The Observatoire International de la Violence à l’école, the Observatoire Européen de la Violence Scolaire and UNESCO are pleased to present this newsletter, the first in a series aiming at keeping you informed about research into and the struggle against school violence worldwide. These newsletters will complement the information published in the International Journal on Violence and Schools (www.ijvs.org), to which readers also have free access.

We are more than ever convinced that school violence has become one of the major problems that school systems and their users now have to face. Violence in educational institutions is now an obstacle to millions of pupils. Its psychological, social and political impacts are enormous: dropout, absenteeism, depression and suicidal tendencies are all highly correlated. At the same time, the media coverage of certain terrible but rare events is tending to highlight the problem in an exaggerated morbid fashion. The true nature of the problem still remains to be discovered. For this reason, there is need for collaboration between the research world and the stakeholders in the field: scientific laboratories, official bodies, NGOs, individuals, etc.

This collaboration is the rationale for our observatories and organisations. It is also the driving force for the world congresses on school violence that we have organised since 2001, of which the fourth will be held in Lisbon in June 2008.

This newsletter is mainly devoted to that event.

This newsletter is your newsletter. Your news, comments and reactions are welcome. Please do not hesitate to send them to us. Research into and the struggle against school violence knows no bounds. To avoid making mistakes and reinventing the wheel by conducting work already undertaken by others, we need to pool our knowledge and resolve any tensions or contradictions that may create. One of the main problems about school violence is the solitude experienced by those faced with it. By bring our knowledge together, we are going some way to breaking that solitude.
Fourth world conference
“Violence at school and public policies”

Violence at school: violence in context?

The first world conference on school violence was held in Paris in 2001. Its success in bringing together researchers and practitioners from 27 countries led to subsequent conferences in Quebec (2003) and Bordeaux (2005), where the participants came from 35 countries from North and South. Our scientific committee is therefore pleased to launch a call for papers for the fourth world conference to be held from 23-25 June 2008 in the prestigious setting of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon. Its superb facilities will guarantee perfect working conditions in one of the world’s great cities. As in previous conferences, a high-level scientific program will be matched by a pleasant social program. These international conferences are the result of a worldwide federation of researchers covering fields as diverse as psychology, sociology, educational sciences, criminology, etc. That the fourth conference is being held is testimony to the federation’s success. These meetings have become a focal point for all those who are interested in the phenomenon of school violence. They target scientific excellence with a rigorous selection process for proposals. For example, only 150 papers were finally accepted out of 400 at the last conference.

School violence has now become a worldwide problem requiring both national and international thinking to encompass its forms, causes and consequences, so as to be able to set up efficient strategies for prevention and intervention. Your contribution would further knowledge in the field and help in developing forms of action to combat school violence.

Venue of conference

As the most westerly situated capital in Europe, Lisbon is a sunny city steeped in culture, and few remain insensitive to its beauty and movement. The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation hosts many conferences and its premises are set in an oasis of calm and flowers in the heart of Lisbon. You can visit its site: www.gulbenkian.pt

Official conference languages

English, French and Portuguese will be used during the conference. Simultaneous translation will be provided during the plenary sessions. It will also be possible to hold parallel meetings in Spanish, as in the previous conferences.

Scientific programmm

School violence cannot be understood in terms of other forms of violence or delinquency. It has specific forms, causes and contexts. It occurs in specific places where victims and aggressors are also specific: pupils, teachers, staff members, parents, etc. The latest research focuses on the effects of the context in association with the school institution itself. For example, how does the internal organization of schools promote or prevent violence? In some countries, schools remain highly protected by the pupils who frequent them, while in others they are viewed as enemies by some youngsters. A major goal of this conference, therefore, will be to compare contexts from the four cardinal points of the globe in a multidisciplinary approach. An important aspect will be to define efficient practice so as to establish the most salient variables for preventing or dealing with violence and aggressive behavior at school.
Plenary lectures:

- Daniel SAMPAIO (Universidade de Lisboa, Ministério da Educação/Observatório da Segurança Escolar, Portugal).
- Marek FUCHS (University of Kassel, Allemagne): Impact of School Violence at School - Multi-Level Analysis
- Mitsuru TAKI (National Institute for Educational Policy Research, Japan): A New Definition and Scales for Indirect Aggression in Schools: Results from the Longitudinal Comparative Survey among 5 Countries (Japan, Australia, Canada, Korea, USA).
- Discussion panel: Quel dialogue entre science et action, au Nord comme au Sud.

