Vietnam Policy Paper 1

School Violence

Evidence from Young Lives in Vietnam

May 2013

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Young Lives
An International Study of Childhood Poverty

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge our deep gratitude to all the Young Lives children for the information that they have provided, without which our analysis would have been impossible, and to Paul Dornan and Kirrily Pells from the Young Lives Policy team based in Oxford for their constant and valuable support and encouragement, which enabled our paper to be improved and eventually completed.

Our sincere thanks go to Dr Le Thuc Duc from the Young Lives Vietnam team, who supported our idea from its inception and has read our drafts several times, providing us with many useful comments from his long experience working with Young Lives in Vietnam and his expertise in issues related to children. We are also very grateful to Dr Vu Thi Thanh Huong from the Young Lives Vietnam team for her kind assistance and for providing us with detailed qualitative data. Unstinting efforts by Ms Nguyen Thu Huong (Young Lives team in Vietnam) in editing this paper are profoundly acknowledged.

It is important to say how grateful we are for insightful comments received from Ms Nguyen Thanh Hai from the Department of Culture, Education, Youth and Children of the Office of the National Assembly of Vietnam; Mrs Tran Thi Tham and Mr Ngu Duy Anh from the Ministry of Education and Training; and Dr Nguyen Trong An from the General Department of Child Care and Protection under the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs.

Young Lives is a 15-year study of childhood poverty in Ethiopia, the state of Andhra Pradesh in India, Peru and Vietnam, following the lives of 3,000 children in each country. It is core-funded from 2001 to 2017 by UK aid from the Department for International Development (DFID) and co-funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 2010–2014. The full text of all Young Lives publications and more information about our work is available on our website **www.younglives.org.uk**

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Funded by

UKaid
from the British people

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands

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Contents

Executive summary

The issue of school violence in Vietnam has previously been addressed in some papers, but only with reference to a specific locality or combined with other issues under the broader theme of child abuse. However, news about school violence is now appearing in Vietnam's national daily media at an increased frequency and intensity, and attracting general public attention.

Despite the existence of legal regulations related to child protection in general and prohibiting school violence in particular, cases of school violence still appear regularly in the media. This raises questions about the enforcement of current legislation and whether the key causes of violence have been properly addressed.

There is no generally applicable definition of school violence but the term 'school violence' used in this paper includes both acts of violence and bullying among students and those performed by teachers on students within the school grounds.

In terms of physical violence, quantitative evidence from the Young Lives study shows a higher level of fighting reported by 8-year-olds in 2009, as compared with children of the same age in 2002. Such incidents were common among students in the sample, regardless of their economic status. The data from Young Lives also allow us to track changes in the rate of physical violence as the same group of children grow up (so picking up differences by child age). The rate of children beaten by other children more than tripled between Rounds 1 and 2 (when the Older Cohort were aged 8 and 12). In contrast, cases where teachers beat students dropped from 3.84 per cent in Round 1 to an insignificant level in Round 2. However, when comparing 8-year-old children at two different times (2002 and 2009), we see an increasing trend in physical violence across the board.

Analysis of emotional violence was more difficult because the data recorded both answers by caregivers and by students themselves. It is interesting that students reported a lower rate of peer bullying (19.7 per cent) than that reported by caregivers (24.8 per cent).

Results from the qualitative data collected from interviews with 36 of the Young Lives children uncovered the long-term impact of school violence as well as its causes. Causes of violence among students vary greatly, and sometimes there is no explicit reason. Therefore, more weight should be given to preventative measures such as improving children's life skills or raising their awareness about the impacts of school violence. Responses from parents and school to violence among students are very important. The ways in which violence is addressed and disputes are settled can have long-term, even lifelong, impacts on children's futures. The right intervention, therefore, requires effort and closer co-operation between families and schools.

Key policy implications of this paper include closer cooperation between the school, family, community and police, accompanied by the introduction of life skills for children into the school curriculum, training in positive discipline for teachers and better data collection.

1. Introduction

Creating a safe and friendly environment for children is a primary target set under Vietnam's National Programme on Child Protection for the 2011–15 period.[1] 'Safe and friendly' covers many aspects of children's environments, from traffic and water to school safety and friendliness, as well as a number of other issues. Efforts have so far mainly been concentrated on the analysis of injuries from traffic accidents, accidental drowning, and so on. However, the issue of school safety and friendliness can also be measured by the incidence of school violence, an area that remains under-researched. Although school violence may result in fewer fatal and physical injuries than traffic accidents and drowning, it may be having a long-term impact on children's future development. The issue has recently attracted major public attention, with rising reported figures of fighting among schoolchildren. Violence is an important area in understanding children's well-being. It is also a controversial and sometimes sensationalist topic (particularly in the media – we refer to media coverage in this paper, but treat this with appropriate caution).

There is no generally applicable definition of school violence, but in practice, it is interpreted as covering a broad range of acts, ranging from verbal, physical and sexual to psychological violence and social exclusion. The term school violence used in this paper covers all these types of acts as perpetrated by a student or teacher on another student within the school grounds.

The broad definition of school violence adopted has been driven by the fact that verbal violence against children by their peers and teachers has not attracted much attention because many adults see verbal bullying and shouting at children as acceptable ways of behaving. But as the UN *World Report on Violence Against Children* has pointed out (Pinheiro 2006), 'extreme events, such as school shootings … and mass kidnappings … are very rare. More common are forms of violence that go unreported and may be so tolerated and perhaps so actively condoned by the public and by official policy and law that they are not deemed worthy of study, discussion or debate' (p. 111).[2] Further, violence among students might happen within or outside the school grounds. More serious fights happen outside school than within the school grounds. However, due to a lack of data, the paper will only discuss school violence that occurs within the school grounds. A number of measures have been taken by the Government to prevent and reduce school violence and corporal punishment. However, these measures remain rather ineffective.

To help alleviate the problem of school violence by designing appropriate policy, it is desirable that policymakers be better informed about the situation, including about non-physical abuse and bullying. This policy paper aims to address this gap by providing evidence from the Young Lives study, which focuses on poor children from five different provinces that are representative of Vietnam's geographic diversity. It should be noted that the sample is a pro-poor one (not necessarily nationally representative) and as a result urban areas are under-represented.

We hope that findings from this paper will provide greater insight into the dynamics and characteristics of the problem of school violence. By better informing policymakers, the paper aims to help them to develop a safe and friendly environment for Vietnamese children.

1 Decision No. 267/QD-CP on 22 Feb 2011.

2 The UN report documents the issue on the global scale, including in Vietnam.

The paper is structured into an introduction and three parts. The next section presents the background on school violence in Vietnam, based on a review of literature and media, as well as key regulations related to the issue. The subsequent section discusses findings from the Young Lives quantitative and qualitative data on school violence. The paper ends with a conclusion and policy recommendations.

2. Background

2.1 What is 'school violence'?

There is no generally accepted definition of school violence. The two most commonly used definitions of violence, which focus on physical acts, are from Olweus (1999) and the World Health Organization (WHO) (2002).

Olweus defines violence as 'aggressive behaviour where the actor or perpetrator uses his or her own body or an object (including a weapon) to inflict (relatively serious) injury or discomfort upon another individual' (p. 12).

The WHO defines it as '[t]he 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, mal-development, or deprivation' (p. 5).

