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Exposure to violence: What impact this has on attitudes to violence and on social capital

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Background

In 1940 about a third of Brazilians lived in urban areas (12 million people) and by 1991 that number had increased to 70 percent of the population (123 million people). The speed of the process of urbanization is one of the causes of the poor quality of urban life in general and this in turn relates to the growth of violence, in particular of violent crime throughout Brazil. Lack of political power and of political efficacy by the majority of the population is also the cause of poor urban environments and violence.

Rates of violent crime have been growing for the past three decades, particularly during the 1980s and 1990s. Homicide in the Metropolitan Region of São Paulo (population: **16,792,329**, data for 1997)¹ grew from 14.62 cases per 100,000 inhabitants in 1981 to 33.92 cases in 1993. By 1996, the rate reached 55.77 homicides per 100,000 persons which is double the national average of 24.76 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants (Table 1: Homicide rates in the Metropolitan areas of Brazil). This lethal violence is affecting more young people, in a process that bears similarity to other urban centers in the Americas.

Today homicide is the major cause of death of young people in Brazil. The risk of death by homicide for males between 15 and 24 years old is much higher than that of traffic accidents. In 1995, in the Municipality of São Paulo, 430 young people between 15-24 years of age died as a result of traffic accidents compared to 2,080 homicides in the same age group. As in other countries, the violence in Brazil is not homogeneously distributed throughout society. Homicide has grown all over the country, but the growth seems to be concentrated in the Metropolitan Regions. In five years São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro's share of the country's total homicide rate has increased from 38 percent of the total (1991) to 42 percent of all

¹ The Metropolitan area of São Paulo is comprised of 39 municipalities of which the Municipality of São Paulo is the largest with **9, 856, 879** inhabitants in 1997. (Source: IBGE-Census Bureau)

the homicides in the country (1996).² This growth of homicide was brought to the awareness of society over 15 years ago but no coordinated effort has been made by governments at local, state and federal to reduce the number of homicides. Nor has civil society pressured the authorities to act. A number of interpretations have arisen to explain this growth of homicides some appealing to a “culture of violence” that would have numbed people’s sense of justice, reducing public indignation and fostering a sort of a acceptance of lethal violence as part of life. The purpose of this paper is to examine this interpretation: we focus on the exposure to violence and on possible effects of this exposure on attitudes, values and beliefs about violence and on social capital defined as the "resource potential of personal and organizational networks" (Sampson et al., 1999)

The first issue is that violence is not a widespread phenomena in Brazil or in Latin America. Violence is concentrated in certain cities and within cities in certain areas. It victimizes young males living in the poorest areas of cities (the deprived areas at the peripheries of the cities which were opened up and made habitable by the people themselves) where the public services that now exist arrived precariously after people had settled the area. This pattern seems to be the same for São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Salvador, Recife, Vitoria and in most metropolitan regions in Brazil as well as in Cali, Bogota (Concha 1998) or Caracas, Venezuela (Sanjuan 1998). What such cities have in common is that they have all experienced fast population growth with limited resources invested in catering for the new inhabitants, in very unequal societies. That fast urbanization could be risky for some social groups was known but that the process could have particularly perverse effects on youth has been less studied.

² In 1991, there were 30,750 homicides in Brazil, 7,520 occurred in the Metropolitan area of São Paulo and 4,254 in Rio de Janeiro (11,774 homicides in both cities). By 1996, the national total was 38,894 homicides with São Paulo Metropolitan area responsible for 9,247 homicides and Rio de Janeiro 6,999 cases—16,246 homicides in both metro areas. (Source Datasus-Ministry of Health)

Homicides in Brazil

Metropolitan Areas	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	Total
Country Total	28757	31989	30750	28436	30610	32603	37129	38894	40507	41916	341591
Population rate/100.000 inhab.	141 mil. 20,29	144mil 22,2	146mil 21,04	148 mil 19,06	151 mil 20,2	153 mil 21,21	155 mil 23,83	157 mil 24,76	159 mil 25,37	161 mil 25,91	
Belem	273	297	378	386	276	368	333	322	366	404	3403
Fortaleza	346	412	416	372	468	430	638	578	652	486	4798
Natal	101	115	110	87	119	109	133	137	146	133	1190
Recife	1379	1219	1552	1392	1482	1390	1487	1643	2240	2788	16572
Salvador	242	381	43	230	802	967	733	971	1069	435	5873
Vitoria	446	438	563	496	722	813	804	828	1070	1227	7407
B. Horizonte	390	400	471	437	466	421	584	618	723	861	5371
Rio de Janeir	5062	2889	4254	3260	4450	5392	7187	6999	7003	6583	53079
Sao Paulo	6785	6508	7520	6912	6887	7535	8903	9247	9202	10122	79621
Santos(baixa	273	297	346	327	328	342	393	506	633	705	4150
Curitiba	317	305	283	300	358	379	431	475	604	552	4004
Porto Alegre	764	676	780	741	511	671	721	785	864	787	7300
Metro areas	16378	13937	16716	14940	16869	18817	22347	23109	24572	25083	192768

Sources: IBGE (Fundação Instituto Brasileiro de Estatística) and Datasus (Brazilian Ministry of Health)

Rapid urbanization seems to present major risks for youth in particular in emerging economies. Stoiber and Good (1998) state that "living in urban environment may accelerate the rate at which adolescents engage in early sexual activity, gang behavior and substance abuse". If this is so, what in the urban environment would enhance the risks of problem-behaviors? Stoiber and Good, reviewing the literature on youth and risk/resilience, assert that at present, urban youth are considered to be more given to risk taking behaviors. This is considered to the result of a particular combination of socialization and contextual factors that expose youngsters to multiple negative influences: peer group instability, neighborhood violence, family stressors and poverty.

Certain physical and social economic characteristics of neighborhoods or communities are supposed to influence risky behavior such as experimenting with drugs and or using violence to solve conflicts. It is generally acknowledged that these characteristics are not, or have not been systematically explored. Still it is also accepted that communities vary in the: access that youth have to substance use, in the presence or absence of physical or social traits that promote or demote substance use, and in the social norms about use (Allison et al., 1999).

Communities differ as well, in their human and economic resources to support or to reduce the probability of use, in particular in the capacity of the members of the community to fend off the threats from drug use and trade (resilience) i.e. the community's capacity to exert social control in order to protect its most vulnerable members, thus they vary in what has been named "social capital" or yet "collective efficacy" (Sampson et al, 1999) of the community.

This is not a small problem. Research has shown that being exposed to certain behaviors affects how youth themselves behave. This may enhance their risks. For instance the perception that there is easy access to alcohol (availability) seems to lead to greater alcohol consumption by males. More, the acceptability of drinking in public by males, seems to increase the levels of alcohol consumption by females. Thus greater availability would encourage alcohol consumption as it creates both: more opportunities for people to consume as well as "normative expectations about appropriate drinking behavior" (Jones-Webb, 1997). Thus greater access moulds expectations as well as fosters opportunities affecting what Kadushin et al.(1998) named the "interpersonal support system" that interacts with the "substance supportive neighborhoods".

It would seem then, that neighborhoods could be providing models for youth behavior be it of drug use or of using physical force to solve conflicts. Transmitting local norms about use of force, drug use or else the community signals what is acceptable and what is not and thus influencing actual use (Allison et al, 1999) the same applies to violence-should a community be willing to intervene when conflicts arise to stop violence from taking place a clear signal is being provided that the use of force is not sanctioned by the community. In this case contributions from social learning theory could be incorporated to better understand the role that the physical context plays in fostering opportunities and patterns of interaction.

Physical and social disorder in a community have also been found to be related to the incidence of certain criminal offences: "areas with greater cues of disorder appear to be more attractive targets for robbery offenders, perhaps because disorder increases the potential pool of victims without full recourse to police protection, such as those involved in drug trafficking and prostitution. Wright and Decker's (1997) research has indicated that robbery offenders are especially tuned to local drug markets where they perceive drug dealers and their customers as prime targets with cash in hand" (Sampson & Raudenbush, 1999). This explains the overlap between the presence of drugs dealers and the greater number of robberies, muggings and even of homicide³.

The perception, by residents, that their neighborhood has much social and physical disorder seems to have impact on their collective efficacy. This is defined

³ This in turn encourages drug dealers to arm themselves which leads to further violence, as documented by Chaiken, 2000 in a study in Washington, D.C.. In this study the author discovered that although drug dealers were less violent than other criminals because they more often carried weapons more often assaults involving them led to lethal outcome. So even if drugs themselves do not necessarily produce violence, the context in which they are transacted is conducive to violence, and this in turn relates to the nature of the social exchanges that take place in the community.

as "the linkage of cohesion and mutual trust with shared expectations for intervening in support of neighborhood social control (Sampson et al. 1997). Just as individuals vary in their capacity for efficacious action, so too do neighborhoods." (Sampson and Raudenbush, 1999).

Social capital/social efficacy or collective efficacy/social control and resilience

Social capital or social efficacy refers to the "resource potential of personal and organizational networks" (Sampson et al., 1999) while collective efficacy was defined by Sampson et al. (1999) as "a task specific construct that relates to the shared expectations of mutual engagement by adults in the active support and social control" in favor of some group i.e. as a source of protection.

