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The Zero Violence Brave Club: a successful educational action to overcome isolating gender-based violence with young adolescents

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Abstract

Some programs and actions contribute to the reduction of violence in schools, but the relevance of studying isolating gender-based violence for overcoming school-related gender-based violence has not been analyzed. This article delves into the analysis of the relevance of identifying isolating gender-based violence in schools through the implementation of the Zero Violence Brave Club program in five primary schools and one special education school in Spain. The process of data collection has focused on the realization of six focus groups and eight in-depth interviews with 21 teachers, 29 students, and 8 families. These instruments follow the communicative research methodology aimed at identifying successful actions that have reached social impact. Results suggest that the Zero Violence Brave Club program contributes to overcoming isolating gender-based violence breaking the isolation of victims and their

defenders, and succeeding in creating a safe context for reporting gender-based violence at school. Therefore, drawing on these findings, the Zero Violence Brave Club is effectively contributing to preventing gender-based violence at school which is directly related to the identification and the overcoming of isolating gender-based violence.

Keywords: Isolating gender violence, Support networks, Zero Violence Brave Club, Prevention

1 Introduction

In this research, we have collected some lines of research on violence in the school environment to delve deeper into the Zero Violence Brave Club and its impact on the prevention of gender-based violence linked to the school.

We start from the definition of violence linked to the school environment as any form of violence that occurs in or around school, suffered by students and perpetrated by peers, teachers and other members of educational communities, affecting 1 in 3 young people (UNESCO, 2019). Forms of school violence include physical violence, psychological violence, sexual violence, bullying and cyberbullying. Kowalski and Limber (2013)

conducted a study of 14–17-year-olds in six European countries, showing that 21.4% had experienced episodes of cyberbullying in the last twelve months. These experiences were more frequent among girls than boys (23.9% compared to 18.5%). These studies underline the importance of considering violence as a whole, as cyberbullying coexists with other types of violence (bullying, sexual harassment, etc.) and should be treated together (Hamby et al., 2018; Leemis et al., 2019).

In the same vein, school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) is defined as "acts or threats of sexual, physical, or psychological violence occurring in and around schools, perpetrated as a result of gender norms and stereotypes and enforced by unequal power dynamics" (UNGEi, 2019, p.2). This violence has negative consequences on the lives of millions of people around the world; it is estimated that more than 115 million girls and adolescents experience sexual and gender-based violence, according to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEi) in collaboration with UNESCO (2023). This violence affects students' ability to get to and from school, their ability to learn effectively while in school, to drop out after secondary school and their ability to stay long enough to reach its benefits. Along the same lines, there are other social and health consequences of not addressing gender-based violence in schools at an early age as it has been shown by several previous studies (Duman, 2009; Fleming et al., 2005; Shonkoff et al., 2012; Strøm et al., 2013; Wang et al., 2014). In particular, victims can develop anxiety disorders, insomnia, fatigue and digestive problems among others (Seedat et al., 2003), even 38% of boys and girls in Europe can develop suicidal thoughts according to Dalla Pozza et al. (2016). Children can also face social relationship difficulties and deficits in social and emotional skills (Bettencourt et al., 2023). In terms of academic consequences, according to PISA 45% of students who are bullied often want to drop out of school after secondary school and perform worse in academic subjects (UNESCO, 2019).

Some studies show a broad consensus on the keys to preventing bullying-related violence (Salmivalli et al., 2011; Polanin et al., 2012; Wachs et al., 2019) and reducing school-related online violence (Villarejo-Carballido et al., 2019). However, there has been a lack of focus on one element for overcoming school-related gender-based violence, namely isolating gender violence (IGV), which is defined as attacks and reprisals against those who support victims of gender-based violence in order to keep them isolated (Vidu et al., 2021). This violence towards people who stand in solidarity with victims has been previously conceptualised as Second Order Sexual Harassment (Vidu et al., 2021). Both terms will be used interchangeably.