However, in practice, non-physical violence, including bullying, is a widespread phenomenon with long-term effects on children's development. Therefore, this study considers bullying as one type of school violence. A common definition of bullying is given by Olweus (1993: 9): 'A student is being bullied or victimised when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students.'

This paper intends to investigate both physical and non-physical violence, inflicted by both teachers and students. In short, the term 'school violence' used in this paper includes *both acts of violence and bullying among students and those performed by teachers on students, within the school grounds*.

School violence might begin at school and continue outside the school grounds, or vice versa. However, data recorded by the Young Lives study allow us to analyse the incidence of violence mainly within the school grounds. The quantitative data, which cover 2,000 children who were born in 2001–2 and 1,000 children born in 1994–5, can help us examine this incidence within school grounds. The qualitative data can help us see how each case evolves, although there were only two cases reported in depth. Both cases show student fighting as not one-off incidents but continuing outside the school gates.

New forms of abuse have emerged via the expansion of the internet and the proliferation of electronic devices, such as mobile phones and hand-held media devices, and are now being taken into consideration by a number of governments as psychological school violence ('cyber-bullying'). For example, in 2008, South Korea revised its School Violence Prevention and Countermeasures Act to expand the scope of school violence to also cover abuses through the use of mobile phones and the internet (Dong-A Ilbo 14 April 2008). This paperdoes not have enough evidence to analyse this trend in Vietnam, but the authors believe that this is a new form of emotional violence that will need to be further analysed in the future.

The UN report on violence against children (Pinheiro 2006) devoted one section to school violence to look at the different dimensions of the issue, including both physical and psychological punishment performed by teachers and bullying and other forms of violence perpetrated by school students. It also covered newer cyber-bullying cases (p. 123).

The UN report and the wider literature also highlight the potential health, social and educational impact of school violence. Aside from the visible physical health impacts that school violence can have, such as injury, it can cause immediate impairment of emotional development and long-term distress or ill-health. In terms of education, corporal punishment and bullying were among the reasons for school drop-out and absenteeism.

2.2 Overview of school violence in Vietnam

Despite the fact that Vietnam was the first country in Asia to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, in 1990, and in spite of the many achievements the country has managed to attain in education through its reforms, the quality of the school environment is causing increasing concern to Vietnamese society today. In some schools the environment seems to be getting more unfriendly for children, with an increase in reported cases of violence in school, both in number and severity.

The population of Vietnam hovered at around 87 million in 2010,[3] making Vietnam one of the most populous countries in the world. Vietnam is a young country, with an incredible 51.8 per cent of the population under the age of 30,[4] and after years of revolutionary initiatives encouraging large families, a two-child policy is now being enforced. As of 2010, Vietnam has about 34.5 per cent of its population under 19 years old.[5] Creating a healthy education environment, therefore, is one of the top development priorities for the future labour force of the country.

Despite the numerous measures targeting both the improvement of the educational environment and the prevention of school violence, as described in Section 2.3 below, violence in school remains a problem. The fact that the number of cases of school violence reported in the media has been on the rise, with recent cases including murder,[6] and that it is not only between students, but also between teachers and students, has attracted the attention of the general public. However, data and research evidence on this topic are far from adequate. Some attempts have been made to generate data through small-scale surveys, but none of these surveys were able to address changes in the same sample over time. For example, a survey conducted by the Ho Chi Minh City Law newspaper in 2010 with 100 teachers and 250 students from 10 schools in Ho Chi Minh City found that 57 per cent of teachers thought that school violence was on the rise, while 22 per cent regarded it as rare. Six per cent of the teachers considered that the rise was exaggerated by media. However, in answer to the question 'Have you seen fighting between schoolgirls within the school grounds?', 64 per cent of the students answered that they had witnessed this (Phap Luat Thanh Pho online newspaper 2010).

Despite growing media coverage of school violence, the issue has been around for years. In 2003, a study conducted on all forms of child abuse in Vietnam, based on data collected from 2,800 adults and children chosen to reflect the social and cultural diversity of the population

3 http://www.gso.gov.vn/default.aspx?tabid=387&idmid=3&ItemID=11505

4 http://www.gopfp.gov.vn/so-lieu

5 http://www.gopfp.gov.vn/so-lieu

6 On 12 November 2011 one 15-year-old schoolgirl killed another 15-year-old schoolgirl at the senior secondary high school in Kien Giang; on 30 November a 14-year-old schoolboy killed a 17-year-old schoolboy at the junior secondary school in Vung Tau; on 29 November 2011 a 14-year-old schoolboy killed his classmate at the junior secondary school in Hai Duong (Thuy Hang 2011).

concluded that childhood abuse and violence was more commonly suffered in reform schools[7] and other institutions than in any other location (UNICEF Viet Nam 2006).

Moreover, violence in school does not only happen among pupils, but corporal punishment by teachers has been observed as well. According to a study conducted in 2005 (Save the Children Sweden 2006), 93 per cent of child respondents had suffered physical punishment and/or emotional abuse in school. However, the study did not give a breakdown of how many children had suffered physical abuse, and how many, verbal abuse. This study conducted a survey on 499 children aged between 9 and 14 years old and 306 adults, and looked at physical, verbal and humiliating acts that adults, including parents and teachers, had perpetrated on children, and how children viewed or felt about such events. By conducting research with children, this study was making an attempt to reflect children's views on punishment and abuse, not only the view of adults. At first the rate of 93 per cent may seem extremely high; however, this also covered verbal and humiliating acts, which are, according to the traditional way of thinking, acceptable and good for children. But, as reflected by children in this survey, verbal abuse makes children feel sad and guilty, while humiliating acts make them more angry and ashamed than any other form of abuse. Although the survey was designed to capture the views of children on child abuse, the survey team was faced with a challenge, which was the intervention of teachers in the children's answers to the questionnaires on physical and verbal abuse. Some children changed their answers, from saying they had been physically and verbally abused by teachers on one day to saying on the following day that they had never been physically and verbally abused by teachers.

Physical punishment, according to UNICEF, may take various forms, with the most common one being beatings by hand, or using a cane, rod, or any other instrument. Other methods used include knocking a child's head, hitting the buttocks, slapping the thighs, or depriving a child of food (UNICEF Viet Nam 2006). In addition, emotional abuse including shouting, humiliating and publicly blaming children is very common, both at school and in the family.

An online newspaper report from 2011 gives an example of violence by teachers against students. Four girls were beaten by their teacher, who then, after her hands started hurting, made the class representative beat 16 other pupils.

Box 1: Seventeen girls beaten by teacher in Hue

According to parents, during the first lesson of the week on 31 October 2011, class 10B4 students did not line up properly. At the review hour ending the week on 4 November, headteacher Vo Thi Thien Tam made each of the students lie on the classroom tables and used a broom to beat their bottoms.

After beating four girls herself, the teacher complained that her hands were hurting and told the class representative, Tran Duc Hoang, to continue with the task on the remaining students. Class 10B4 had 41 students in total; during that review session, 20 of them were beaten by their teacher and class representative, among whom 17 girls were given ten strokes each and three boys were given five strokes each.

Facing parents, the teacher admitted that 20 students had been beaten and explained that it was because these students did not behave well during the first lesson, and also because of their attitude to learning. 'At the teacher–parent meeting held at the beginning of the year, I asked for permission to use violence on the students if they breached the rules, and the parents agreed to it. I wouldn't have asked the class representative to beat his classmates, but because my health conditions did not allow it, I had to assign the task to Hoang', explained the teacher.

