



***PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN VIOLENCE  
PREVENTION PROGRAMMING FOR  
ADOLESCENTS***

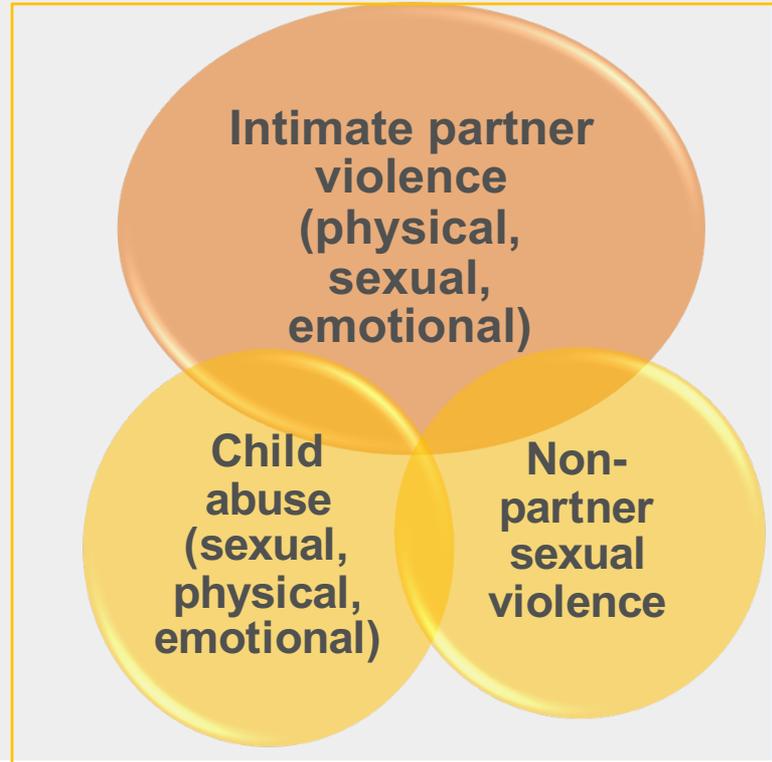
**Nwabisa Shai**

Senior Scientist

Gender and Health Research Unit,  
South African Medical Research Council

# Violence among adolescents in SA

- Most GBV begins in the adolescent years:
  - 40% victims reporting sexual violence to the police were girls under 18 years (Peden et al, 1999)
  - Three quarters of men who rape do it for the first time before the age of 20 years (Jewkes et al, 2009)



# Exposure to violence

- Physical punishment, common parenting practice
- Childhood exposure to domestic violence associated with domestic violence in adulthood (Machisa et al 2011; Maniglio 2010)
- Childhood adversity is associated with:
  - Poor attachment to caregivers (Belsky 1993, Norton 2012)
  - Incident HIV infection among women (Jewkes et al, 2010)
  - Perpetration of domestic violence (Machisa et al 2011), among sexually abused boys (Duke et al, 2010)
  - Victimization among adult women (Machisa et al 2011)



IMPACT OF THE INTERVENTIONS

EFFECTIVE (Impact on VAWG)

- Microfinance and gender transformative approaches
- Relationship-level interventions
- Group education with community outreach (men/boys)
- Workshop based interventions to transform masculinities

PROMISING (Impact on risk factors only)

- Parenting programmes
- Community mobilization – changing social norms

CONFLICTING

- Bystander interventions

EFFECTIVE

- Single component communications campaigns
- WASH interventions in schools

- Skhokho
- Sinovuyo for Teens
- PREPARE
- Thula Sana

# Skhokho Supporting Success RCT

- **Skhokho** aims to develop and test a multi-faceted school-based intervention to prevent intimate partner violence (IPV)
- Theory of change:
  - IPV is a product of both patriarchy, a culture of violence, low social value and power of women and expectations of male control of women (Jewkes 2002)
  - IPV and its causes do not exist in isolation but influenced by multiple factors in the Ecological model (Heise 1998)
- Interventions: school strengthening and parenting
- Grade 8 learners around Tshwane district schools



