

## Thai Adolescents and Social Responsibility: Overcoming Violence in Schools and Creating Peace

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### Abstract

There is a need to understand the nature of adolescent violent behavior across cultures as well as to learn more about adolescent's social responsibility toward violence.

**Purpose:** To describe social responsibility of adolescents toward violence and explain the aspects of adolescent's social responsibility in Thailand.

**Design and Methods:** Focus group and qualitative individual interviews (N=18) were conducted with 18 participants, including 10 adolescent students, 4 teachers, and 4 parents, to assess their perceptions and behavior on social responsibility and violent behavior. Thematic analysis was conducted in three phases to code transcribed interview data and identify themes of social responsibility toward violence.

**Findings:** Violence has become recognized globally as a critical social problem that requires vital attention. The present study found that it is valuable that adolescent students could cultivate social responsibility toward violence. In this research, the social responsibility was categorized into 4 aspects: 1) Being influenced by others and feeling out of control; 2) Being frustrated with diffusion of responsibility for promoting non-violence; 3) Not accepting responsibility for escalating behavior; and 4) Seeing the larger picture and developing trust.

**Conclusions:** Adolescents' social responsibility should be promoted through collaborative social support between home and school. This was accepted among the participants as the way to reach the culturally-valued superior moral rank of social responsibility. The concerted collaboration to attain the highest value of social responsibility has the potential to solve issues of violence and latent violence as well as contribute towards a peaceful society.

**Key words:** adolescence, violence, social responsibility, school mental health promotion

### 1.Introduction

This paper describes a study that investigated aspects of Thai adolescents' social responsibility and their growing tendency to commit acts of violence in high schools. Nurses have been positioned in the forefront of efforts to help Thai adolescents at risk and their families yet they are constrained by the lack of accurate data from which effective and meaningful violence prevention strategies might be created. This study therefore aimed to provide such data by attempting to understand the influences brought to bear on high school adolescents, families, and teachers.

In Thailand, a country that embodies both ancient and new traditions, Buddhism is the predominant religion. Saffron-robed monks walk the streets daily while devout Thais kneel to receive their chanted blessings. Buddhist beliefs permeate the Kingdom of Thailand and are significant in preserving the sense of unity and wholeness of the land and its peoples. Thai culture is closely bound with Buddhist precepts of peace and harmony, sustaining families and communities, and perpetuating the highly-valued ethics of social responsibility. The profound national respect for His Majesty the King Bhumibol Adulyadej and for Buddhist beliefs are central to understanding the Thai ethics of social responsibility, which sustains and embodies what is understood as right and good. The Thai people acknowledge that straying from the embedded precepts of peace, harmony, wellbeing, and balance in life causes suffering.

Imbuing children with these values is also integral to Thai culture. Parents begin early to cultivate benevolence, peace, harmony, respect, and duty as a way of life to mature children through adolescence into socially responsible adults; children are taught to be peaceful and continuing contributors of peace to family and community. Recent outbreaks of violence, however, have revealed that among Thai adolescents, violent behavior has become a social and cultural problem<sup>3</sup> by which parents are alarmed. The contrast between a spiritual peace that is prized and the anger of alienated adolescents cause acute suffering among families and create a rift in the fabric of Thai society<sup>1</sup>.

## **2. Background and Significance of the Study**

In Thailand, although efforts have been made to discourage acts of violence in schools and communities, violence among Thai adolescents remains a worrisome problem in Thai society. The burden of education related to reduction of violence has fallen on high schools, where much of the violence occurs. Communities have begun requiring that high schools include in their curricula the cultivation of social responsibility and violence avoidance for all adolescents<sup>6,27</sup>. Social responsibility means applying local values and beliefs to enhance their relevance, acceptability and effectiveness within the community. However, strategies for increasing social responsibility and preventing violence need to be more effective than the policies presently exist in Health Promotion in Schools of Thailand<sup>8,9</sup>. A coherent approach to violence prevention must have at its core an examination of the community's perceptions and cultural dimensions<sup>5,6</sup> but formal research studies to identify these essential frameworks have been few<sup>28</sup>.

National statistics related to adolescent violence are daunting and reveal sharp increases<sup>32</sup>. Thai high school adolescents are at high risk for violence evidenced by the increasing numbers of adolescents who committed crimes in Thailand; the increase jumped from 12,423 in 2004 to 17,629 cases in 2005<sup>8,25</sup>. In 2005, the Thai Youth Risk Behavior Survey<sup>29</sup> found that 6.3% of adolescents had carried a weapon onto school property and 8.5 % had carried a weapon in other places. This survey found that 28.9 % of adolescents had been involved in a violent event that occurred on the school property and 31.5% of adolescents had been involved in violence occurring outside of the school.

