



Project “TOGETHER AGAINST VIOLENCE“
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· RESEARCH RESULTS FOR SPAIN-CATALONIA.



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AIMS OF THE PROJECT



- GENERAL: Increase the efficiency of working with adolescent perpetrators of violence living in residential centers; through prevention and intervention actions that help reduce future aggressive behavior.
- SPECIFIC:
 - Knowledge and evaluation of *factors* resulting in acts of violence.
 - Description of the current system of *services* and their effectiveness.
 - Improvement of the same through the provision of *recommendations*; and
 - *Dissemination* of information to the professional community.

→ *To achieve these aims, firstly a research was made.*

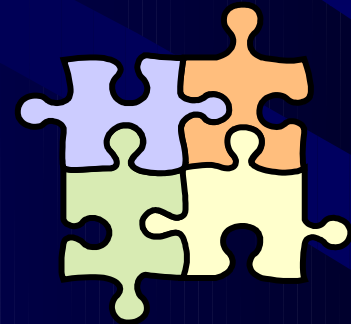
→ OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH



- **GENERAL:** Understand violent behavior of adolescent perpetrators in Austria, Bulgaria and Spain (with focus on Catalonia). Analyze the existing prevention and intervention programs against these behaviors, in order to design more efficient measures to treat them.

→ To reach this, we investigated about:

- the *contexts, situations and mechanisms* that create the phenomenon;
- the *risk and protective factors* involved in the development of youth violence;
- the *perception* about the issue and the ways in which governments react to it, in terms of *laws, regulations and measures* taken to reduce the problem; and
- the *elements and practices* of the residential centers that contribute to effectively reduce violent behavior.



→ * *To contextualize the research, in each country was made...* ←

→ *Documentary research*: description of laws, volume and treatment.

→ *Empirical research*: individual interviews and group discussions with different protagonists.



‘GROUNDED THEORY’: Based on their perceptions, attitudes and considerations, we construct an explanation-model and solutions by induction processes!

‘Violence’: definition of the *World Health Report* (WHO, 2002):
“*the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person that results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, ‘maldevelopment’ or deprivation*”.

- Types of violence studied:

Against oneself

Against others

Against property

METHODOLOGY



PARTICIPANTS

12 youths = 3 types of violence \times both genders \times 2 age groups (14-15 & 16-18). Different types of centers... (*explain*)

4 parents = mother/father; child's gender \times age group.

several professionals = focus groups & individual interviews.

Direct attention // management, outer services.

INSTRUMENT

* Semi-structured, problem-centered interview

- Individual--youths \rightarrow biographical approach: *life history; violent behavior; residential attention; the future.*

--parents \rightarrow considerations about: *relation with the child; family history and violence; evaluation of the support, and expectations.*

- Focus groups \rightarrow discussion about: *characterization of the children; programs and system vs. violence; residential institutions.*

METHODOLOGY



PROCEDURE

- Application in Center premises (children/groups) and homes (parents).

- * *Data analysis:*

- Qualitative of individual interview content.

Evaluation of services and programs parting from case study (*children / parents*).

- Interaction of comparisons and contrasts about perceptions, points of view, opinions and judgments (*group discussions*).

- Categories validated by ‘inter-judges’ (*national / international*).

- “Communicative validity” → discussion in specialist panels and conferences; relevance for practice.



- *First phase of analysis:*

By samples: categories grouped by subjects (big 5).

- *Second phase of analysis:*

By issues: Services //
- Factors & behaviors.

