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HEADLINES

Violence Prevention Alliance Annual Meeting

The Violence Prevention Alliance (VPA) Annual Meeting was held on 2-3 December 2008 in Washington, DC, USA. The meeting was hosted by the Pan American Health organization (PAHO) and opened by PAHO's Director Dr Mirta Roses-Periago. The 58 meeting participants included representatives from most of the VPA's 38 participant organizations, and observers from international and regional organizations, private foundations, and governments. The three main achievements of the meeting were: developing a strategy to generate political priority for violence prevention, preparing a plan for VPA participants to raise violence prevention on the agendas of Official Development Assistance agencies, and adopting three priorities for VPA work in 2009-2012. These priorities are: strengthening intersectoral collaboration for violence prevention (starting with enhanced public health and criminal justice/policing collaboration), enhancing national and local level violence prevention capacity, and developing a systematic approach to advocacy using narratives about how experiences of violence have shaped the lives of violence prevention professionals.

For more information, please contact Dr Chris Mikton at miktonc@who.int.

Searchable violence prevention evidence base

On 25 November, WHO and Liverpool John Moores University's Centre for Public Health launched an important new web site highlighting what works to prevent violence. Geared towards policy-makers and violence prevention researchers, practitioners and advocates, the web site marks the first time that information on effective violence prevention programmes is available in a searchable web-based data base. It includes:

- A searchable data base of abstracts from published studies that measure the effectiveness of interventions to prevent child abuse, elder abuse, intimate partner violence, sexual violence, self-directed violence and youth violence;
- Resources including key publications on violence and its prevention;
- News including updates on new violence prevention events and publications;
- An opportunity for organizations to contribute to the web site by submitting resources.

Visit the evidence base at: <http://www.nwph.net/preventviolence/default.aspx>.

HIGHLIGHTS

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies: high-level meeting on violence

On 15-17 December 2008, in Geneva, Switzerland, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) hosted a high-level meeting on violence aimed at elaborating a Federation-wide strategy for addressing the social culture of violence. Nearly 40 individuals from 22 IFRC member countries, the International Committee of the Red Cross, UN agencies (International Labour Organization, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations Children's Fund and World Health Organization), and other organizations participated. Anchored in a public health approach, discussions focused how global, regional and local IFRC members can contribute to preventing interpersonal and self-directed violence by addressing the underlying causes. IFRC participants expressed strong support for the principals and goals of the WHO Global Campaign for Violence Prevention, and it was agreed that the two organizations should strengthen their partnership around violence prevention.

For more information, please contact Dr Alexander Butchart at butchart@who.int.

Featured outcome evaluation:

Sure Start Local Programmes (SSLPs) is an area-based intervention widely implemented in England. It aims to improve services for young children and families in deprived communities, promote health and development, and reduce inequalities. In a quasi-experimental evaluation of its effectiveness, 5883 children and their families from 93 disadvantaged SSLP areas were compared with 1879 children and families from 72 similarly deprived areas. One of the 14 outcomes measured was parenting risk, which was made up of the variables of mother's responsiveness to child, mother's acceptance of child, parent-child conflict, parent-child closeness, harsh discipline, and home chaos. Other outcome measures included accidents, language development, positive and negative social behaviours, and father's involvement. After controlling for background factors, beneficial effects were found for five of the 14 outcomes. Families in SSLP areas showed less parenting risk (ES=0.44) than those in control areas. Effects of SSLPs seemed to apply to all subpopulations and SSLP areas. This study shows that early interventions can improve the life chances of young children living in deprived areas and reduce risk factors for child maltreatment.

Reference: Melhuish E, Belsky J, Leyland AH, Barnes J, and the National Evaluation of Sure Start Research Team. Effects of fully-established Sure Start Local Programmes on 3-year-old children and their families living in England: a quasi-experimental observational study. Lancet, 2008; 372: 1641-47.

Armed Violence Prevention:

UN General Assembly Resolution on Armed Violence Prevention

On 12 November 2008, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution A/63/L.27, "Promoting development through the reduction and prevention of armed violence". The resolution highlights the primary responsibility of national governments for curbing armed violence and fostering the Millennium Development Goals, stresses the need for a coherent and integrated approach to preventing armed violence, and requests the UN Secretary General to prepare a report on armed violence prevention for submission to the UN General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session in 2009.

For more information, go to: <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2008/ga10785.doc.htm>.