Previous studies such as Oliver's (2014) show that gender-based violence is occurring at increasingly younger ages and that we should not wait until adolescence to educate that this type of violence is an intolerable act. This author points out that effective interventions will be those that focus on stopping normalising it, identifying it quickly, and engaging and involving the whole community to act actively against it. However, witnesses have been identified as encountering various barriers to intervention, including fear of retaliation or attack for standing up for a victim or not considering the situation high-risk (Hazler, 1996; Unnever & Cornell, 2004; Bennet et al., 2014; Bennett et al., 2017). Recent studies have delved into the GBV that is perpetrated against those who protect and defend victims (Vidu et al., 2021); this type of

violence aims to isolate victims of gender-based violence and discourage help (Melgar et al., 2021). Other studies have analysed how to overcome it by activating and intervening with witnesses (Puigvert et al., 2022).

The studies cited indicate that for the reduction and elimination of SRGBV, it is highly beneficial to implement programmes based on prevention from an early age and in adolescence, which promote the intervention of the entire educational community to create protection networks for those who can defend themselves, avoiding isolating gender violence (Aubert & Flecha, 2021; Vidu et al., 2021). In this way, it is observed that when there are more witnesses, the victims are acted upon, breaking the isolation they suffer and making them more vulnerable. In particular, Berkowitz (2014) analysed in depth the role of witnesses who intervene in favour of victims, known as *upstanders*. This article will analyse this aspect by implementing the Zero Violence Brave Club (Roca-Campos et al., 2021).

The Zero Violence Brave Club (ZVBC) is based on the successful educational action of the Dialogic Model for Violence Prevention (DMVP) which was evaluated as part of the *INCLUD-ED* project (Strategies for Inclusion and Social Cohesion in Europe from Education, 2006–2011) funded by the European Commission's Sixth Framework Programme. Since 2011, results of its implementation have been collected, and it has been included as one of the successful projects of the European Commission's School Gateway database (Roca et al., 2021; Duque et al., 2021). The DMVP aims explicitly to address coexistence in schools to create violence-free schools, promoting a context of prevention before conflicts arise and eliminating them quickly and effectively when they do occur (García Yeste & García Carrión, 2022).

Specifically, ZVBC is based on students taking a stand against violence and denouncing it whenever it occurs while valuing friendship; they learn to defend and support victims and reject students who behave violently (Roca et al., 2021). This contributes to creating peaceful relationships based on positive feelings that socialise from 0 years of age in the desire to neither exercise nor tolerate violence (Flecha et al., 2023; Giner, 2019; Soler-Gallart, 2017). The name ZVBC corresponds to the meaning of the process of conflict prevention and resolution in the framework of the DMVP. Among others, it has two key components: (1) it puts at the centre those brave attitudes and behaviours that are to be promoted and that are in line with the principles of dialogic learning (Flecha, 1997), such as solidarity and the possibility of transformation of all people who want it; (2) it focuses on the intervention of the whole community in the creation of environments where no aggression of any kind takes place.

The research presented in this article was carried out using the communicative research methodology (Gómez et al., 2019; Puigvert et al., 2012), which the European Commission has recommended as one of the best methodological approaches to study the situation of vulnerable or discriminated groups (European Commission, 2010). This methodology aims to detect solutions to problems identified by citizens so that the research can provide them with resources to improve their lives in the area analysed (Munté-Pascual et al., 2022). Therefore, all the data collected in this research are framed in two specific studies: the R + D + i SAFE project, funded by the Government of Spain, and research on the Zero Violence Brave Club initiated in 2022 (Roca-Campos et al., 2021).

Table 1 Phases, techniques and sample

Phase	Data collection techniques	Participants
1st period October 2021	6 communicative focus groups	Teachers 2 of early childhood education 18 of primary education 1 transition to adult life (TAL) of a special education institution
2nd period December 2021, January and February 2022	6 communicative focus groups	Students 2 early childhood education 24 primary Education 5 of secondary education 2 of TAL
3rd period December 2021 and January 2022	8 in-depth interviews	8 Family Members

Source: Own elaboration

2 Materials and methods

2.1 Participants and procedure

The research that has been developed focuses on the case study of 6 schools in Valencia that have applied, for at least two academic years, the ZVBC to improve coexistence in their schools. They were selected by purposive sampling to extend the data collection that had not been analysed in the previous study by Roca-Campos et al. (2021), in which the same schools had already participated. For this study, we have collaborated with that research team because of our interest in continuing to deepen the results linked to the prevention of SRGBV and having all the necessary informed consent. The schools have a very diverse profile in terms of the economic situation of the students, size of the school, location (urban or rural), ownership (public or subsidised), origin (religious or secular), and population served (different proportions of cultural minorities and students with special educational needs). The fieldwork included a sample of a total of 21 pre-school and primary school teachers, a total of 29 pupils aged between 5 and 21 and a total of 8 family members of primary and secondary school pupils.