Source: http://vnexpress.net/gl/xa-hoi/giao-duc/2011/11/17-nu-sinh-bi-phat-nam-len-ban-de-co-giao-danh/

7 In Vietnam adolescents who commit minor violations against the law can be sent to reform schools, which are managed by the Ministry of Public Security. The decision to send a child is not made by a court, but on the recommendation of the police by the People's Committee at a district level.

Yet despite the situation described by Save the Children Sweden in their 2005 study, measures taken by the Government do not seem to be enough. In 2008, a group of researchers from the Institute of Development Studies in Ho Chi Minh City conducted a survey with 200 children under the Child Abuse in School and Family study (Le 2008) and found that 26.3 per cent of participants in the survey were punished by teachers, with punishments ranging from deliberate frightening and thumping on the head, to pinching ears and forcing children to stand in the sun; and 16.7 per cent of the children were being bullied by other pupils, for example by being forced to do schoolwork for others or take notes for them.

According to a report from the Ministry of Education and Training, since the beginning of the school year 2009–10, there have been 1,598 cases of students fighting in school and outside it registered (Ba Hai 28 July 2010). However, there is no clear definition of student fighting in the report, thus making it very difficult to make any comparison or judgment. There is no consistent data collection system for school violence either.

Recently, the appearance of several worrisome cases in the media about fighting between schoolgirls calls for more research on this issue. It is perhaps worth noting that levels of physical violence among boys tend to be higher (see, for example, Table 2), but that fighting between girls may attract particular attention, being seen as more surprising. According to a survey conducted in 2008 by Hoang Ba Thinh, Director of the Centre for Population Studies and Social Work at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities (under the National University of Hanoi), violent behaviour among schoolgirls does happen. The research was done in two high schools in the Dong Da district of Hanoi among 200 students aged between 15 and 18 years old. A total of 96.7 per cent of the respondents stated that that fighting among girls happened in their schools; 44.7 per cent had witnessed it very often, 38 per cent, often, and 17.3 per cent, not frequently. More alarmingly, 64 per cent of female students admitted having been involved in fights (Hoang Ba Thinh 24 March 2010). As stated above, a survey carried out by the Ho Chi Minh City Law newspaper found that 64 per cent of student respondents confirmed having seen fighting among girls inside their schools, but the pattern is very different, with only 2 per cent having seen it very often, 17 per cent sometimes, and 45 per cent only rarely (Phap Luat Thanh Pho online newspaper 2010). The significant difference in the rate of students witnessing fights among schoolgirls may have resulted from the sample selection. The first survey in Hanoi was conducted on two schools located in the same district, thus entailing the risk that both schools shared similar neighbourhood patterns. The survey in Ho Chi Minh City covered ten schools, although it was not mentioned where the schools were located, but it seems likely that student family backgrounds and circumstances would vary greatly.

According to the previously mentioned survey in Hanoi, there are several recurring causes for fights, including revenge for disputes over boyfriends, hatred of each other, provocation, as a favour for friends, or even for no explicit reason at all, and that the first time, fights usually take place inside the school grounds, while subsequent fights usually move to outside the school gates (Hoang Ba Thinh 24 March 2010).

School violence has physical, emotional and social impacts on children. Physically, children might get injured from such violence. Emotionally, victims of violence feel frightened or worried and are unable to concentrate on their schoolwork. At a social level, they can suffer stigma because the general opinion about people involved in fights is always negative, whether they are the victim or the offender (Le and To 2010). In addition, as the UN report on violence against children has pointed out, school violence also has an educational impact. Young Lives evidence supports this finding, with the legacies of violence including children dropping out of school (see Box 2).

A number of studies on school violence (Le and To 2010; Le 2009; Phap Luat Thanh Pho Online Newspaper 2010) have shown that there are several different factors contributing to rising school violence, including the psychological development of adolescents, parents' negligence, being subjected to family violence, lack of proper extra-curricular activities, low awareness of the legal consequences of violent actions, the negative context and environment around adolescents' lives, or some are encouraged by their parents to settle conflicts, quarrels or disagreements with fights.

The over-emphasis on academic learning has resulted in a great deal of coursework; students face great stress because of the need to learn enormous amounts of material in a short time, making them react negatively to their environment (Le Minh Tien 6 April 2010). A survey of 1,000 child and adolescent patients at the Mental Health Hospital in Ho Chi Minh city shows that among those who have undergone psychological therapy, more than 90 per cent have suffered tension, worry, sadness, insomnia and stress from study pressure (Nguyen Minh An 2009). Few extra-curricular activities are offered in school, which would normally have given students a chance to enhance their communication skills and abilities to handle different situations. Among the 100 teachers who responded to the Ho Chi Minh City Law Newspaper's survey on school violence in Ho Chi Minh City, 32 per cent mentioned that ethics, a subject which is supposed to equip children with social knowledge and life skills, is ineffective in helping to prevent violence at school.

It should be noted that some adolescents might feel worried or scared when they start to see physical changes in their bodies. Talking with parents and teachers could help in this case. However, under the influence of Confucianism, according to which young people are required to respect and obey adults unconditionally, it is not common in Vietnam for parents to speak to their children in a friendly and open way. Le (2008) reported that only 46 per cent of parents talk to their children regularly and 10.1 per cent of parents do not talk to their children at all. Further, it is widely believed that the best way to educate children is to 'give them a stick' (to hit them). Some parents even accept light physical punishment by teachers such as hitting with a hand or cane, or knocking the child's head. Humiliating punishment is also widely accepted both in school and in the family.

2.3 Legal regulations aimed at reducing school violence

The first and most significant legal document relevant to school violence is the Law on Child Protection, Care and Education, no. 25/2004/QH11, issued on 15 June 2004, which provides protection to children who have been victims of abuse. In particular, Article 26 under this law clearly states that '[t]he family, State and society have the responsibility to protect a child's life, body, dignity and honour; and to take measures to prevent accidents for the children' and that '[a]ll acts of violence infringing upon a child's life, body, dignity and honour shall be handled in time and strictly according to legal provisions'. To implement this law, in 2005 the Government issued Decree No. 36/2005/ND-CP, which gave detailed guidance on the implementation of articles under it. However, there was no specific regulation on school violence.

Only recently has the issue of school violence been addressed more clearly in legal regulations. A new Decree, 71/2011/NĐ-CP, was issued on 22 August 22 2011, which provides guidance on the implementation of articles under the Law on Child Protection, Care and Education. Decree 71 clearly stipulates that using punitive measures to educate, injure, or hurt children, either physically or mentally, are in violation of child rights (Article 8.3). Following this Decree, Decree No. 91/2011/ND-CP of 2011 on administrative sanctions in relation to child

protection, care and education sets out specific level of fines in case of violation of children's rights. For those using punishment in educating children that results in hurt or pain, either physical or emotional, shall be subject to a warning or fine from VND 1 million to VND 5 million (Article 13d).

Another move by the Government is the passage of Decree No. 40/2011/ND-CP in 2011, modifying Decree No. 49/2005, which handles violations in the education sector. This Decree sets fines between VND 1 million and VND 3 million for physical or psychological insult to a student (Article 16b).