In this sense collective efficacy could be interpreted to represent some collective forms of provision of support to vulnerable groups and as such to have a character of resilience. Expresses the potential or yet the willingness that residents have to get together and act in defense of their fellow neighbors, in particular in defense of the most vulnerable groups: children, youth and the elderly. The role of the community in communicating, what is acceptable or is not-, the collective normative expectations has been stressed by many authors, as have the consequences of the withdrawal of residents from the collective/public sphere. The role that crime or drugs play in de-mobilising social forces in communities has been less stressed.

The importance of the role examining interactions between the quality of social interactions and the existence or not of collective efficacy and the presence in the community of disorder, crime or substance abuse was stressed by Brooke, Nomura and Cohen (1988) in one of the earliest studies seeking to determine the connections between the physical context and drug use. In this study, the authors examined what they called "neighborhood aspects of the network of influence on adolescent drug involvement" as well as the role of reference groups and role models. In the literature reviewed, neighborhoods have been studied from the perspective of the quality of the interaction within the community expressed by: the level of satisfaction with the neighborhood (perception of the neighborhood and willingness to move out), degree of mutual help and sharing, cohesion, personal ties, conflict, and fear (not walk alone).

In communities where people are fearful, they are encouraged to avoid others, which in turn reduces social control. Where there is less social control there is more dereliction, as people who should have a stake in the community withdraw from public spaces. These will be neighbourhoods where there are no signs that "if a potential offender should cross territorial boundaries, residents are expected to take some defensive action such as calling out, calling for a neighbor, or calling for the police" (Perkins, Meeks & Taylor, 1992).

The opposite was found by Sampson and Raudenbush (1999). Where there is collective efficacy there is lower crime rate and "observed disorder, after controlling for neighborhood structural characteristics." Thus collective efficacy has been found to inhibit physical and social disorder being a mechanism of social control over public space. Also Sampson's et al. (1999) study about the spatial dynamics of collective efficacy, presents some thought provoking contributions to understand how social organizations and what social mechanisms and processes can protect children from certain conditions, usually associated to concentrated urban poverty. To do so, the authors explored the role three dimensions play in social capital or collective efficacy: the social network of parents in a community- the knowledge people have of each other; the nature of interfamily contact- the level of mutual help that takes place in a community/informal mutual support, and the forms of social control or the expectations that the members of the community will act or intervene in favour of a vulnerable group- children (in the specific study), if adults see them involved in risk behaviour.

What affects social efficacy? Concentrated affluence or disadvantage, population instability, population density and the spatial location of the neighbourhood in relation to other neighbourhood seem to be key variables. Why would it be more difficult for poorer neighbourhoods to react and to protect their children and adolescents from criminal activities including drug trafficking?

Firstly, in such communities more often than not there is much population instability. Social efficacy requires cohesion and this in turn demands interpersonal trust. Cohesion and trust develop over time and this demands a continuity in the structure of the community. This continuity is measured by Sampson et al. (1999) by the population turnover, i.e. the ratio of population gains and loss. Lack of continuity/permanence in the composition of the population weakens interpersonal ties and fosters institutional disruption. If, on top of that violence also prevails there is even more incentive for people to move out. Communities where there is violence and fear people are more likely to fear or mistrust strangers.

Crime and fear of crime tend to overlap with concentrated disadvantages, such as unemployment: "poorest neighborhoods tend to have not only the lowest incomes but also higher rates of unemployment, financial dependence, and institutional desinvestment" (Sampson and Raudenbush, 1999). Where there is unemployment, there is also more uncertainty and some form of economic dependency, as result people will be less available for collective action since their psychological and physical investments will be directed towards ensuring their economic survival. It is understandable then the conclusion that Sampson et al. (1999) reached based on their Project on Human Development, in Chicago, that: "Apparently the concentration of multiple forms of disadvantages depresses shared expectations for collective action regarding children". This is a powerful obstacle for collective action. It does not come as a surprise then that concentrated affluence,

low population density and residential stability⁴ are key factors in collective efficacy for the protection of children.

Another important result, from Sampson et al. (1999) Chicago study, is that of the importance that the relative position of the neighbourhood in the larger city plays in collective efficacy. Physical capital and human capital are unevenly distributed, not only across neighborhoods in the United States as the authors claim, but in most societies. The more unequal the society, the greater the gap between neighbourhoods in all senses. If negative events in one neighbourhood tend to spill over (or to contaminate) to neighbouring sites, it should not surprise then that the authors have identified a positive spill over effect as well: "collective efficacy in surrounding neighborhood has a direct positive relationship with a given's neighborhood internal collective efficacy, regardless of population composition"... "Some neighborhoods benefit simply by their proximity to neighborhoods with high levels of adult-child exchange and shared expectations for social control."

This has led the authors to encourage further research into what they call the "study of spatial externalities in social mechanisms, along with racial differences in spatial advantage/disadvantage". The authors suggest some questions that ideally should be answered by future research and two of them could be adapted for the issue of substance abuse: "Do spatial externalities of children centered social control protect children from violence? What mechanisms of 'prosperous' communities influence children health and how are they spatially distributed?"

When one considers the process of urbanisation that took place in cities like São Paulo, it would seem that most conditions for collective efficacy are absent. On the one hand residents, in cities that underwent rapid urbanisation, had to adapt to the process of massive inflows of new people that had very heterogeneous backgrounds. The newcomers, on the other hand, had to adapt to very new surroundings in most improvised circumstances. New neighbourhoods were created some of which abided to buildings codes, while others did not- resulting in much heterogeneity in terms of quality of life. Some of the old neighbourhoods underwent massive changes, for instance moving from predominantly low-rise buildings to high rise, or from being residential areas into mixed residential and non-residential or yet rural areas were incorporated in the urban limits of the city as people moved in to build houses or industries. As result, the profile of the residents changed with many new people moving in, some old

⁴ Population stability measured by the number of owner occupied dwellings and the number of vacant houses. Higher rates of home ownership are interpreted to mean that people will be more settled in the area and as having higher stakes in conformity and in preserving the neighbourhood well-being. Also used to measure stability (Sampson and Raudenbush, 1999) are: population density, non-residential land use- because "illegal activities feed on the spatial and temporal structure of routine legal activities" and public transportation modes to examine if they encourage large flows of population to come to the area under study. Ignored by this literature are other types/variables that may influence of population stability and or cooperation: rapid population growth and the breakdown of interpersonal ties/knowledge, and or competitions between neighbours for; transportation, water, electricity, telephones etc .

timers remaining and some moving away. Increases in the population density led to changes in the way people interacted.

This process was not uniform across the city but its strength is greater where the physical changes were also greater. Thus today the city has some areas (few ones) that were not touched by the inflow of new people, while others are not recognisable when compared to what they looked like 30 years ago. The fact is that continued population change has become the norm as opposed to stability in the composition of the population. Districts where people have lived for decades or even generations are rare. Moreover the change from low rise: houses, to high rise- apartment introduced yet another powerful element in the social patterns of interaction.

This means that there was much work to be done by people to re-establish a sense of community. Some contexts, as seen above, are more amenable to this effort than others. Contexts that allow face to face contact between neighbours is one such context. Positive opportunities to get to know each other is another one. People living in high rise buildings may well avoid contact with neighbours instead of encourage contacts, if they already feel that they have too much forced proximity and little privacy. The same may be true for people living in densely occupied areas with little audio or visual privacy, or in high crime areas, where there is little trust between neighbours. It seems that there is some progress in identifying features of the neighbourhood that keep people apart. Still the question, that remains not answered, is whether there are, and if so, what are the features of the built environment that would encourage trust, connectivity and foster interpersonal knowledge so that communities can act in defence of their vulnerable groups and ensure quality of life, moreover in a context of continued exposure to violence a process which is thought to have a perverse effect of driving people away from collective action?

Do variations in social and economic factors influence the impact of risk and protective factors on youth?

Violence that victimises youth is often associated, by law enforcement agents, in Latin America, to drug use or sale. But drugs are used by youth in general irrespective of their social economic status whereas violence victimises poor youth. What accounts for the differences in outcomes from what should be a similar process? There is little literature comparing the consequences of drug use by youth of different social economic status. The authors reviewed report that the pattern of risk of violence and the "causation" of drug use seems to differ between affluent and inner city youth. In the USA affluent youth often use more drugs, according to the authors' findings, because they have more financial resources to do so and are less afraid to experiment whereas "inner city youth have observed the serious effects of long-term drug use" and are also more likely to be victimised as result of drug use. They also report association between greater use of drugs and more self-reported psychological problems such as anxiety and depression.

This anxiety could be expressing the pressures these youth feel to achieve. Wealthy youth are, according with the authors "driven to excel academically as well as in extra curricular activities", while feeling very alone, having a great deal of unsupervised time, as both parents work or have many activities outside the house, and have "ample money to do as they wish".

Poor inner city youth would be driven to substance use because of the challenges elicited by their social economic circumstances: serious economic deprivation, neighbourhood disadvantage, racism, limited opportunities for legal employment, and exposure to community violence. Their worse ratings by teachers, when compared to that of affluent white youth, in the authors view, may be reflecting the existence of two standards: 1- suburban youth (Whites) may present better behaviour in class than inner city, i.e. they may be realistically more conforming to rules than inner city youth (Blacks) or else, 2) teachers in suburbs may be more tolerant of youth behaviour than teachers in inner city schools. If this is so, behaviour that is considered to "creative self-expression in the suburbs" would be rated as rowdiness in inner city schools.