Presidential address:

Eric DEBARBIEUX (International Observatory on School Violence): Bringing research together: the need for dialogue on a world level

Parallel sessions:

There will be 145 papers covering 5 themes:

1: The present state of affairs both nationally and internationally.

The scientific committee will pay particular attention to papers containing national statistics (official census data, self-reported victimization or delinquency surveys, etc.) and to proposals making international comparisons or using different approaches of a more ethnographic or qualitative type.

2: Explanatory models of school violence.

As international comparisons become available, it would be interesting to update the explanatory models of school violence. For example, it is essential to understand why some countries seem less subject to school violence despite their apparently highly prejudicial socioeconomic backdrop. Models using risk and resilience factors could be very appropriate here.

3: School violence, the family and the community.

Both family and community may be perceived as the root of violence, yet they are also pathways to finding solutions. A point common to all five themes is the links between school, family and community.

4: Public practice, programs and policies.

In a perspective for action, we need to get to know programs already in existence and whether they are efficient. Nevertheless, many public programs are still torn between repression and prevention so we need better knowledge of them.

5: Relationships with educational practice.

School violence cannot be dissociated from the climate present in schools and educational practice. Which practices and routines are efficient? This theme will include teachers as victims of school violence. We need to understand how schools can help to protect against violence. Is this a matter for teaching or exclusion? Teacher training is a key issue here. Some of today’s practices actually fuel aggressive behavior in schools.

Symposia:

6 symposia will be organized during the conference:

1: The work of the European Observatory on School Violence (EOSV): between violence at school and delinquency among minors.

Coordination: Catherine Blaya (EOSV, University of Bordeaux, France)

2: Early Intervention for Tackling Antisocial Behavior.

Coordination: Fernando JUSTICIA Justicia and Juan Luiz BENITEZ Muñoz (University of Granada, Spain)

3: Health Behavior in School-aged Children (WHO-HBSC): results from several countries.

Coordination: Rosario Ortega (Universidad de Córdoba, Spain) and Joseph Dougoudia LOMPO (University of Koudougou, Burkina Faso).

5: Bullying in schools: Predictors and Profiles: Results of the Portuguese Health Behavior in School aged Children study.

Coordination: Margarida GASPAR de MATOS (Faculdade de Motricidade Humana, Lisbon).
Scientific committee

Co-chairs:
- Ron Avi Astor, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, États-Unis
- Éric Debarbieux, Université Victor Segalen 2, Bordeaux, France
- Carlos Neto, Faculdade de Motricidade Humana, Universidade Técnica, Lisboa, Portugal

Members:
- Alfredo Furlan, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexique
- António Fonseca, Université de Coimbra, Portugal
- Benoît Galand, Université de Louvain, Belgique
- Carol Hayden, University of Portsmouth, Royaume Uni
- Catherine Blaya, Observatoire Européen de la Violence Scolaire, Bordeaux, France
- Claire Beaumont, Université Laval, Québec, Canada
- David K. Farrington, University of Cambridge, Royaume Uni
- Edwin R. Gerler, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC, États-Unis
- Égide Royer, Université Laval, Québec, Canada
- Florent Gomez, Institut Universitaire de Formation des Maîtres d’Aquitaine, France
- Franco Prina, Université de Milan, Italie
- Georges Stellgen, Université du Luxembourg, Luxembourg
- Helen Cowie, University of Surrey Roehampton, Royaume Uni
- Jaime Retamal, Pontificia Universidad Catolica, Santiago, Chili
- John Visser, University of Birmingham, Royaume Uni
- Joseph Dougoudia Lombo, Université de Koudougou, Burkina Faso
- Laurier Fortin, Université de Sherbrooke, Québec, Canada
- Luis Manuel Flores, Pontificia Universidad Catolica, Santiago, Chili
- Margarida Gaspar de Matos, Faculdade de Motricidade Humana, Lisboa, Portugal
- Maria Benedita Monteiro, Institut Supérieur des Sciences du Travail et de l’Entreprise, Lisboa, Portugal
- Maryse Paquin, Université Trois-Rivières, Québec, Canada
- Mona O’Moore, University of Dublin, Trinity College, Irlande
- Peter K. Smith, Goldsmiths College, University of London, Royaume Uni
- Phillip Slee, Flinders University, Australie
- Rami Benbenishty, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Israël
- Rosario Ortega, Université de Cordoba, Espagne
- Walter Funk, Institut für empirische Soziologie, Nürnberg, Allemagne

