

ENVIS

Project ENVISION

A CITY WITHOUT
SEXUAL VIOLENCE:
COMMUNITY RESEARCH
SUMMARY

10451 • 10452 • 10456
the SOUTH BRONX

In 2009, the New York City Alliance Against Sexual Assault, in conjunction with community stakeholders, conducted action-research on sexual violence prevention in three communities. In the South Bronx, a community coalition comprised of local service providers, rape crisis advocates, community members and activists, is using the data to develop effective solutions for preventing sexual violence in their community.

Sexual violence is any completed or attempted sexual act against a person's will or against a person unable to give consent. Sexual violence encompasses a continuum of acts, ranging from unwanted sexual comments or advances to completed rape.

Sexual violence is a public health problem and a human rights issue that can be prevented.

THE RESEARCH EXPLORED:

- 1 Is sexual violence a problem in the community?
- 2 What are the most common forms of sexual violence in the community?
- 3 What are the root causes of sexual violence?
- 4 How can we prevent sexual violence in the community?
- 5 What are the characteristics of the community that can support sexual violence prevention?

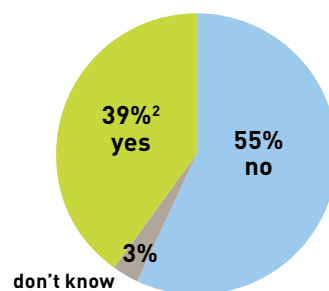
2009

1 Is sexual violence a problem in the South Bronx?

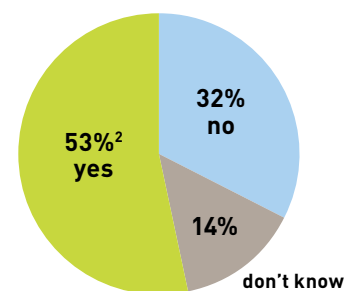
Have you experienced sexual violence...

...before the age of 15?	50% ¹
...after the age of 15?	50%
...perpetrated by a partner or spouse?	28%
...perpetrated in the workplace?	22%

Do you know someone who has experienced sexual violence?



Do you think sexual violence is a problem in the South Bronx?



Data was gathered using participatory action research (PAR) methods, including focus groups and street-intercept surveys. PAR methods emphasize meaningful community engagement in all phases of the research. A total of 169 community members participated in the research: 92 completed street surveys and 77 participated in focus groups. Data does not reflect a representative sample of the community, rather, a combination of both random and participant-driven, snowball sampling methods. For additional information on research questions, sampling methods, demographic data and a complete report coming soon, visit: www.svfreenyc.org.

1) Here, % represents the percentage of the 32 focus group participants who completed scope surveys.

2) Here, % represents the percentage of 92 street survey respondents. Data that does not total 100% indicates "No Response."

2 What are the most common forms of sexual violence in The South Bronx?

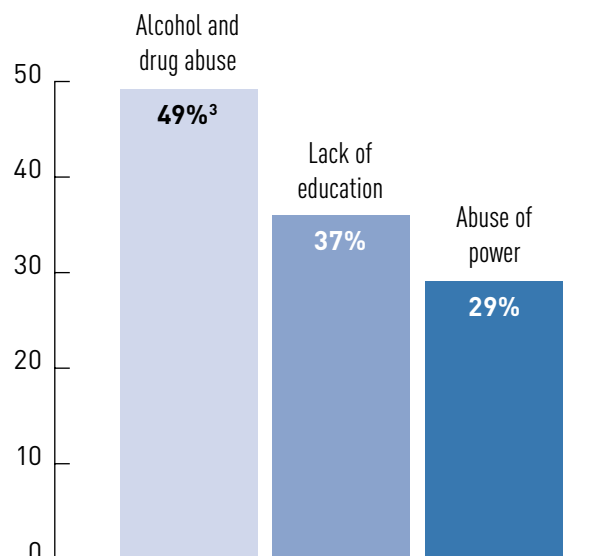
Community researchers asked focus group participants to identify the most common forms of sexual violence in the South Bronx. **The forms identified most frequently were:**

- ▶ **Sexual violence within intimate relationships (teens are a priority)**
- ▶ **Sexual harassment (verbal and physical)**
- ▶ **Childhood sexual abuse/molestation**

3 What are the root causes of sexual violence in the South Bronx?

Street survey data revealed community members' perceptions of what causes sexual violence in the South Bronx. Respondents selected from a list of potential causes, identifying those that best represent their perceptions. **The most frequently identified root causes were:** ▶

Focus groups provided more information about the root causes of sexual violence in the South Bronx. The root causes identified most frequently were organized into four levels that emphasize that sexual violence exists not just because of individual behavior, but also because of the social and environmental factors that influence individuals and groups. **The most frequently identified root causes were:**



INDIVIDUAL

Exerting/taking advantage of power, control or authority

RELATIONSHIP

Cycle of violence/normalization of violence within families

COMMUNITY

Poverty/low socioeconomic status

SOCIETAL

Gender (norms, socialization, inequality)

Adapted from: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2004.

3) Here, % represents the percentage of the 92 responses given for the street survey question, "Which are the 3 main causes of sexual violence?"

