

# HSI Connection

Helping People • Changing Lives

## How Much Violence Did You Experience Today?

### Did You Know?

- Every two minutes, someone in America, is sexually assaulted.
- One in four American women report that they have been physically abused by a husband or boyfriend at some point in their lives.
- One out of every 18 victims of violent crime, and one of every 3 victims of sexual assault, is under age 12.
- In 1999, there were nearly 1 million confirmed cases of child maltreatment.
- 74% of children age 8 to 11, and 84% of children age 12 to 15 reported being bullied at their school.

### WHAT'S INSIDE

Symptom Checklist . . . . . 2

Help Phone Line . . . 4

Adopt a Project. . . . 5

CEO Note. . . . . 5

Resources . . . . . 5

Although dramatic events such as 9/11 and mass school shootings dominate the media and grab our attention, far greater numbers of people are affected by acts of violence each day in their own communities. On a typical morning you might encounter violence:

- When opening the local section of the newspaper you find detailed accounts of a one-year-old child killed by his child-care worker, the rape of a woman in a park, and sexual abuse allegations against a priest.
- As you walk by a television, you see a scene showing where a character was shot and killed.
- You hear your neighbor call a four-year-old child "stupid" for crying about spilling juice, and threaten the child with a spanking for not hurrying into the car.
- While driving by a local school, you see the principal breaking up an argument between two students.
- As a driver swears and shakes a fist at you while aggressively passing your car on the freeway as you travel within the speed limit on your way to work.
- On a radio news broadcast, President Bush celebrates an agreement between the United States and Russia that would limit deployed strategic nuclear warheads to between 1,700 and 2,000, down from the 6,000 apiece that currently exist.

This could be anyone's morning. In just a few hours, there were six brushes with violence. Most people experience these kinds of exposures to violence regularly, but brush them off or scarcely notice them, because the violence around us is so pervasive, it has a tendency to overwhelm us and lull us into a state of complacency. But there is good reason for all of us to stop, pay attention, and take action against violence. **Its' presence in our culture is doing harm to our psychological well being, and is having a significant impact on all of us.** Our children are especially vulnerable and deserving of our help. They are victimized in greater numbers than adults, and because they are still learning and developing, have fewer skills for coping with the effects of violence.

### What is the Impact of Daily Exposure to Violence?

Each year, our staff at HSI work with hundreds of people who are impacted by violence on many levels.

There is a general and growing uneasiness in adults and children, who have a nagging sense that it is difficult to find places where they feel safe. The U.S. Department of Justice reports in a recent survey of 80,000, 20% to 48% said they were fearful of crime in their own neighborhood.

The National Center for Injury Prevention and Control reports that on their Youth Risk Behavior Survey of students grades 9-12,

*continued page 2*

## SYMPTOM CHECKLIST

### Are You In An Abusive Relationship?

#### Does your partner....

- ✓ Embarrass or make fun of you in front of your friends or family?
- ✓ Put down your accomplishments or goals?
- ✓ Make you feel like you are unable to make decisions?
- ✓ Tell you that you are nothing without them?
- ✓ Treat you roughly - grab, push, pinch, shove or hit you?
- ✓ Use drugs or alcohol as an excuse for saying hurtful things or abusing you?
- ✓ Blame you for how they feel or act?
- ✓ Pressure you sexually for things you aren't ready for?
- ✓ Prevent you from doing things you want - like spending time with your friends or family?

#### Do You...

- ✓ Sometimes feel scared of how your partner will act?
- ✓ Constantly make excuses to other people for your partner's behavior?
- ✓ Believe that you can help your partner change if only you changed something about yourself?
- ✓ Try not to do anything that would cause conflict or make your partner angry?
- ✓ Stay with your partner because you are afraid of what your partner would do if you broke up?

If any of these are happening in your relationship, talk to someone. Without some help, the abuse will continue.

—From The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

17.3% of high school students carried a weapon (e.g., gun, knife or club) during the 30 days preceding the survey. 5.2% of students had missed 1 or more days of school during 30-day period because they did not feel safe at school.

Statistics compiled by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the American Automobile Association show that almost 13,000 people have been injured or killed since 1990 in crashes caused by aggressive driving. According to a NHTSA survey, more than 60 percent of drivers consider unsafe driving by others, including speeding, a major personal threat to themselves and their families. About 30 percent of respondents said they felt their safety was threatened in the last month, while 67 percent felt this threat during the last year.