In addition, the 2005 Law on Education gives further details on the protection of children at school. Under Article 75, a teacher is not allowed to take any action to 'hurt the honour, dignity or body of a student'. Moreover, the Ministry of Education and Training has been taking several measures to reduce school violence. Specifically, to eradicate corporal punishment, the Ministry issued Decision No. 16/2008/QD-BGDDT in 2008 which sets out the code of ethics for teachers, including the prohibition of abuse of pupils, both physical and emotional.

In order to help prevent violence among students, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) has undertaken independent as well as joint measures focusing on building up a friendly school environment, more collective activities, stronger ties between the school and the family and a better school security system. For example, in 2008 MOET issued Directive No. 71/2008/CT-BGDDT on strengthening the cooperation between school, family and society in the education of children, pupils and students; and Directive No. 40/2008/CT-BGDDT, which launched the Campaign "Child Friendly Schools, Active Students" in the period 2008–2013, which aimed to build safe effective learning environments and to encourage pupils to take a proactive and creative approach to learning. In 2009, the Ministry of Education and Training, jointly with the Ministry of Public Security, issued Joint Circular No. 34/2009/TTLT-BGDDT, which provided guidance on the mechanisms to secure order and security in schools. To encourage collective activities at school, the Ministry of Education and Training, together with the Central Committee of the Ho Chi Minh Youth Union, passed Joint Resolution No. 12/2008/NQLT/BGDDT-TWD, aimed at strengthening mixed-ability education and enhancing activities by the Children's Union, Youth Union and other school associations. And in 2011 the Ministry of Education and Training approved the Education Sector's Action Plan for 2011–15, which aimed to address the negative consequences of online games (Decision No. 1384/QD-BGDDT, dated 7 April 2011).

Vietnam's first National Programme on Child Protection for the 2011–15 period, approved by Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung in February 2011, targets all children, with a particular focus on those in special circumstances, such as abused and exploited children, minors (under 18) in conflict with the law, and at-risk children. One of the targets of the Programme is to establish a child protection service, including a child protection network, social work service centres, counselling centres and community networks of child protection collaborators, in 50 per cent of all provinces and cities across the country by 2015 (Nguyen Hai Huu 2011).

A recent assessment of laws and policies on child protection in Vietnam by UNICEF found that the country's legislation and policies regarding child care and protection can ensure the exercise of child rights (UNICEF and MOLISA 2009). Vietnam has been continuing to improve its legislation on child protection. As we can see from the discussion above, the two new decrees passed in 2011 have significantly improved the legislation in relation to school violence. However, information on how those policies have been implemented in practice is not available, an area which researchers might need to explore in the future.

3. School violence among children under 16 years old – evidence from the Young Lives study

3.1 About Young Lives Vietnam

Young Lives is an international study of childhood poverty following the changing lives of 12,000 children in Ethiopia, India (in the State of Andhra Pradesh), Peru and Vietnam over 15 years. In each country, the study follows 2,000 children born in 2001–2, and about 1,000 children born in 1994–5 (see Appendix 2 for more details).

In Vietnam, the Young Lives research is based in 20 survey sites in the 31 communes of Lao Cai in the north-west, Hung Yen province in the Red River Delta, the city of Da Nang on the Central Coast, Phu Yen province from the South Central Coast and Ben Tre province on the Mekong River Delta. Together, these five areas cover different geographical regions, levels of socio-economic development, urban/rural locations and population characteristics. So far, Young Lives has conducted three rounds of survey data collection since 2002.

Alongside the household and child survey, the study also conducts in-depth qualitative research with a sub-sample of the Young Lives children. In Vietnam, the first data were collected in 2007 with a second round in 2008 and a third round taking place in 2010–11. In this third qualitative round, the sample is limited to three communes (sites) in three provinces (Da Nang, Phu Yen, Hung Yen) with 12 children from each site. In addition, there is also a school survey, but data from this new component is not used in this paper.[8]

Both quantitative (all three rounds) and qualitative data (Round 3) from Young Lives will be used for the analysis of school violence among children under 16 years old in this paper.

3.2 Evidence from the Young Lives quantitative data

Results from the quantitative analysis come from the Older Cohort data collected during Rounds 1 and 2; for the Round 3, only the Younger Cohort data were taken into account (see Appendix 3 for data on enrolment of the Older Cohort in the three rounds). The reason is that the Younger Cohort in Round 3 were 8 years old, the same age as the Older Cohort in Round 1, allowing us to see the differences between the same group age at different periods. For better understanding of the issue of school violence, which covers both physical violence and humiliating acts, we tried to separate those two factors wherever possible. For more concrete information about specific questions taken into account for the calculation, see Appendix 1. In interpreting these results, it is worth noting these are based on what children and households *report* is happening (rather than what is being observed by others), and so it is possible that there is over- or under-reporting in the figures. This may also mean that some groups under-

8 At the end of 2011, the Young Lives School Survey component was conducted for the first time in Vietnam. The component consists of assessing the school performance of Young Lives children in Grade 5 and investigating their external environment and its effects on conditions at school. Among the instruments used are teacher and student questionnaires and tests to assess students' level of performance, but there is also a questionnaire for the school, which is completed by the headteacher or school management. The information collected will tell us about the conditions under which children go to school, including family, community and school factors that may affect their learning. http://www.younglives.org.uk/what-we-do/school-survey/vietnam-school-survey

report violence compared to other groups, which could affect observed differences (for instance between poorer and less poor children).

Already from Round 1, for the Older Cohort 'teachers or pupils beating a child were the most common reasons expressed by children as what they do not like about school' (Tran Tuan et al. 2003: 39). For this group, the rate of children being beaten by other children increased by more than three times between when children were aged 8 and 12 (Table 1). On the other hand, while we can observe cases where teachers beat students (which is reported less frequently), in some cases the sample is pretty small compared to the whole sample (indicated by an asterisk) and no case of a teacher beating a student was reported in urban areas or among poor students during Round 2. The rate of children who experienced physical punishment by teachers dropped from 3.8 per cent in Round 1 to a negligible rate (very small number of observations) in Round 2. This drop was perhaps due to the change from primary school, where teachers not only teach study subjects but also conduct class discipline, to lower secondary school, where teachers focus more on study subjects rather than discipline.

Table 1. Corporal punishment and violence at school by gender, region and poverty status – Older Cohort (%)

	Round 1 (2002) 8 years old		Round 2 (2006) 12 years old	
	Physical punishment by teachers	Student fighting	Physical punishment by teachers	Student fighting
Whole sample (n. = 1,000)	3.8	11.2	1.1*	34.9
Gender				
Boys	5.4	13.3	1.3*	41.8
Girls	2.3*	9.1	0.8*	28.0
Region				
Urban	5.9*	12.2*	0.0	30.0
Rural	3.4	11.0	1.3*	36.2
Poverty status[a]				
Poor	3.1*	11.4	0.0	32.5
Non-poor	4.2	11.2	1.3*	35.3

* The sample size is very small, less than 25 observations.

[a] The national poverty line applied in this paper is based on the basket of food and non-food items consumed by households in the middle quintile for the Vietnam Household Living Standards Survey (VHLSS) in 1993. The food basket was to provide each household member with 2,100 calories per day. This basket was recalculated for VHLSS in January 2006. Spatial (regional) price deflators are calculated by the VHLSS team at the World Bank office in Hanoi. To complete the calculation of the poverty line, however, we apply the price deflators for the period between January 2006 and the months of the Young Lives surveys, separately for rural and urban sectors. The Young Lives sample is not nationally representative, therefore the figures should be treated with caution and not compared to the corresponding ones in national documents.