Summit on progress implementing Geneva Declaration on armed violence and development

On 12 September 2008, a Ministerial Review Summit was hosted by the Government of Switzerland and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to assess progress made towards the goals of the Geneva Declaration. Ministers and officials representing over 40 governments, UN agencies, and nongovernmental organizations participated. The Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development calls upon States to achieve demonstrable reductions in the global burden of armed violence and improvements in human security by 2015. The Summit featured presentation of a new report entitled Global burden of armed violence. Published by the Geneva Declaration Secretariat, this report estimates that there are approximately 740,000 deaths due to armed violence (excluding suicides) each year, of which 490,000 occur in non-conflict settings and 250,000 in war-torn, conflict settings.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.genevadeclaration.org/index.html> and for the report go to <http://www.genevadeclaration.org/resources-armed-violence-report.html>.

17th International Safe Communities Conference

On 20-23 October 2008, the 17th International Safe Communities Conference took place in Christchurch, New Zealand. Conference Chair Dr Carolyn Coggan welcomed over 500 participants from nearly 30 countries to the conference. Reducing alcohol-related violence and unintentional injuries was a central conference theme, and in addition to presentations on innovative national- and municipal-level approaches to doing so, conference presentations covered a broad range of violence and injury prevention strategies at the societal, community, relationship and individual levels.

For more information please visit <http://www.conference.co.nz/index.cfm/Iscc08/Welcome/> or contact Dr Alexander Butchart at butchart@who.int.

OTHER RECENT EVENTS

Health sector indicators for violence against children

On 25-26 November 2008, at WHO Headquarters in Geneva, an expert meeting to discuss health sector indicators for violence against children was convened in follow up to the UN Secretary General's Study on Violence against Children. The meeting focused on developing recommendations for indicators to monitor childhood exposure to family, community, and self-directed violence; the health consequences of such exposure; risk and protective factors; and country progress towards preventing violence against children. A list of potential indicators identified by the group will be carefully evaluated using standard criteria for public health indicators. Following this a report and technical guidance document on implementing a final list of recommended indicators will be published.

For further information, contact Dr Alexander Butchart at butchart@who.int.

Regional Activities

Americas

New Pan American Health Organization resolution reiterates call for violence and injury prevention action

On 15 August 2008, at the 60th Session of its Regional Committee, the 48th Directing Council of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) adopted a resolution urging Member States to give greater visibility to health-sector-led violence and injury prevention plans, to promote more effective inter-sectoral collaboration, and to step up political commitment to violence and injury prevention. The resolution also called on PAHO to strengthen its violence and injury prevention activities; enhance support for country data collection, prevention and victim services; increase support for regional and national capacity development; and promote research examining the social determinants of violence and injuries in the Americas. To view the resolution, visit <http://www.paho.org/english/gov/cd/CD48.r11-e.pdf> and for a related background discussion paper, visit <http://www.paho.org/english/gov/cd/CD48-20-e.pdf>.

For more information, contact Dr Alberto Concha Eastman at conchaal@paho.org.

Europe

WHO Regional Committee reviews progress on violence and injury prevention in Europe

The 58th Session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe was held on 15-18 September 2008, in Tbilisi, Georgia. Among the agenda items, progress achieved over the past three years in implementing resolution EUR/RC55/R9 "Prevention of injuries in the WHO European Region" was reviewed. A report on *Progress in preventing injuries in the WHO European Region* was released as were summaries of 30 country assessments documenting achievements (see <http://www.euro.who.int/document/E91710.pdf>). Online tools were also published consisting of web-based country assessments, an inventory of national policies for violence and injury prevention, and an online tutorial of how to use these tools (see <http://data.euro.who.int/InjuryPrevention>).

For more information, contact Dr Dinesh Sethi at din@ecr.euro.who.int.

United Kingdom launches national violence prevention framework

On 25 November 2008, the UK Department of Health launched a draft national policy for preventing interpersonal violence. Hosted in London, the launch event featured high-level statements from Baroness Scotland, the UK Attorney General, and Ann Keen, UK Parliamentary Under Secretary for Health Services. There is potential interest in using the UK investment in evidence-based, multi-sectoral policy making to serve as a model for similar policy development processes elsewhere.

For further information, please contact Dr David Meddings at meddingsd@who.int.

Cambridge Conference on Evidence-Based Policing

From 30 June-2 July 2008, Cambridge University and the UK National Policing Improvement Agency held a

conference on evidence-based policing. This established links between police executives and leading criminologists, statisticians and physicians in the field of evidence-based practices. The conference goal was to explore how much is known about police practices, using methods and levels of reliability found in evidence-based medicine; how much more could be learned from further field testing and systematic reviews of the costs and benefits of key police practices; and barriers and issues to be faced in translating systematic evidence of what works in policing into policy and practice. The conference is being followed by a series of long-term efforts to develop the evidence base for police practice, both nationally and globally, such as the launch of Cambridge University's Lee Centre for Experimental Criminology and a website inventory of systematic reviews of the cost-effectiveness of police practices.

