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Domestic violence

Is criminal law the best platform for domestic violence prevention?

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The main question

- Main question is *whether criminal law should be a fundamental mechanism for the domestic violence prevention?*

Before answering...

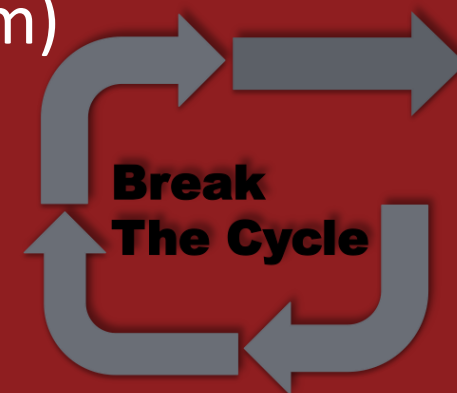
Etiology of
domestic
violence?

Success of
criminal law in
crime
prevention?



Etiology of domestic violence

- Household poverty as well as lower socio-economic positions
- Low education level
- Alcohol abuse
- Lack of self control (self control theory)
- Previous child abuse (offender → victim; victim → victim)
- Etc... (complexity of violence etiology)





Criminal law and its success in crime prevention

- Regarding the criminal law, latest research shows that criminal law is not very good at preventing violent crimes
- Penal populism in 21st century
- Policy of deterrence: sanction threats can reduce crime (Gibbs, 1975)
 - Human action is motivated by seeking pleasure and avoiding pain
 - Decisions to offend are made by balancing the costs and benefits of various action alternatives
 - Individuals choose and act with at least minimal rationality





Harsher law – lower domestic violence rate?

- The prevalence estimates of lifetime intimate partner violence range from 20% in the Western Pacific, 22% in high-income countries and Europe and 25% in USA to 33% in the African region, 31% in the Eastern Mediterranean region, and 33% in the South-East Asia region
- Prevalence of violence in lifetime (OECD)



New Zealand, USA, Chile, Mexico, Turkey,
Bosnia and Herzegovina, Korea



Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Japan,
Netherlands



If not criminal law, then what?

- Teach safe and healthy relationship skills
- Social-emotional learning programs for youth
- Healthy relationship programs for couples
- Engage influential adults and peers
- Bystander empowerment and education
- Family-based programs
- Early childhood home visitation
- Preschool enrichment with family engagement





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If not criminal law, then what?

- Parenting skill and family relationship programs
- Treatment for at-risk children, youth and families
- Create protective environments
- Improve school climate and safety of the society in general
- Strengthen economic supports for families
- Strengthen household financial security
- Support survivors to increase safety
- Victim-centered services
- Improve treatment and support for survivors of IPV





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Thank you for your attention!

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