By looking at the same group age at different periods in time, we can observe that violence increased for 8-year-old children between 2002 and 2009. The increase is slight for physical punishment by teachers, from 3.8 per cent in 2002 to 5 per cent in 2009, but larger for beatings by other pupils, from 11.2 per cent in 2002 to 17.4 per cent in 2009 (Table 2).

Table 2. Changes in the rate of violence experienced by 8-year-old children at school between 2002 and 2009 (%)

	Round I (2002)		Round 3 (2009)	
	Older Cohort, 8 years old (n.=1,000)		Younger Cohort, 8 years old (n.=2,000)	
	Physical punishment by teachers	Student fighting	Physical punishment by teachers	Student fighting
Whole sample	3.8	11.2	5.0	17.4
Gender				
Boys	5.4	13.3	5.4	19.0
Girls	2.3[a]	9.1	4.6	15.7
Region				
Urban	5.9*	12.2*	5.8*	18.0
Rural	3.4	11.0	4.8	17.2
Poverty status				
Poor	3.1*	11.4	4.3*	15.0
Non-poor	4.2	11.2	5.1	17.9

* The sample size is very small, less than 25 observations.

As observed from Tables 1 and 2, the rate of physical punishment by teachers is much lower than the rate of students fighting. However, there is a concern that children may not be reporting violence by teachers.

Emotional abuse, as measured by teachers shouting at pupils and bullying by other pupils, is presented in Table 3. However, the questions were not repeated in all three rounds. In Round 1, only data on bullying reported by caregivers is available, while in the Round 3 data on bullying was recorded from both caregivers and children. Comparing the 8-year-old groups, we can see a big drop in the rate of children bullied by other pupils reported by caregivers, from 57 per cent in 2002 to 24.8 per cent in 2009. The considerable gap between the two figures might be explained by the difference in the questions asked in the two rounds. While in Round 1, the question asked about being bullied by other children, i.e. including being bullied by peers at school and also by other children outside school; in Round 3, the question was restricted to being bullied by peers at school only.

It is interesting to look at the difference in results of children bullied by their peers reported by caregivers and children in Round 3, which are presented in last two columns of Table 3. Caregivers reported a considerably higher rate (24.8 per cent) than children (19.7 per cent). This reflects the different views on bullying of adults and children. Children tend to accept more bullying acts than their caregivers, perhaps because they consider such acts as play between friends, not intended as bullying, or they may be more scared to report it for fear of reprisals.

Table 3. Emotional violence (%)

	Round 1 (2002)		Round 2 (2006)		Round 3 (2009)		
	Older Cohort, 8 years old		Older Cohort, 12 years old		Younger Cohort, 8 years old		
	Teacher shouting	Bullied by pupils	Teacher shouting	Bullied by pupils	Teacher shouting	Bullied by pupils	
Reported by	-	caregiver	child	child	child	caregiver	child
Whole sample	-	57.0	9.0	8.0	8.2	24.8	19.7
Gender							
Boys	-	57.9	7.0	3.7*	9.7	27.2	18.1
Girls	-	56.0	10.7	12.2	6.6	22.2	21.4
Region							
Urban	-	66.0	10.7*	2.0*	10.0	34.3	20.0
Rural	-	54.8	8.5	9.5	7.7	22.3	19.6
Poverty status							
Poor	-	65.9	7.5*	11.1*	10.7	24.4	18.7
Non-poor	-	52.4	9.2	7.3	7.6	24.9	19.9

* The sample size is very small, less than 25 observations.

In one group discussion with children from an ethnic minority group, when talking about reasons for children in the village dropping out school, children mentioned 'teacher shouting' at weak students as one reason for dropping out the school. (Group discussion held on 16 April 2011).

One might assume that children from poor families would be subjected to more violence from their peers than children from better-off families, but evidence from Tables 1 and 2 above does not support this. We need to bear in mind that it is possible that this reflects a reporting bias – if poorer children are exposed to high levels of violence, this may become 'normalised' and then actually reported less. Another possible factor that might explain the relatively higher rate of violence experienced by non-poor students is that children from poor families have less time and fewer resources to join in leisure activities, thus reducing the time they spend with other children and hence the risk of potential misunderstanding and conflicts. Poor children spend more time on work. In Round 3, 7.93 per cent of the poor children in the Younger Cohort had to work on family farms or do herding work for their households, compared to 4.51 per cent of the non-poor group. This rate for the Older Cohort in the same round is 40.63 per cent for poor children and 28.06 per cent for non-poor children (Le Thuc Duc et al. 2011). Data on consumption expenditure collected in Round 2 shows that the household consumption expenditure of households from the ethnic majority was more than twice that of ethnic minority households (Le Thuc Duc et al. 2008), most of which are poor. This implies that poor children have fewer resources for recreational activities. While children may well be subject to violence at work, this is not something that Young Lives captures in this survey.

Looking further into poverty status, as measured by wealth index (Table 4), we can see that in most cases, the rate involvement of students in physical violence against each other at school is higher in rural areas, even for the better-off and the least poor quartiles. This implies that economic status does not seem to be an influential factor of school physical violence. Children from both poor and non-poor families can be involved in such activities.

Table 4. Students fighting at school by wealth index (%)

Wealth index	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
	Older Cohort 8 years old	Older Cohort 12 years old	Younger Cohort 8 years old
Poorest	**8.9**	**22.3**	**12.5**
Urban	100.0**	14.3*	0.0
Rural	8.6*	22.5	12.7
Nearly poor	**13.9**	**39.7**	**18.3**
Urban	13.0*	15.8*	14.3*
Rural	14.0	42.1	18.5
Better off	**12.7**	**40.3**	**20.9**
Urban	20.0*	32.1*	15.1*
Rural	10.3*	42.6	22.0
Least poor	**9.2**	**36.6**	**17.8**
Urban	6.7*	32.2	19.2
Rural	11.2*	40.8	15.5

* The sample size is very small, less than 25 observations.
** Only one student fell in this category.
Note: The wealth index used by Young Lives is an important measure of a household's the socio-economic status, and is calculated as a simple average of the following three components: (1) housing quality; (2) access to consumer durables (scaled); and (3) access to services, expressed as a figure between 0 and 1 (maximum).

Table 5 provides some descriptive evidence relating to stunting (being shorter than expected for age). Since being short may single children out for bullying, we might expect this to be is associated with higher rates of violence. As such, teachers and others may need to be aware of the greater risks of violence faced by this group of children. To explore this we look at violence reporting in urban and rural areas for stunted and non-stunted children. We expect that in urban areas, where the stunting rate is lower, the rate of stunted children who got into fights would be higher than in rural areas. However, the numbers of students fighting in urban areas is very small compared to the whole sample. Table 6 (below) suggests an association between being short for age and experiencing violence. In addition, Kinh (ethnic majority) children are more involved in all cases of violence reported.

Table 5. Student fighting by ethnicity and nutritional status (%)

		Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
		Older Cohort 8 years old	Older Cohort 12 years old	Younger Cohort 8 years old
Ethnicity				
Majority (Kinh)		11.9	36.2	18.0
Minority		6.1*	24.1	14.0
Nutrition				
Stunted		13.5	35.0	18.2
of which	Urban	24.2*	36.7*	20.8*
	Rural	11.9	35.0	18.0
Not stunted		10.4	34.7	17.2
of which	Urban	9.7*	28.7	17.9
	Rural	10.6	36.7	17.0

* The sample size is very small, less than 25 observations.