Several qualitative data collection techniques were applied, following the communicative methodology (Gómez, 2015; Redondo et al., 2020) and structured in three phases (see Table 1). We considered it necessary to include students of different ages to ensure a representation of the student's reality. During these three phases of the research process, an advisory board made up of family members, students and teachers validated our research question, the data collection instruments, the categorisation necessary for the data analysis and the main findings obtained by the research team. These dialogues enriched and contributed to co-creating the resulting knowledge together.

2.2 Data collection instruments

2.2.1 Communicative focus groups

A communicative focus group is a data collection instrument based on the above-mentioned communicative orientation (Gómez, 2015). They are designed to promote a collective interpretation of specific issues through an egalitarian dialogue between researchers and researched people. Unlike other typologies of focus groups, this approach aims to generate scientific knowledge collaboratively with the purpose of

Table 2 Participants in the Focus Groups

Student Ages	N	Level of education
4	2	Early childhood education
7	6	Primary education
8	1	Primary education
9	8	Primary education
10	2	Primary education 1 of them from the Special Education school
11	7	Primary education 2 of them from the Special Education school
12	2	Secondary education
13	3	Secondary education
20	1	TAL of Special Education school
21	1	TAL of Special Education school

Source: Own elaboration

transforming the context by reaching a consensus on diverse interpretations. In this way, a hierarchical break in the interpretation of reality is achieved because the researcher provides scientific knowledge by guiding the process of dialogue among participants, and the latter bring their knowledge linked to their lifeworld.

In the first period (P1), 6 focus groups were organised with 21 teachers; in the second period (P2), 6 focus groups were held with 29 pupils. The P1 focus groups involved 3–4 teachers from different educational stages: early childhood education (3–6 years) and primary education (6–12 years). The teachers in the special education centre taught primary education and the transition to adult life.

The focus groups in the second period (P2) consisted of groups of 4 to 6 female pupils. They were in early childhood education, primary education, and the first stage of secondary education (12–14 years old), and in the case of pupils with special educational needs, some were in the transition stage to adult life. The ages of the pupils are shown in Table 2.

Drawing on the objectives of the research the issues which emerged in the discussion and were approached in the focus groups were: situations where they feel safe and not afraid to report and support victims of first or second order violence, and personal experiences related to how they have been protected by others and the violence had stopped.

2.2.2 In-depth interviews

Through these interviews with families, we reflected on the key elements that protect first and second-order victims and break the isolation they suffer thanks to ZVBC. In total, 8 family members from 4 participating schools took part, 2 family members from each school (E1, E2, E5 and E6). All 4 schools were public schools, one of which was the special education centre. Three interviews were conducted face-to-face and five interviews were conducted online. The dialogue on the interviews drives family members to talk about the connection between their own past experiences of violence in their schooling and the one their children were living thanks to their participation in ZVBC.

Table 3 Data analysis categorisation

Dimensions	Categories	
	Breaking the isolation of victims from their advocates	Promoting safe reporting environments
Transformative	1	3
Exclusionary	2	4

Source: Own elaboration

2.3 Data analysis

A structured analysis table was created to analyse the data, delineating the categories for analysis alongside exclusionary and transformative dimensions (refer to Table 3). These categories were constructed deductively, drawing from previous theories with a communicative orientation.

We draw on the analytical proposal of the communicative methodology of transformative and exclusionary dimensions. The first ones were classified as transformative when they overcame an unequal or discriminatory situation by improving them: for instance, when children succeed in breaking the isolation of the victims and their supporters. The second ones were considered exclusionary when they contributed to maintaining barriers that make people's lives difficult: for example, when bullying increased due to not properly implementing the ZBVC. Starting from the purpose of our study, we will only focus on the transformative dimensions.

Besides this two-fold dimension, we established inductively two categories aimed at responding to the research question of our study, which was related to deepening the impact of ZVBC by breaking the isolation of the victims and promoting safe reporting environments. A more detailed explanation is given below:

Category 1 refers to situations where students do not feel alone if they have quality friends who stand up for them and people in the school who would join them in standing up for someone if they have witnessed support networks or if they have carried out support networks.