The major conclusion reached by this study is that "there is little question that the correlates of substance use vary substantially across different subgroups of adolescents: females as opposed to males, and relatively affluent as opposed to economically disadvantaged". Furthermore, the authors emphasise that the consequences of drug use may also vary across group, and that in fact "long-term ramifications of even trivial experimentation with drugs can be far more serious for the disadvantaged and minority youth than others." Quoting work by Kandel and Davies (1996) and that of Luthar et al. (1992), they say that it has been found that siblings of low socio-economic status drug addicts "who had ever tried drugs as teenagers have been found to be almost 5 times as likely as others to manifest serious problems of drug abuse as adults". The same point has been made by Kadushin et al. (1998), in terms of the relation between ethnicity and dependence: "With dependency, the relationship between ethnicity and drug use in the United States changes, with White/non-White differences eliminated or even reversed (Kandel, 1991; Warner et al., 1995).

In the United States, ethnicity is related to social class, education level, urban residence, and neighbourhood, so these variables must be taken into account in order to understand the impact of ethnicity on drug use and misuse". This should not mean that others youth groups be ignored in substance use studies but that, as dramatised by the broad drug use, researchers should be aware that: "Economic advantage or residential location may offer only limited immunity from the risks of the adolescent years. (Takanishi, 1996)" in Luthar and D'Avanzo (1999).

The fact that most violence and drug prevention programs ignore that there may be specific causes and dangers associated to substance use and to violence victimisation, by different youth groups, enhances the likelihood such programs will fail to fulfil their aims. This research points to the continued need for comparisons

because: "Although several researchers have documented levels of substance use and associated problems in particular groups of teens, there have been few attempts to compare groups that are sociodemographically so different" (Luthar and D'Avanzo, 1999). Another major conclusion is that by Kadushin et al. (1998) that " the pervasive effect of neighborhoods on both substance use and dependence. Substance supportive neighborhoods are differentially located in poor and in Black communities". As result this author advocates that promoting neighbourhood improvement is a basic ingredient in preventing substance use.

This literature review, if did not answer the questions about what in the urban environment explains greater or lesser vulnerability to violence and to drug use, at least it has provided some support for some tentative ideas raised in earlier documents:

- a) the quality of the environment seems to matter- physical incivility coupled with social incivility seem to signal a lack of collective efficacy by adults in the area, and this may be taken as a cue for criminals to take over public space;
- b) overt drug and alcohol use, trade as well as the presence of people under the influence/intoxicated or high on drugs besides providing the idea that substances are easily available, could also be communicating to youth normative expectations that facilitate substance use such as that there is nothing negative about doing it or that the community accepts such use. As such availability also encourages use;
- c) availability also encourages the peer group to exert pressure for use;
- d) concentrated disadvantages reduce the potential for collective efficacy, social and physical incivilities being part of the "concentrated disadvantage" syndrome;
- e) the risk of substance use is not homogeneously distributed, moreover the causes for substance use by wealthier youth may differ from those that drive poor youth to substances. Furthermore there are signs that while affluent youth may consume more substance than poor youth, the consequences of substance by both groups will also differ: while for affluent youth substance use may represent an experimental use, poor youth may have a higher risk of becoming dependent.

Risks for youth in São Paulo: the exposure to violence

If we are to identify what elements of risk and of resilience that can be found in the context of the city of São Paulo, then we should try to identify how risk and resilience are distributed across the city. By means of two surveys- a preliminary one (1999) and a recent one (2001) we identified the exposure to violence by youth and other age groups living in different areas of the city and the impact that this exposure potentially has over:

- attitudes to violence,
- and to social capital- measured by the perception that the inhabitants have of the level of integration and trust within the community, satisfaction with the community,

We also explored the relations between the exposure to violence and values and norms about crime, punishment and human rights as well as the perception and power delegated to the police forces and to the judiciary, but these data are not presented here.

We are presenting here preliminary results of the last survey comparing to the results of the first one when applicable. The survey questionnaire was applied to residents in the Municipal area 16 years old or more. The survey was carried out at the home of the respondents: IBOPE , a major public opinion polling Institute was contracted to collect the data. In the first survey the sample totalled 500 questionnaires and in the second one 700, followed by a sub sample of 341 questionnaires applied to residents in one of the most violent areas of the city (Map- Distribution of homicides)

The Impact of Exposure to Violence: the Neighborhood

What impact violence has on people's lives; what does it mean to people to be exposed to this high number of homicides and to live in a state of fear of being victimized; are the high exposure and fear fostering a the acceptance of violence as legitimate means to solve conflict- breeding a culture of violence or not? In order to investigate the consequences of living with violence, a series of research projects have been carried out by the Center for the Study of Violence of the University of São Paulo. Two of such research projects help us further our understanding of the consequences of living with violence and fear.

The literature on violence shows that it affects different age groups differently and that living in high-risk areas increases the chances of victimization. (Sampson and Laub, 1994). Exposure and victimization also appear to increase the risks that young people will become perpetrators of crime and violence.⁵ The majority of youngsters are resilient to it, but studies show that most offenders suffered or witnessed violence in the past.⁶ Families and communities play key roles in the development of resilience (Rountree and Land, 1996).

Greater exposure to violence affects school performance provoking post-traumatic syndrome; children exposed to constant stress have been linked to violence within schools. Studies (Lorion and Saltzman, 1993) in the U.S. showed that children from violent neighborhoods were so frightened that sometimes they hid in their schools to avoid going home at the end of the day. Similar facts were

⁵Assis (1994) identified the same for young offenders in Rio de Janeiro: "they reproduce the victim-aggressor syndrome." They are victims as well as victimizers.

⁶ Hartless et al. (1995).

observed in São Paulo in another recent study by NEV/USP (Núcleo de Estudos da Violência, Universidade de São Paulo, Universidade de São Paulo--Center for the Study of Violence, University of São Paulo).⁷ The emotional development of the children is also affected: they are more irritable, anxious, less adventuresome, and they lack self-confidence (Osofsky, 1995). Again studies show that families play a key role in moderating the effects of the exposure to violence (Richters and Martinez, 1993).

The first survey (March-April 1999) covered ten (10) of the state capitals in Brazil assessed mostly the relations between respondents' beliefs, attitudes, behavior towards violence, and exposure to violence.⁸ As can be seen from the table below, the data for São Paulo shows that similar to results obtained in the U.S., violence seems to occur in the neighborhood much more frequently than near the workplace or school.⁹

Table 2- Victimization 1999

"Different things can happen to people. In the last 12 months did you experience any of the following in your neighborhood?"

Number of Respondents: 500

Location: São Paulo

Percent Answering Yes	TOTAL	AGE	AGE	AGE	AGE
		16-24	25-34	35-49	50 and over
Verbal assault	20	30	19	19	11
A relative had his/her life threatened	10	19	9	7	3
Gun threats forced you to surrender property	7	8	7	6	8
Drugs were offered to you	7	17	5	6	0
Physical assault	4	8	4	2	1
You felt the need to be armed	4	8	2	6	0
A relative was murdered.	4	8	4	2	1
Knife threats forced you to surrender property	3	4	3	2	2
You moved to another residence for fear of violence	3	4	4	2	1
Assault or mistreatment by a police officer	3	8	2	1	0
You were asked to find drugs	3	12	2	1	0
A relative was hurt by a knife or fire arm	3	7	5	1	1
You were extorted by a police officer	2	3	4	1	1
A relative was kidnapped	1	1	1	0	1
You were hurt by a fire arm	0	2	0	0	0

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 1999.*

The second survey was polled between September and October 2001 and the results point to the growth of exposure to violence in particular to that violence that victimizes persons not only resulting from crimes against property.

⁷ Pesquisa "As condições de vida das crianças que circulam pelo campus da USP" (Street Children in the University Campus), sponsored by Instituto Ayrton Senna.

⁸ Exposure to violence was measured in three different contexts: the neighborhood, at work, and at school.

⁹ Respondents were asked to remember events that took place in the 12 months prior to the survey.

**Table 2a- Victimization
2001**

N=700	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 and over
Verbal assault	21	30	23	18	11
A relative had his/her life threatened	14	20	15	11	12
Drugs were offered to you	12	23	13	7	5
A relative was hurt by a knife or fire arm	12	15	15	10	7
A relative was murdered.	11	13	13	9	7
You felt the need to be armed	10	10	12	10	10
Gun threats forced you to surrender property	8	9	8	9	6
Physical assault	6	9	7	4	2
Assault or mistreatment by a police officer	5	10	7	3	2
You were asked to find drugs	4	10	5	2	1
You moved to another residence for fear of violence	3	4	6	2	1
You were extorted by a police officer	3	4	5	2	3
A relative was kidnapped	3	4	2	3	1
Knife threats forced you to surrender property	2	4	2	2	1
You were hurt by a fire arm	2	2	2	2	1

**Table 2b- Victimization
Jd. Angela & al.**

N:341	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 and over
Verbal assault	26	38	29	16	15
A relative was hurt by a knife or fire arm	19	32	15	17	8
A relative had his/her life threatened	18	16	20	13	10
A relative was murdered.	16	24	14	15	8
Drugs were offered to you	13	24	18	3	2
Gun threats forced you to surrender property	11	14	13	8	6
You felt the need to be armed	10	13	15	6	2
Physical assault	8	16	8	3	6
Assault or mistreatment by a police officer	8	15	9	5	0
You were asked to find drugs	6	16	4	1	0
You moved to another residence for fear of violence	5	5	9	2	0
You were extorted by a police officer	3	3	5	2	0
Knife threats forced you to surrender property	2	4	1	1	2
A relative was kidnapped	2	3	3	1	2
You were hurt by a fire arm	2	1	4	1	0

Source: Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001.