Another known fact is violence begets more violence. We know that individuals who are witnesses or experience abuse – from verbal cruelty to physical harm – will absorb it and may repeat it. This is true whether they experience it in the media or in person. We are seeing an increased willingness in both children and adults to express themselves with violence instead of finding other peaceful solutions.

Finally, an odd lack of reality seems to be developing in our culture that involves thrill seeking and desensitization to hurting others for personal gratification. Don Jaehne, HSI Domestic Abuse Services Supervisor says, "We are bombarded by television shows and movies that bask in violent images that are in large measure aimed at providing cheap thrills to a willing adolescent market. The media holds our attention for its own purposes by promoting adrenaline highs with images that trade in fear, disgust and vengeful behavior. Can it be a surprise when some of our more vulnerable citizens act out in tragically absurd acts of violence on our streets or in our schools?" Jaehne continues, "Adults, parents, and citizens share responsibility for the training we

provide our youth and ourselves that either maintains or degrades the value we place on human dignity and life."

### What Factors Contribute to Violence?

There are many risk factors that can lead a person to violence. In children and adults, **an inability to communicate, solve problems, and resolve conflicts** can lead to frustration, which can lead to violence. Adults bear central responsibility to teach children how to communicate effectively and to resolve conflicts peacefully. Unfortunately, many adults lack skills in solving problems, and fall short in the task of teaching children assertiveness skills and compassion for others. As with adults, children need to develop competency in managing their emotions and impulsive behavior. Those who can confidently express the full range of their emotional life rather than simply take a shortcut to only feeling and displaying anger, rage or demanding behavior are far better equipped to successfully lead a non-violent life. Don Jaehne says, "Our experience in clinical work with aggressive and violent youth and adults is that most of them harbor long-term problems with resentment over perceived grievances and their internal logic is that they are entitled to seek violent justice or retribution to restore a sense of personal power. We would all be living in a safer and saner world if we put a greater emphasis on teaching more rational and effective means to handle conflict and disappointed expectations."

Another contributor to violence is **alcohol and drug misuse and abuse**. The relationship between chemical use and violence is complicated, and differs by the type of chemical, but in most cases, chemical use reduces judgment and can leave a person more vulnerable to being a victim or an offender of violence. Research has demonstrated a relatively strong correlation between alcohol and illegal drug use, and violence. The National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information reports



### Important Information:

The information that is provided in this newsletter is not to be used to diagnose individual cases. Each individual is unique, only a professional healthcare provider is qualified to diagnose illness and prescribe treatment.

—This newsletter is supported by a charitable grant from Eli Lilly & Company

that up to 86 percent of homicide offenders, 37 percent of assault offenders, 60 percent of sexual offenders, 57 percent of men and 27 percent of women involved in marital violence, and 13 percent of child abusers had been drinking before the time of the offense.

Most often, violence is a learned behavior, but certain **mental health disorders** do have a higher potential for an outcome of violence. Some of the disorders that violence has been associated with include depression, Tourette Syndrome, oppositional defiant disorder, conduct disorder, and obsessive-compulsive disorder. These disorders can be treated, and when they are managed effectively, violent behaviors are typically under control as well.

### Where Can I Get Help?

If you have questions or are worried about the effects of violence in your life or that of someone you love, talk to a professional who can help you evaluate your situation and recommend treatment and support options. Our agency offers support groups, classes, and therapy services through our Domestic Abuse Services and Rape and Sexual Violence Center. In addition, our Mental Health and Chemical Health Services for adults, adolescents, children and families offer a variety of treatment options.

HSI, a human service organization, is part of a statewide network of "community mental health centers", which is committed to providing affordable behavioral health services. HSI is a provider for Medical Assistance-Pre-paid Medical Assistance Programs (PMAP), Medicare, Minnesota Care, as well as a large number of commercial insurance plans. For further information or help with violence issues call 651-777-5222 for an appointment, or just to talk it over with a trained professional staff.

## *Impacts on our Children- it's not just the media!*

Without a doubt, **exposure to violence in the media** is significant. The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry reports that the effects of television violence on children and teenagers have found that children may become "immune" to the horror of violence and gradually accept violence as a way to solve problems, imitate the violence they observe on television, and identify with certain characters, victims, and/or victimizers.