# **RANDOMISED CONTROL TRIAL**

**GROUP 1:  
8 SCHOOLS**

School  
Strengthening  
Intervention

Quantitative &  
Qualitative  
research

**GROUP 2:  
8 SCHOOLS**

School Strengthening  
Intervention  
+  
Parenting Intervention

Quantitative &  
Qualitative research

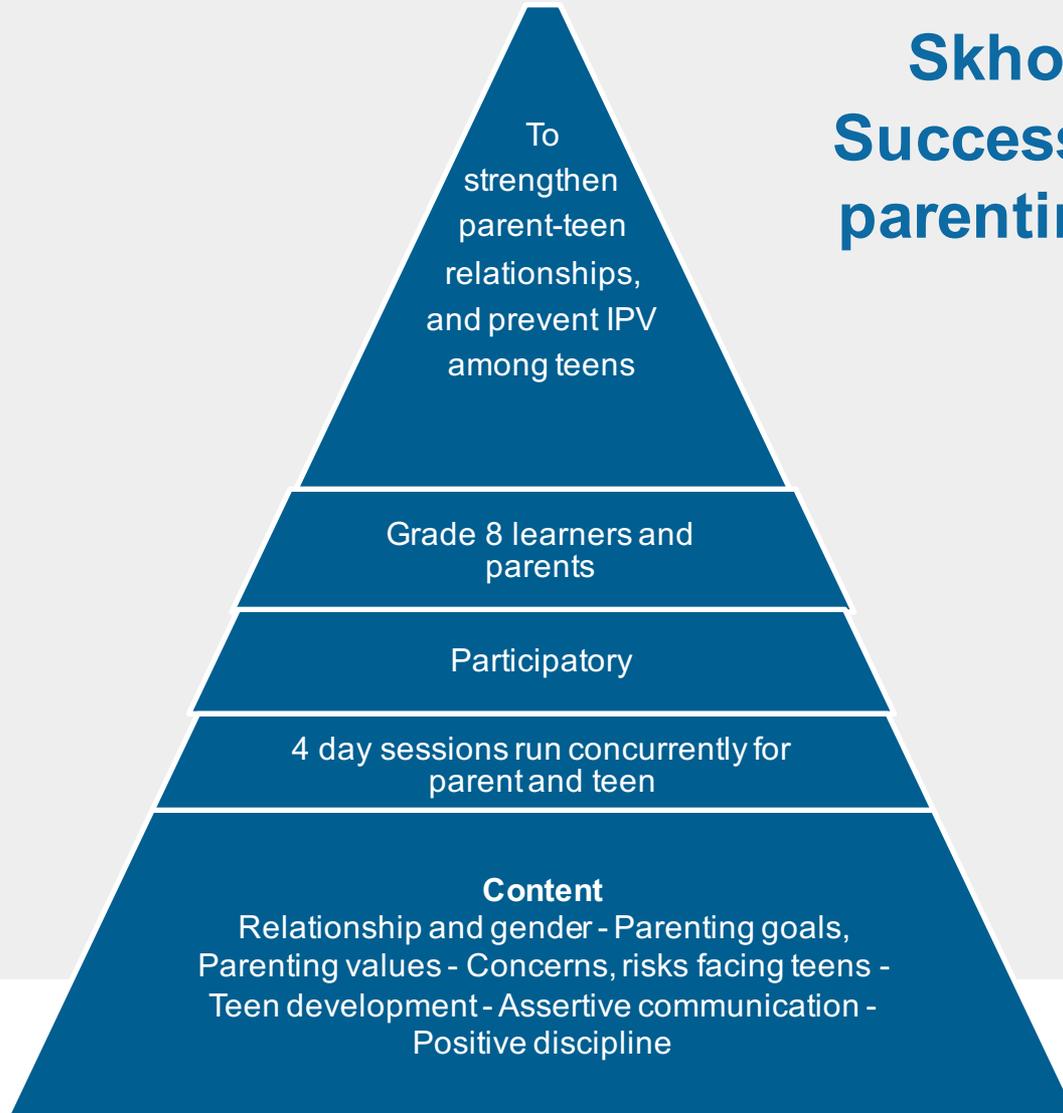
**GROUP 3:  
8 SCHOOLS**

No interventions

Quantitative &  
Qualitative  
research

**Feb 2014 → → → → → → → → Sep  
2015**

# Skhokho Supporting Success for Families – parenting intervention





*Int Health* 2016; **8**: 18–26  
doi:10.1093/inthealth/ihv068 Advance Access publication 5 December 2015

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

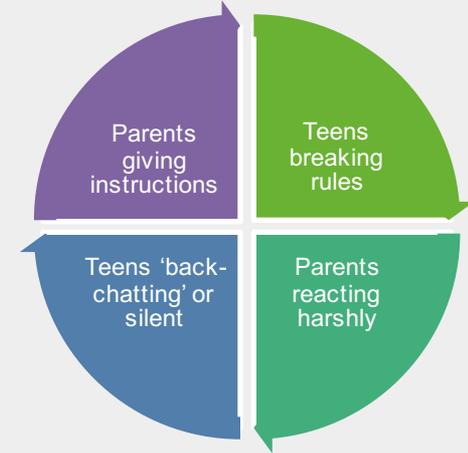
## Prevalence and risk factors for intimate partner violence among Grade 8 learners in urban South Africa: baseline analysis from the Skhokho Supporting Success cluster randomised controlled trial