Southern Thailand has been described as a "multicultural society", especially the southernmost provinces with concentrated Muslim population. Education in these provinces has long been a challenge because of the sharp contrast between the school culture, which represents the national culture, which is predominantly Buddhist, and the culture of local students from diverse cultural backgrounds. The challenge is increasing with the resurgence of violence<sup>1</sup>. The social unrest that is now endemic strains close family structures and consequently, extends the loss of harmony to the community<sup>3</sup>. In rural areas, where communities have existed peacefully with little exposure to Western and other global cultural influences, violence among adolescents' family members manifests as a deep affront to the Thai sensibility<sup>25</sup>. Within the cultures of insulated rural societies, adolescents' social responsibility is shaped by the perspectives of the local people and in turn, directly effects the wholeness and peace of the community. Thus, when adolescents become estranged, particularly due to non-Thai cultures are vectored into the community through sophisticated Internet, media, and other communication technologies<sup>4</sup> and participate in non-peaceful, non-socially responsible activities, both family and community come together to find ways to overcome the divide.

While professionals in nursing, mental health, education, social service agencies, and the juvenile court systems now recognize that early identification and involvement are necessary in the prevention of violence<sup>31</sup>, no research data related specifically to violent behavior in Thai high school settings or to strategies to increase especially social responsibility are currently available. Moreover, because data on the perspectives of the population are lacking, the experiences and views of students, teachers, and parents are largely unknown<sup>30</sup>. In addition, assumptions, stereotypes, and biases have dominated perceptions about adolescents' social responsibility and attitudes toward violence related to their behavior in the high school communities<sup>9,23</sup>.

## **3. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to describe and explain the aspects of Thai high school adolescents' social responsibility toward violence as related to their behavior and attitudes as a part of society among high school aged adolescents and relevant adult stakeholders, including teachers and parents.

A specific aim of the study was to understand adolescents' social responsibility and to gain information to help determine appropriate local and cultural responses to solve the problem of adolescent violence among high school students in Southern Thailand.

#### **4.Design and Methods**

Focus group was used as a method along with qualitative individual interviews serving as sources of data. Focus groups<sup>21,26</sup> are useful because they can collaborate key stakeholders within the community.

Qualitative individual interviews were designed to explore the experiences of the adolescents' social responsibility toward violence from the perspective of parents and teachers. The major aim of conducting a qualitative study is to develop an understanding that is grounded in the data. Qualitative research attempts to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.<sup>7</sup>

This qualitative study was conducted using focus groups and in-depth interviews to explore the perceptions, experiences, thoughts and feelings regarding social responsibilities and violence management. A teacher at the selected high school provided the researcher with access to the classroom. The researcher explained the study to the students and invited them to voluntarily participate. Those who agreed to participate were provided with information to share with their parents along with an informed consent form for the parents to sign. All participants were contacted directly. The researcher divided the participants into 3 groups to enable freedom of expression: group 1 was composed of 10 students; group 2 consisted of only teachers; and group 3 of 4 consisted of parents only.

The teacher collected the signed informed consent forms from the students then gave them to the researcher. The researcher contacted the consented parents and respective students to make arrangement for focus groups. Likewise, teachers were also contacted and invited to a focus group.

Focus groups were conducted with students and teachers. Parents participated in in-depth interviews. Students were divided into 2 groups, 8-10 persons in each. Each of the 2 student groups participated in a group interview twice, each time lasted approximately 60-90 minutes. The example of the questions were, "Have you ever experienced any violence?" "What did you do when facing with your friend committing violence in school?". For teachers, only one 45-minute focus group was conducted with 4 teachers per group. The example of the questions were "Have you experienced any violence in school?" "How did you help your students who have experienced violence?". After all focus groups were completed, the researcher visited each of the parents at home for a 60-minute in-depth interview. Examples of the questions asked of the parents were, "Have you ever discussed violence issues with your child?" and "How do you feel when your child acts aggressively toward others?". Each focus group and in-depth interview was taped and transcribed. Data from the focus groups were first analyzed separately from the one from the in-depth interviews, then the data from both encounters were combined. Thematic analyses were then conducted in three phases to code the transcribed interview data and to identify themes of violence or latent violence.

