

## **Longitudinal relations between sectarian and nonsectarian community violence and child adjustment in Northern Ireland.**

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## **Longitudinal relations between sectarian and nonsectarian community violence and child adjustment in Northern Ireland.**

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### **Source**

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### **Abstract**

Although relations between political violence and child adjustment are well documented, longitudinal research is needed to adequately address the many questions remaining about the contexts and developmental trajectories underlying the effects on children in areas of political violence. The study examined the relations between sectarian and nonsectarian community violence and adolescent adjustment problems over 4 consecutive years. Participants included 999 mother-child dyads (482 boys, 517 girls), M ages = 12.18 (SD = 1.82), 13.24 (SD = 1.83), 13.61 (SD = 1.99), and 14.66 (SD = 1.96) years, respectively, living in socially deprived neighborhoods in Belfast, Northern Ireland, a context of historical and ongoing political violence. In examining trajectories of adjustment problems, including youth experience with both sectarian and nonsectarian antisocial behaviors, sectarian antisocial behavior significantly predicted more adjustment problems across the 4 years of the study. Experiencing sectarian antisocial behavior was related to increased adolescent adjustment problems, and this relationship was accentuated in neighborhoods characterized by higher crime rates. The discussion considers the implications for further validating the distinction between sectarian and nonsectarian violence, including consideration of neighborhood crime levels, from the child's perspective in a setting of political violence.

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