In trying to identify possible links between the level of physical violence and other factors, we used a simple regression (Table 6) to estimate the impacts of different factors on whether or not a child reported experiencing physical violence at school. The table evidence suggests that being a girl and from an ethnic minority background is associated with lower chances of reporting experiencing physical violence at the ages of 8 and 12 (Rounds 1 and 2). The result for minority groups may seem counter-intuitive at first (since in mixed communities minority groups may experience discrimination). However, it is worth noting that the minority group children in the Young Lives sample tend to be geographically concentrated in relatively homogenous communities. This finding therefore may not hold for mixed communities. In Round 1 (age 8), though not Round 2 (age 12), there is an association between being shorter for age and reporting violence. The result is that for the Older Cohort in Rounds 1 and 2, there is a possibility, although weak, for a negative link between school violence, gender and ethnicity. Girls and minority children are less engaged in violence.

Table 6. Determinants of physical violence at school

Individual and household characteristics	Round 1 Older Cohort OLS_scvio coef/p-value	Round 2 Older Cohort OLS_scvio coef/p-value
Being a girl	−0.071***	−0.140***
	(0.002)	(0.000)
Coming from an ethnic minority group	−0.142***	−0.194***
	(0.000)	(0.000)
Living in a rural site	−0.022	−0.002
	(0.466)	(0.704)
Caregiver's education	−0.020	−0.015
	(0.175)	(0.339)
Weight-for-age z-score[a]	0.023	0.017
	(0.218)	(0.487)
Height-for-age z-score[a]	−0.040**	−0.013
	(0.041)	(0.614)
Being from the least poor group	−0.001	0.000
	(0.126)	(0.869)
Const.	0.478***	0.817***
	(0.000)	(0.000)
Number of observations	976	975
R^2	0.028	0.036

OLS regression model. Statistical significances: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.
[a] z-score is defined as the deviation of an individual's value from the median value of a reference population, divided by the standard deviation of the reference population (or transformed to normal distribution). As such, the weight-for-age and height-for-age variables in this regression measure how an increase of one unit (one standard deviation) of z-score will likely be linked to involvement of a child in violence at school.

3.3 Evidence from the Young Lives qualitative survey

One important advantage of the Young Lives study lies in the fact that its data is collected from both qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys. Young Lives takes a case study approach in its qualitative studies. Methods applied are mixed and multiple, using a number of tools to work with children and the key adults in their lives in order to understand children's own experiences

and the circumstances of their daily lives.[9] This section of the paper uses data from the third round of qualitative data collection, which took place in 2011 with 36 students in three sites representing the three geographical areas of Vietnam (Red River Delta, Cities, and South Central Coast).[10] In each site 12 students were selected. A team of ten researchers spent 17 continuous days in each site and gathered data though observations, group activities and discussion, and in depth-interviews with children, their caregivers, siblings, relatives, teachers and friends.

By using this very rich source of information, this section will try to explore why students fight with each other and what the consequences might be, as well as children's views on this sensitive issue.

Despite the relatively small sub-sample in the Young Lives qualitative survey, amounting to only 36 pupils,[11] there is evidence of school violence. The two serious cases of student fighting are presented in Box 1 and Box 2 below. As these case studies show, violence in school might start from misunderstandings or ethnic discrimination and can have long-term impacts.

Family intervention is crucial in getting a fair outcome for children involved in fights at school. Y Thinh, the boy featured in Box 2, did not receive strong and timely intervention from his family.[12] His parents persuaded him to return to school without any specific protection measures from a possible attack by his Kinh classmates. On the other hand, Huu, the boy featured in Box 3 received decisive support from his family – who later on moved him to another school. This latter change has improved his performance at school as well as his chances of a better future. Y Thinh has not ended up very happy and will probably continue working in agriculture in the immediate future. Despite the fact that he received an offer of a scholarship from a football boarding school, his family did not allow him to go.

Box 2. A Chăm H'Roi ethnic minority boy drops out of school through fear of bullying from peers.

Y Thinh is 17 years old, and from the Chăm H'Roi ethnic minority in Van Lam, a very poor mountainous community in the South Central Coast. Most of the inhabitants of Van Lam are from ethnic minority groups. Two years ago, when he was in Grade 7, Y Thinh dropped out of school for two reasons. The first concerns his poor health. When he was 12, he fell against a kettle full of boiling water and was burned. This accident injured his eyes, causing a deterioration of his vision, although not too serious because he can still play football very well. Sometimes he gets headaches. The second reason is that he was involved in a fight with one of his classmates and was afraid that the classmate might continue to try and get revenge.

Y Thinh was twice involved in a fight in his class for the same reason: his friends were making fun of him because he was from an ethnic minority. Both times it was his classmates who started the fight and Y Thinh who reacted, resulting in a fight inside the classroom. According to Y Thinh's mother, her son has a bad temper but is a kind person, therefore it is not surprising if he reacted that way. Both times, parents of these children were invited to meet the teacher to discuss the situation, and the student who picked the fight was punished. Angry about this punishment, this classmate continued to stop Y Thinh on his way home and picked another fight. This is the main reason, in addition to his health problems, that Y Thinh dropped out of school.

Dropping out of school because of fighting has implications for Y Thinh's future. According to his mother, his next five to ten years will be spent working in agriculture because his education level is too low to find a better job.

Source: Young Lives qualitative research, April 2011.

9 For more detailed information on the methodology of the Young Lives qualitative research, please see http://www.younglives.org.uk/what-we-do/research-methods/qualitative-sub-sample-research.

10 In addition to eight socio-economic regions of Vietnam (North West, North East, Red River Delta, North Central Coast, South Central Coast, South East, Central highlands, and Mekong Delta, Young Lives categorised all major urban centres as a new region – the Cities region.

11 Young Lives full sample size is 3,000 children.

12 Pseudonyms have been used for people and communities with less than 40,000 inhabitants, in order to protect the identities of children and their families.

In both cases, the teacher's response was to organise meetings with the parents. However, there is more that teachers and schools can do to prevent students fighting. For example, in one of the private upper secondary schools, strong discipline enforced by the school and other measures, such as encouraging students to go home straight after class and ensuring that students do not gather outside school after class, are the ways that the school responds to students fighting. This implies that schools and teachers play a crucial role in the prevention of violence at school.[13]

One approach employed by the Young Lives qualitative survey to stimulate group discussion is the use of newspaper stories. School violence was the theme of the three group discussions carried out as part of the qualitative survey in Vietnam.[14] Given a choice of three sub-topics under this theme, most pupils chose to talk about fights between schoolgirls, and found it a common issue because most of them have witnessed such fights, heard about them from each other or from the media, or been victims themselves. (It is worth noting that the analysis in Tables 1 and 2 suggests rates of physical violence among boys were actually higher.) The three sub-topics related to school violence that were suggested to the group for discussion were schoolgirl fights, schoolboy fights, and physical punishment by teachers. Some students gave the reasons why they wanted to talk about schoolgirl fights as follows:

> "Nowadays, schoolgirl fights are a critical problem. Teacher using canes to educate children ('Spare the rod, spoil the child') is a story of years ago. Now it is no longer valid."
>
> (Group discussion among 17-year-olds, 17 April 2011, in a rural site)

Box 3. A 16 year-old-boy is intimidated into leaving his school following a misunderstanding over a game

Huu is a 16-year-old boy from Van Tri, a prosperous rural area in the Red River Delta. When he was in Grade 8, he was involved in a fight with a Grade 9 student due to a misunderstanding. It all started when Grade 9 students were playing badminton. The shuttlecock was hit out of the the court and Huu picked it up but the Grade 9 students thought he was stealing it, even though he did actually return it later. For this reason, the Grade 9 students started to hit Huu when they were standing near the stairs, right next to the staffroom, and told him not to come to school for the next days and not to tell his parents, saying that otherwise he'd get killed. One of Huu's best friends told Huu's mother the story and was also hit very hard by a group of Grade 9 students.

