



SESSION 1: GETTING TO KNOW YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY

The purpose of this group is to learn more about how youth, families, and your community are impacted by trauma and violence and what you can do to help. Each week we will review a new topic or theme. Our sessions will begin with a brief check-in and video about the session. We will then have a discussion and activity connected to the theme for the week. There will also be some activities that you can work on at home to practice the skills learned in the session or to prepare for the following week's topic.

There are a few important rules and reminders for the group! Important things to remember are that no one has to share if they do not want to, be generous to others in the group and active listeners, do not share information heard here with others outside of the group, and that group facilitators are mandated reporters.

Today's session *Getting to Know You* is about learning who the members of the group are, why they are attending, and what they hope to get and contribute from participation. This session also focuses on the socioecological model of communities, which talks about factors that make youth and other individuals more likely to be victims or perpetrators of violence and negative behaviors. The four levels included in the socioecological model are individual, relationship, community, and societal.

In addition to talking about what are some of the challenges that you and your family are facing across these different levels, today's session encourages you to think about the strengths that you all have and the things that are going well for you and your family.



Each week you will be encouraged to take time to reflect on what has been discussed in the group and examine how it relates to your current situation or experiences. For example, during today's group you can identify some of the similar challenges that others in the group have experienced and share examples of possible ways to fix or overcome current situations that are difficult or stressful. Likewise, group members can use some of the strengths that have been identified to come up with a list of solutions for resolving difficult situations.

During today's session, all group members are also encouraged to create two goals to work on based on the current needs of your family. We will work on these goals throughout the duration of the group and examine the overall progress that was made during our final session.

At-Home Activity

- Review the handout *Best Practices for Violence Prevention and Trauma Intervention*.
- Bring a picture of you and your child(ren) to share with the group during the next session.
- Upcoming session: *Know the Signs- Identifying, helping, and supporting survivors of community violence*

GROUP RULES AND IMPORTANT REMINDERS



Take Care of Yourself and Take Care of Others-When other group members share about what they have seen or heard in the past, we can be most supportive by being active, listeners. No one has to share if they do not want to. However, if you do choose to share, we ask you to focus your sharing on your thoughts and feelings. Please avoid getting into the details of scary or traumatic events you may have experienced. Sharing too many details may be triggering or even traumatic to the person telling the story and for those listening.



Be Generous and Mindful of Time Constraints-When other people share, it is valuable to be generous listeners. When you share, it is valuable to be generous by allowing time for others to share. The facilitators will help manage the overall time because they know how much time each activity takes. Facilitators will also encourage all participants to be generous with our patience and our tolerance, especially when participants share different perspectives.



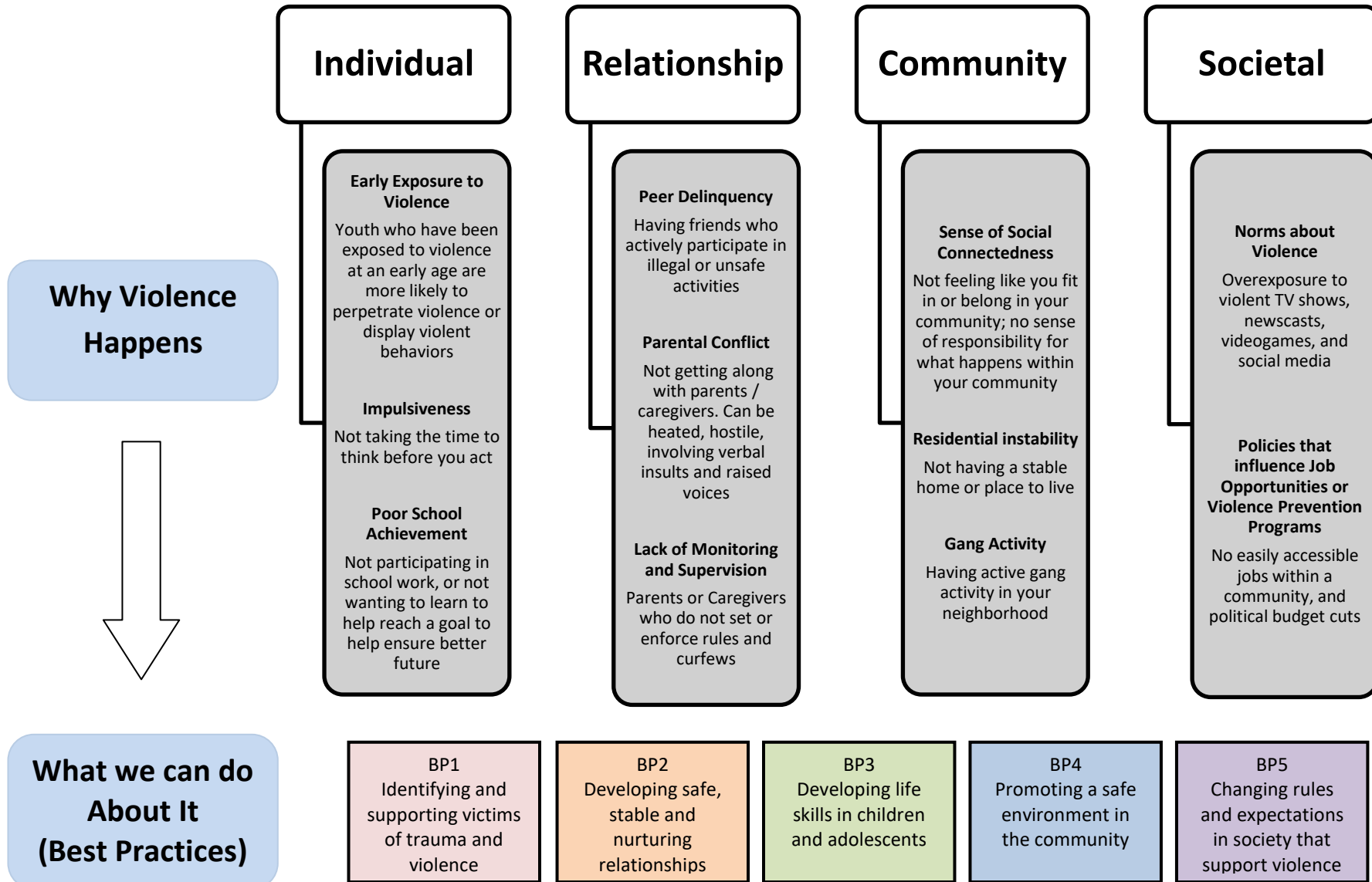
Confidentiality-Confidentiality means that what is shared in the group is not talked about outside of the group. We count on every member of the group to keep things private in order to build and develop trust.



