

WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

"Domestic violence is a pattern of behavior that one person in a relationship uses to control the other. The behavior may be verbally, emotionally, physically, financially or sexually abusive."

Domestic violence in the home can affect children in different ways. Children in the home may be in fear of what else may happen, such as:

- Seeing or hearing one parent hurt the other
- Hearing threats
- Experiencing one parent being angry or afraid

You may notice changes in behavior in children who have witnessed domestic violence:

Children in preschool may begin to show behavior regression.

- Wetting the bed
- Increased crying and whining
- Separation anxiety
- Difficulty sleeping

School-aged children may blame themselves for the abuse and begin to feel guilty.

- Low self-esteem
- Less participation in activities
- Poor grades
- Getting into trouble
- Headaches & stomachaches

Teens may act out in negative ways and engage in risky behaviors.

- School truancy
- Substance abuse
- Trouble making friends
- Depression
- Starting fights

Children can heal from their experiences with the help of the loving, nonviolent parent



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(800) 254-1286



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RESOURCES

- <https://www.nctsn.org/resources/children-and-domestic-violence-parents-fact-sheet-series>
- <https://www.womenshealth.gov/relationships-and-safety/domestic-violence/effects-domestic-violence-children>
- <https://www.thehotline.org/resources/safety-planning-with-children/>
- https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/guide_domesticviolence.pdf

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THE EFFECTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN

St. Jude House
FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION
CENTER AND SHELTER



ST. JUDE HOUSE

St. Jude House is a safe emergency shelter and domestic violence prevention center, committed to providing transformational, compassionate, and comprehensive programs and services to those whose lives have been touched by abuse.

CHILDREN AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STATISTICS

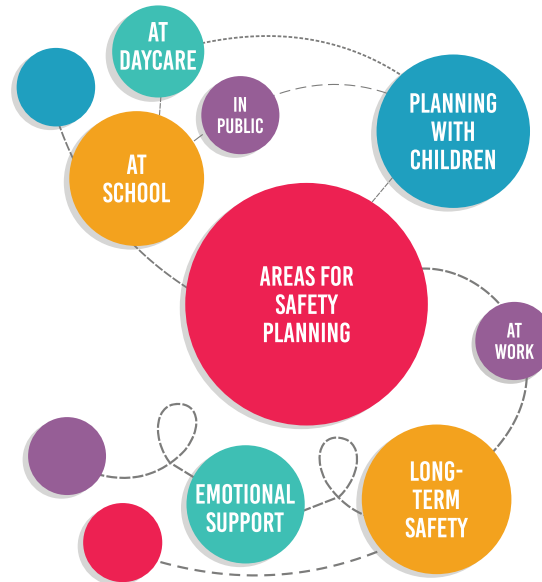
- 1 in 15 children are exposed to physical intimate partner violence each year.
- 90% of these children are eyewitnesses to this violence.
- Approximately 1 in 5 children witness intimate partner violence in their lifetime.
- Children who witness intimate partner violence growing up are 3 times as likely to repeat the cycle in adulthood.
- Domestic violence in childhood is directly correlated with difficulties learning, lower IQ scores, deficiencies in visual-motor skills, and problems with attention and memory.
- Children in homes with violence are physically abused or seriously neglected at a rate 1500% higher than the national average.

CREATED BY THE CHILDREN OF ST. JUDE HOUSE



CREATING A SAFETY PLAN

Your safety and the safety of your children are the biggest priorities.



You can take steps now to help yourself and your children including:

- Tell them when, how, and who to contact during an emergency.
- Teach them that they shouldn't try to intervene in moments of violence.
- Let them know that what is happening isn't their fault and they didn't cause it.
- Remember that your child might tell your partner whatever information you come up with together, which could make an abusive situation more dangerous. When talking about safety plans, use phrases like, "We're practicing what to do in an emergency," instead of, "We're planning what you can do when _____ becomes violent."

INGREDIENTS FOR RESILIENCE

One of the most important protective factors for children experiencing domestic violence is a strong, secure and caring relationship with the nonviolent parent. This relationship can make a huge impact and can help provide a foundation for a healthy future.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Identify and nurture your child's strengths. Involve your child in activities they are interested in, such as sports, art classes, and other programs in the community.
- Make time for your child without distractions. This special time together sends the message that your child is special and loved no matter what is going on.
- Praise your child. This will help them feel special and increase their sense of security.

BUILDING PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Building protective factors for children exposed to domestic violence can help increase resilience. It can provide opportunities and relationships that can offset risk factors.

- Teach your child self-regulation skills, such as emotional awareness, anger management, stress management, and coping skills.
- Help your child develop problem-solving skills.
- Talk about, and foster, healthy relationships and healthy boundaries.
- Create opportunities for each child to contribute.