Category 2 refers to these situations where children feel lonely, have no quality friendships, are unsure of being supported, do not report or protect others and have never witnessed support networks.

Category 3 refers to situations where reporting and standing up to violence does not involve effort or fear because of the support children receive and the social valorisation given to children who do it. When they look the other way or do not tell the truth, this behaviour is not valued.

Category 4 concerns situations when whistleblowing is a heroic act that is not dared because of attacks. Children who do it are isolated, and these dynamics are not valued and are associated with being a whistleblower.

Finally, this data analysis process followed a codification procedure to ensure anonymity. Thus, each participant was coded with a letter and a number (A: *Alumnado*

[students], P: *Profesorado* [teacher], and F: *Familias* [family member]) and each school (*Escuela*-[School]) with a number from 1 to 6.

3 Results

As previously mentioned, in this article, we will focus on describing the transformative dimensions. In other words, we will pay attention to the elements identified in ZVBC to overcome GBV by contributing to the creation of protective factors against school violence. The exclusionary dimensions have not been included in this case because they are not aligned with the article's objective, so they will be considered for further research.

3.1 The alliance of upstanders together to prevent violence

All the teachers who participated in the focus groups identified the value given to people with upstander behaviour as one of the protective factors. It was found that ZVBC provides a sense of group feeling, which unites students who have participated in their centres to protect victims and help them act against violence. These alliances give them the confidence, strength, and security to take the step to support victims without fear of retaliation because of the feeling of protection. The teacher in one of the schools explained it as follows:

It is highly valued that you support the victims, that you stand up for them, defend them and protect them when something has happened. That's what marks the brave club, we define ourselves because we are a group of brave people... We are like a family because we protect each other, we love each other and we take care of each other, that awareness of protecting each other and taking care of each other. That's why I haven't seen second-rate harassment; on the contrary, when there's a victim, everyone takes a stand [E1P12].

In the focus groups, a sixth-grade pupil explained that it is very difficult for isolating gender violence to happen because there are always many people united to defend. This explanation reflected that pupils perceive the existence of a commitment aligned to the defence of justice and the rejection of violence.

I will say why it is so difficult. It's so difficult because there are so many people who are there and people are not always alone and that's why it's so difficult to try to do it [attack], there are two options, the person who has been harassed reports or someone sees it and reports, that's why it's so difficult [E6A42].

3.2 Breaking alliances with aggressors

In the focus groups with teachers, they were asked if they had detected any results in breaking alliances with bullies, and they all agreed that this had been achieved. A teacher from a regular school explained that ZVBC weakens the chances of bullies finding allies because there is an agreement on the rejection of violent behaviour from whomever it comes from. This teacher explained that, if it is not approached, when someone engages in violence, they look for accomplices in their social group or within their followers and they usually find that support, but in classes where ZVBC is properly implemented it is not easy for bullies to find support for violent behaviour.

When you don't work in the class with a club for the brave, they [the aggressors] do seek help and there are classmates who give it to them... because they go in small groups... because there is no sense of justice. When there is no ZVBC they think that this person is going against this person... not in search of justice. With a club of brave people it is very difficult for the aggressors to find allies [E6M12].

In the same vein, a mother from the special education centre who volunteers in the Successful educational actions of dialogic literary gatherings and interactive groups (Soler-Gallart, 2017) explained that she had helped children reject all kinds of violence and talk about it quickly by activating the support networks that are born from the ZVBC.

The bully is no longer, because the bully is a bully because he had a little group that was applauding and that little group is no longer applauding him because I am here, because I have come and I have seen him and I have seen how the children have gone and they have told him this is going to the brave club, I have seen it [E6F22].

The students interviewed in school 4 also say that they feel more confident and empowered because they know that by rejecting violent behaviours, they are helping people to achieve a bully-free school. This is exemplified in one of the statements made by a child in one of the focus groups:

There are times when you worry about a person (the victim) and they say "what are you doing here? get out of here" and then you go to get more people to protect that person and in the end that person [the aggressor] is left alone because we help the other person and he is left alone [E4A32].