Overall, verbal assault and threats to a relative were the most frequent form of violence followed by theft and robbery in the first survey but in the 2001 actual physical harm or threat of physical harm to close relatives has grown indicating not only that violence has grown but that it is violence against person as opposed to property. The younger group is the age group most affected, the one that reports more cases of violence and this is true throughout the city with larger frequencies present in the most violent regions- as expected. Besides experiencing more physical violence to persons close to them, the younger group experience more police violence and are also more victimized by being offered drugs, being asked to find drugs or tell where they could be found was common.

In general, the younger group seem more exposed to the types of violence listed than older groups. Verbal assaults, seem trivial enough, but it is documented that such assaults can escalate to physical violence when they become more abusive, especially when people are experiencing other forms of stressful events as seems to be the case with the respondents.¹⁰ Moreover, when people's safety relies on their reputation rather than on the efficiency of public security (i.e. the effectiveness of law enforcement agents), being insulted can easily become a life-threatening situation if it is interpreted as a challenge. If the offended party does not repair the damage he/she may be perceived as weak—someone to be “messed with.” People may react violently to insults in order to pre-empt further threats. The younger group also differs from their elders in that they report having experienced more abuse from the police, more physical violence, and thus it is not surprising that they felt more need to be armed. All these experiences enhance their vulnerability.

Exposure, defined in terms of witnessing events, was also investigated and the answers given (shown in the table below) indicate that the use and trade of drugs was the most common illegal activity witnessed by all age groups, but by young people more frequently. This exposure to the consumption and trade of drugs is an indicator of the availability of drugs in our society. The data also indicates that youngsters are more alert to the signs and symbols involved in such transactions than the adult population. Young people have also been more exposed (in the previous 12 months) to violent criminal events. More often than other age groups, they have witnessed people being shot and murdered, robbed, and arrested. They also witnessed more episodes of interpersonal violence, with varying degrees of seriousness, such as people pulling guns on each other or being assaulted. Part of this may be the result of greater use of public space by younger people which in turn means that they are more likely to witness incidents when they take place.

1999

Table 3- Witnessing Violent Events

“And in the past 12 months did you or did you not witness anyone”:

Number of Respondents: 500

	AGE	AGE	AGE	AGE	
TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 and over	
	Percent answering yes				
Smoking marijuana/using drugs	52	72	55	49	29
Buying/selling drugs	32	46	34	31	17
Being assaulted	30	46	35	22	17
Being robbed	22	26	23	19	19
Being arrested	21	27	23	22	12
Pull a gun on another person	19	29	23	19	5
Have his/her house broken into	17	23	15	16	14
Being shot	11	16	13	13	3

Being murdered	11	14	13	11	5
Who had been murdered	8	13	8	9	4
Being knifed	6	7	9	4	5
Being kidnapped	1	3	1	1	2

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 1999.*

In the 2001 survey exposure, measured by witnessing violent events, follows the trend identified for being victims: there has been a growth in witnessing all violent events listed. Younger people continues to be the group that most witnesses violence in public spaces but they are witnessing less drug use and more interpersonal violence and robberies.

2001

Table 3a- Witnessing Violent Events

Percentage	yes	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
N=700		%	%	%	%	%
Someone using drugs		53	65	54	52	40
Someone being robbed		39	47	36	40	33
Someone being arrested		38	51	39	33	30
Gunshots		36	46	36	35	26
Someone being assaulted		29	44	32	23	17
Someone that was murdered		25	33	28	21	17
Someone being shot		22	32	22	19	14
Gang fight		15	22	15	13	9
Someone being threatened at knife point		13	22	12	11	7

Percentage	yes	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
Jd. Angela & al.		%	%	%	%	%
Someone using drugs		48	58	53	39	35
Gunshots		43	53	49	32	35
Someone being arrested		42	57	45	35	25
Someone being robbed		38	42	41	33	35
Someone that was murdered		33	45	36	25	21
Someone being assaulted		33	50	39	21	15
Someone being shot		28	42	30	19	17
Gang fight		17	17	21	16	13
Someone being threatened at knife point		17	23	24	8	8

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo),2001.*

This type of exposure is not unique to São Paulo or to Brazil. Existing studies in the U.S. reveal that children and adolescents in violent areas are heavily exposed to violence (Shakoor and Chalmers 1991).¹¹ A recent survey, of students

¹¹ The exposure of children of the favelas in Rio de Janeiro and of the periphery of São Paulo to violence is not negligible. The *Jornal do Brasil* (April 18, 1996) reported that in September 1995 a survey found that 1 in every 3 children in Rio had been robbed and that 50 percent of them had witnessed a robbery and 18 percent had witnessed some type of shooting.

in three schools in Rio de Janeiro, showed that 42 percent had witnessed someone being shot or knifed, 25 percent had witnessed a person being robbed, 18.6 percent had had a friend or relative threatened at gunpoint, 10.2 percent had had a relative seriously injured), 15.3 percent had been robbed, 8.4 percent had a relative who was murdered, 5.1 percent had one relative kidnapped and 5 percent had a school colleague murdered.¹² More shocking is the data on their contact with the police; 15 percent had been mistreated by the police and 12 percent had been extorted by the police.¹³

Exposure to violence can also be measured in terms of hearing about other people's experiences. Respondents that did not witness such events were asked about whether any of their close friends had experienced any of the situations listed in the questionnaire. Those who did, reported experiences very similar to that of people who witnessed it first hand. So whether the exposure is direct or indirect, the results are similar. Again the younger groups seems to be the most exposed to violence, be it criminal or interpersonal.

Table 4- Friends' Exposure to Violence

A close friend witnessed someone:

Number of Respondents: 500

Percent Answering Yes	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	Age 50 and over
Being robbed	22	24	25	21	19
Whose house was broken into	14	16	15	14	10
Being shot	8	13	6	9	4
Being assaulted	7	12	4	8	4
Being Murdered	7	13	9	4	4
Who was killed	7	10	6	6	5
Pulling a gun on another person	6	8	6	7	2
Smoking marijuana/consuming drugs	4	7	2	4	4
Buying selling drugs	4	9	3	1	1
Being arrested	4	8	4	4	0
Being knifed	4	9	1	4	1
Being kidnapped	3	8	2	1	1

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 1999*

2001

Table 4a Friends' Exposure to Violence

A friend witnessed someone:	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
N=700	%	%	%	%	%
Being robbed	20	24	14	20	23
Who was killed	15	20	14	12	13
Being shot at	13	17	12	10	13
Gunshots	12	19	10	11	9
Being arrested	10	13	7	9	10

¹² Instituto de Educação Continuada no Rio de Janeiro, in November, 1996.

¹³ This is not an isolated result. Assis (1991) researching students from Duque de Caxias Municipality obtained similar results, 20 percent of the students had one relative killed, robberies and killings had been witnessed by 36 percent of the students.

Gangs' disputes	9	11	8	10	7
Being assaulted	9	11	7	9	9
Smoking marijuana/consuming drugs	8	7	5	7	13
Being threatened by a knife	4	5	4	8	3

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001*

Table 4b- Friends' Exposure to Violence

A friend witnessed someone:	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
Jd. Angela & al.	%	%	%	%	%
Being robbed	16	20	17	12	14
Who was killed	16	15	16	15	20
Gunshots	13	13	9	19	10
Gangs' disputes	12	16	11	10	8
Being shot at	12	9	12	13	16
Being arrested	9	11	9	8	6
Being assaulted	9	10	10	8	4
Smoking marijuana/consuming drugs	7	5	10	9	2
Being threatened by a knife	4	7	2	5	2

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001*

The younger groups are more exposed to violence by being more victimized, by witnessing more, and being told more. This violence is more familiar to them because their friends experience much of what they do. Moreover, it seems, from their reports, that part of this peer group also victimizes others. Asked whether any of their friends or colleagues had victimized someone, over half responded that they had a friend that seriously assaulted someone. One third had friends that had been involved in a gang fight, another third had friends who carried guns, close to a third knew someone who had held someone up at gun point, and 12 percent knew a young person who had committed murder. This exposure to violence by young people—witnessing their peer group being victimized and victimizing—seems to be affecting how they think about violence, its causes, and its uses.

According to the survey, extreme exposure to violence also affects young peoples' routines and the way that they use the city. Staying indoors at night and avoiding areas of the city are the most frequently adopted behaviors by all age groups as can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5- Changes of Routine Motivated by Fear .

"Fear of violence can lead people to change some routines.

Have you felt the need to do any of the following?"

Number of Respondents: 500

Percentage yes

	Age				
	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	Age 50 and over
Avoid going out at night	47	41	46	51	47
Avoiding areas of the city	29	33	28	30	25
Change the route from home to school/ work	18	23	16	17	14
Avoid contact with neighbors	15	13	19	16	13
Avoid certain public transport lines	9	7	11	9	7

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 1999.*

In the 2001 survey more questions were asked about changes in habit in order to understand if and how fear affects the use of the city and that of their neighborhood.

Table 6-Are there places you do not feel are safe for you to walk through during the day?

