

Can A Programme To Support Parents Reduce Conflict In The Family

ZIMBABWE

Research Institutions:

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CONTEXT:

Violence against women and violence against children occur at high rates across the world. Half of all the world's children experience violence, and 30% of women experience intimate partner violence. Exposure to violence, whether in the form of child maltreatment or intimate partner violence (IPV), has significant negative effects on the lives of children. Similarly, women experience serious psychological and social consequences as a result of IPV.

Often these two forms of violence co-occur, and arguably this overlap is the rule rather than the exception. Given this significant overlap, various researchers have called for the integration of these research areas and their subsequent prevention work.

Parenting programmes have been identified as a key evidence-based strategy for preventing violence against children. Those that also address interparental conflict and positive parenting skills may be a powerful way to prevent both violence against women and violence against children, by strengthening relationship skills, preventing child abuse, and transforming attitudes, beliefs and norms: three of the strategies for preventing violence against women identified in the World Health Organisation's synthesis of the evidence on strategies to prevent violence against women.

PROJECT AIM:

The broader study aims to adapt the Parenting for Lifelong Health (PLH) Teen Programme to include a more explicit focus on preventing violence against women and engagement of fathers for the Zimbabwean context.

Our work with SVRI aims to pilot this adaptation in Zimbabwe in collaboration with Clowns without Borders South Africa and Plan International Zimbabwe.

It aims to assess its readiness for a randomised control trial.

STUDY CONTRIBUTION:

This action-orientated and policy-relevant study answers the call to integrate solutions for the prevention of violence against women and violence against children. In order to do this, this study will:

- Adapt a programme that has been specifically designed to be scalable in low- and middle-income countries, Parenting for Lifelong Health (PLH) Teen Programme.
- Work with teenage and pre-teenage children and their parents, in an integrated approach to preventing family violence.
- Build on the strong evidence base for parent skills training interventions as effective in preventing violence against children.
- Seek to expand a parent skills training to include the prevention of violence against women by actively engaging the couple as a unit and shifting the gender norms that drive violence in the family.