3.3 Putting a name to isolating gender violence

When teachers were asked about the concept of isolating violence, they were all familiar with it, except in one school, thanks to the training on preventive socialisation of gender-based violence in which these schools participated. It enabled them to recognise violence against those who support and defend victims, to name it and to transfer effective strategies for activating advocacy to those who defend other pupils who are victims. In this sense, the teacher training had a direct impact on the students, who reported feeling more confident and empowered to support a victim. Students also learned what isolating violence is and learned that the most effective thing to do is not to leave the person supporting a victim alone because the more people who support them, the less likely they are to be attacked. In particular, two of the schools (E1 and E6) have agreed on norms linked to overcoming isolating gender violence: "protect the one who protects" and "protect yourself, protect me, protect us".

This impact is reflected in one of the statements of a pupil who knew the term well:

Well, when I see an injustice or violence, what I try to do... first I try to fix the matter but if I don't succeed, what I start to do is to ask someone for help and tell them so that I have more support and so that second order harassment doesn't happen. Second order bullying is when someone is being bullied and you come to their defence

and they bully you [E6A42].

Families in these two schools have also received training on isolating gender violence, and one mother explained that having evidence-based training spaces in the school, where families can participate, has helped her a lot as a mother because she can put names to the realities they encounter and feel more confident about what she can do.

As a mother, I receive information from the school through information from conferences in which you can participate and I have been able to participate as a mother in dialogical discussions of scientific articles. At school there is a "dialogue space" that has helped me a lot since I started school and since my son started first grade. We have had discussions about gender violence and many other topics that help us a lot [E6F12].

3.4 Fostering safe environments for reporting

The fieldwork found that the ZVBC has contributed to the identification of physical and verbal aggression as intolerable. A large part of the educational community rejects them. As they are seen as undesirable actions, children begin to act out by denouncing and publicly rejecting these behaviours. For example, one mother reported that her son learned how to protect girls from gender-based violence from ZVBC and this learning served him well in the first days of high school. Her son learned this in primary school, and as the mother told us, it helped him to identify, on his first day of high school, an act of gender-based violence. Her son, seeing how another boy in the class was threatening his classmate, decided to intervene by encouraging the girl to quickly report it to the teacher.

There [at school] it's the opposite, I mean he says that I can't believe that the first day of class a boy touched a classmate's ass and I told him "excuse me, you can't do that to the girl, she said no, so leave her alone" and the other one started to push him (...) What happens?..) What happens? The teacher arrives, the girl says thank you and so on, and my son says to the girl: "tell it to the teacher" but of course, after a few days the girl doesn't say anything and the other one keeps on bothering him [E2F11].

In the special education centre, a teacher explained in a discussion group that when pupils arrive from the mainstream school, they come up with the idea of "reporter" that is deeply rooted, and it takes time to transform it into the idea of bravery. The teacher says that ZVBC helps them to make this change; in the assemblies they have before going out to the playground, they talk and remind them that they have to be attentive to the relationships that take place at that moment, and if they see violence, they have to tell the class assembly about it. They have a rule that helps them to be active witnesses: "eyes wide open". This rule contributes to the dialogues that take place before the playground, favoring the creation of safe contexts for them to report any violence. In the focus groups with pupils, the importance of consent when it comes to touching girls was noted. A sixth-grade pupil said that, before ZVBC was implemented in his class, he used to chase some girls to hug and touch them even if they did not want to because he thought it was fun, but that the club has helped him to stop seeing it as fun and to stop doing it.

There was also something that happened, some girls didn't care, but some didn't like it and it was a game that... it wasn't a game. The girls were running away from boys who hugged them and I thought it was fun, before I thought... but now I realised that it's not so fun and the brave club has helped me [E6A41].

4 Discussion

The relevant role of bystanders in sexual violence (Banyard et al., 2007, 2010; McMahon & Banyard, 2012; Bennett et al., 2014; Bennett et al., 2017) and specifically in school violence (Berkowitz, 2014; Berkowitz & Benbenishty, 2012; Canales et al., 2018; Coker et al., 2017; Saarento & Salmivalli, 2015) have been studied by numerous authors as well as the interventions to reducing and eradicating it. Therefore, the importance of interventions in favour of victims has been highlighted in order to overcome all types of violence. On the other hand, non-intervention, like a neutral stance, is understood by aggressors as tacit approval of their aggressive behaviour (Craig et al., 2000). However, we found that witnesses are not always willing to intervene to stop violence, among other reasons, because of fear of retaliation (Hazler, 1996; Unnever & Cornell, 2004; Camodeca & Goossens, 2005; Berkowitz, 2014; PROGRESS, 2007–2013). In particular, one of the fears identified is receiving isolating gender violence, as demonstrated by Vidu et al. (2021).

