



Editorial Comment

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You can no more win a war than you can win an earthquake.
—Jeanette Rankin (June 1880-May 1873), first woman in the U.S. Congress

In this issue we have many good articles, but one stood out to me as especially important. The article entitled “Drug-Related Collective Violence on the Ciudad/Juarez Border and its Impact on Children’s Mental Health” is something we all should read and think about.

The violence in Juarez has gone on for several years now and it doesn’t really show signs of stopping soon. Yes, we hear less about it in the news these days and there are fewer warnings on the radio. Mexican tourist information attempts to downplay the danger to foreigners. Yet, the violence still exists and we should not ignore the ramifications that it has had, is having and will have on the health of our patients here in El Paso. Most of us don’t talk to our patients about how much influence the violence has on their lives, but perhaps we should.

I have had many patients of mine over the last few years present with symptoms ranging from headaches and stomachaches to hyperactivity, uncontrolled diabetes, drug use and suicidal ideations. All of these patients had lost somebody close to them (a sibling, a parent an uncle, aunt, grandparent or friend) in Juarez. Some of the children had seen their loved ones killed in front of them. All of them had some relief from their symptoms after we acknowledged that their symptoms might be attributed to the experience of losing a loved one in a violent way and got them into grief counseling. I ask you, would you even behave half as well as these children did in similar circumstances?

The war there is not over. Even when it is over, the scars done to a generation of children both in Juarez and El Paso will have an effect on us for many years to come. Please ask your patients how

the violence has affected them. You may be ignoring a crucial part of their history that is affecting their health today.

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