

To promote prosocial attitudes, adolescents should be reached with preventive measures and activities such as parenting education, public information and education campaigns (WHO 1998a); in other words: It appears necessary to implement actions at all levels of the MLIVEA framework, i.e. the macro level, the local setting, and the individual level.

5 Conclusions

The idea of this paper was to give insight into the problem of adolescent violence in cities focusing on the determinants. For this purpose, a new comprehensive framework has been developed and applied. The MLIVEA framework shows that different interrelating factors of the macro level, the local setting, and the individual level can result in urban adolescent violence. The advantage of the new framework is the presentation of the whole process and the interrelationship of factors conducive to adolescent violence, and it also shows areas where further research is needed. The framework could serve as a starting point for decision-makers to collect indicators and data on adolescent violence in cities, and to develop preventive and interventive measures.

To know more about the health effects of adolescent violence, it is necessary to systematically collect data on the problem. Surveillance is the first step in the "public health prevention cycle". Through epidemiological surveillance, we get more knowledge of the extent, forms and causes of adolescent violence and its health consequences in a city in order to carry out prevention programmes. Disaggregated data on the city level would be best for surveillance – however, such data are hardly available. Instead, researchers often focus e.g. on a specific school or the whole country.

Through methods of public health research, the problem and the underlying factors can be made visible to demonstrate that violence is not inevitable. The various disciplines of public health approaches can effectively contribute to uncovering the different causes leading to adolescent violence in cities, and to developing different measures of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention.

The relevance of public health intervention particularly becomes clear if one considers that young people are the future of society. Different actions can be taken to reduce violence at the macro level, the local setting, and the individual level. In general, the more levels the respective measures refer to, the better the chance to reduce violence and to break the cycle of violence. Therefore, a comprehensive public health approach is needed that decisively promotes sustainable development of societies.