	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
N=700	%	%	%	%	%
No	69	68	66	71	72
Yes	29	30	32	28	25
Jd. Angela & al.					
No	67	60	69	65	77
Yes	32	38	31	32	23
No response	1	2	0	3	0

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001.*

At least one third of respondents feel that there are places in their neighborhood they do not feel safe enough to walk through even during the day. This is true also for young people who tend to be less concerned about their personal safety. At night the lack of safety is very expressive: 10 % avoid going out at night, 38% feel unsafe and 26% somewhat safe. The same applies to the most violent areas of the city in more poignant way. It is clear that violence is affecting people's quality of life in the sense that it curtails their freedom to use the city as they please. People limit the use of the city in spatial terms and in terms of hours of the day.

2001

Table 7- How safe do you feel walking around your neighborhood at night?

N:700

	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
	%	%	%	%	%
Feel unsafe	38	38	41	35	38
Somewhat safe	26	32	24	27	20
Safe	20	19	22	22	16
Does not go out at night (espont.)	10	5	8	9	19
Very safe	6	5	5	7	8

Jd. Angela & al.

N=341

	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
	%	%	%	%	%
Feel unsafe	41	47	43	34	36
Somewhat safe	28	32	34	22	19
Safe	18	13	17	20	24
Does not go out at night (espont.)	10	5	4	18	14
Very safe	4	2	1	6	8
No response	0	0	1	0	0

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001.*

Fear of violence is leading people to change habits and to adapt their houses to the fear they feel. Restricting the use of the city during the night, reducing their mobility and becoming more selective in terms of where and how they go are the strategies that most often are adopted. In terms of their abodes, multiple strategies are adopted depending on the costs, but it seems houses are becoming fortresses: gates are strengthened and windows are barred. Most impressive is the fact that young people, who are generally less fearful than their elders, living in violent areas report changing their behavior and restricting their use of the city in order to avoid becoming victims of violence.

2001

Table 8- Fear of violence can lead people to change some things about their lives. Have you:

N:700

Yes

	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
	%	%	%	%	%
a) in your behavior					
Avoid going out at night	49	47	46	48	54
Avoid carrying money	48	39	44	56	52
Avoid streets/areas of the city	33	37	31	34	28
Change route to school/work	26	31	25	24	22
Avoid talking to neighbors	16	17	16	16	16
Children cannot play outside the house	14	8	17	17	13
Does not use certain bus lines	13	18	13	13	7
Bought a gun	6	8	6	6	5

b) at home:

Padlocked gates	56	52	51	61	61
Bars on windows	34	28	26	36	47
Trained dogs	21	23	20	20	19
Contracted guard for the block	19	19	16	18	22
Built high external walls	17	13	15	19	20
Installed electronic control of the gate	13	14	8	14	15
Contracted surveillance system	8	9	7	9	8
Installed closed TV circuit	3	2	4	5	2
Hired private security	2	2	3	3	2

Jd. Angela etc.

N=341

a) in your behavior

	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
	%	%	%	%	%
Avoid going out at night	52	54	56	49	43
Avoid carrying money	42	39	43	47	37
Avoid streets/areas of the city	31	46	31	25	17
Change route to school/work	24	33	21	23	13
Avoid talking to neighbors	18	16	19	20	15
Children cannot play outside the house	16	11	17	20	19
Does not use certain bus lines	13	15	15	12	8
Bought a gun	5	9	6	1	6

b) at home:

Padlocked gates	52	51	46	59	51
Bars on windows	28	32	22	29	32
Trained dogs	21	23	22	21	18
Built high external walls	20	18	22	21	21
Installed electronic control of the gate	9	10	12	8	6
Contracted surveillance system	9	10	6	11	9
Bought a gun	4	6	5	4	2
Hired private security	1	1	1	1	0
Installed closed TV circuit	1	1	3	0	0

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001.*

Exposure to Violence and Beliefs about Violence and its Legitimacy

Legitimate uses of violence

When there is significant violence in a community, there are strong incentives for self-defense mechanisms. This is particularly the case if violence is considered to be a legitimate tool to solve conflicts and if the state cannot ensure people's safety. In such a scenario, reputations may be used as a shield from threats and violence may be used to support and maintain a reputation or social status. Petty confrontations, conflicts and disputes, if perceived as threatening reputations, may become a matter of life and death. When personal safety relies on their personal

image or social reputation, there is much sensitivity to any threats viewed as challenges to one's reputation. Responding to these threats may result in a cycle of retributions: retaliations and vengeance.

In the two surveys, values and norms concerning violence were explored (see chart below) through situations presented to the respondents. The situations involved values about self-defense, honor, jealousy, response to insults, disputes over partners, etc.

1999

Table 9- Legitimate Uses of Violence

People have different opinions about the use of force. Do you agree/disagree:

Number of Respondents: 500

	Fully *				
	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 and over
Percentage agreeing					
A person has the right to kill in self-defense	42	47	38	42	40
A person has the right to kill to protect his/her family	42	46	40	41	42
A person has the right to kill to protect his/her property	21	26	18	18	24
Neighbours have the right to expel people who cause trouble	21	20	20	23	19
A man who is unfaithful to his wife deserves to be hit	14	20	15	12	10
A woman who was unfaithful to her husband deserves to be hit	13	19	12	12	11
A man has the right to hit another man who tried to seduce his wife	11	17	9	7	11
A woman has the right to hit another woman who tried to seduce her husband	11	18	8	7	10
Having a gun in the house makes the house safer	10	23	6	6	8
Often it is necessary to use violence to prevent violence	6	9	6	6	3
Carrying a gun makes a person safer	6	14	4	3	2

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 1999*

* Respondents were presented a five point attitudinal scale, ranging from fully agree to fully disagree with the neutral point in the middle. For the purpose of this analysis agreement whether partial or full was added up.

In the 1999 survey most respondents agreed that violence could be used for self-defense and that a person is entitled to kill in order to defend him/herself or his/her family, but only a third approve of killing to defend property. Still this approval is less strong than that among respondents surveyed in the United States (Cohen & Nisbett, 1994). Studies carried out to identify the roots of the differences in violence between Southern states and other states within the United States have pointed to a stronger acceptance of the use of violence in self-defense in Southern states- where to kill to protect one's family is fully approved by 80% of respondents and by 67% of respondents from non-South states.

The results in the São Paulo survey point to less acceptance of violence even if used for self-defense than that of surveys in the U.S. irrespective of the whether the data refer to Southern or other states outside of the South (Cohen & Nisbett, 1994). The use of violence to solve disputes between males over a woman or between females over a man are rejected by the majority, as are the

possession of guns for safety. Still this rejection is least strong among the younger group, especially in reference to the possession of guns. A fourth of the young respondents believe that having a gun in the house increases the safety of the home and the belief that carrying a gun increases a person's safety is also more prevalent amongst youth than older respondents. Also, more younger respondents accept that violence can be used, than adults, in response to what is perceived as betrayal by a partner, either by physically punishing the partner or the third party involved. Such beliefs could make them more vulnerable to involvement in conflicts that result in violence.

The concept that violence for self-defence is legitimate was reaffirmed by the respondents' answers to other questions about whether resorting to violence was just or unjust. These responses reiterate the acceptance of violence used for self-defence and, for some age groups, to defend their property. It seems that certain forms of violence, rooted in a need to "keep face" are thus considered by some people (more than a third of the respondents) to be legitimate. More important, young people seem to believe more in this legitimacy than their elders. This, alongside with their greater tendency to believe in the efficacy of possessing guns and their greater exposure to risky situations, could be a key element in their greater vulnerability.

A study (Fagan, 1998) about the context of homicides of young people in New York has shown that despite being motivated by different reasons, the need to maintain status and reputation was the motive behind many homicides. Homicide is associated with incidents perceived to be insults (or disrespectful to or threatening) to the perpetrator's masculinity (such as competition for girls), or preventive violence ("getting him before he gets me"), or competition for power or influence in the territory, or retribution for humiliation or for previous violence. The reaction of the community, in particular of bystanders, is key to the outcome of incidents that lead to such conflicts. Bystanders can discourage or encourage a fatal outcome. What Fagan observed is that in communities where there is much violence, there is also the tendency for bystanders to encourage disputes. When drugs and alcohol are present, language becomes more provocative, anger is exaggerated and there is greater sensitivity to the group's encouragement.

In Brazil, we must keep in mind that police behavior is one key element to encouraging violence. Often the police are so violent in their search operations and/or are so involved with criminal activities that they provide an extremely negative role model for the communities. This behavior reinforces a lack of trust in the police and ensures that the police will have little or no credibility to help them solve conflicts peacefully. Added to this, is their lack of efficiency in solving cases; the result is that people do not trust the police forces. People that feel threatened or who have been victims of violent crimes are encouraged to solve the problems by their own means.

2001

Table 9a- Legitimate Uses of Violence

Percentage Fully agree	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais %
N=700	%	%	%	%	%
A person has the right to kill to protect his/her family	37	32	33	49	31
A person has the right to kill in self-defense	37	30	34	47	37
Neighbours have the right to expel people who cause trouble	27	29	30	26	25
A person has the right to hit another who is trying to seduce his/her partner	14	20	15	10	12
If a person is unfaithful to her/his partner-deserves to be hit	13	16	13	11	13
A person has the right to kill to protect his/her property	11	10	12	14	8
Having a gun in the house makes the house safer	7	11	11	4	5
Carrying a gun makes a person safer	4	6	6	1	4

Jd. Angela etc.