Focus groups were conducted in order to learn more about perceptions of adolescent violence in Thai high schools. The guideline of the focus group discussion was semi-structured, which provided topics and subject areas of inquiry. Moderators had the freedom to explore, clarify, and ask relevant follow-up questions in order to clarify participants' perspectives. Mixed-gender adolescent focus groups were conducted during class time.

#### **5. Ethical Considerations**

The research protocol was approved by the Institutional Review Boards (IRB) of Faculty of Nursing, Prince of Songkla University and the Songkhla High School Committee, prior to initiation of the fieldwork. All students in grades 7 were approached by a research assistant (RA), who is a counselor at the school. The RA provided written information –

regarding the purpose of the study, risks and benefits of being involved in the study, what the involvement entailed, voluntary participation and confidentiality issues, and the ability to withdraw from the study at anytime without penalty repercussions – to the students which they shared with their respective parents. Each of the students was asked to sign an assent form and to ask their parents to sign a consent form. Consented parents and students were asked to return the signed forms to the responsible teachers within one week after receipt of the forms.

#### **6.Participants**

Participants (N=18) included 10 adolescent students – 5 girls and 5 boys enrolled in grade 7 (13-year-olds) at the selected High School, 4 teachers, and 4 parents, . Adolescent students were recruited from a large high school

in the southern part of Thailand to talk about their perceptions of social responsibility and experiences with violence. All of the adolescents were willing to participate and they were randomly divided into groups. The adult participants (n=8) included four parents and four teachers. Parents, with an average age of 41.45 years, whose offsprings had had violent outbursts, were referred by the teachers. The teacher group consisted of two special education teachers and two school counselors.

## 7.Results

The results from the thematic analysis of the focus group and individual interviews provide insights into the perceptions of adolescents, parents, and teachers regarding social responsibility toward violence in their schools in the southern part of Thailand. Four themes emerged from the data.

### 7.1. *Being influenced by others and feeling out of control*

This theme included the identification of the nature of adolescent violence within many types of violence. Two primary patterns of violence, physical and psychological, were identified. Physical violence is the action taken to inflict fear, pain or injury on another person, object or property. Examples include: fighting, insubordination, harassment, and bullying. Psychological violence includes speech that causes oneself or another person suffering, shame, sadness, dissatisfaction or anger. Examples include spreading rumors, reputation-damaging gossips, insults and making false accusations.

Adolescents who had expressed violent behavior explained that they were not able to control their own emotions toward violent situations. In addition, because they were not enacting the cultural norm of social responsibility for preventing violence in their lives, they were thus unable to deal with difficult situations.

“Students who bully [feel the] need to show authority and desire to be socially accepted so sometimes they don’t know whether these things are right or wrong.” (teacher)

“When we experience uncontrolled and unstable emotions, we need to let it out through violence” (student)

“I knew someone had been talking about me behind my back and I just wanted to hit him, so I did” (student)

Peers have great influence on adolescent violent behavior. Adolescents usually behave violently within a group, which often holds a unified attitude toward violence. An adolescent may desire to be a hero within a violent peer group in order to gain self-esteem and social acceptance. Thus, whenever the adolescent uses violence in order to be accepted by the peer group, the use of violence was condoned and considered normal behavior.

“I feel really sad when I see some friends tease another friend who is weaker. This is one thing that leads to fights in our classroom and also leads to people getting angry easily within the class. It is hard to tell friends to calm down” (student).

“Whenever they use violence as a part of a group, it is regarded as normal. Other students feel that it is risky to be near them.” (student).

“Peer influence is important; it could encourage students to either go the right way or the violent way” (teacher).

### 7.2. *Being frustrated with diffusion of responsibility for promoting non-violence*

The responsibilities for non-use of violence towards another person, group or community were held as norms by school, parents, teachers, peers, and also the media.

Teachers felt the school had created ineffective restrictions and punishment for adolescents who were offenders. From their perspective, school rules had not been applied consistently and they had not seen improved attitudes toward violence and aggressive behavior. Furthermore, the school’s approach had not been able to capture the social responsibility with its sense of moral and spiritual needs of their adolescent students. The school environment also had limited facilities in which the problems could be dealt, such as areas for recreational activities, relaxation, meditation, or continuing scholarly activities.