Dr. Bart Main, HSI Chief of Psychiatry says, "Children under ten years of age don't discern fantasy vs. reality well, so witnessing this violence is equal to experiencing it. Given the enormous numbers of violent acts kids watch on television, we can assume that they will learn that the world is violent, and that they must defend themselves. While this exposure to violence on television alone is significantly negative, the time spent in front of a television also displaces family time, whether family members are watching together or not. No one is talking, so the experiences that lead to the internalization of the parent as a positive role model and resource are fewer."

Research has repeatedly shown that the presence of a positive adult role model to supervise and guide a child's behavior is a key protective factor against violence. Many parents struggle with relationships, mental health problems or other stressful issues that distract them from parenting. Often families live in isolation so that the connection to community is often weak or broken, further removing opportunities for positive adults in a child's life.

Dr. Main continues, "A lack of meaningful and significant relationships with adults destabilizes the foundation of children's personality development. We learn to check our impulses by having a broad experience of being cared for, and by caring for others. Kids with weak attachments to caring adults don't learn that others will be around to care about and help them, and so, they learn that they can't trust others and they need to watch out for themselves."

According to the State of Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, over 160 rape and sex offenses were reported in year 2000 in Washington County alone. More alarming is the fact that this number represents only a small fraction of the sexual assaults that actually occurred. Estimates show that as many as 90% of sexual assault crimes go unreported.

One clear area of concern is the sheer amount of time that children are left alone unsupervised. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, nearly 7 million children are left home alone after school between the hours of 3 PM and 6 PM when violent youth crime peaks and a child's risk of being a victim of crime triples.

Many children experience a **lack of structure, limits, consistent expectations, guidance and supervision**. An important task of childhood is to learn basic rules of life. Without support from caring adults to do so, children can become angry, confused, and out of control. Sometimes those same children make it all the way to adolescence and adulthood without gaining the basic tools they need to get along with others.

"Children exposed to violence without adequate support and mentoring are at high risk for mirroring that violence in their own lives. These children may display their pain in various kinds of problems that surface as sibling abuse, school violence, depression, anxiety, conduct disorder or substance abuse," states Barb Walker, HSI Child and Family DATP Specialist. Through generous donations from the United Way and a private donor, the Child/Family Advocacy program was created within HSI's Abuse Services to provide a variety of forums that works directly with children and their families in which family violence has occurred.

8200 Hadley Ave. S.  
Cottage Grove, MN  
55016  
(651) 458-4116

Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri:  
8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Thurs:  
8:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

121 11th Ave. S.E.  
Forest Lake, MN  
55025  
(651) 251-5220

Mon-Wed, Fri:  
8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Tues-Thurs:  
8:30 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

7066 Stillwater Blvd. N.  
Oakdale, MN 55128  
(651) 777-5222

Mon - Thurs:  
7:30 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.  
Fri:  
7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Sat:  
8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Sundays and Holidays  
(Crisis Clinic only)  
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

375 East Orleans St.  
Stillwater, MN 55082  
(651) 430-2720

Mon - Thurs:  
8:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.  
Fri:  
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

TDD: (651) 770-6834

[www.hsicares.org](http://www.hsicares.org)

24 Hours Mental  
Health Crisis Line  
651-777-4455



## Adopt a Project

HSI is in need of gifts that are important for our programs and services. Current needs are:

3 – 27" televisions & VCRs to improve our educational component of the Domestic Abuse Program.

1 – 19" television and VCR to be used for training HSI transporter drivers.

1 – Refrigerator for our Therapeutic Learning Center serving children and adolescents

Books for Resource Library for Caregivers.

Looking for opportunities to volunteer? There is a position to match most any interest. Call Celinda Doyle at 651-275-5813.

## Resources and Support

### HSI

7066 Stillwater Blvd. N.  
Oakdale, MN 55128  
651-777-5222  
www.hsicare.org

### HSI Rape and Sexual Violence Center

24-Hour Crisis Line:  
651-777-1117

### Tubman Family Alliance

(serving the East Metro area of the Twin Cities):

24-Hour Crisis Line:  
651-770-0777  
www.stopfamilyviolence.com

### Child Abuse USA, Child Abuse Hotline

(for victims, offenders and parents):  
1-800-422-4453 (1-800-4 A Child)

### National Institute on Media and the Family

606 24th Avenue South,  
Suite 606  
Minneapolis, MN 55454  
612-672-5437  
www.mediafamily.org