For more information, visit <http://www.crim.cam.ac.uk/events/documents/151.pdf>.

Western Pacific

WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific Gives Awards for Preventing Violence in Cities

At the Third General Assembly of the Alliance for Healthy Cities held in Ichikawa City, Japan on 23-26 October 2008, the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific gave away two WHO Healthy Cities Awards for Preventing Violence in Cities. Noarlunga (South Australia) garnered the Good Practice plaque for its Keep Safe, Stay Cool (KSSC) programme on domestic violence prevention. Geumsan City (Republic of Korea) won the Best Proposal plaque and seed money of US\$10,000 for a project to prevent domestic violence in mixed-marriage households. For more information on the WHO Healthy Cities Awards and the Alliance for Healthy Cities, go to <http://www.alliance-healthycities.com>.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Latsis Symposium on Violence

Understanding Violence: Recent advances in biology, sociology and modeling
11-13 February 2009, Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, Switzerland
For more information, please visit: <http://latsis2009.epfl.ch>.

Third International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN) Arab Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect

Working Together for a Safer Childhood
1-4 March 2009, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
For more information, please e-mail: NFSP@ngha.med.sa or visit: <http://www.arabcanconf.org>.

2nd International Meeting on Crime Observatories

From 18-20 March 2009, Santiago, Chile
For more information, please e-mail Joanie Prince at jprince@crime-prevention-intl.org, or visit: http://www.crime-prevention-intl.org/menu_item.php?code=other_icpc_events.

Sixth ISPCAN African Regional Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect

Focus on Early Childhood Development and Education
4-6 May 2009, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
For more information, please e-mail: anppcanconference@ethionet.et or visit: <http://www.anppcan-eth.org.et>.

2009 ISPCAN Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect Child Abuse and Neglect: Looking Through the Lens of Prevention

15-18 November 2009, Perth, Australia
For more information, please visit: <http://www.apccan2009.org.au>.

Fourth Milestones in a Global campaign for Violence Prevention meeting

17-18 September 2009, Geneva, Switzerland
The Milestones of a Global Campaign for Violence Prevention meeting series is a way to recognize the achievements of the Global Campaign for Violence Prevention since the 2002 launch of the *World report on violence and health* and identify challenges and future priorities in violence prevention. The aims of this Fourth Milestones meeting will be to increase the political priority of violence prevention and turn it into a global health priority by convening a group of world-recognized moral authorities to speak out in favour of violence prevention; convene a critical mass of

Official Development Assistance agencies to raise violence prevention on their agenda; discuss a proposed UN General Assembly Resolution on violence prevention; and finalizing a strategy for strengthening collaboration between the public health and criminal justice/public safety sectors to reduce violence.

PUBLICATIONS

***Lancet* special issue on child maltreatment**

On 3 December 2008, the *Lancet* published a special issue on child maltreatment. The issue has four main articles, one each on: the magnitude and consequences of child maltreatment, interventions to prevent child maltreatment and associated consequences, recognizing and responding to child maltreatment, and promoting children's rights to aid the prevention of child maltreatment. Introducing the special issue, *Lancet* Editors Richard Turner and Richard Horton wrote that: "Too often, the safety of children is debated in the polarising light of litigation or political division. Whilst this outcome is inevitable because of the public outrage child maltreatment engenders, a damaging consequence is that the evidence surrounding child neglect and abuse often fails to influence serious policy discussion. It is this marginalisation of the science of child maltreatment that we are seeking to reverse". To view the *Lancet* special issue, visit: <http://www.lancet.com/series/child-maltreatment>.

Unhappy hours: Alcohol and intimate partner violence in the Americas

A new Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) book, *Unhappy Hours: Alcohol and Partner Aggression in the Americas*, published on 5 December 2008, provides evidence from 10 countries that excessive alcohol consumption is associated with increased risk of intimate partner violence among men and women. "The publication of *Unhappy Hours: Alcohol and Partner Aggression in the Americas* is the latest contribution to a better understanding of partner violence and, in so doing, to find more effective interventions to right this wrong," said Dr. Mirta Roses, Director of PAHO. "The book's message is clear: effective policies to decrease excessive, harmful alcohol consumption in a population will have a beneficial impact on the rates of violence against women." *Unhappy Hours* provides evidence from Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Uruguay, and the United States that excessive alcohol consumption is associated with increased risk of both victimization and perpetration of intimate partner violence for both men and women in these countries. For more information, please contact Dr. Maristela Monteiro at monteirm@paho.org.

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