Table 9b- Legitimate Uses of Violence

Percentage Fully agree	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais %	
N=341	%	%	%	%	%	
A person has the right to kill to protect his/her family		35	34	34	33	43
A person has the right to kill in self-defense		34	32	35	31	40
Neighbours have the right to expel people who cause trouble		27	33	25	18	36
A person has the right to kill to protect his/her property		14	13	14	15	16
If a person is unfaithful to her/his partner-deserves to be hit		13	17	11	11	11
A person has the right to hit another who is trying to seduce his/her partner		9	13	10	6	6
Having a gun in the house makes the house safer		7	14	6	2	2
Carrying a gun makes a person safer		4	8	2	3	4

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001.*

The 2001 survey shows a decline in the approval to the use of violence in all the conditions considered, except the right that neighbors have to expel people who cause trouble. This is a positive change, moreover when one considers that reported exposure to violence grew in the period. Also very promising is the fact that youth, despite the fact that they still tend to be more approving of the use of violence to solve competitions in love relations, are no longer as approving or believing in that having a gun or carrying one provides protection.

The Causes of Violence

The consumption of drugs and alcohol was perceived, in the 1999 survey, as major causes of violence. Among the respondents, this belief is widespread; it is disseminated by the media and the police. It is interesting to note that there is more of a consensus among the younger groups on the causes of violence than among the older group. Young people surveyed in São Paulo see violence as related to the need to maintain ones reputation or status within their group. The greater consensus among young people as to the causes of violence may derive from their closer experience with these events. While the context where violence takes place can vary, as can the degree of deprivation and need, the causes of violence are quite universal and have to do with values and with what is learned and with how people are socialized.

1999

Table 10- Causes of Violence

“People have different ideas about why people commit violence. Do you agree/disagree that people commit violence because:”

Number of Respondents:500

percentage Fully agree
fully agree

	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 and over
They use drugs	79	76	82	76	83
They sell drugs	79	75	83	74	84
Get drunk and provoke others	72	71	76	70	72
Have to maintain their reputation	41	46	48	44	24
Have to maintain a reputation of toughness	41	38	38	31	19
Bystanders encourage violence	40	38	49	39	33
Take pleasure in inflicting pain	39	47	42	42	23
Are racially prejudiced	39	47	42	42	23
Want to feel important	38	39	36	34	29
Are provoked by others	37	44	37	36	29
Feel jealous of their partner	36	43	39	35	27
Want to protect their family	36	39	37	37	29
Want to impress their friends	35	39	36	34	29
Want to protect themselves	33	38	39	33	22
They are afraid of being hurt	32	35	37	34	19

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 1999.*

- Respondents were presented with a five point attitudinal scale, ranging from fully agree to fully disagree with the neutral point in the middle. For the purpose of this analysis agreement, whether partial or full, was added up.

In the 2001 survey the consensus about the role that drugs and alcohol use have as causes of violence was reduced, in particular amongst youth living in the less dangerous areas of the city while the opposite happened in the most violent ones. The use and trade of drugs as well as consumption of alcohol are still appointed as the major causes of violence.

Table 10a- Causes of Violence 2001

	N=700	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
Percentage fully agree		%	%	%	%	%
They use drugs		71	66	74	70	72
They sell drugs		70	65	74	68	75
They are evil		68	63	73	69	66
Get drunk and provoke others		64	60	71	63	61
Are not religious		56	49	55	61	57
Are provoked by others		41	51	44	37	33
Lost hope of improving their lot		41	47	45	40	31
Are racially prejudiced		38	49	34	35	35
Feel jealous of their partner		37	40	41	34	35
They are afraid of being hurt		37	34	41	40	31
Fail to feed their families		36	36	36	35	35
Have to maintain a reputation of toughness		31	36	36	26	25

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001.*

In the most violent areas of the city there is more concern for the economic roots of violence: hopelessness and failure to support one's family are more appointed as causes of violence as well as racial prejudice than in the other areas of the city.

Jd. Angela etc.

2001
N=341

	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
	%	%	%	%	%
They sell drugs	73	74	79	69	66
They use drugs	70	74	74	66	62
Are evil	69	73	70	64	66
Are not religious	61	58	66	58	63
Get drunk and provoke others	60	67	69	51	46
Are provoked by others	46	52	44	51	32
Lost hope of improving their lot	44	49	50	40	29
Fail to feed their families	41	45	44	41	27
Feel jealous of their partner	40	44	40	40	30
Are racially prejudiced	40	46	44	37	29
They are afraid of being hurt	40	48	37	38	36
Have to maintain a reputation of toughness	31	31	38	26	27

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001.*

Greater exposure to violence and also holding beliefs that are more conducive to violent responses, would seem enough to place youngster at high-risk of being victims and victimizers. However, given their vulnerability, the question is why most youngsters survive this difficult stage of life without being seriously harmed or imprisoned. Adolescence and early adulthood are periods of greater vulnerability, not only to violence, but also to substance abuse, emotional problems, risky sexual behavior, and suicide.

Resnick et al. (1997) in a survey with 12,118 U.S. adolescents reported that the protection against such risks comes from the family and from parents in particular. Parental expectations in terms of educational achievement are critical. The literature on resilience has often given emphasis to parental supervision especially in terms of the peer group (Emler and Reicher, 1995), but what this last survey underlines is that more than supervision, the quality of the relationship between parents and their children is a key element of protection against risks. A good rapport, intimacy, affection, and the capacity to have fun together were found to be elements that granted protection and motivated children to do well in school. Family violence enhances vulnerability to violence. Whereas family violence affects school performance, increases failure, and weakens the children's ties to school, socializes children into accepting violence as normal, and increases the chances of delinquency (Jenkins, 1995)

In the 2001 survey we decided to measure how serious certain social problems are perceived, by respondents, to be in their neighborhoods. It does not surprise that unemployment is perceived as a very serious problem as well as drug use and alcohol addiction. It is expected that if the three conditions are present that family violence will also play a key role. The data show that respondents are oblivious to the importance that family violence plays in fostering violence outside the family and in supporting both drug and alcohol addiction as well as teenage depression and pregnancy. This obliviousness suggests the existence of some sort of form of psychological denial of this problem, moreover when the recognition of this problem is smallest amongst youth living in violent areas: only 18% appointed family violence as serious problem.

2001

Table 11-For each condition I would like to know how serious a problem that condition is in your district

N: 700	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
	%	%	%	%	%
Very serious					
Unemployment	60	62	63	63	53
Drug use	53	56	58	56	42
Boredom	43	43	49	44	36
Alcoholism	41	45	46	42	30
Vandalism	34	37	40	31	26
Teenage pregnancy	32	33	37	36	21
Gang wars	30	37	34	27	20
Depression	29	30	33	28	25
Family violence	28	32	31	27	20

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001.*

Jd. Angela etc.

Table 11a-For each condition I would like to know how serious a problem that condition is in your district

For each condition I would like to know how serious a problem that condition is in your district

N=341

	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
	%	%	%	%	%
Very serious					
Unemployment	68	67	68	68	70
Drug use	57	56	60	56	56
Boredom	50	43	53	48	59
Alcoholism	49	44	53	50	47
Teenage pregnancy	45	42	54	41	37
Vandalism	36	37	37	32	37
Gang wars	35	36	36	32	34
Family violence	30	28	32	31	29
Depression	25	18	29	27	25

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001.*

The school, along with the family, is another critical actor in safeguarding youth. Good ties to their schools protect youth from risks, whereas school failure represents an element of risk (Resnick et al., 1997). School failure increases frustration and lowers self-esteem and this encourages aggression (Werthamer, 1991; Le Blanc et al., 1992). The role that schools can play in fostering violence is again ignored or underestimated by most respondents. When asked both in 1999 and in 2001 what causes school violence the answers we get are place the responsibility mostly on outsiders-drug dealers or in drug/ alcohol addiction, youth gangs and or youth bringing guns to school. All are issues that are well beyond the control of the school while the role that issues crucial to school performance, such as the interactions between teachers and students, class overcrowding, academic performance, family involvement in school etc. play in fostering school violence are downplayed.

1999

Table 12- Violence in schools can have multiple causes

Percentage fully agreeing

	IDAD E				
	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
	conc.t otal	Conc. total	conc.t otal	conc.t otal	conc.total
	%	%	%	%	%
students consume drugs	78	73	81	75	82
presence of drug dealers near schools	77	69	84	78	77
students belong to gangs	72	68	76	71	73
students bring guns to school	71	63	78	70	73
students consume alcohol	67	62	70	68	67
students have problems with teachers	31	36	35	27	25
there is racial prejudice	31	44	31	24	27
there is much inequality among students	28	29	32	26	27
there are too many students in each class	28	30	28	28	27
families do not care for school	28	26	30	27	27
students are not motivated to study	22	25	26	16	21
students do badly in school	14	18	17	11	12

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 1999.*

The misconceptions about the role that different aspects of the experience students have in schools play in school violence survive in the 2001 survey. Violence is generated by outside events but there are signs that other issues are beginning to be included as well: in particular the role of teacher-students interaction, racial prejudice and the skills of teachers and headmasters in implementing discipline.