According to Huu's mother, both the class teacher and the headteacher did not carry out their duties and obligations in full. When Huu was hit right next to the staffroom and did not come to school for five days, the school did not notify his mother of his absence. If Huu's uncle, who is a police officer, had not intervened, then the school management wouldn't have done anything to resolve the issue.

According to Huu's mother, her son is a shy boy and had never been involved in a fight before. He loves video games, and so his mother decided to send him to live with his uncle in the centre of the village.

The change has been good for Huu because in his new environment, his school performance has improved, and he has managed to pass the entrance exam to a highly selective school in town.

Source: Young Lives qualitative research, April 2011.

The good thing is that most of the students consider schoolgirls fighting as unacceptable because it damages the image of schoolgirls. They are also aware of the negative consequences of such actions. The attacker will end up with a bad reputation for having beaten a girl, and the victim also faces the risk of social exclusion and might suffer negative long-term psychological consequences. Students are also opposed to the recording and

13 Based on interview with child done on 15 September 2011 and Interview with school manager done on 10 September 2011.

14 Group discussions involve Young Lives children and their peers. There are between six and nine children in a group.

uploading of clips onto the internet ('cyber-bullying'), which is made possible by growing internet use, as such acts violate other people's dignity and their privacy.

The causes of violence between girls, as mentioned in the discussion, may include hatred of each other, showing off, envy, or no explicit reason at all.

> "[Girl students get into fights] because of boyfriends or envy of others' beauty."
>
> "Schoolgirls get into fights because of their egos. There are many reasons – hatred of each other, envy, jealousy, arrogance – to name just a few. But sometimes it is just for no reason."
>
> (Group discussion among nine students aged 15–17 held on 10 April 2011 in a rural site)

Asked how to stop girls fighting, most of the students agreed that the issue needs both school and family support to raise student awareness about the possible consequences. Some suggest that stronger disciplinary measures should be taken by the school and the police, but expulsion from school does not seem a viable option. Wider propaganda on different levels, including at the community level, is another option that might work in this case.

Group discussions held during the Young Lives qualitative survey also reflect the pervasiveness of fighting among female students. Three groups selected the topic of fighting between girls at school. All participants shared the view that fighting between girls was bad behaviour and they had all heard about or witnessed it. This undermines the gentle image of girl students. One participant had herself been the victim in a fight with another girl.

> "I think that fighting among schoolgirls is common at lower secondary and upper secondary schools."
>
> "I also think that this 'fighting between girl students' is negative action but it has become common in schools."
>
> (Group discussion among nine students aged 15–17 held on 10 April 2011 in a rural site)

Cases of students being beaten by teachers have been reported as well. The worst case was that of a girl reportedly being slapped hard by her teacher because of some misunderstanding. The girl felt angry and unfairly treated by the teacher, given that he did not give her any chance to explain. Information on teachers beating students can be gained not only from interviews and discussions, but one interviewer himself witnessed a teacher beating students using a rod during a visit to a school. But it is interesting to learn from interviews with children that not all of them are against physical punishment by teachers, although they prefer teachers not to do it. The reason they give is that the child sometimes does the wrong thing and needs correction. One child also described an occasion where her peer even slapped his teacher back when she slapped him for mimicking her voice.

During discussions, teacher shouting did not come across as upsetting for children. However, in all three group discussions, children listed beating and shouting by teachers, as well as discrimination and beating by friends, as indicators of ill-being in children. It should be noted that all those discussions took place among the Younger Cohort children and their peers and there is a different pattern of indicators of well- and ill-being identified by children from the two cohorts.

4. Conclusion and policy recommendations

Our evidence from the three rounds of the Young Lives study highlights a number of policy-relevant findings. The data show that school violence between children gets more frequent as children get older. We also see evidence of an increasing rate of reported cases of school violence between students when we compare children of the same age growing up in the same communities at different times. The economic status of child's family does not seem to have influence over his/her involvement in violence with peers at school (though this may reflect some reporting bias). We see evidence that boys are more likely to be affected by violence, although many girls are too. There are also issues connected with ethnicity: compared to the Kinh and Hoa children, ethnic minority children are less engaged in violence.

Good policy should be backed up by strong evidence that captures dynamics of change, but there are no comprehensive data on school violence in Vietnam. For example, the Young Lives data, although collected on a longitudinal basis, cover a relatively small sample and can't be nationally representative, given its pro-poor nature. However, the strength of this approach is that it shows change over time. This paper has illustrated the need for improved data on school violence and this final section discusses some possible ways of reducing violence, in order to improve children's well-being.

- **Start with prevention when formulating policies aimed at addressing school violence** This involves a series of measures which address the whole school environment and recognise the linkages between violence and inequalities inside and outside school (Pinheiro 2006). It requires closer cooperation between school, family and community members: reasons for school violence are very diverse and sometimes fights happen within school grounds for reasons originating elsewhere. It is important that all members of the community support efforts to reduce violence.
- **Raise awareness of children's rights to protection and of the consequences of abuse** Teachers and school administrators need to be more aware of children's rights to protection and of the consequences of physical and emotional abuse for children's learning and engagement in schooling. Qualitative and survey evidence suggests that children do not like the violence they often experience, and that it may prevent effective participation in schooling. Strong school leadership is required, with teachers and students working together to develop anti-bullying strategies and ensuring that the school environment is safe for all children. Having easy access to a trusted adult, such as a counsellor or social worker, can help children report cases of violence or abuse or resolve disputes or misunderstandings without getting into fights.
- **Introduce alternative disciplinary methods** Teachers can be encouraged to use other ways of disciplining children, such as the 'positive discipline' method that Plan International in Vietnam has been promoting. To summarise: 'positive discipline encourages teachers to use non-violent methods in the classroom and to treat children more as equals, allowing them to take more responsibility for their own behaviour'.[15] This requires moving away from the traditional belief that beatings and humiliation work well in educating children to become good people.

15 http://plan-international.org/learnwithoutfear/resources/stories/plan-vietnam-helps-teachers-to-stop-violence-in-schools

- **Bring life skills into the curriculum**
  The current curriculum does not include important life skills; these do not feature in ethics lessons. The UN report on violence against children (Pinheiro 2006) has pointed out that life skills such as problem-solving and decision-making will help develop a child's personal skills so they can cope with violence and recover when it occurs (p. 150). Mrs Do Thi Hai from Vietnam's Institute for Environment and Social Issues believes that a lack of life skills is one of the main reasons leading to students fighting. She gave evidence from a survey on 1,000 students conducted by her institute. The survey results show that 95 per cent of children lack proper understanding of life skills; 77.7 per cent had never had any teaching on this issue; 76.4 per cent said they thought students needed life skills teaching, and most of them said they thought they had difficulty in handling common situations in life (Nguyen Hieu 10 December 2009). Bringing life and social skills into the curriculum, therefore, would be an effective way of preventing violence among pupils.