“The school has rules to regulate adolescent behavior and gives too many warnings when a student does something bad, like hurting other students. We didn’t know the pressures that had influenced them when they

exhibited extreme outbursts, frequently hit objects [when angry at a peer]. The good students are also afraid. The school acts as if it has no power to take control of bullying. It should use the school rules consistently and continuously rather than resorting to warnings. Everybody needs to follow the rules.” (teacher)

Teachers also reported that parents had not assumed their roles adequately in taking responsibility for their children’s behavior. Some parents did not realize the risk for violence at school. Most parents lacked knowledge about prevention of violence. Moreover, if parents were very strict, teachers said their children were repressed. Some families had to work outside the home so they had little time for sharing or guiding their children on correct behavior, peaceful development, and avoidance of violence. Therefore, parents expected the school to deal with their children’s behavior. Teachers found that domestic violence, divorce or separation, death of parents, and poverty created pressures in the family and the school environment.

“Many parents' characteristics do not support the school’s responsibilities toward enforcing school rules and culturally appropriate behavior. For example, if parents spoil their children, the children would usually lack self-control. On the other hand, if parents are very strict, children feel repressed.” (teacher)

Teachers realized that their role could significantly contribute to positive interpersonal relationships with adolescent students to promote non-use of violence towards others.

In this role, they promote adolescents' social responsibility, namely, assisting adolescents to communicate their pressure and frustration in dealing with difficult situations before resorting to violent outbursts to let out the negative energy. Moreover, teachers are able to facilitate adolescent students in dealing peacefully with many kinds of problems and helping them avoid decisions, which may lead to the use of violence.

“Responsibility is an interpersonal relationship between teachers and students. The teachers give adolescents a chance to express their feelings or pressure about situations which might lead to the use of violence. If the interpersonal relationship isn’t good, the adolescent would feel unsatisfied or rejected and would go against the teacher's warnings” (parent)

“You shouldn’t use violence. But if you tell the teacher and she doesn’t do anything about it, you would have to fight back” (student).

“I could have told a teacher but that wouldn’t have been any use.” (student).

The media is one of the factors that influence adolescents' social responsibility toward violence. Adolescents spend a great amount of time either on the Internet or playing computer games, which usually are showing violent situations. Adolescents are heavily influenced by the media as they lack proper judgment.

“Adolescents' social responsibility is always stimulated by the media; they think that fighting or making others get in trouble might be good. This idea is generated by movies and television and is on all the time ” (parent).

“Young people perceive the media uncritically and they are influenced by actors from the multi-media. This makes them behave in the wrong way and lack of any responsibility toward society” (teacher).

“Students imitating the media programs, such as television and violent computer games that have no responsibility for society, make it difficult for teachers to advise adolescent students and to help them use critical thinking when those media show bad role models” (teacher).

### *7.3. Not accepting responsibility for escalating bad behavior*

The adolescent’s individual personality is a factor in their taking responsibility for their actions. When confronted with a difficult situation, the suppression of pressure and frustration for a long period of time is bound to result in a break out of violence.

“Adolescent students who have been assaulted sometimes have decreased self-confidence especially when they are holding back from being violent” (teacher).

“Even though some families are rich and have higher education, their children still have a problem with violence. This is the result of the parent's failure to take care of their kids. Some families cannot control their children’s behavior or they spoiled them” (teacher).

The school’s policy on violence should include restructuring the environment in order to support the feeling of safety and relaxation for faculty members and students. Sports clubs should be organized, recreational activities

appropriate for adolescents should be created during homeroom hours. These places should be able to provide for ongoing creative social responsibility activities.

“The boys who frighten other people, nobody stops them because they have no responsibility for their actions - for example they always lie and say they didn’t do it. Girls and boys bring weapons to school but we are afraid to tell the teachers or adult supervisors because they will tell those students we rattle them out. They don’t realize that those students will threaten us and get back at us. We have to be careful.” (student).

“Students often come to school bearing the trouble of psychologically upsetting situations that have happened at home. Thus, we should understand the root of the adolescent’s attitudes and behavior. The way to solve the problem shouldn’t operate in the short term and only in passing because students still think of vengeance despite the teacher’s warning.” (teacher).

