

HOW VIOLENCE MAY AFFECT PHYSICAL HEALTH OF CHILDREN BORN WITH HIV

Many youth with perinatal HIV (PHIV) and their families live in neighborhoods where violence is common. Studies show that experiencing violence is linked to worse health, and that this might be different for girls and boys. Yet, none of these studies looked at how many PHIV youth specifically have been affected by violence, and no studies of PHIV youth have looked at how experiences of violence may affect their health.

WHO PARTICIPATED

268 youth in AMP



268 youth in AMP participated in this study between 2007 and 2015. All of the youth:

- are living with HIV
- were 8 - 15 years old at the time of the study

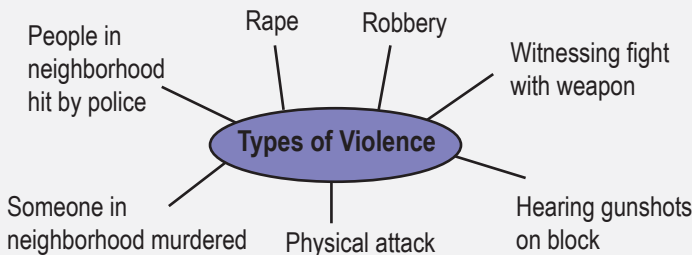
WHAT WE DID

We compared youth with violence exposure to youth without violence exposure. We also compared boys to girls.



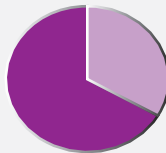
We wanted to know if youth who witnessed or experienced different types of violence had worse physical health. In particular, we looked at high viral load (higher than 400 copies per mL) and low CD4 percentage (less than 25%).

We asked youth if they had witnessed or experienced seven different types of violence over the past year. We got their viral load and CD4 percentage from their medical charts. We also asked caregivers about their own experiences with violence.



WHAT WE FOUND

34% of youth had been exposed to violence in the last year.



Overall, more youth who had witnessed or experienced violence in the past year had worse physical health (higher viral loads and lower CD4 percentages) and worse HIV medication adherence than youth who had not witnessed or experienced violence.

WHAT WE LEARNED



Youth with PHIV and their caregivers report high levels of violence exposure. Youth who had witnessed or experienced violence had worse health outcomes. Further research is needed, but preventing violence and helping youth with PHIV cope with violence may improve their overall health and lower the risk of HIV transmission.