RESULTS



- *FIRST PHASE OF ANALYSIS:*

- *Category clusters agreed by countries.*
- *Base for conclusions and international comparisons.*

- *SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS:*

- *Presentation by issues, according to research plan:
factors + behaviors // services + practices.*

• **SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...**

→ *To integrate with international aspects.*

- “Memos”: *Cross scriptures that connect themes and patterns of categories; articulate the theory in creation → Focus points.*

* *FACTORS FOR VIOLENCE: Ecological approach...*

I. PERSONAL.

II. FAMILIAR.

III. PEERS AND OTHER SIGNIFICANT NETWORKS.

IV. SOCIAL / CONTEXTUAL.

→ Focus point.- *Dysfunctional environmental dynamics:*

Comprehension of the problem not (only) looking at the individual, but all the system; the child as expression and result.

• **SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...** *FACTORS FOR VIOLENCE.

I. PERSONAL.

A) Personality traits

B) Inadequate relation patterns

C) Addictions and drug consumption

D) Lacks and failures

E) Significant milestones

* *Differentiated profiles:* According cultural origin and gender.

• **SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...** *FACTORS FOR VIOLENCE.

I. PERSONAL.

A) Personality traits

- *Aggressiveness, reactivity-impulsivity, disinhibition, hyperactivity, nervousness, instability, conflict, negativity...*
 - *Demanding, stubborn, suspicious, obsessive, hyperactive character; 'childish' for their age*
 - *Difficulties for contention*
- = *Expression in violent outbursts.***

B) Inadequate relation patterns

- *Experienced V. episodes*
 - *Dysfunctional interactions around*
 - *Peer influence...*
- = "*from abused to abusers*"**

• **SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...** *FACTORS FOR VIOLENCE.

I. PERSONAL.

C) Addictions & drug consumption

- *Children: want to withdraw, along with other abnormal behaviors*
- *Professionals: mainly reflected in self-control loss; interacts with other disorders.*

D) Lacks and failures

- *Affection, playing in early stages →*
- *→ Compensation needs*
- *Figures / personal and relational models*
- *School failure and in other fields*
- *Lack of recognition → low self-esteem*

E) Other significant milestones

- *Birth conditions*
- *Separation from or lack of family contact*
- *Displacements (forced or not)*
- *Fleeing from home or center → source of other anomic behaviors*



• ***SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...*** **FACTORS FOR VIOLENCE.*

II. FAMILIAR.

- A) Family structure and dynamics
- B) Parental figures
- C) Parent-child relation and parenting style
- D) Significant Others—extended family

* *Vision of future:* dreams and hopes much related to family issues compensation (help them; make them happy; build up one of their own...)



· **SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...** *FACTORS FOR VIOLENCE.

II. FAMILIAR.

A) Structure and family dynamics

- *Disintegrated, separated, torn; extended, rebuilt... but...*
- *...dysfunctional or with generalized conflictive dynamics*
→ *Patterns and behaviors repeated by the children!*

B) Parental figures

- *Father, mother and/or principal figure:*

- *With antecedents of violence and consumptions*
- *Maltreater / maltreated (mother)*
- *Absent (father) -- Idealized*
- *Multiproblematic –unemployed; gambling; justice...*
- but:
 - *persistence of idealization*
 - *not always from economically deprived environment; rather depending on...*



· **SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...** *FACTORS FOR VIOLENCE.

II. FAMILIAR.

→ C) Parent-child relation
and parenting style

- *Both good and bad kinds of relation*
- *Disaffection from the parent // Reject from the child*
- **Styles:** · *from indulgent to negligent*
 - *strict—conservative (immigrated)*
- * *Mother complaint → violence increase*

D) Significant Others —
extended family

- *Grandparents; step-parents; other family members*
- *Some abusers; important rearing*
- * **Significant Other:** *some without principal caring or affection figure.*



→ **Focus point.** - ***Unusual pattern of reference figures:***
Undefined, confusion or assumption of inadequate roles;
educator role and presence as normalizing agent.

III. PEERS AND OTHER NETWORKS.

A) Friends and peers

B) School & institutionalized activities

C) Opportunities and experiences

- *Common trait: house for anomic or antisocial behaviors.*

· **SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...** *FACTORS FOR VIOLENCE.