Simukai Shamu<sup>a,b,c,\*</sup>, Anik Gevers<sup>d,e</sup>, B. Pinky Mahlangu<sup>a,b</sup>, P. Nwabisa Jama Shai<sup>a,b</sup>, Esnat D. Chirwa<sup>a</sup> and Rachel K. Jewkes<sup>a,b</sup>

- 52% girls had begun dating compared with 70% boys
- High prevalence of sexual or physical IPV:
  - Victimization of girls (30.9%; 95% CI 28.2–33.7)
  - Perpetration by boys (39.5%; 95% CI 36.6–42.3)
  - Boys more exposed to childhood trauma compared to girls (25.8% vs. 19.3%)
- High levels of corporal punishment and bullying at school

# Qualitative Research Evaluation of Skhokho for Families: parent-teen relationship strengthening intervention

- **Relationships were generally harmonious**
- BUT the dominant parenting practices:  
**didactic, instructive, dictatorial, ineffective communication**
- Shouting, threats, physical beatings, silent treatment
- Underlying these was parents' expression of their power
- **Limited dating and sexuality communication**



# Positive feedback at follow up

- **Parents felt workshops were acceptable: they were working for them**

“What I liked about the workshops is that they taught us how to parent our children. They also enlightened us about the negative side of alcohol in children, drugs, nyaope\* and other things.” (MamKoena)

- **Stressed less**

“I liked how (SS4F) helped us to handle and raise our children... We used to punish her too much and I have seen that this workshop has worked for me. I no longer have stress because (Laughs) truly you have helped us because we did not have that knowledge.” (MaSibeko)

Nyaope\* is a local name for a drug cocktail incl. heroine, cocaine and other illicit drugs

# Improved parent-teenager relationships

- **Both reported improved mother-daughter relationships**

“Our relationship is great now. I used to not listen to my mother a lot but now I do so. When I talk to my mother now she listens to me and gives me a lot of attention when I talk to her and this makes both of us great together. If there is a misunderstanding between us or I have done something that she does not approve of, she no longer just gets angry with me and not speak to me but we are now able to discuss what happened together and then we get along well” (Lungiswa)

- **Parents of boys also valued improved relationships with sons**

“We were not talking, it was just hints. We were not that close but now we are more like friends. He can even ask for things and I now understand him better than before”  
(MaZondo)

# Trust and Respect

- **More trusting of their children; assumptions about dating had shifted**

“I have learned to trust my child; during the dialogue we had with our children, we had a one-on-one session with them. I always accused her of dating but that day I realized that she does not have a boyfriend. I asked her and she told me and other people that she does not have a boyfriend. So I am open to the idea that there are friends who are boys, and it does not mean they are girlfriends and boyfriends, we are just making assumptions.” (MaSibeko)

- **Teens also connected improved communication with being respect**

“What helped me was that the facilitator taught us so many things and she was patient with us. She took her time and that taught me that I should respect my parents and that I should not talk back at them...” (Sipho)

# Less harsh

- **Parents were more reasonable and less aggressive:** *“Yes. If I am in a bad situation I do not react with anger. I am now a bit calmer. I try to be understanding on reasonable grounds in most cases” (MaThema)*
- **Teens confirmed this change:** *“My mother does not beat me or shout at me like she used to do before the workshop” (Thandile)*
- **Some reflections on the impact of certain discipline strategies:** *“Sometimes being too hard on your child will lead your child in engaging into wrong things like for an example if you take her phone as a punishment, she might get it from a boyfriend or get it from a friend. I now find other ways of punishing my kids” (MaZondo)*
- **Some parents began to implement positive discipline strategies**

# Processes of change

- **Some parents struggled with the change, adopted other ineffective communication or discipline strategies in attempt to change for the better**
- **Dating and teenage sexuality communication remained particularly challenging**
- **Facilitators of change:**
  - **Degree of readiness to change**
  - **Critical reflection**
    - E.g., a parent realising that if she continued to be harsh, she would alienate herself from her children
  - **Support from family members:** *“Even the father also talks about the workshop, saying that they are right and that they are helpful in many areas”*
- **Barriers to change:**
  - Fear of history repeating itself, especially fear of teenage pregnancy
  - Strong beliefs in physical punishment

# Conclusions

- This Commission highlighted the need for “*new approaches... in the prevention and early intervention of ... violence. (And) ... a need to better understand what works for males and females, for different age groups of adolescents and for socially marginalised groups.*”
  - South Africa has a number of local primary prevention interventions that are showing promise of effectiveness
  - More rigorous evaluation of interventions to strengthen impact
- National forum to promote Scaling up of these interventions
  - Our first lesson has been HOW to advocate for prioritised funding
- Engagement of stakeholders, particularly **academics, civil society, government** is critical for impactful development and testing, and scaling up of these interventions