The first research that presents quantitative data on the reasons why most people do not support victims of sexual violence was recently published and revealed that 40% of people did not support it precisely because of fear of retaliation (Melgar et al., 2021). We found in our study that schools which implement ZVBC can contribute to creating safe contexts so that no one in the educational community is afraid of reprisals if they support victims. When teachers, students and families were asked whether they were afraid to support children who were victims of violence at school, no one answered affirmatively. The reason was that they felt protected because so many people came together to stand up for them. Thornberg et al. (2012) showed that when witnesses do not intervene, violence is more likely to occur, so we can think that if students are not afraid to stand up for themselves, gender-based violence will be more complicated.

In our study when asked about the reasons that made pupils feel safe, students explained that they are not afraid because they know that, if it were to happen again, they could tell and receive support and protection from many people again. This chain of protection, first to the defender to safely protect the victims without fear of reprisals or attacks, is helping these schools learn that this is how to act in solidarity and effectively end violence. Similarly, in the schools participating in the research that received training on isolating gender-based violence, this knowledge helped pupils, families and teachers to be able to transfer it to their personal relationships by better understanding, for example, the reasons behind the use of the word "whistle-blower" and to understand how it is reproduced. In addition, the ZVBC has given them the confidence to know that friendship and positioning contribute to making it more difficult for alliances with aggressors to exist and for more people to reproduce isolating gender violence (IGV). Therefore, all engaged teachers agreed that the ZVBC prevented IGV because, since its implementation, attempts to attack those who broke the silence have decreased. When

we asked about the use of the word snitch or whistle-blower, it was found that it is no longer used in the schools studied because now, those who break the silence are seen as brave people.

Therefore, we can say that ZVBC has contributed in these schools to prevent GBV through 1) the alliance of brave people united to protect, 2) breaking alliances with aggressors, and 3) naming second-order violence or Isolating Gender Violence. The ZVBC has also managed to break these alliances with aggressors and create alliances between people who unite to protect themselves and each other through the feeling of friendship (Giner, 2019).

5 Limitations

The elements that conditioned the field study are related to the difficulties associated with the pandemic, which made it impossible to carry out 3 focus groups with students in person. The fact that these focus groups were conducted online made communication between the researcher and the students difficult, as it was impossible to see gestures and looks and, on occasion, to lose sound. These difficulties were considered when preparing the focus groups, and the teachers were always present and collaborated with the audio recording. The online focus group with pupils from the special education centre was particularly difficult as the pupils have difficulties communicating. This was solved with the participation of three teachers who repeated the pupils' answers out loud, confirming with them that what they were saying was what the child wanted to express.

For future research, it is worth incorporating the voices of teachers who receive secondary school students who have participated in primary school in the ZVBC since, as far as we have been able to ascertain, the way of dealing with violence in secondary schools is very different to ZVBC. Furthermore, although as already mentioned this article has focused on developing the transformative dimensions, the existence of barriers such as the lack of support for victims or being perceived as a whistle-blower in case of reporting are also possible elements to be analysed in the future.

6 Conclusions

Through the fieldwork, the existence of gender-based violence has been made visible in three of the schools analysed, but what is most relevant is that the participants have recognised that ZVBC helps them to act in defence of the victims because they feel safe to denounce and reject this violence, overcoming one of the most important barriers identified in the scientific literature, which is the fear of being attacked for defending (Vidu et al., 2021). These results are also in line with previous literature that emphasises the importance of bystander intervention, community engagement and victim protection as protective factors that favour the prevention of gender-based violence in schools (Berkowitz, 2014; García Yeste & García Carrión, 2022; Puigvert et al., 2022). To sum up, it is noted that ZVBC has contributed to breaking the isolation of victims and their advocates through 3 elements: 1) creating alliances between upstanders who unite to protect, 2) breaking alliances with aggressors by rejecting violence for the common good, and 3) naming the IGV which has helped to identify this violence more easily and to be able to transfer effective strategies to learners to

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