III. PEERS AND OTHER NETWORKS.

- *Peer group pressure; attractive image (...)*
- *Lack of other relations, values*
- A) Friends and peers * *As in the case of parents, they instigate or push to violence or illegal perpetration → 'influenciable' kid*
 - ↑ *in similar environments, negligence;*
 - ↑ *if lacks in other fields or activities...*
- B) School & other institutionalized activities
 - *Academic failures /* * **Chronification;**
 - *Bad & abusive relations* * **concatenation**
 - *Abusive dynamics → expulsions → prejudices → reject...*
- C) Opportunities & experiences
 - *Opportunity losses in educational activities;*
 - *lack of integration to institutions = **social exclusion***
 - * *Violence influenced by its consequences...*



* **Institutional abuse**



• **SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...** *FACTORS FOR VIOLENCE.

III. PEERS AND OTHER NETWORKS.

→ - **Mother:**

“Even I went to ask for another opportunity, they expelled him from the football team because somebody ‘said’ he stole a mobile phone; nobody knows if it happened like that; he cried and sworn he didn’t do it. I asked the municipal social educator for help so he could enter another team; she said that if he robbed nobody would let him in.

*–So, he didn’t train ever again...? –But where...? In my sons’ schools they always talk of mobile thefts; why aren’t kids thrown out?? In any case, we must punish them, but not take away what is **their life...** They said that if in my country [Morocco] everybody steals, here they didn’t need another thief ‘Moor’. /.../ Nobody helped him. Children should be forgiven and supported and helped; if they are rejected, they’ll hate everybody; and that’s where everything begun /.../ he has never overcome that.”*



C) Opportunities
& experiences

• **Disintegration or lack of coordination in the net**
• **Lack of safe and sustained affiliations and relations**



• **SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...** *FACTORS FOR VIOLENCE.

IV. SOCIAL / CONTEXTUAL.

→ Focus point. - **Social tolerance, indulgence and negligence:**
At all systemic levels, lack of limits and alternatives.
Responsibility of all; institutional complicity;
cultural value of V.

- A) Attractiveness of violent behaviors or niches
- B) Tolerance, approval and **promotion** of V.
- C) Images, actions and interactions in the media
- D) Relaxation of rules and firmness of educational practices
- E) Excessive individualism; lack of empathy

• *SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...*

* *VIOLENT BEHAVIORS : Before and in the centers...*

I. TRIGGERS.

II. BEHAVIORS AND CONSEQUENCES.

III. SOOTHERS AND OTHER PROTECTIVE FACTORS.

• **SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...** * *VIOLENT BEHAVIORS.*

I. TRIGGERS.

* *Internal / external origin*

A) Common form of expression

B) Hyper-reactivity to stimulus

C) Way of achieving purposes

D) Confrontation of contended emotions and difficult situations

A) Defensive reaction of oneself / others

B) Unfair treatment (centers)

· **SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...** * *VIOLENT BEHAVIORS.*

I. TRIGGERS.

A) Common form of expression

* *More while more normalized
in the different systemic levels*

B) Hyper-reactivity to stimulus

* *Responses not seen as violent*
* *Lack of consciousness of own
limits, until admission in CREI*

C) Way of achieving purposes

* *Normal, until the apparition of an
external 'brake'*



= *Conditions in which anything can work as trigger for V.*

D) Confrontation of contended
emotions and difficult situations

· *Hopelessness, helplessness, frustration*
· *More if associated to difficult experiences*
· *More when negative thoughts
and feelings are present*

· **SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...** * *VIOLENT BEHAVIORS.*

I. TRIGGERS.

A) Defensive reaction of oneself/ others

- *'Normal' reaction to provocation*
- *Sense of 'justice' associated*
- *Posterior to 'warnings' or unbearable situations*

B) Unfair treatment (centers)

- *Injustices, negligence or inattention from educators*
- *'Law of retaliation' with peers (teasing, physical abuse, ridicule)*



