly differ when the protagonists include migrant children.

Racist violence and bullying were targeted in a 2004 project led by the Mannerheim League (FI) whose objective was to create a model for a European Declaration of School Peace, with support materials for schools to promote understanding and tolerance (2004-1/068/YC). In each of the partner countries – Finland, Greece, Estonia, Poland and Spain – events were organised at which school students committed themselves to upholding the declaration.

Finnish and Estonian church organisations and NGOs joined forces in a 2005 project (2005-2/076/YC) led by the Evangelical Lutheran Association for Youth (FI) that developed a toolkit for violence prevention among children and young people, targeted at educators and youth workers. The focus of the toolkit was on providing non-violent alternatives in situations of potential conflict, and users were introduced to it through a series of training courses. A multi-sectoral network established during the project provided pedagogical support to those using the toolkit.

Central to many of these initiatives is the requirement to identify potential conflict situations in schools and to intervene to stop violence before it happens. A project called 'Fair play at school; fair play in society' (2005-2/072/YC) focused on formulating indicators that would help teachers, education officers and others to identify risk factors and address these with preventive measures. The project leader, the Finnish National Centre for Professional Development in Education, brought together educational institutions in Finland, Greece, Germany and Slovenia to work on this project and create a permanent network to continue monitoring the results.

The Daphne Programme also supported two significant research projects focusing on violence and school. The first (2005-1/127/Y) focused on school conflict among adolescents and resulting from boy/girl relationships, dating and 'models of attraction'. The premise of the study was that adolescents perceive some elements of violent behaviour as attractive and that this often includes macho behaviour and gender-related bullying. In analysing these models, the University of Zaragoza (ES) and academic partners in Cyprus and Malta set out to promote actions for secondary school teachers and staff to implement to discourage respect for violent behaviours and promote equality and respect.

The second, in 2006, was carried out by partners in Italy, Finland, Spain and the UK, who worked under the coordination of the University of Bologna (IT) on a joint investigation of new forms of school bullying such as cyberbullying (harassment or threats transmitted via the Internet or mobile phones) and the social dynamics at play among 8 to 16 year-olds that lead to such actions (2006-1/241/YC). The aim was also to analyse the kinds of peer-to-peer strategies that children use to defend themselves against bullying.

Finally, on the basis that preventing violence in the educational setting is best started early, a 2006 research study coordinated by the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (NL) looked at peer violence and approaches to primary prevention in kindergartens (2006-1/247/C). Partners in Italy, Poland, Belgium, Sweden and Germany, with an associate partner in Norway, observed children in kindergartens and surveyed staff and parents whilst researching the report, and held strategy workshops. The study also included elements of a kindergarten curriculum for non-violence, and frameworks for identifying good practice and a future research agenda.

Selected on-line resources

- The Daphne II and III Programme websites can be accessed through the European Commission EUROPA site:
Daphne II: http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/funding/2004_2007/daphne/funding_daphne_en.htm
Daphne III: http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/funding/daphne3/funding_daphne3_en.htm.
- The Daphne Toolkit, which includes descriptions, lessons and comments on all completed Daphne projects up to 2005, as well as useful links, 'tools and tips' and multimedia materials from the projects, is at http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/daphne-toolkit.
- The United Nations Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children reports and resources can be downloaded from www.unviolencestudy.org.
- The website of the Global Initiative to End All Corporate Punishment of Children can be found at www.endcorporalpunishment.org.
- The European Observatory on School Violence site is www.obsviolence.com.
- The International Observatory of Violence in the School Environment site is www.ijvs.org.
- A useful website with links to various initiatives relating to violence and school is www.bullying-in-school.info.
- Extracts from the *Journal of School Violence* can be accessed via <http://genesislight.com/JSV.html>.
- UNESCO's website has a series of tools for 'healthy schools': www.unesco.org/education/fresh.