Mandated Reporting-When information is shared regarding harm to self or others, group facilitators and/or program supervisors are required by law to report information to applicable authorities in order to keep everyone safe.

SOCIOECOLOGICAL MODEL OF COMMUNITIES

The socioecological model explains the different factors occurring on an individual, relationship, community, and societal level that can make individuals more likely to be victims or perpetrators of violence and negative behaviors. This handout gives examples of the different things that can explain why violence happens. Although dealing with individual and family-related challenges can be difficult, we can work together to address these issues by using the five best practices for violence prevention and trauma intervention.



BEST PRACTICES FOR VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND TRAUMA INTERVENTION

<i>Best Practice</i>	<i>The Impact</i>	<i>The Importance</i>
<p>BP1: Know the Signs Identifying, helping, and supporting survivors of community violence</p>	<p>Early exposure to violence can make it more likely that someone will be a victim or perpetrator of violence in the future. Exposure for youth can lead to many social, emotional, behavioral and cognitive problems.</p>	<p>Caregivers should try to identify and understand the signs that their child may be struggling with trauma or difficult situations. There are many effective tools and resources available to help families who have been affected by violence and trauma.</p>
<p>BP2: A Sense of Trust Developing safe, stable, and nurturing relationships between children and their parents, caregivers, and caring adults</p>	<p>Witnessing community violence and having people close to you (e.g. caregivers, siblings, peers) who engage in violence can affect relationships and trust.</p>	<p>Children do best when they are well cared for and have stable relationships with caregivers. They are less likely to be victims of maltreatment or have problems because of aggressive behavior.</p>
<p>BP3: A Sense of Mastery Developing life skills in children and adolescents</p>	<p>Experiencing early violence and adversity has been linked to poor social skills, low academic achievement, impulsiveness, truancy, and poverty. These factors can fuel more violence.</p>	<p>Supportive parenting and positive communication can help with skill development. In addition, learning skills and participating in extracurricular activities can help youth manage themselves better and deal with everyday life challenges. This can protect them against aggression, lead to better social skills, and better school and job performances.</p>
<p>BP4: Feeling Safe Promoting a safe environment in the community</p>	<p>Living, working, and going to school in urban areas can at times feel like being in a war zone. Additionally, these children lack access to safe areas for recreation.</p>	<p>Everyone plays a role in keeping a community safe, but no one person, family, organization, or system can make a difference without support. We all play a part in making communities safe.</p>
<p>BP5: Changing the Message Changing rules and expectations in society (cultural norms) that support violence</p>	<p>The rules or expectations of behavior (cultural norms) in our society can sometimes encourage violence. Aggressive verbal and physical behavior among youth and adults can influence other youth to show or support aggression.</p>	<p>Having the wrong impression about other people's intentions can lead to violence (an accidental bump interpreted as intentional). Violence in the media and on the internet can make people more accepting of violence in the community.</p>