→ *Triggers often used to legitimate violent reactions.*

• **SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...** * *VIOLENT BEHAVIORS.*

II. BEHAVIORS AND CONSEQUENCES.

* *Origin in anomic behaviors: escapes from home, truancy, antisocial acts...
... initially pleasure and inspiration*

Against oneself

- A) Self-injuries (serious or not)
- B) Somatization
- C) Suicide attempts
- D) Diverse substance consumptions

* *not seen as 'violence'*

* *More common in girls*

Against others

- A) Insults, threats (incl. educators)
- B) Hits and fights
- C) Abuse towards parents (+ mother)

Against property

- A) Destruction of property, furniture
- B) Thefts * *continuous justifications ('I need')*

* *Most see a clear difference before and after living in CREI.* →



· **SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...** * *VIOLENT BEHAVIORS.*

II. BEHAVIORS AND CONSEQUENCES.

→ **Consequences of violent behavior:**

- *Legal complaints of parents*
- *Expulsion from school*
- *Punishments: effective // ineffective*
- * *Importance of analyzing measures*
- *Other:*

- * *Perception of not being conflictive/violent*
- * *Lack of Cs: sensation of normality*

* *Their consideration of being violent or not refines all arguments and justifications*

• **SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...** * *VIOLENT BEHAVIORS.*

III. SOOTHERS AND OTHER PROTECTIVE FACTORS.

A) Coping before living
in centers:



• **Non aggressive:**

- *isolation; walk away*
- *dialogue to solve conflicts*
- *changing bad relations*
- *less substance consumption*

• **Aggressive:**

- *higher consumption*
- *increase of fights, hitting*

• **Feelings:**

- *impotence, frustration*
- *death wishes*
- *fear of being sent to Centers*

B) Development of
personal resources:

- *Capacity of resilience and overcoming*
- *Bigger sense of responsibility*
- *Enhancement of positive qualities of character*

* *They see lack of understanding, acceptance, support
and help; even in the first Centers* →



• **SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...** * *VIOLENT BEHAVIORS.*

III. SOOTHERS AND OTHER PROTECTIVE FACTORS.

→ * *Higher actualization of their potential for self-control*
When intensive intervention started

C) Coping within
residential context:

- *Disconnect or leave the situation*
- *Ignore source of aggression (person) →*
- *→ Start another activity, 'ritual'; or get away and use control techniques*
- *Experience, suffer or think about own thoughts and 'boiling' feelings →*
- *→ share their experience*
- *Come to educators*
- * *Relations with supportive people- peers & staff*



** *Effectiveness of interventions!*



• *SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...*

* *SERVICES :*

I. PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION
SERVICES AND PROGRAMS.

II. RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS. PROBLEMS AND
ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVENESS.

III. FUTURE PERSPECTIVES AND POST-RESIDENTIAL
SUPPORT SERVICES.

• *SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...*

* *SERVICES.*

I. PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS.

A) Best practices for prevention and treatment

B) Main problems of the service network

· **SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...**

* **SERVICES.**

I. PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS.

A) Best practices * *Effective measures in the familiar and social daily context; previous to measures or entering centers.*

A1) Social and institutional action * *Local, integrated, integrative, planned network action*

* *Diverse and conjoint actions in order to be successful:*

investment in direct attention; conciliation policies; content control...