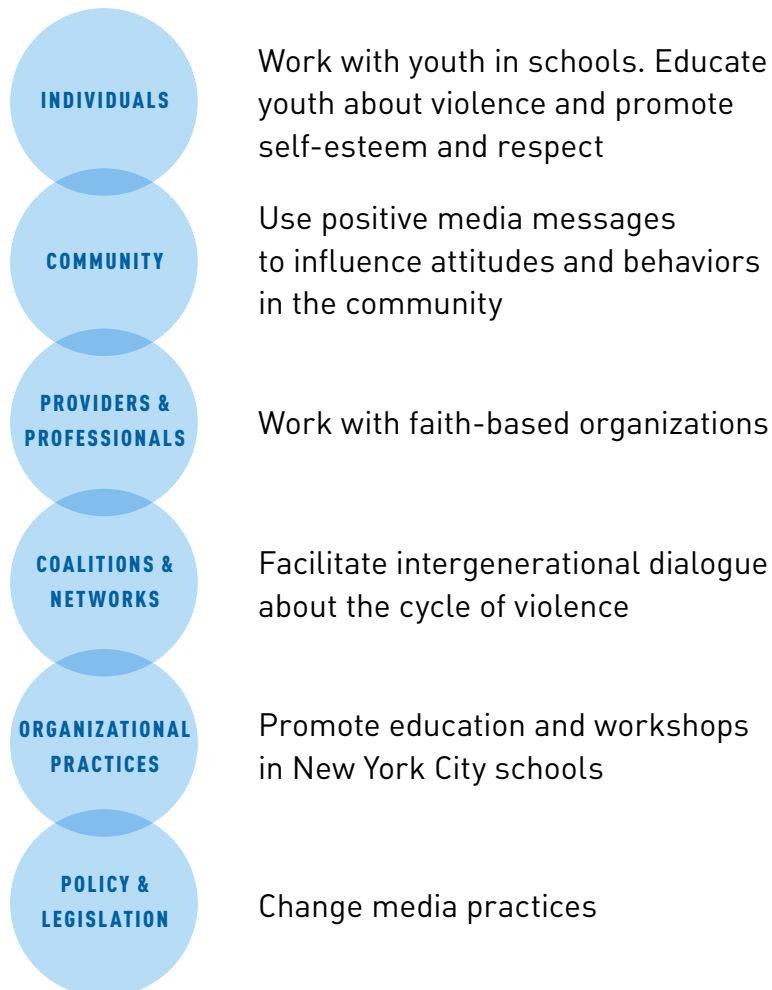
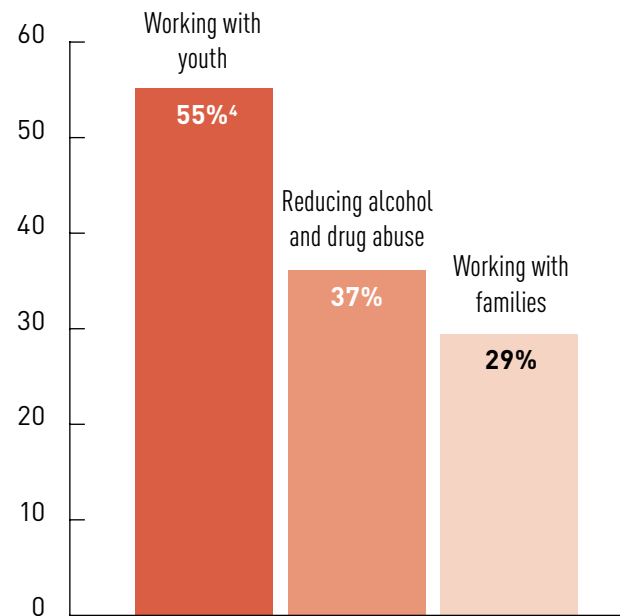
How can we prevent sexual violence in the South Bronx?

Street survey data revealed community members' perceptions of the most effective approaches to prevent sexual violence in the South Bronx. Respondents selected from a list of approaches, identifying those that are best suited for their community. **The most frequently selected approaches were:** ▶

In focus groups, participants gave more information about strategies for preventing sexual violence in the South Bronx. Researchers organized the strategies discussed most frequently into six different levels, below.

Prevention strategies must operate at multiple levels, as sexual violence cannot be prevented solely through individual behavior change.

The most frequently identified strategies were:



Adapted from: Prevention Institute, 1999.

⁴) Here, % represents the percentage of the 92 responses given for the street survey question, "Which are the top 3 ways to reduce or prevent sexual violence?"

5 What are the characteristics of the South Bronx that can support sexual violence prevention?

Street survey data revealed perceptions of various community characteristics that might influence efforts to prevent sexual violence in the South Bronx:

	YES	NO
Do you have family in the community?	73% ⁵	27%
Do you have friends in the community?	83%	17%
Do you attend any groups or organizations in the South Bronx?	35%	62%
Would community members be willing to contribute to a community project?	67%	11% 19% don't know

Focus groups discussed the ways in which existing community strengths might be utilized to prevent sexual violence in the South Bronx. The most frequently identified community strengths were:

- ▶ Churches
- ▶ Shop owners
- ▶ Parks
- ▶ People look out for children
- ▶ People work hard to survive
- ▶ Immigrant population
- ▶ Highbridge Life Center
- ▶ Channel 67 Bronx
- ▶ Community Boards
- ▶ Hair salons
- ▶ Pregones Theater



Help prevent sexual violence in the SOUTH BRONX!

JOIN THE COALITION

Email: envision-southbronx@svfreenyc.org

LEARN MORE ABOUT PREVENTION

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New York City Alliance
Against Sexual Assault

www.svfreenyc.org
212.229.0345

5) Here, % represents the percentage of the 92 street survey respondents. Data that does not total 100% indicates "No Response."