2001

Table 12a- Violence in schools can have multiple causes

	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
	%	%	%	%	%
students consume drugs	67	66	69	70	64
Presence of drug dealers near schools	66	57	69	67	70

students bring guns to school	63	57	68	64	63
students belong to gangs	61	60	63	61	60
students consume alcohol	59	59	59	60	59
students have problems with teachers	48	54	53	44	42
teachers and headmasters fail to deal with indiscipline	44	46	43	43	43
there is racial prejudice	41	45	44	38	35
there are too many students in each class	41	43	46	40	36
there are few teachers	41	41	47	36	42
families do not care for school	40	35	45	40	39
students do badly in school	24	27	29	20	21

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001.*

In Jardim Angela and neighboring districts, that are plagued by epidemic levels of homicide, there seems to be greater awareness about the role that the quality of school experience plays in fostering violence. There is more awareness among youth about the effects that the quality of teacher students relations, racial prejudice, classroom overcrowding, teachers deficit etc. have on violence.

2001

**Table 12b- Violence in schools can have multiple causes
Jd. Angela**

School violence can have many causes	TOTA L	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
N=341	%	%	%	%	%
Presence of drug dealers near schools	73	76	81	66	64
Students consume drugs	72	71	77	67	70
Students bring guns to school	70	68	77	64	68
Students belong to gangs	64	68	72	56	58
Students consume alcohol	64	66	72	60	54
there is racial prejudice	49	59	52	44	35
Students have problems with teachers	49	55	50	46	41
there are too many students in each class	48	50	55	42	43
Teachers and headmasters fail to deal with indiscipline	48	48	52	48	39
Families do not care for school	45	45	53	37	43
there are few teachers	45	46	50	39	45
Students do badly in school	28	33	33	23	20

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001.*

To reduce young people's vulnerability, it is necessary to improve school achievement. The family and the community need to be involved (Jessor, 1993; O'Donnell et al. 1995) and to do so they need to be informed about what the role of the school is. Without this awareness there is no collective action to improve school.

In the poor areas of the Metropolitan region, the problems listed above are made more intense, by overlapping deprivations and the extreme visibility of peer

group life. Having nowhere to meet but the streets, their reputations are based on a mixture of fact and fantasy. Different dress, language codes and different behavior from that of adults may in the end be read as more than just different and be labeled dangerous or even criminal. The irony is that once labeled, the group will try to live up to its reputation thereby becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy. Trivial things like chatting with friends may be interpreted by fearful outsiders as threatening activity. In addition, once youngsters believe that violence is functional, they may respond with violence in order to maintain their reputation or territory.

The reduction of violence demands prevention and improvements in communities that are more at risk. One strategy is making schools more effective in meeting the needs of the community. Teachers need to find teaching tools that allow them to present materials in a more accessible way. It is also necessary to recognize other needs youngsters and their families have such as adequate job training opportunities, and facilities for healthy group activities. Youngsters should have a place to go where they can be with their friends in a more protected environment, where they can practice sports, listen to or play music, and dance or chat. Psychological and economic support for families at risk, including treatment for drug addiction, is also needed.

Families despair when their children get involved with drugs and have little or no information about what to do and where to go for help. This lack of information fosters helplessness and hopelessness and in the end may cause families to give up on their children because their home life is perceived as unacceptable. It is also critical to provide hope for the future by introducing income generating programs to train youngsters for the job market.

Exposure to Violence and Social capital

Population stability

A key element for trust to develop is that people know each other. This mutual knowledge demands some stability in the population in a given area. It is known that when major shifts occur in the composition of the population of an area that violence also grows because traditional ties are broken and because suspiciousness, fed but lack of knowledge about who is who, is encouraged. How stable is the population in the different areas of the city? Are we dealing mostly with consolidated neighbourhoods where people have lived for generations and know each other well or a mixture of consolidated with recently formed (or in the process of being formed) neighbourhoods? Is the city broken up in strong communities with dense and profound social exchanges? What can we deduct to be the main patterns of neighbourhood interaction. Are they based on trust and marked by cohesion or the opposite, marked by mistrust and disunion? Are the nature of interpersonal relations assets for social capital/collective efficacy to develop or obstacles for such development?

Population stability and density

In the literature reviewed, population stability is generally measured by:

- The percentage of owner occupied homes,
- Ratio of population growth,
- ratio of adults to children: children under 4 years and adults over 65.

Population stability was measured, in the 2001 survey, by the proportion of owner occupied dwellings and by the time people have lived in the area. A high proportion of owner occupied dwellings is taken to indicate population stability as this would signal to people having higher stakes in investing in the improvement of their surroundings and willingness to take collective action in order to ensure the maintenance or the betterment of the place.

Most of the houses are owner occupied and most of the respondents have been in the area for more than five years also suggesting stability in the neighborhood.

Table 13- House ownership

	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais	ZonaCe ntro Oeste	Norte	Leste	Sul
N=700	%	%	%	%	%				
Owner occupied	73	69	63	79	79	55	72	75	77
Rented	25	29	34	18	20	41	25	23	20
Live at the workplace	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1
Borrowed	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	1
Others	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
No response	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0

Jd. Angela etc.

Table 13b- House ownership

N=341

	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais	Capão Redondo	Jardim Ângela	Jardim São Luis	
	%	%	%	%	%	%			
Owner occupied		80	82	72	78	94	84	75	81
Rented		17	15	26	14	6	14	20	16
Live at the workplace		3	2	2	5	0	2	3	4
Borrowed		1	1	0	1	0	0	2	0
Others		0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001.*

Still secondary data for São Paulo suggests that there are multiple patterns of population distribution and stability in the city. While some areas seem to be very consolidated from the view point of population growth, others appear to be still in the process of building: both physically and in terms of community structure. Ratios of young people to elderly people vary a great deal. Inner areas of the city

are losing population and present an over representation of older people. Younger people are concentrated in the most extreme areas, also the ones with strongest signs of crowding. High population density coupled with some indicators of high population instability could signal to less social capital as there may be more reason for people to avoid each other than to get together, despite the high levels of owner occupied dwellings. This is but a tentative analysis but it does reiterate the need to use multiple indicators to assess density instead of relying on a single one. (Map 2- population by age and density)

Table 14- How long have you been living in this area?

	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais	ZonaCe ntro Oeste	Norte	Leste	Sul
Years	%	%	%	%	%				
Up to 5	29	36	39	25	14	33	28	28	28
More than 15 to 25	27	44	18	23	25	22	28	30	26
More than 25	23	0	16	27	51	22	33	21	20
More than 5 to 15	21	20	27	26	10	22	11	21	27

Jd Angela etc.
N=341

	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais	Capão Redondo	Jardim Ângela	Jardim São Luis
	%	%	%	%	%	%		
More than 5 to 15		31	28	31	40	23	31	33
More than 15 to 25		27	38	14	27	31	32	23
Up to 5		26	35	42	13	4	25	25
More than 25		16	0	13	20	42	12	19

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001.*

The data about stability suggests that people have been living in the areas long enough to have established some ties to the area. Whether they feel part of a community or not is something else. Feeling part of a community would be a necessary condition for social capital to be exercised as social power. People have to feel that they stand to lose something valuable if they do not act as a group to protect their community in order for the potential of social capital to become reality. If they feel they are “in transit” they will have little motivation to do so. When asked how they feel about their neighborhood there is a split, just over half of the respondents feel it is “just a place to live” and the other half that they “belong to a community”. It is a positive sign that even in very violent neighborhoods about half of the inhabitants express feeling part of a community suggesting there is potential for much collective action that is not activated.

How people perceive their contacts with their neighbours and the potential for social capital:

Table 15- How do you feel about your neighborhood?

	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais	ZonaC entro	Norte	Leste	Sul
--	-------	-------	-------	-------	-----------	-------------	-------	-------	-----

N= 700

	%	%	%	%	%	Oeste				
It is just a place to live		53	57	58	45	50	44	45	60	53
I feel I belong to a community		45	41	40	52	48	52	54	38	44
No response		2	1	2	3	2	4	1	1	3

Jd. Angela etc.

N=341

	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais	Capão Redondo	Jardim Angela	Jardim São Luis	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
It is just a place to live		57	61	56	57	53	48	59	64
I feel I belong to a community		41	35	43	43	45	50	39	35
No response		2	4	1	0	2	2	3	1

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001.*

Perception of their neighborhood

Besides rating their feelings about belonging or not to a community respondents were asked about how they rate their neighborhoods in terms of satisfaction. Again we were surprised by the results that indicate little overt dissatisfaction, in particular because when asked to rate different aspects of their neighborhood from the infrastructure to commerce, leisure and other basic aspects most of the persons interviewed expressed much dissatisfaction.

Table 16- How do you rate your neighborhood? Are you:

N: 700	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
	%	%	%	%	%
Satisfied	61	62	63	58	61
Dissatisfied	20	24	22	18	16
Very satisfied	14	10	8	18	19
Very dissatisfied	4	4	6	5	2
No response	1	1	2	1	2

Jd. Angela etc.

N=341

	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
	%	%	%	%	%
Satisfied	63	68	60	69	69
Dissatisfied	22	2	23	24	18
Very satisfied	7	5	6	8	10
Very dissatisfied	7	6	9	7	4
No response	1	1	2	1	0

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001.*

Social network

The extension of the social networks was measured by the level of mutual knowledge: how much parents know of the friends of their children and their respective parents. Again it is thought that parents that have closer contact with friends of their children will have better contact with their own children as well as be more involved with the welfare not only of their own offsprings but with also with the welfare of other people's children.

The 2001 survey shows that there is much knowledge about who are the friends of their children and also who are their parents in all neighborhoods including in the most violent ones both as reported by young people- who were reporting about their own parents and by older people who have children of their own. In this context it is also expected that people will be have more encouragement to be actively involved in the welfare of their neighbors' children.