#### *7.4. Seeing the larger picture and developing trust*

The positive approach by teachers, school counselors and parents were perceived to be valuable for cultivating adolescents’ social responsibility. This approach consists of two helping methods: the first method is the individual approach, that is, treating the adolescents with warmth, love, respect, understanding and providing support, guidance and helpful explanations for decision making. For students who need close attention, especially when they feel sad or have made a significant mistake or lapse in judgment, the teachers give them positive reinforcement to assist in passing through the crisis. The second approach is more general. It encourages classroom to participate in positive social engagement such as greeting each other, respectfully giving and receiving compliments, and asking for help. This particular approach also encourages students to participate in peaceful engagement among themselves. Adolescent students feel safe and recognize the positive effect of responsibility in their daily lives despite the violent events that surround them.

“Sometimes, the helpful method is not only focusing on the adolescent’s responsibility or on avoiding violence but rather on including other tasks such as helping an adolescent who asks for help so to establish trust between the adolescent students and their teachers.” (teacher)

Parents and teachers felt that communication between the school and parents was significant for the school system. They also felt effective coordination would significantly increase the understanding and the sense of awareness of children’s behavior as well as the family’s ability to take responsibility for their child’s problems. Furthermore, it was expressed that the school should encourage parents to try to enhance social responsibility regarding the use of nonviolence through teaching, consulting, giving warmth, and love to the students as well as searching for ways to help. Parents should follow up consistently on their adolescent’s social responsibility behavior and be aware of the people their child spends time with, especially their peer group.

“Parents have to have a sense of responsibility and distinguish between right and wrong, especially violence in the media as well as friends who can easily be a channel of intimidation for an adolescent.” (parent)

“The adolescents who always use rude and violent behavior begins at a very early age and continue all the way through upper high school. The answers, when we look back to the environment around them, are that these behavior are learned at home and in the community beyond schools.” (teacher)

Thus, active participation among teachers, parents, health care providers, and others will be the best way to address the problem of violence. This emphasizes the importance of a strong community partnership to make violence prevention a community affair.

## **8. Discussion**

Cultivating social responsibility as a positive deterrent to violence is essential. The early adolescent period covers between 12 to 18 years of age, particularly the years in high school. Physical, psychological, societal, cultural and environmental systems are multidimensional components that affect them<sup>18</sup>. Social-cognitive deficits have been linked to violent behavior in adolescence.<sup>17,23</sup>

School is an important social setting for cultivating adolescents’ social responsibility. Erickson’s psychosocial theory<sup>14,16</sup> of personality development stated that the developmental task of an adolescents is the move between identity and role confusion. The major challenge for an adolescent facing with the stress, accompanying the

psychological and social conflicts of this developmental period at school, is to cope appropriately and to formulate socially acceptable roles as they enter young adulthood. One obvious area of environmental impact on growing adolescent is the effect of the type of environment of the immediate area surrounding the school. Gangs, delinquency, and negative environmental attitudes will have strong effects on the development of the sense of responsibility in the adolescents. Adolescents are quick to absorb apathetic attitudes and can become violent<sup>20,24</sup>.

Thus, the period of the adolescents' growing sense of responsibility is a turning point toward the responsibility of adulthood and peaceful behavior. Understanding the essentiality of cultivating adolescents' social responsibility toward violence may be helpful in implementing a positive course of action. It may lead to more efficient allocation of time and energy to reconcile the patterns of early violence prevention that are recognized as social responsibility.

*Self-management in troubled situations: strategies for preventing violence through education.*

Responsibility toward violent situations is a complex issue since violence is caused by multiple factors<sup>2,6</sup>. Literature shows that contribution of individual traits, family context, school environment, community characteristics and culture explain how adolescent students may be either or both targets and aggressors. Strategies for support are classified into four dimensions: (a) the level of the social system the strategies attempt to change, (b) the extent to which the strategies focus on an individual's responsibility, (c) the developmental stage of the participants, and (d) the strategic goals<sup>23,27</sup>.

In the schools in Southern Thailand, a variety of strategies range from the installation of programs to promote social responsibility, emotional engagement toward responsibility, and enhancing adolescents' social responsibility behavioral skills. Schools should implement four basic principles: (1) students will not harm others; (2) students will help other students who are targets of aggression; (3) students will help students who are violent deal with their responsibility; (4) students will include all students in their activities without remaining within peer groups; and students will tell an adult if someone is exhibiting aggressive behavior.