### America's Promise: The Alliance for Youth

909 N. Washington Street,  
Suite 400  
Alexandria, VA  
22314-1556  
703-684-4500  
www.americaspromise.org

### National Resource Center on Domestic Violence

6400 Flank Dr., Suite 1300,  
Harrisburg, PA 17112-2778  
800-537-2238

## QUESTIONS?

Would you like more information on our services? Call . . . (651) 777-5222

### HSI BOARD

Robert Butler, Ph.D.  
**Chief Executive Officer**

### HSI Board of Directors

Mark J. Vierling  
**Chairman**

Robert Beltz, Jr.  
**Vice-Chairman**

Arline Beutel  
**Secretary**

Virginia Hartman  
**Treasurer**

JoAnne Bailey  
Tracey Galowitz  
Janet Garlock  
Richard Johnson  
Lynn Kaye  
Edwin McCarthy  
Edward Reid  
Stephen Scallon, M.D.  
Gerhard Schmidt  
Edward Simonet III

Leah Hillesheim  
**Board Member Emeritus**



## From the CEO...

Violence is learned, therefore, violence can be unlearned. We hope to inspire you to stop, think, feel, listen, realize, and comprehend just how much violence impacts your life and the lives of

those you love. You can help stop the violence. Strive to take good care of yourself and your family. It may sound too simple, but it all begins with *you*.

- If you use alcohol, do so in moderation. Seek help if you have a problem with alcohol or drug misuse or abuse.
- Learn and share ways of expressing a full range of emotions and for resolving conflicts peacefully. Model how to be frustrated and not give up or strike out in anger. Reward kids for positive expressions of emotion.
- Speak out against bigotry, hate, harassment, or bullying whenever you see it.
- Turn off television, computer, video, and music violence!
- Accept raising children as a community responsibility. Watch over all kids and invite neighbors to watch over yours.
- Be a mentor or caring person for a child in need.
- If you are a parent: Be a positive role model. Spend time with your kids. Know what they are doing. Know their friends. Tune in to their behaviors. Set limits using alternatives to physical punishment.

If you or someone you know is violent, or has been the victim of violence, seek help.

# HSI

a private nonprofit corporation

Human Services, Inc.

7066 Stillwater Boulevard North

Oakdale, Minnesota 55128-3937

(651) 777-5222

www@hsicare.org

NON-PROFIT ORG.

U.S. POSTAGE

**PAID**

PERMIT NO. 2633

ST. PAUL, MN

## HSI *Connection*

### FEATURE FOCUS

Violence is the act of using force or power to hurt another. Violence takes many forms: using fear, pain, or hurt to make another do something against his or her wishes; using words to scare, bully, embarrass, or demean; hurting someone physically; damaging the things someone cares about; or touching someone against his or her wishes.

### WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

## *Help is Only One Phone Call Away*

Sexual assault can happen to anyone, regardless of race, economic status, or home community. Estimates from the State of Minnesota show that 1 of every 3 girls, and 1 in 5 boys will be sexually assaulted *before* they reach the age of 18, and most by someone they know. "Sadly, most victims do not report the assault to the authorities nor seek professional support and counseling but instead try to deal with the trauma alone," states Karen Hogendorf, Supervisor HSI Rape and Sexual Violence Center (RSVC).



Since 1979, RSVC has been working tirelessly to help reduce the risk of sexual assault and provides free, supportive, private, and caring assistance to victims of sexual violence and their families. RSVC services provide a 24-hour telephone crisis line (651-777-1117), crisis intervention, individual counseling, advocacy, support groups for teen victims, their parents, and adult female victims; and training and consultation for professionals in the community.

This fall, RSVC is launching an exciting new project called "Growing Voices." The goal of "Growing Voices" is to broaden support for teens and parents by offering information and classes that will increase awareness of teen relationships, including sexual and dating violence issues. Through educational meetings offered in Forest Lake, Stillwater, and South Washington County, parents will have an opportunity to learn more about creating dialogue with their teens on dating, healthy vs. unhealthy teen relationships, and ways to reduce the risk of sexual assault. Continues Hogendorf, "As a community of knowledgeable, caring voices, we can together share information and support teens in an effort to make a difference in reducing dating violence."

All RSVC services are free and provided to anyone in Washington County. To continue the important work we do, volunteers and donations are needed. For more information on "Growing Voices" classes, RSVC services, or to make a donation or become a volunteer, please call the HSI Rape and Sexual Violence Center at 651-768-5205.

**HSI's mission is to help people overcome and prevent life impairments by developing individual potential and promoting meaningful participation in family and community life.**