Words Matter: A conversation on changing the narrative to prevent violence impacting youth

Learning Objectives
The importance of reframing messages about violence and youth to change the narrative to positively impact communities.
How to apply CDC’s Essentials for Childhood positive messaging frame to prevent violence that impacts youth.
How STRYVE Action Council members are leveraging prevention efforts and multi-sector partnerships to build safe, stable, nurturing, and healthy communities that provide opportunities for all children, teens, and young adults to thrive.

Statement of Purpose
In a world dominated by distorted headlines that conflate race and violence, youth are often portrayed as perpetrators rather than as victims. This contributes to fear and a sense of helplessness; that violence is inevitable rather than preventable. Engaging multi-sector partnerships to counter the popular narrative and implement cross-cutting, comprehensive approaches can lead to healthier communities free from violence. The STRYVE Action Council is a consortium of organizations working nationally to advance prevention efforts that build safe, stable, nurturing, and healthy communities. Council members, will participate in a panel discussion on the media’s portrayal of youth violence, and how working upstream can have lasting positive health impacts. Panelists will discuss opportunities to leverage efforts between public health, health systems, law enforcement and others to change the narrative and prevent violence.

Methods
The STRYVE Action Council is made up of 17 national organizations committed to amplifying the public health approach and inspiring action to prevent violence impacting youth. Through the collective strength of members, the Council provides guidance and insight to researchers and practitioners on effective strategies to prevent youth violence. A panel of Council members and CDC experts will share their perspective on critical, systemic issues contributing to the media’s portrayal of youth violence and how a public health approach can prevent it.

Results
Panelists will engage participants in a discussion on systemic issues and structural determinants of health that influence the media’s reporting and narrative on youth. Strategies from the CDC’s Youth Violence Prevention Technical Package and Essentials for Childhood work will provide a framework for the discussion. Panelists will share outcomes from local, state, and national initiatives that use a public health approach and positive messaging frame to combat the negative media portrayal of youth violence.

Conclusions
Multi-sector partnerships working to change the narrative on violence impacting youth and effective prevention strategies can build safe, stable, nurturing, and healthy communities that provide opportunities for all children, teens, and young adults to thrive. By creating space for open dialogue on
messaging related to violence and the systemic issues contributing to the narrative, the Council hopes to energize practitioners and engage new partners.

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A Human Rights Framework for Violence Prevention

Learning Objectives
1. To understand the limitations and strengths of criminal justice and public health approaches to violence prevention.
2. To understand how a human rights framework changes the narrative and approach to violence prevention.
3. To understand how a human rights approach can be used as a fundamental framework for violence prevention.

Statement of Purpose
Two fundamental approaches to the understanding and prevention of interpersonal violence dominate the literature: the criminal/juvenile justice approach and the public health approach. The former focuses on the dynamics of violence perpetration and the later focuses on victims/survivors of violence. In this presentation, we will articulate an approach based upon well-established and articulated human rights norms regarding human interaction and communication.

Methods
The human rights approach is derived from a range of modern human rights documents commencing with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The key elements of a human rights approach include non-discrimination, universality, and indivisibility and includes norms based on respect and dignity for all.

Results
A human rights approach shifts the narrative about violence. First: a human rights approach provides guiding principles and norms, as well as a positive vision, for understanding and contextualizing the rights of all persons. Second: it makes visible multiple forms of violence—reflected in behavior, educational climate, curricula, neighborhood norms, and discipline practices. Third: a human rights framework requires monitoring and assessments to ascertain whether human rights are appropriately accorded and protected. Fourth: it requires meaningful engagement, critical reflection, activism, and dialogue among all stakeholders. Fifth: a human rights framework dictates responsibilities for all individuals, groups, institutions, and governments to remedy human rights violations in whatever guise they appear: “human rights that do not become a part of the rhythms of community life have no meaning.” Sixth: a human rights framework requires the adoption of preventive, corrective, therapeutic programs and strategies to rectify violations of and to promote adherence to human rights norms.

Conclusions
Much progress has been made by criminal justice and public health professionals: epidemiological methodologies, the articulation of risk and protective factors, and evidence-based intervention programs. Nevertheless, these advances have been made without opportunities for the direct contribution of system-engaged youth, survivors of violence, and families. Moreover, institutional violence, interpersonal disrespect, and authority-driven practices are generally ignored. A human rights
approach can be incorporated into educational practices and programs, and it provides positive opportunities for change by those particularly affected by violence.

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