2001

Table 17- Extension of social networks

N=700	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
Percentage fully agreeing	%	%	%	%	%
Parents of children in the neigh. know each other	58	59	63	55	56
Adults are concerned about child.safety including other people's child.	68	71	68	67	65
Adults know children from the neighb.	62	62	65	62	58
Your parents know your friends' parents/or you know parents of your child.'s friends.	52	58	56	51	44

Jd. Angela etc N=341	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais	
Percentage fully agreeing	%	%	%	%	%	
Adults are concerned about child.safety including other		76	80	74	76	72
Parents of children in the neigh. know each other		67	73	69	65	55
Adults know children from the neighb.		67	74	66	68	56
Your parents know your friends' parents/or you know		61	64	66	60	45

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001.*

Trust

This mutual knowledge does not translate directly in people being intensively cooperative with their neighbors or that they often help each other, or yet get closely involved in the running of their lives. When asked how much some mutual help exists between them and their neighbors, it is clear that there is some mutual help of more non-committal type and less help that could be interpreted as being of more private nature, or that entail great personal responsibility, and or yet hold potential for conflict. This would be the case of looking after children, considered to be the gesture least asked from neighbors or asking someone for help with shopping. The good news is that areas that are violent ones do not seem to differ from the rest of the city and that youth living in these areas, the group most

exposed to violence is also the most optimistic one about the nature of mutual help.

Table 18- How often do you ask your neighbors:

N=700		TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais	
Always		%	%	%	%	%	
To look after your house when you travel		30	27	30	33	30	
To lend you tools		24	27	21	27	22	
To have come to a party, barbecue, lunch		24	26	24	25	20	
To get something for you when you can not go to the shops		19	19	15	20	22	
To look after your children		11	12	11	14	7	
N=341		TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais	
Always		%	%	%	%	%	
To look after your house when you travel			33	30	33	41	26
To lend you tools			31	35	32	33	17
To have come to a party, barbecue, lunch			30	37	30	34	11
To get something for you when you can not go to the shops			26	29	27	27	16
To look after your children			18	20	22	16	10

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001.*

What is their perception of their neighborhood at large in terms of the quality of the interaction between people who are not so close or who may even be anonymous to them? To examine this we asked respondents to go over a list of situations and to assess in how far they represent conditions of disrespect for other people's welfare. All conditions were almost unanimously rated as indicating disrespect (minimum 95% of the respondents indicated the conditions as such). When asked to assess how often the situations occurred in their own neighborhood we observe that between 1/3 and half of respondents perceive that such conditions happen often and the younger group seems to be more perceptive of these events-probably because they are more mobile, use public spaces more and thus have more opportunities to witness this kind of situation in a similar fashion as they witness also more violence. This picture of scenes of disregard for the public good, or signs of disrespect for the rights of others and/or of incivility is bleaker in the most violent areas. So we have two conditions: at the individual level people know each other are generally settled in their neighborhoods, express some trust in their neighbors but on the other hand frequently experience very stressful events in public spaces.

Table 19- Do any of the following ever happen in your neighborhood?

	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
Happen frequently:	%	%	%	%	%
People throwing refuse in rivers or streams	57	65	64	55	43
Bus drivers not waiting for elderly/handicapped/infirm	54	65	57	50	47

person to board/exit buses					
Adults consuming alcohol/illegal drugs in front of children	47	57	52	44	33
Couples arguing/fighting/cursing in front of children	45	54	51	42	32
People partying with loud music until late at night	45	59	48	41	29
Private security mistreating people because of their race	43	59	50	35	27
People being mistreated by police officers for being poor .	42	59	51	33	24
A man or a woman trying to seduce someone else's companion.	42	62	50	33	22
Couples fighting in front of their children	35	45	45	30	22
Migrants being mistreated by public servants for being from other states.	31	39	33	28	24

N=341

Happen frequently:

	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
<u>Jd. Angela</u>	%	%	%	%	%
<u>etc.</u>					
People throwing refuse in rivers or streams	72	80	76	64	63
People partying with loud music until late at night	61	74	59	58	48
Bus drivers not waiting for elderly/handicapped/infirm person to board/exit buses	59	67	55	59	55
Adults consuming alcohol/illegal drugs in front of children	58	62	66	56	36
Couples arguing/fighting/cursing in front of children	55	59	59	55	40
People being mistreated by police officers for being poor	52	68	52	47	33
A man or a woman trying to seduce someone else's companion	52	68	55	44	31
Private security mistreating people because of their race	50	64	47	52	23
Couples fighting in front of their children	45	53	44	44	31
Migrants being mistreated by public servants for being from other states.	39	40	36	47	31

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001.*

Perception of involvement with collective issues

The ambiguity suggested above is confirmed when we examine the respondents' answers to the question about the frequency with which they and their neighbors meet to discuss collective issues- the results show that this is not a frequent experience despite the fact that most of the issues raised are very important ones and were considered to be unsatisfactory: there is agreement that there is little security, that housing is a problem, that there are problems with schools and with the provision of health but these issues are still dealt with at the individual level despite the acuteness of the problem they may represent. It is very interesting that despite this apparent apathy the young people living in violent areas and known to have access to very poor public schools, represent the group that has the most positive view of local mobilization of resources to discuss educational issues.

Table 20- How often do you and your neighbors meet to discuss :

N=700	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
	%	%	%	%	%
Always					
Violence	6	5	6	8	4
Housing	6	6	5	6	5
Education	6	7	5	7	5
Health	5	5	5	8	4
Leisure	5	4	5	7	3
Maintenance of public areas	5	3	5	7	5
	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
Always	%	%	%	%	%
Violence	6	5	2	8	10
Housing	7	7	2	7	12
Education	7	11	2	8	8
Health	6	7	4	8	6
Leisure	6	9	2	5	8
Maintenance of public areas	7	6	6	6	8

Source: Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001.

Perception of availability for collective action

The young people living in Jd. Angela and vicinity are not wrong about one aspect: education seems to be the theme that more strongly mobilizes people into action. If their neighborhoods are perceived to be inactive this does not seem to be a permanent condition- if an extreme situation arises local groups are generally expected to act, in particular if the question involves school closure. This is true for all areas of the city.

Table 21- How sure are you that your neighbors would act together if:

	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
	%	%	%	%	%
Definitely they would					
A neighborhood school was threatened to close	51	56	52	50	47
A neighborhood hospital was threatened to close	49	54	50	49	43
A neighborhood creche was threatened to close	49	51	50	50	45
Definitely they would	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
N=341	%	%	%	%	%
A neighborhood school was threatened to close	60	64	52	68	55
A neighborhood creche was threatened to close	58	60	53	63	55
A neighborhood hospital was threatened to close	56	57	50	61	53

Source: Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001.

Willingness to intervene

This readiness to act in extreme situations should not be interpreted as readiness to act in any emergency situation. When questioned about what they expect that their neighbors would do in emergencies it is clear that they expect that action will be taken to protect the infirm, the elderly and children from abuse, they are less optimistic about action being taken to prevent violence within homes involving adults, or actions that involve the police even if they interpret it as abusive. This suggests that strong boundaries between public and private survive as well as a high degree of reticence to interfere with the action of law officials. Remarkable though is how optimistic the younger group seems to be when compared to their elders. As they are often more victimized, one would expect to find them more jaded but their survival mechanisms seem to rest on a much more positive view of others and of the future than one could expect.

Table 22- What do you expect that your neighbors would do if:

Percentage saying "neighbors would definitely intervene"

N:700

	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
	%	%	%	%	%
If an elderly person is threatened/intimidated by thugs on the streets /	45	51	46	43	41
If a child is being severely punished by parents	44	49	46	39	45
If a person is being robbed in front of their house	22	26	18	22	20
If a newly arrived person is threatened by a local gang	19	26	17	17	16
If police officers verbally abuse and hit youngsters	17	19	18	15	16
If in a family dispute a women is by her husband.	14	18	17	9	14

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001.*

Jd Angela

N=341

	TOTAL	16-24	25-34	35-49	50 e mais
	%	%	%	%	%
If a child is being severely punished by parents	43	47	42	46	35
If an elderly person is threatened/intimidated by thugs on the streets /	40	49	35	44	28
If a person is being robbed in front of their house	20	26	21	19	11
If a newly arrived person is threatened by a local gang	18	23	17	15	15
If in a family dispute a women is by her husband	15	17	17	14	8
If police officers verbally abuse and hit youngsters	15	25	17	9	6

Source: *Núcleo de Estudos da Violência (Center for the Study of Violence)- Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), 2001.*

Concluding remarks

The points made above are tentative as we are beginning a comparative analysis of the data using statistical methods, still some of the results have surprised us. There is no evidence that high exposure to violence is resulting in greater acceptance of violence by the population regardless of how closely they experience it. It is not leading to a destruction of collective life, despite the fact that it does affect people's use of the city, that it does seem to reduce people's quality of life, reducing their freedom to come and go and placing added burden to their finances by forcing them to invest more and more in safety gadgets and schemes. Exposure to violence seems not to be erasing social capital from collective life, there are indications that greater barriers to the expression of social capital into action may be found in surviving forms of socially rooted authoritarianism: in forms of acquiescence, in reticence, expressed as fear of challenging powerful groups and in doubts about the fairness of the justice system.

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