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## " Interpersonal Violence: Gender Difference in Event Characteristics"

A study proposal

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Interpersonal violence among youth is a national health problem. Boys outnumber girls in studies of interpersonal violence, although a large number of girls are participating in violent behavior. Therefore, little is known about factors that may be unique to girls. In addition, the specifics about the violent events, such as motivation and relationships, have not been explored. **Objective:** To determine differences in characteristics of interpersonal violence events involving boys versus events involving girls. **Methods:** A cross-sectional survey at an urban, tertiary care children's hospital emergency department (ED) will be administered to children ages 8 to 14 years who present to the ED after a violent event. A violent event is defined as an event between 2 or more people in which there was some intent to harm. The survey will assess particular event characteristics, including time and location of the event; age, gender, and relationships of all those involved; motivation for the event; weapon use; injuries sustained; and plans for retaliation. In addition, several well-established risk factors for violent behavior will be assessed, including a history of prior fighting behavior, school failure, and a history of weapon carrying. **Implications:** By determining how events involving boys differ from events involving girls, it is likely that more effective interventions can be designed targeted specifically at reducing interpersonal violence among girls. A better understanding of the causes and characteristics of youth interpersonal violence will allow physicians to obtain more relevant histories and to make more targeted and appropriate referrals