Action programs

* *Social services, +:*

- *Improvement plans of Attention Teams (EAIA)*
- *Work with abused women*
- *Groups/schools/spaces for parents & family*
- *Leisure programs in 'Esplais'*
- *Open Centers*
- *Communitarian and affiliation nets*



· *SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...*

* *SERVICES.*

I. PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS.

A2) Work with the family

- *Early intervention; provision of therapy, relational models and dynamics. Systemic.*
- *To keep the child the most with them.*

* *Strong ordinary nets = scarce separation of the child*

A3) Work with the child

- *To give limits, habits, activities, education in values, social abilities*

* *(Multi) diagnosis and early treatment are clue*

→ * *Evaluation of the support: All types of situations; un/coordination; importance of self implication*

A4) School context

- *Prevention / intervention, part of the basic curriculum → surpasses possibilities of the centers*

* *Incoordination and dysfunction of interface family—school—Social services line*



• *SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...*

* *SERVICES.*

I. PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS.

→ * *Clues for effectiveness:*

* *Integral solutions that consider all developmental systems.*

* *Flexible services; adjusted to concrete individual necessities.*

* *The way in which the person interacts and uses the different resources.*

· *SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...*

* *SERVICES.*

I. PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS.

B) Principal problems of the net

- * *Lack of resources (economical; housing; interventions; planning), family therapy; mental health service 1 date x month...*

B1) Structural-institutional

- *Not agile, diffused, bureaucratized net...*
- *... + uninterested society / government*
- *Disconnection reality // authorities and technicians*

* *Juvenile Justice system: contents but without enough reeducation*

B2) Direct attention personnel

- *Lack of specialized & specific training in violence*
- *Short-term initiatives*
- *Vulnerability and helplessness*
- *Frustration and 'burn-out' due to inefficiencies of the system*



• *SECOND PHASE OF ANALYSIS...*

* *SERVICES.*

I. PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS.

B) Principal problems of the net

** Lack of resources (economical; housing; interventions; planning), family therapy; mental health service 1 date x month...*

B3) Of the cases

- Lack of specificity in diagnosis*
- Immediate separation from the family*
- Constant residence changes*
- Youths' attitude ← lack of adult firmness (unbalance rights // duties)*



II. RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS. PROBLEMS AND ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVENESS.

- A) Residential institutions fail to help youngsters with violent behavior...
- B) Residential institutions attempt to provoke significant change in aggressive youth...



II. RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS. PROBLEMS AND ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVENESS.

A) Residential institutions fail to help youngsters...

* *When entering, shocking emotions; more negative.*

Fed up of hopping through the residential system.

Influence of parents' attitude.

More positive feelings actually (7/10).

** Safe environment; provider and helpful*

** Boredness and sorrow; + due to familiar circumstances*

** Solutions must include all the family system*

- Other problems of the children

• Dysfunctional profile in basic habits and abilities
• Influence of meso- and macrosystem, difficults the case



II. RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS. PROBLEMS AND ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVENESS.

A1) Principal problems of the residential centers

* *Continuation of previous life: lack of limits, negligence, reinforcement or tolerance of disruptive behavior.*

· *Combi of (in)efficient measures.*

· *Critics (maily) towards previous centers...*

· *Lack or excess of control*

· *Abusive, inefficient and/or negligent behavior & attitude*

· *High conflict, stygmatisation, injustices, inequities, thefts, abuses*

– So, the first center where your son stayed didn't seem good to you... –*Not at all, because he wandered, didn't go to school, stayed until 6 A.M. in Barcelona... he just did what he wanted and that's it! /.../ I called to the Center and he didn't go to sleep, imagine that. /.../ I wanted a therapeutical center [when I asked for help]; a closed center where he could learn something, not where he just went for a bed and at 8 A.M. have the door opened and leave. (Mother).*



II. RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS. PROBLEMS AND ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVENESS.

* *Contrasts with the general model of most of actual CREI's*

A1.1) Principal problems of actual CREI...

- *Arbitrary rules; authoritarianism; injustices-favoritism*
- *Trivialize what's important to the children; negligence*
- *Limitations for going out and family contact*
- *Part of the program*
- *Lack of academic exigence (parents say); but not many more things they'd change*

**** Nonetheless, majoritary good opinion!**



II. RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS. PROBLEMS AND ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVENESS.

B) The CREI provoke significant change in aggressive youth...

