

Predicting and Preventing Workplace Violence

NEMLEC Police Foundation, Inc.
Business Safety Summit

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Violence and Mental Illness



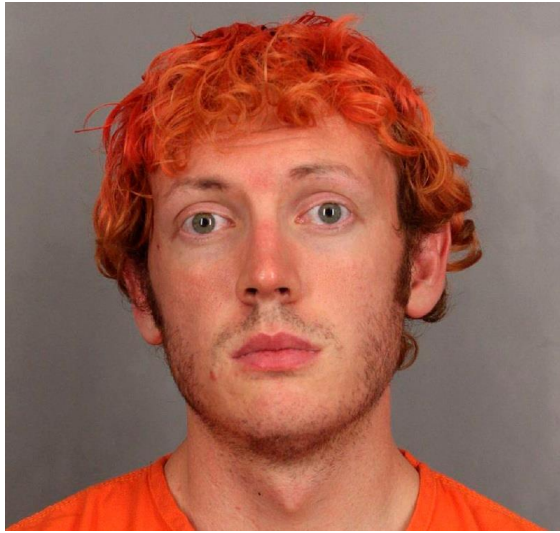
- Are the mentally ill violent?
- Are the mentally ill at increased risk of violence?
- Are the public at risk?

Public Perception

75% viewed people with mental illness as dangerous (1)

60% believed people with schizophrenia were likely to commit violent acts (2)

- (1) Link BG, Phelan JC, Bresnahan M, Steuve AP, Pescosolido BA ; Public perceptions of mental illness: Labels, causes, dangerousness, and social distance, Am J Public Heth 1999:89 (9) 1328-1333.
- (2) Pescosolido BA. Monahan J. Link BG, et al. The public's view of the competence, dangerousness, and need for legal coercion of persons with mental health problems. Am J Public Hlth. 1999; 89:1339-1345





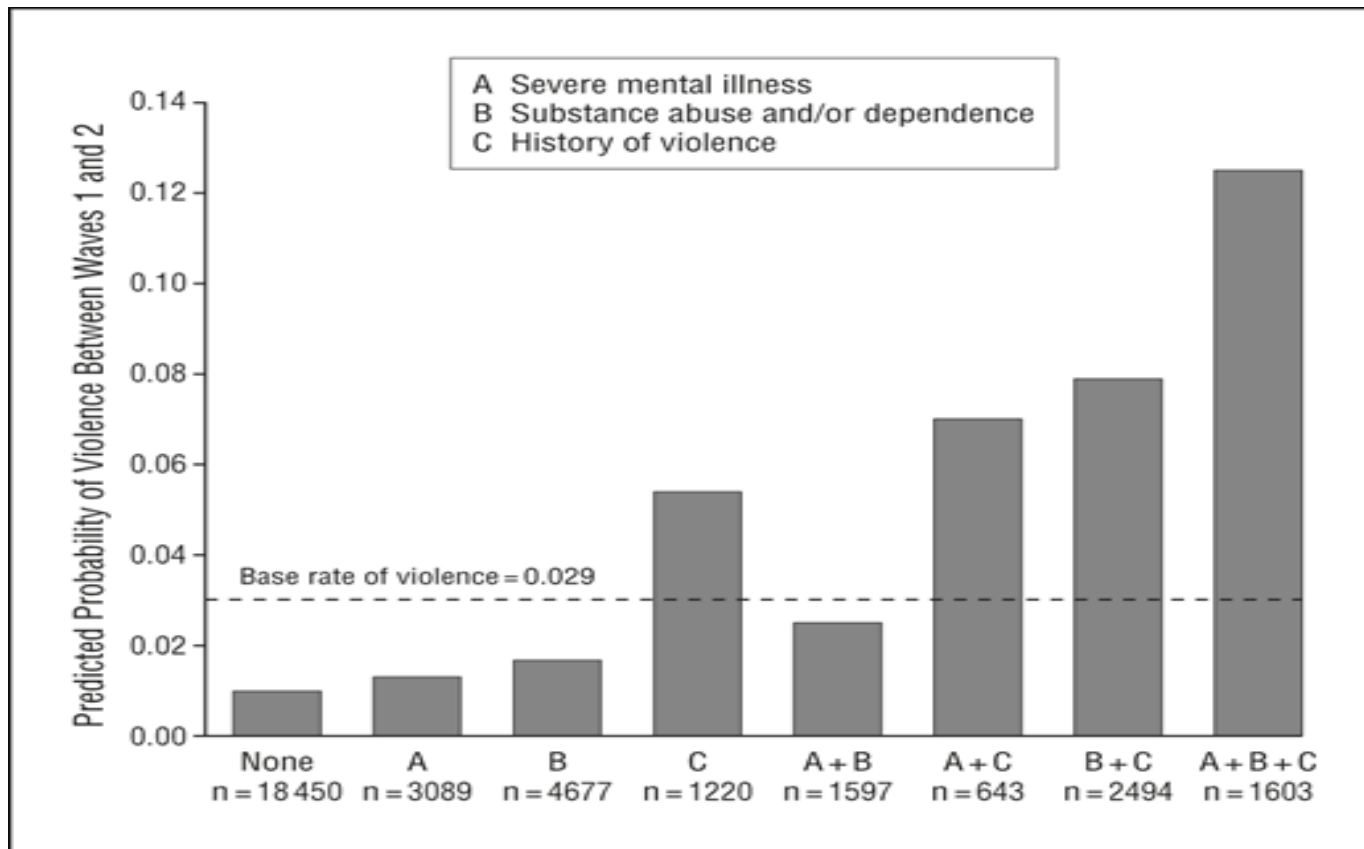
Link Between Violence and Mental Disorder