Organizing committee:
Amália Marques (FMH), Ana Tomás de Almeida (IEC), Beatriz Pereira (IEC), Carlos Neto (FMH), Celeste Simões (FMH), Conceição Taborda (FPCEUC), Éric Debarbieux (OEVs), Isabel Morais (FMH), João Sebastião (OSE), José Brito Soares (IAC), Manuel Dias (OEVs), Margarida Gaspar de Matos (FMH), Maria João Malho (IAC), Ray Cooke (OEVs), Rosario Ortega (UCE), Sofia Carvalheiro (FMH).

Websites:
- www.fmh.utl.pt/icvs2008, the official conference website
- www.ijvs.org, International Journal on Violence and Schools
- www.iacrianca.pt, Instituto de Apoio à Criança

Registrations:
Enrolment fees before 14th April:
- Normal rate: 220 euros
- Student Rate: 100 euros

Enrolment fees between 15th April and 31st May:
- Normal rate: 250 euros
- Student Rate: 120 euros

Enrolment fees after 1st June:
- Normal rate: 300 euros
- Student Rate: 150 euros

Online registration: www.fmh.utl.pt/icvs2008, Faculdade de Motricidade Humana
Lessons That Should Be Learned From School Shooting Murders

By Ron Avi Astor, Professor, University Of Southern California, Schools of Social Work and Education

If we hope to reduce the number of future tragic school attacks, these are the main lessons we should learn.

Lesson 1:
Students, teachers, and family members are our most important line of defense for saving lives.

In almost all mass school shooting events the perpetrator has sent out many messages to friends, family, and peers. These signs follow a similar pattern across many of the shooting situations. This means we need ways to allow these groups to pass information on to the correct places that could address potential danger. Almost all K-12 school murders that have been thwarted were stopped because a student, faculty member, or family member came forward before the event occurred. When these types of lethal events are prevented, our nation should celebrate as heroes the students, teachers, and family members who saved lives.

Lesson 2:
We need to be clear on what to look for.

Most of the shooters have been suicidal and homicidal for extended periods of time. The public and media have been trying to frame the cause along one variable (e.g., bullying, mental illness, guns, suicidal behavior, etc.). It’s clearly not ONE variable but the combination of variables. The most important one is threat to self and others. This means that the risk signs we normally look for with suicide could be very helpful in deciding what is a real problem. Has he made threats of suicide/homicide? Does he have a plan? Does he have a target group? Does he have method? Is he obsessed with weapons, firearms, or explosives? Has he communicated verbally or in writing violent tendencies? Does he have a history of mental illness with violent traits? Does he see himself as a victim with many perpetrators around him? It’s not one of these questions that determine the ultimate risk, rather the combination of all of them that requires the need for speedy intervention.

Lesson 3:
Understanding this act as a form of national terrorism, personal glorification, and a desire for eternal fame.

This understanding is critical if we as a society want to reduce the number of such tragedies. The main motivation shooters have in perpetrating these events in the way that they are done is eternal memory and fame. They also want to strike fear into the hearts of every American for many years to come. This means the country should respond to these events as they would to terrorist acts, acts of suicide, and attempts to destroy our morale. Decades of social science research clearly show that glorification of perpetrators in the media right after an event increases the chances of these events happening in the months and years following a saturation of information on perpetrators in the media. A focus on the victims and the pain caused by the tragedy leads to a decrease in copycat events.

Lesson 4:
Pre- and post-crisis planning need to include many citizens.

In a crisis the EMTs and police have thousands of civilian helpers and allies to help evacuate, secure perimeters, triage, and everyone knows where to go and how to respond in a timely manner. There is no reason that all U.S. high school students and college freshmen can’t take basic emergency training courses to increase our national and local capacity to handle disaster events.

In the same way we educate about CPR or how to use the Heimlich procedure or basic safety classes on riding a bike, or driving a car, we can create short pre-during-post crisis units in health classes (both at the high school and college levels). In the same way that learning CPR and the Heimlich empowers people who learned these skills, basic crisis knowledge could help students feel that they can help and contribute if called upon.
The International Journal on Violence and School Presentation

The IJVS is a blind- and peer-reviewed scientific journal founded by the International Observatory of Violence in Schools in 2005. Its Scientific Committee includes researchers from different disciplines and from 14 different countries. The aim is to publish articles of a very high scientific standard. Four ijvs numbers have been published.

