

In This Issue:

Violence as a Public Health Issue

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Violence is not only a major public health issue, but a root social determinant of so many other health issues. From mental health trauma and physical trauma caused by war, to limited healthcare access due to unsafe neighborhoods, the toll taken by violence is tremendous.

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared violence a major public health issue in 1996, defining it as “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation.”¹ In 2022, the first World Report on Violence and Health was released, analyzing different types of violence (child abuse and neglect, youth violence, intimate partner violence, sexual violence, etc.).²

The magnitude of what can be considered violence is staggering. It is equally staggering the limited policy responses we have taken in the US against preventable gun violence, which is, shockingly, the leading cause of death among US children.³

This is also a global issue, with ongoing conflicts raging that have destroyed communities and disproportionately affected children.⁴ The US policy responses in this area are inadequate at best.

In this issue, we continue to bring forward the best thinking about this critical public health topic, in ways which matter to Delaware, and which we hope move forward an agenda of controlling violence locally and globally. We include articles about intimate partner violence, community violence, crime compensation, violence intervention programs, and gun violence, knowing that they are only a drop in the bucket of the ongoing study of violence. Our guest editor, Dr. David Chen, has written several articles about violence and gun violence in previous issues of the journal, and we thank him heartily for the experience and forethought he brings to this issue.

As always, we encourage your feedback, and for you to submit articles about your own work and experiences in this field.

References

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