Furthermore, it is widely understood that violence has contributed to growing anger in the public by the lack of social responsibility within the media. Media may not only stimulate violence among adolescents but also affect their psychological and cognitive growth<sup>6</sup>. In turn, social responsibility toward strategies to control violent events could use media campaign to promote widespread education about aggressive behavior, violence prevention, and mission to improve the media response to issues of violence in the programs targeted at youth. The purpose would be to diminish or eliminate imitation and modeling of violent behavior both in school and in society. Kendell<sup>20</sup> noted that many of the positive effects reported in an evaluation study reflect changes in knowledge, attitudes, and responses to violent situations. This suggests the need for a stronger focus on training for specific social responsibility skills and ensuring that participants can generalize those skills to new situations. Schools have the potentials to play an important role in encouraging adolescents' social responsibility toward violence.

*A focus on adolescents' social responsibility toward violence is needed to collaborate and reach an agreement between school and family.*

Aspects of this theme, as discussed, prompt teachers to identify the need for relevant lessons for integrating social responsibility into the curriculum and for incorporating adolescents' values of responsibilities. This theme also stimulate teachers to formulate a new school mission statement and vision with family members. These values can guide continuing development of lessons by teachers to implement in the school curriculum.

The collaboration is needed to prevent violence by focusing on the weakness of the individual family's environment. Family characteristics, such as large family size, low income, and growing up in a single-parent household, increase the risk of youth violence<sup>12,13,15</sup>. A weak family environment is one that includes clusters of poor family management and parenting practices, deficiencies in communication and problem solving, family conflict and violence, and parental problem behavior, such as drug use, alcohol, and involvement in criminal activities. Moreover, poor family management includes the failure of a parent to set clear expectations and responsibilities for a child, poor monitoring and supervision, lack of involvement in the child's activities, and inconsistent discipline.

Consequently, home and family dynamics affect the attitudes of adolescents toward social responsibility, which are manifested in the physical and psychological worries and concerns that they bring to school. The school needs to collaborate with parents in order to provide assistance<sup>8</sup>. Schools need to educate parents about their

responsibility to handle their children's violent behavior and parents need to know about parental behavior that may increase responsibility toward preventing violence<sup>10</sup>.

*The importance of conducting outreach in the community for violence prevention.* This study demonstrated that there are limited public and social services available to residents and that there are limited recreation and developmental techniques for youth as well as fewer public and voluntary organizations. There has been limited ability and willingness of community residents to supervise and control children and adolescents. It is difficult for families to reduce their children's' level of exposure to unhealthy lifestyle or violence that characterize these communities<sup>24</sup>.

The most vital components compose of adolescents' strategies to help themselves; the role of close people in their social circle such as parents, teachers, peers; and effective strategies that include family, school policies, and school activities. The role of parents and teachers is meant to assist adolescent students to enhance interpersonal relationships through receiving essential information, and encouraging social responsibility with self-care in dealing with difficult situations before they lead to violence. Students are given intensive care such as counseling, addressing issues before they are expressed through violence, observing behavior, and consistently following up. Establishing rules for appropriate behavior guides adolescents in making the right decisions.

Examples of strategies that should be used for promoting healthy behavior are: encouraging self-management in troubled situations by developing problem-solving skills, coping with emotion and stress, and developing ethical and moral values. The school's activities should be supported by using homework and peer teaching, especially of adolescents' social responsibility techniques. Activities should take place either inside or outside school, such as sports competitions for healthy release of energy, recreation, and volunteering with other organizations or schools.

An adolescent's social responsibility would afford the opportunity to endorse school health policy to make violence prevention a community affair. Schools need to send a strong message to all members of the community that violence is not acceptable<sup>14,17</sup>. The community needs to be able to participate in organizing activities to defuse adolescent aggressive energies and also to bring adolescents, peers, parents, and school officials together in a common cause to stop violence with their responsibility. Thus, a recommended outreach agenda should be the formation of a community association specifically to promote social responsibility to prevent violence. Stakeholders are needed to champion the health of youngsters and to prevent violence the community by realizing that they are a part of society.

## 9. Conclusions

The findings from this qualitative study support efforts to promote and cultivate social responsibility to reduce violence in rural Thailand, including the ongoing development of (a) a specific way to manage and prevent violence at school and (b) onsite comprehensive school health services. Partnering with teachers, school administrators, and parents, the researchers were engaged in the development of a curriculum aiming toward institutionalizing a policy of culturally relevant social responsibility toward violence prevention. This curriculum will incorporate the concept of self-management, and social responsibility skills. Violence is an issue of social justice. Efforts in the school will comprehensively link adolescents to public responsibility while ensuring health, safety and academic success.

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