The IJVS seeks to promote progress in knowledge of an issue that is often misrepresented or manipulated in public opinion: violence in schools. Violence here is understood as being in all its forms: physical brutality and bullying, juvenile delinquency or violence perpetrated by adults. It can affect children, teenagers and members of staff alike. Those responsible may be members of the school or people from outside. The articles will attempt to describe, list or analyse these different forms of violence by calling on a combination of approaches ranging from large-scale surveys of victimisation, for example, to ethnographic immersion methods. The international, comparatist dimension will be one of the outstanding features of the Journal.

However, violence will also be considered in a wider environment than that of schools alone: issues devoted to themes such as juvenile delinquency or violence within the family, for example, may also be published.

The IJVS is aimed at researchers and students specialised in education, criminology, psychology, sociology or anthropology. More widely, it will also be of interest to teachers, educators, those responsible for or active in politics and associations, as well as to all those in charge of prevention and security policies. It is an attempt to bring reason and sense to a debate that is too often beset with pitfalls.

Initially, access to the Journal will be totally free via the internet. To ensure that the site can survive, however, payment may be required for access to part of its content at a later date.
The International network on school violence newsletter is a joint publication by the International and European Observatories on School Violence and is published with the assistance of UNESCO. It complements the scientific articles made freely available to the public by the International Journal of Violence and Schools, an on-line scientific peer-reviewed journal (www.ijvs.org). Initially published 6 times a year in English and in French, it aims to become monthly with Spanish and Portuguese versions following shortly. The main objective is to establish an open international link between research and action in the struggle against school violence.

Each newsletter will contain a main dossier or highlighted piece of news such as the organisation of world congresses, reports of important meetings, updates on countries and regions, and a focus on particularly salient research. Shorter articles analysing particular problems or reacting to topical issues will form the second part. In this way, important news will finally be available to all (e.g. the latest publications). Scientific laboratories, researchers, NGOs, institutions and individuals wishing to present their work and findings are cordially invited to send their contributions, even short, to the editorial team of the newsletter (debarberic@aol.com). The newsletter will be what its readers make it!
News in brief

Portugal

The Commission of Education, Science and Culture of the Portuguese Parliament has published its final report on "School Violence". This report is the fruit of hundreds of interviews carried out by the Portuguese deputies and where different experts and technicians (teachers, educators, etc.), parents, associative leaders, etc. could present results, facts, situations, concerns, suggestions, and so on. The Commission mentioned in its report a range of measures that could be taken on various levels.

Romania

In the Romanian society, violence in schools was neglected. Statistics and research papers on national level were missing. The research “Violence in schools”, developed on a national level by the Institute of Educational Sciences between 2004-2005, with the financial support of UNICEF representative in Romania and partnerships with Ministry of Education/Research and Institute of Criminology, was a necessary step, an argument in order to sensitize the population to the phenomena and a condition to mobilize the necessary resources in order to approach violence in schools.

The concepts used throughout the research in relation to manifestation of violent behaviour were: verbal and psychological violence (name calling, threats etc.); physical violence; behaviour that falls into a legally sanctioned category (rape, consume of drugs, theft etc.); offence made to the teachers status/authority; other types of violence in relation to school.

The main objectives in this research project were: to evaluate (dimension, types of violence), to identify (the situation and causes) and to elaborate [a typology of this phenomena and a set of recommendations for teachers and parents, in the scope to improve the phenomena in schools].

Methods and techniques used in this research project were: documentary analysis (legal documents, etc.); survey conducted through questionnaires (school headmasters, teachers, school counsellors, and pupils); individual and group interviews (parents, teachers, pupils, policemen, and school inspectors); case studies (“problem-child” known in schools).

Results will be presented in June 2008 during the 4th World Conference “Violence at school and public policies. Violence at school: violence in context?” 23rd, 24th and 25th June in Lisbon.