Selected bibliography

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CNN	'FBI holds news conference on school violence prevention', transcript of live cross, CNN, 6 September 2000. See www.fdch.com
Committee on the Rights of the Child	<i>General Comment No. 8: The right of the child to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment (Articles 19, 28(2) and 37, inter alia)</i> , CRC/C/GC/8, 2006
Committee on the Rights of the Child	<i>General Comment No. 1: The aims of education</i> (CRC/GC/1/2001)
Council of Europe	<i>Building a Europe for and with children (fact sheets)</i> , undated. See www.coe.int
Council of Europe	<i>Preventing school violence – A handbook for local partnerships</i> , Strasbourg, undated
European Commission	Eurobarometer 51.0: <i>Europeans and violence against children</i> , 4 June 1999
Gittins, C.	<i>Europe and violence in schools – How to make a difference: A handbook</i> , Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 2006
Pinheiro, P. S.	<i>World Report on Violence against Children</i> , United Nations, Geneva, 2006, pp. 109-170
Schonfeld, I. S.	<i>Sources and forms of workplace violence</i> , New York, 2005, pp. 169-209
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Time	<i>The ABCs of school violence</i> , 23 January 1978
Totaro, P.	'Britain to get tough on teens carrying knives', <i>The Age</i> , 6 June 2008, p. 14. See www.theage.com.au
–	<i>Ending legalised violence against children</i> , Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, London, 2005
–	<i>Violence in schools training action</i> , July 2000, supported by the European Union Comenius 2 Initiative, Grant number 112044-CP-1-UK-COMENIUS-C21
–	<i>Youth violence: an overview</i> , Centre for the Study of Youth Policy, University of Pennsylvania, 1994

Daphne-supported projects in the area of violence and school

On bullying and peer violence	
1997/290/2/C	RESPECT: Anti-bullying project
1997/417/2/C	Violence in educational centres
1999/169/C	Breaking the barrier: A campaign by people with learning disabilities against violence and bullying of children and young people with learning disabilities in Europe
2003/166/YC	LUCY: Community intervention to prevent peer abuse and intimidation
2005-1/040/YC	Needs assessment and awareness-raising programme for bullying in schools
2005-1/078/C	Creating bullying-free schools in Lithuania and Latvia
2005-1/150/Y	Schoolmates: Training and tools to prevent and address violence against homosexual adolescents in schools
2006-1/198/C	PEAB: Peer education against bullying
School as a venue for anti-violence education	
1998/035/C	A video pack entitled 'Home truths'
1998/159/C	A prevention programme for female adolescents and women in training and education
1998/193/WC	On the safe side
1999/044/WC	Teenage tolerance: Research and preventive education module
1999/158/C	School response and resources in helping children and young people exposed to domestic violence
1999/241/WC	Tell it like it is: Animated video package about violence in secondary schools
2000/287/WC	ATAV: Action Teenagers against Violence (+ follow-up: 2002/215/YC DATAV: Dissemination Action Teenagers against Violence)
2001/163/YC	Violence against children and young people: Operational networks for project work in schools
2002/062/YC	Helping abused children video pack
2002/081/WYC	Education for a violence-free society
2004-1/068/YC	School peace
2005-1/127/Y	Secondary education schools and education in values: Proposals for gender violence prevention
2005-2/072/YC	Respect! Fair play at school, fair play in society
Teachers and education staff as a protection resource	
1998/249/C	Increasing the role and optimising the actions of teachers, social assistants and parents to protect children against sexual abuse
2003/126/W	Increasing teacher trainees' awareness of sexualised and gender violence

Studies, tools and methodologies	
1999/117/C	Language: A bridge to one another
2000/132/C	Prevention of violence in school: The school mediator as a resource
2000/234/W	The POMBA project – Prevention, orientation and basic support methods
2001/125/YC	‘Believe me’ video pack
2001/202/WYC	Increasing awareness in educational organisations of sexualised and gendered violence
2002/078/YC	Secucities: City and school
2004-1/183/Y	YiES: Actions against inter-ethnic violence among pupils at school
2005-1/265/C	Childlines in partnership with schools
2005-2/076/YC	Toolkit of non-violence: Methods for teachers and youth workers
2006-1/241/YC	An investigation into forms of peer-peer bullying at school in pre-adolescent and adolescent groups
2006-1/247/C	Study on violence prevention in the kindergarten

Note: Full details of these projects and the organisations involved are available in the on-line resource Daphne Toolkit: http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/daphne-toolkit. Projects supported through the 2006 Call for Proposals (06-) run through 2007 and complete reporting in 2008, but they are outlined in the Daphne Toolkit project listing.

European Commission

Daphne Booklets: Issues and experiences in combating violence against children, young people and women
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