- **Be proactive about the problem of cyber-bullying**
  The new form of school violence, using electronic devices, mobile phones and the internet, should be taken into consideration. If the first *Survey Assessment of Vietnamese Youth* (SAVY 1) (Ministry of Health, GSO, WHO and UNICEF 2005) showed that only 17 per cent of young adolescents used the internet, during SAVY 2 (Ministry of Health, GSO, WHO and UNICEF 2010), the figure rocketed to 61 per cent. Twenty-two per cent of young internet users use the internet to blog and 18 per cent to upload and exchange information and data online. During free time, young people in upper secondary school and vocational school spent more time using the internet than participating in social activities (Appendix 4). The rising popularity of the internet among adolescents hints that more cyber-bullying is to be expected in the near future (Ministry of Health and GSO 2010).

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Appendix 1: Young Lives survey questions used in the paper

Question	Answer options	Selected options for calculating violence	Selected options for calculation of emotional abuse
Round 1 (2002) Older Cohort			
What is the main thing you don't like about school?	1 – teacher beating 2 – pupils beating 3 – the noise 4 – being bored 5 – having to work hard 6 – dirty toilets 7 – no football playground 8 – no safe drinking water 9 – too few seats in classroom 10 – nothing 11 – others 12 – n/a (children not in school) 99 – don't know	Option 1- 'teacher beating' used to calculate physical punishment by teachers Option 2- 'student beating' used to calculate beaten by other students Remaining options for 'not beaten'	
Over the last six months has your child been picked on or bullied by other children?	1 – not true 2 – somewhat true 3 – certainly true		Option 2: 'somewhat true' and Option 3 'certainly true' were used to calculate 'bullied by other pupils'. Option 1 'not true' for 'not bullied'
Round 2 (2006) Older Cohort			
What are the worst things about being at school?	1 – teachers beat us 2 – teachers shouting at us 3 – teachers discriminate because of gender 4 – teachers discriminate because of economic status 5 – teachers discriminate because of disability 6 – teachers discriminate because of ethnicity 7 – absenteeism among teachers 8 – lack of teachers	Option 1: - 'teacher beat us' used to calculate 'physical punishment by teachers' Option 16: 'student fighting' used to calculate 'beaten by other students' Remaining options for 'Not beaten'	Option 2: 'teachers shouting at us' used to calculate 'teacher shouting' Remaining options for 'Not shouted by teachers' Option 11, 12, 13, and 14: 'other pupils tease because of gender, disability, economic status and ethnic group' used to calculate 'bullied by other pupils' Remaining options for 'Not bullied'

Question	Answer options	Selected options for calculating violence	Selected options for calculation of emotional abuse
	9 – frequent change of teachers 10 – teaching is poor 11 – other pupils tease because of gender 12 – other pupils tease because of disability 13 – other pupils tease because of economic status 14 – other pupils tease because of ethnic group 15 – noisy classroom 16 – students fighting 17 – no food provided 18 – poor infrastructure 19 – school is dirty 20 – poor physical environment 21 – no surrounding wall 22 – no drinking water 23 – lack of teaching materials 24 – lack of toilets 25 – school is far away 26 – school for both boys and girls 27 – too many students 28 – others 29 – nothing 30 – full-day study	Option 1: - 'teacher beat us' used to calculate 'physical punishment by teachers' Option 16: 'student fighting' used to calculate 'beaten by other students' Remaining options for 'Not beaten'	Option 2: 'teachers shouting at us' used to calculate 'teacher shouting' Remaining options for 'Not shouted by teachers' Option 11, 12, 13, and 14: 'other pupils tease because of gender, disability, economic status and ethnic group' used to calculate 'bullied by other pupils' Remaining options for 'Not bullied'
Round 3 (2009) Younger Cohort			
What don't you like about being at school?	1 – teachers beating 2 – teachers shouting 3 – teachers discriminate 4 – absenteeism among teachers 5 – lack of teachers 6 – frequent change of teachers 7 – teaching is poor 8 – lack of stationary 9 – can't help the family 10 – bullied by other students 11 – poor food quality 12 – don't understand language used by teachers 13 – things learned are not useful	Option 1: - 'teacher beat us' used to calculate 'physical punishment by teachers' Option 15: 'student fighting' used to calculate 'beaten by other students' Remaining options for 'Not beaten'	Option 2: 'teachers shouting at us' used to calculate 'teacher shouting' Remaining options for 'Not shouted by teachers' Option 10: 'bullied by other students' used to calculate 'bullied by other pupils' Remaining options for 'Not bullied'

Question	Answer options	Selected options for calculating violence	Selected options for calculation of emotional abuse
Round 3 (2009) Younger Cohort (continued)			
	14 – noisy classroom 15 – students fighting 16 – no food provided 17 – no uniform provided 18 – poor infrastructure 19 – school is dirty 20 – poor physical environment 21 – no surrounding wall 22 – no drinking water 23 – lack of teaching materials 24 – lack of toilets 25 – toilets are dirty 26 – toilets are not well covered 27 – school is far away 29 – too many students 30 – nothing 31 – bored from sitting whole day in classroom 32 – feeling shame due to bad learning ability 33 – others		

Appendix 2: Number of Young Lives children by region and cohort

Region	Round 1 (2002)	Round 2 (2006)	Round 3 (2009)		Lost in Round 3	
			Main survey	Follow-up	Consent refused	Untraceable
Northern Uplands	600	593	575			2
Red River Delta	600	593	569		1	1
Central Coast urban	600	589	571			8
Central Coast rural	600	597	576			4
Mekong Delta	600	594	582			1
Migrated elsewhere					1	3
Total	**3,000**	**2,966**	**2,873**	**66**	**2**	**19**
Younger Cohort	2,000	1970	1,922	41		
Older Cohort	1,000	990	951	25		
All	**3,000**	**2,966**	**2,939**		**21**	

Source: Le Thuc Duc et al. (2011)

Appendix 3: School enrolment of Older Cohort children in the three survey rounds, by gender, location, poverty status, ethnicity and region (%)

	8 years old (2002)	12 years old (2006)	15 years old (2009)
Whole sample	**98.5**	**96.7**	**78.1**
Girls	98.4	96.7	80.0
Boys	98.6	96.7	72.2
Urban	100.0	100.0	87.8
Rural	98.1	95.9	73.2
Poor	-	91.3	54.8
Non-poor	-	98.2	77.9
Kinh	99.6	98.4	80.0
Minority	90.6	85.8	50.4
Region			
Lao Cai	93.9	93.9	66.7
Hung Yen	100.0	99.0	79.7
Da Nang	100.0	100.0	89.8
Phu Yen	99.5	94.3	66.0
Ben Tre	99.0	97.0	81.2

Source: Young Lives Vietnam

Appendix 4: Use of free time by children and young people, by education stage (%)

Activities	Primary school	Lower secondary school	Upper secondary school and vocational school
Watching TV	90.5	96.7	98.5
Listening to music	77.8	88.1	95.1
Playing sports	29.3	55.7	69.2
Reading books	37.1	70.7	87.1
Using the internet	5.2	27.3	58.1
Playing games	10.6	30.1	46.4
Participating in social activities	16.2	35.7	52.5

Source: SAVY 2 (Ministry of Health, GSO, WHO and UNICEF 2010)

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