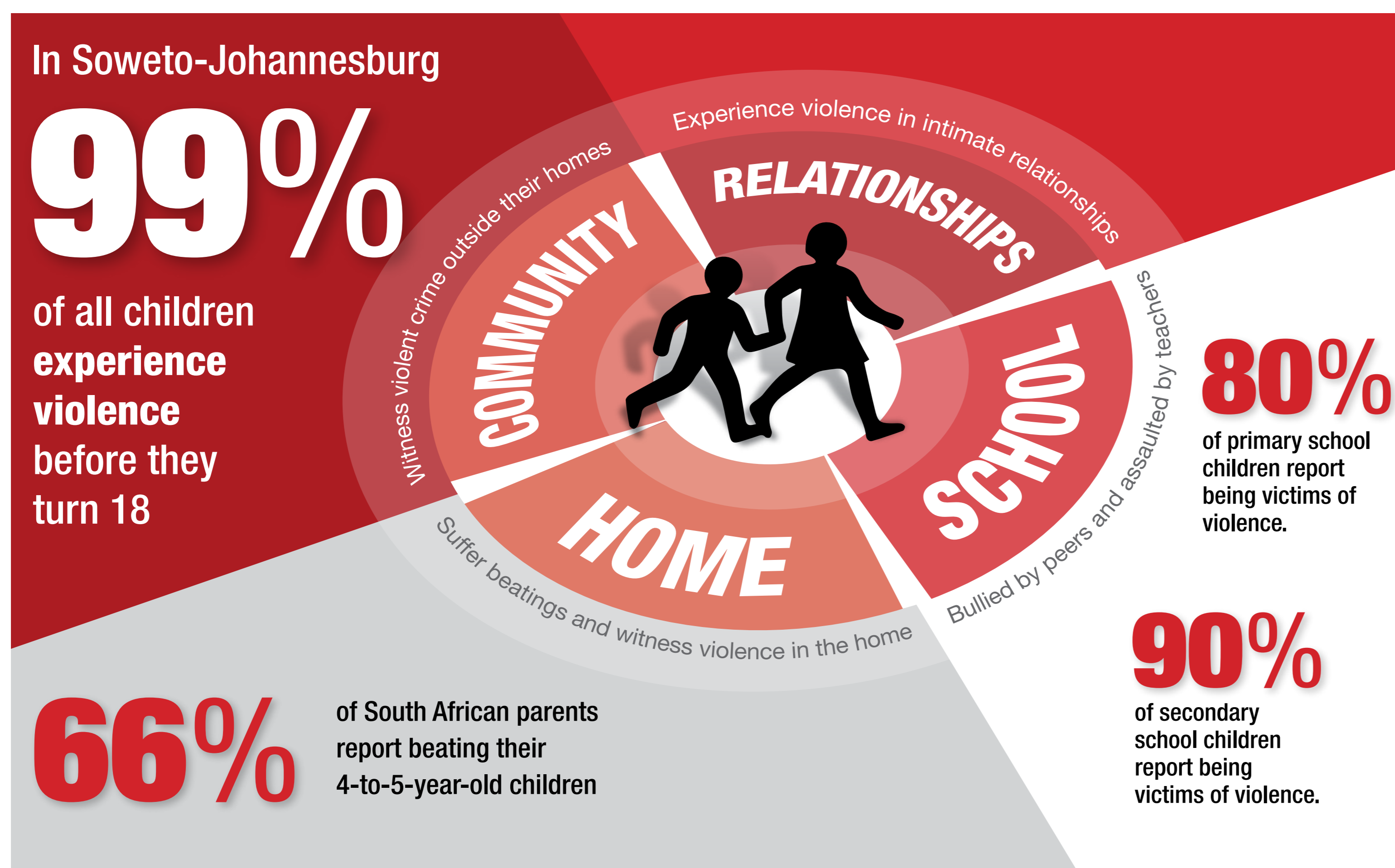


Few safe places for South African children

Children in Soweto-Johannesburg, studied over time, are either victims or witnesses to aggression between parents, between parents and children, teachers and learners, amongst learners themselves, and strangers in their communities.



“...Save The Children estimated the costs of violence in our society due to death, ill-health and poor mental health, reduced earnings and welfare at around R238 billion...”

The longitudinal **Birth to Twenty Plus** study found that only 1% of children in Soweto-Johannesburg did not experience violence before 18 years of age. These children were threatened or beaten at home, at school or in their neighbourhood. Violence in childhood can lead to poor mental and physical health with adverse effects on progress through school, work productivity and social stability.

Starting at home, two thirds of parents reported regularly beating their 4-to-5-year-olds with sticks, belts and shoes. More than 80% of children in their primary school years, and more than 90% during their secondary school years, reported being victims of violence at home, at school, in their community or in their intimate relationships. More girls report experiencing

violence at home, while more boys report violence at school.

Children who have few safe spaces at home, school or in their community can become desensitized to violence. The high level of violence in South African society has at least some of its origins in violence witnessed and experienced in childhood.

Save The Children estimated the costs of violence in our society due to death, ill-health and poor mental health, reduced earnings and welfare at around R238 billion, roughly 5% of South Africa's gross domestic product in 2015.

Preventing violence has to be a priority for everyone in South Africa. Children who experience or witness violence carry the damage as fear and insecurity. As adults they are more likely to hit first!

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