National Epidemiological Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions

34,653 subjects between 2001 and 2005

“...severe mental illness is not a robust predictor of future violence...”

The Intricate Link Between Violence and Mental Disorder: Results From the National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions



Eric B. Elbogen, PhD; Sally C. Johnson, MD *Arch Gen Psychiatry.* 2009;66(2):152-161.
 doi:10.1001/archgenpsychiatry.2008.537.

Primary Risk Factors

- Personality conflicts
- A mishandled termination or other disciplinary action
- Bringing weapons to a work site
- Drug or alcohol use on the job
- Grudge over a real or imagined grievance
- Break-up of a marriage or romantic relationship
- Other family conflicts
- Financial or legal problems

Rugala, EA and Isaacs, AR (Eds), Workplace Violence: Issues in Response, Critical Incident Response Group, National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime, FBI Academy, Quantico, VA, 2001

Additional Risk Factors

- Increasing belligerence
- Ominous, specific threats
- Hypersensitivity to criticism
- Recent acquisition/Fascination with weapons
- Apparent obsession with a supervisor or coworker or employee grievance
- Preoccupation with violent themes
- Interest in recently publicized violent events
- Outbursts of anger

Workplace Risk Factors

- Understaffing= job overload or compulsory overtime
- Poorly defined job tasks and responsibilities = frustration
- Downsizing or reorganization
- Labor disputes and poor labor-management relations
- High injury rate or frequent grievances
- Poor management styles
 - inconsistent discipline
 - over-monitoring
 - “public corrections”
- Inadequate security or poorly trained, poorly motivated security force
- Lack of employee counseling

Seven Prevention Measures

1. Prevention and reparation policy against harassment
2. Clear codes of conduct
3. Awareness and training sessions
4. Do not allow conflicts to escalate into harassment or acts of violence
5. Effective lines of communication
6. Pay special attention to the quality of relationships among members of a work team
7. Encourage acceptance of individual differences

From: Ordre des conseillers en ressources humaines et en relations industrielles agréés du Québec
<http://www.prevention-violence.com/en/int-210.asp>

“Help people reach their full potential-Catch them doing something right”.



K. Blanchard, 1981



Lahey Health
Behavioral Services

The One Minute Praising



- Tell people up front
- Make contact: state name
- Look person in the eye
- Be precise
- Connect with overall goals of organization



The One Minute Correction

- Tell people beforehand
- Reprimand immediately
- Be specific
- Relate with goals of organization
- Let feedback fit in
- Remind of value
- Reaffirm
- Its over when its over



Feedback Tips

- Crystal clear feedback
- Comment on behavior not worth of person
- Help people laugh at themselves
- Never adjust anyone in public



Receiving Feedback

- State what you want:
be specific
- Check what you have
heard: paraphrase
- Share your reactions
to the feedback