** In the 3 countries become evident very similar key elements of change; possible to group in some main lines:*

B1) Stabilizing and normalizing environment

- Clear and firm house rules;*
- routines, habits, skills for independent living.*



** Give a structural basis; promote self control.*

- Youth active participation in the establishment of rules, activities, and decisions regarding the tutorship.*



** Part of self determination*



II. RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS. PROBLEMS AND ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVENESS.

B2) Integral and individualized education

- *School program adapted to the children of the Center*
- *Meaningful workshops and extracurricular activities*



* *Develop:*

- *Confidence in own talents*
- *Work habits; acquisition of professional skills... → future!*

- *Guided spare-time activities and sports*



- * *Give opportunities and motivation to demonstrate and improve skills and abilities*



- *Transmission of positive values*



- * *Contribution and participation. Feel part of something; appreciation and gratitude towards / from others*





II. RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS. PROBLEMS AND ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVENESS.

B3) Development of social network and close relationships

· *Relationship with reference educator: trust, confidence, support, acceptance, understanding*



* *Pacifies, gives self confidence, open attitude → positive reference figure.*

**** More effective than coercion or behavior control.**

· *Relations with Center peers and staff*



* *Valuable for development of healthy socialization*

· *Restoration of family relations*



* *Stabilization and constancy of links and its dynamics*

· *Usefulness of psychiatric and psychotherapeutic attention*



* *Very necessary to increase*

*** Above all, support to develop inner resources and potential for change.**

II. RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS. PROBLEMS AND ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVENESS.

→ * *Positive effects of the stay:*

- * *Responsibility promotion*
- * *Family environment*
- * *Self reflexivity and of own actions*
- * *Self-concept, self-control and self-regulation improvement*
- * *Changes in the way they relate*
- * *Transcendence of values learned*



III. FUTURE PERSPECTIVES AND POST-RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT SERVICES.

- **FUTURE PLANS:** most of arguments related with school studies and work.
- **HOPES AND DREAMS:** The issue of the family is equally important and repeatedly mentioned in all answers.
- **CONCEARNS, FEARS AND WORRIES:** very related to the family and the future.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

- Violent behavior can (only) be understood as the confluence of all the constituting elements of its factors; it is only the 'final explosive' outcome.
- It is necessary to work all of them, and at all levels. Special importance of *family* and *prevention*. Challenge: inclusion of the family and school support.



I.- TO WORK FOR / WITH THE FAMILY AND OTHER SIGNIFICANT ADULTS.

- The guidelines given and *planning* in the context of intensive education reduce violence; when providing the child of *relations and activities* tailored to their profile.
- *Successful programs* are those that support each of those involved, make preventive diagnoses and take measures in the context of the family.



II.- SERVICES AND INDIVIDUALIZED PLANNING, EVALUATING NECESSITIES .



GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

- When young people feel considered in the planning, they *get implied, self-regulate* and *engage* with their own process.
- We shall increase ways of *participation* and promote it among other agents.



III.- BEHAVIORAL CHANGE IS SUSTAINABLE ONLY WITH PARTICIPATION OF THE INVOLVED.

- Intensive education centers show keys and clues to *increase the effectiveness* of others and the services in the territory. Lack of financial resources.
- There is a clear *lack of post-residential services* that make last the effect of the stay at the centers. Participation, social corresponsibility and dis-stigmatization are important...



IV.- QUALITY AND EFFECTIVITY OF RESIDENTIAL CENTERS TO POSSIBILITATE THE CHANGE.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

- The *lack of specific training* in violence is usually solved with the transfer of the child to other centers.
- Effectiveness of the *reference figure* and their *interventions* in the context of the centers (in all countries), leads to promote it as a preventive factor in a broader context!
- It is necessary *to give space* for professionals' training and at the same time carry out their other tasks.



V.- CLUE ROLE OF PROFESSIONALS AND SPECIALIZATION IN CONTENTS & METHODS.

THANK YOU!

