Together, we can create a safer world
1 billion children have experienced sexual, physical, or emotional violence in the past year.*

That’s equivalent to one in every three children around the world.

Childhood sexual violence is a notably taboo, and often hidden, form of violence.

It takes many forms, including sexual abuse, intrafamilial sexual violence, exploitation, rape, child marriage, and sexual violence among peers.

It is also widespread. In Uganda, more than 1 in 3 girls and 1 in 6 boys experience sexual violence before their 18th birthday.*

In the United States about 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 13 boys experience sexual abuse at some point in childhood. Adolescent girls are especially vulnerable. Nearly 1 in 5 high school girls in the U.S. experienced sexual violence in the past year.**

Sexual violence against children and adolescents happens in every country in the world.

In homes
In schools
In sports
In places of worship
Online

Chances are, it’s happening in your community.
In Kenya, girls and boys who experienced multiple forms violence in childhood, including sexual violence, were more than 5 times more likely to have suicidal thoughts.* And the list goes on: substance use disorders; school drop-out; unintended pregnancy; and HIV.

**Violence is also cyclical.** Boys who experience violence are significantly more likely to grow up to perpetrate violence against their intimate partners later in life.

**The economic cost is staggering.** It is estimated that violence against children costs societies 3% to 8% of global GDP** which translates to $2.9 to $7.8 trillion dollars.”

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“I am a researcher, a psychologist, and a survivor of childhood sexual violence.

I’ve been sharing my story publicly for more than a decade because I know it doesn’t have to be this way.

We can end sexual violence against children and adolescents within a generation.

But to do so, we need to move from horror to action, and we need to work together. Through our work, we connect survivors and allies to demand transformational change. Together, we are powerful.

We need to be brave so that children can be safe.”

Daniela Ligiero, is the CEO of Together for Girls and co-founder of the Brave Movement.
Violence against children is a hidden and pervasive issue, and it is hard to talk about.

The shame associated with childhood sexual violence means survivors often don’t disclose their experiences, and many people are unaware how common it is.

Governments and institutions reduce it to a personal or family issue and look the other way. And when they do act, the response is often siloed, limited, and woefully insufficient.
A problem of this magnitude can seem insurmountable.

It seems impossible to imagine that changes in prevention, healing, and justice could be achieved at the scale required to create a safer world.

...But what if it were?
Parents were reassured that schools, technology companies, sports clubs, and places of worship had the right systems in place to protect their children?
When a child experienced sexual violence, they felt safe to come forward knowing that they would be believed, and could access effective, age-appropriate support services to begin their healing?
WHAT IF
Perpetrators, and those complicit, were brought to justice quickly, ensuring they could never harm another child?
In Kenya, the Government used data from the 2010 Violence Against Children and Youth Survey to guide the creation of a National Action Plan aimed at preventing violence and improving response. Actions included increasing access to education; strengthening legal protections; and linking the most vulnerable children to resources, services, and care.

After another survey in 2019, childhood sexual violence was reduced in half for females, and by two-thirds for males. This means that 2 million fewer girls and 1.4 million fewer boys experienced sexual violence as a result of declines in levels of childhood sexual violence.

Floian, a PEPFAR DREAMS participant.

Photo courtesy of PEPFAR Kenya
Merina, a peer educator with Kiota Women’s Health and Development (KIWOHED) in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

The evidence is clear: violence is preventable, change is possible.
Through data and advocacy, our global partnership drives action to break cycles of violence and ensure prevention, healing, and justice.

We hear directly from children about their experiences of violence. Through the groundbreaking Violence Against Children and Youth Survey (VACS) we have data representing 20% of children, adolescents, and youth living in lower income countries where data is often lacking.

We use this data to create change for children. Working behind the scenes, we support national and community leadership in partnership with leading global experts including the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and civil society.
Ending violence against children cannot be achieved by a single actor alone. Our members and allies are active in all regions of the world, bringing together people from every corner of society. We are survivors and allies. We are civil society, governments, funders, and UN agencies. We are parents, educators, and allies. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for.

Brave Members and allies mobilizing in Brussels outside of the European Union to demand action to protect children online, April 2023.
We are led by survivors. CEO Daniela Ligiero is a survivor of childhood sexual violence. Under her leadership, we catalyzed the first global survivor-centered advocacy movement to end sexual violence against children - the Brave Movement.

We are radically collaborative. We unite disciplines that often do not work together to address a multi-faceted problem. We support national leaders in creating diverse, multisectoral teams in order to avoid silos.

Since 2009, Together for Girls has been a pioneer in the global fight to create a safer world for children and adolescents.

TfG rang the opening bell of the New York Stock Exchange with allies and other key partners to commemorate TfG’s 10th anniversary, 2019.
The Brave Movement is a survivor-centered global movement campaigning for the right of all children and adolescents to live in safety and dignity. The Brave Movement campaigns across three pillars:

- **Prevention:** including advocating for a safer internet to keep children and young people safe online.
- **Healing:** including advocating for more resources to support survivors in their healing journeys.
- **Justice:** including abolishing statutes of limitations around the world to aid justice for survivors, and prevent perpetrators from continuing abuse.

Brave Movement survivor leaders meeting, Oxford, UK, 2023. The SAGE (Survivor Advocates, Globally Empowered) is a globally diverse team of adult survivors of childhood sexual violence, who help lead the vision and strategy of the Brave movement.
This work has never been easy. As the world continues to struggle with multiple and expanding crises, hard-fought gains for children around the world are at risk of being lost.

Now is the time to redouble our collective efforts to rebuild a safer world for our children.
Know where, how, and why violence against children and adolescents happens, and find evidence-based solutions that work to prevent it.

Address urgent data gaps, such as studying violence against children in humanitarian settings.

Build the capacity of national governments and partners to collect and use relevant data.

With your help we can generate quality, comprehensive data.
With your help, we can lead **advocacy** to drive transformational action.

- **Shape global** and **national policy agendas**, building political will to drive lasting change.
- **Shatter the silence around sexual violence** by amplifying survivor voices and making sure they are incorporated into policy discussions.
- **Champion evidence-based solutions to end violence against children**, helping ignite interventions on a national, regional, and global scale.

“My life is what I can use to help others, so I have to be a champion. I want to go out and tell my story and use it to help girls in my community.”

Upendo, DREAMS Ambassador and survivor, uses her own experience to connect other survivors to critical legal and health services, Tanzania 2018.

Photo courtesy of Sharon Natoli

Joseph Trikka Beugre (CDC Côte d'Ivoire), Dr. Solange Amethier (PN-OEV), Bibola Ngalamulume (PEPFAR Côte d'Ivoire), Manuela Balliet (Together for Girls) and Shirish Balachandra (Country Director, CDC Côte d’Ivoire) at the launch of the Côte d’Ivoire VACS report, 2020.

Dr. Daniela Ligiero spoke at a Commission on the Status of Women event hosted by Together For Girls, 2018.

To date, our partnership has helped:
- 12 countries ban corporal punishment
- 10 countries abolish child marriage
- 13 countries add child safety regulations
- 21 countries use VACS data to inform policy and programmatic action

And there is much more to be done.

With your help, we can create a safer world.
Together, we can create a world where every child and adolescent is safe, protected, and thriving.