Slovakia

Alojz Nociar from the Research Institute for Child Psychology and Pathopsychology, with the support of the National Monitoring Centre for Drugs (Slovakia), will present in June 2008 during the 4th World Conference “Violence at school and public policies. Violence at school: violence in context?” that will be held in Lisbon on 23rd, 24th and 25th June, results of a representative school survey done in 2007 in Slovakia. Target population: pupils from the last grades of primary school, and secondary school students from grades 1 to 4, aged from 15 to 19. The sample consisted of 10,822 students.

The method used was the ESPAD questionnaire surveying primarily use of both licit and illicit drugs among pupils and students. Also other psychosocial variables, like family status, antisocial behaviour and also ten items about violence at school were included. In addition CAGE and Alcohol Dependence Scale’s (ADS) items were administered along with the ESPAD questionnaire, together with CAST to estimate problems with cannabis.

Brazil

Escola Municipal Honorato Borges and Colégio Berlaar Nossa Senhora do Patrocínio (town of Patrocínio, region of Minas Gerais) will be developing throughout 2008 a partnership around the “Convivendo e Aprendendo” project (Learning and Living Together). The goal is to support students and youngsters with the practice of a pacific life in schools, with the aim to avoid violent actions and lack of respect among students, as well as between them and their teachers and directors.

The project’s first action will be a stroll carried out by the students, parents, teachers and directors, on 7th March. Departure scheduled at 8 a.m. from the Honorato Borges school, walk to the Bank of Brazil and a return-stroll to the school.

To inform the newsletter’s editor about your publications, conferences, brief news:

debarberic@aol.com

Meeting report from 27th–29th June, 2007 in Paris, Unesco Headquarters. Three Panels (School Violence: the global context; How can we make schools safe for children? Initiative Policy and Good Practices; What role can civil society and the media play in making schools free from violence?), 67 pages. For further information check www.unesco.org/education and e-mail: m.milanzi-nguni@unesco.org


This important book examines, through ethnographic comparative researches carried out in France and in Brazil, how the street and school contribute to gang building. The school does not just suffer from its environment: it also contributes to its fabrication. This serves as a good contextual analysis example of school violence and the richness of international comparative work. This research got the Thesis Prize from the French newspaper Le Monde.

Laurence Bergugnat-Janot, Jean-Louis Camin, Nicole Rascle (2007): Prévenir le stress, paroles d’enseignants... (Prevent stress, teachers’ testimonies...) DVD 120 minutes, CRDF d’Aquitaine : Bordeaux. A booklet with 42 pages

Since the 80’s, it has become common to talk about teacher’s discomfort without really knowing what it means. The profound job transformations subdue the educational staff to multiple constraints and expose them sometimes to difficult situations. As in many professional branches (industry, health...), teachers are affected by the stress, even by a professional breakdown dangerous to their health. This document informs every person asking themselves about characteristics of a profession that poses itself as attractive because of certain good aspects: time work management, holidays... It brings also comprehensive elements about stress and societal components that influence the job arduousness. To illustrate that: 88 video sequences, a booklet and 88 sheets associated to online downloadable videos at http://crdp.ac-bordeaux.fr/stress.


For further information check the website (in French): http://jeandaniel.rohart.free.fr/rogers.html


This work gathers conversations held on an organized study day by CREAM-LACNAD (Languages and Cultures of the North of Africa and of Diaspora) of the National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilizations, in Paris, in 2002. Insults, verbal offences and snide remarks constituted the topic and hence are considered in the present publication; they occur not only within the groups of descendants of the immigrants in France, but also in different countries of Maghreb. To quote an expression of one of the authors, an insult, “a weapon of the poor”, has also the characteristic to transgress the two major taboos of these societies, one of sexuality and the other of religion. What regards the snide remarks, they arise from a game, what might be considered as a sign of modernity. Several contributions illustrate these various facts, meanwhile others refer to the “verbal violence” issue; the management of snide remarks and insults employed during conflicts and the tenuous line existing between them as well as quick shifts throughout the generations which affects lexical corpus.

About conferences

Nassau – Bahamas. Ministry of Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, the Organization of American States and UNESCO

A regional conference on School Violence Decrease was held from 6th-8th February 2008 with the participation of delegates from 17 countries and the International Observatory. Report in the next Newsletter.

15th Congress of the World Association for Educational Sciences (AMSE-WAER-AMCE) at Marrakech (Morocco), from 1st-6th June 2008.

The topic will be “Globalization and Education: towards a society of knowledge”. You can find all necessary information at: http://www.ucam.ac.ma/amse/fr/renseignement.php.