

Recognizing the Signs of Domestic Violence

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Division of Violence Prevention Resources (DVPR)

- A Division of the Department for Community Based Services;
- Formerly the Division of Child Abuse and Domestic Violence Services;
- DVPR doesn't do any direct service;
- Funding and Program Administration;
- We are NOT the state agency that investigates child abuse and neglect and can not take a referral or report.

Division of Violence Prevention Resources

Funding = \$5.9 Million (approximately) in
Federal and State funds:

- \$3.8 Million for Rape Crisis Centers

- \$2.1 Million for Children's Advocacy Centers

Definitions and Terms

- **Domestic violence** is a pattern of physical, sexual, environmental and psychological maltreatment of one family member by another with the intent to control. This misuse of power harms the psychological, social, economic, sexual and physical well-being of the victim. It usually escalates in frequency and severity and can lead to death without intervention.

Definition of Terms

- **Domestic Violence:** has definite legal implications and is defined in Kentucky Revised Statutes Chapter 403;
- **Family Violence:** is an “umbrella” term encompassing violence directed by one family member to another family member, could be child abuse, sibling abuse, etc.

Definition of Terms

- **Intimate Partner Violence:** IPV—is violence committed by a spouse, ex-spouse, or current or former boyfriend or girlfriend. It occurs among both heterosexual and same-sex couples and is often a repeated offense.

Definition of Terms

- **Batterer, Offender, Perpetrator:** a person, who uses violence or control tactics against their intimate partner for the purpose of gaining power and or control; usually a male.
- **Victim or Survivor:** a person, usually female, that the batterer uses control tactics against.

Definition of Terms

- **Exposed Child:** a child that typically resides in a home where intimate partner violence is occurring, the child is “exposed” to IPV as if exposed to a toxin in the environment

- See Power and Control Wheel
- See Equality Wheel

Dynamics of Domestic Violence

- People who experience Domestic Violence are just like anyone else:
 - These couples either still care about each other deeply – or at least did at one time;
 - They are probably not comfortable talking about this issue;
 - Both the Batterer and the Victim/Survivor are probably feel the stigma of DV; and
 - Due the stigma, both will probably minimize.

Scope of Domestic Violence

- Domestic Violence is very common:
 - Domestic-violence-related police calls have been found to constitute **the single largest category of calls received by police**, accounting for 15 to more than 50 percent of all calls. ¹
 - In a large study of adults about adverse experiences from their childhood, 12.5 % acknowledged that their mothers were treated violently (Range: sometimes kicked, hit or slapped up to threatened with a weapon). ²
 - Annual domestic violence rate per 1,000 persons (age 12 or older) for intimate partners and/or relatives was
 - 5.9 for females
 - 2.1 for males

Scope of Domestic Violence

- The Severity of DV is variable and per the 2005 National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS):
 - About 1/3 of the victims reported they were physically attacked;
 - 2/3 were threatened with attack or death; and
 - A little more than half (50.5 percent) of the female victims suffered an injury,
 - Only 4.5 percent were seriously injured.

Scope of Domestic Violence

- The Severity of DV is variable and per the 2005 National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS):
 - More than 3% of victims reported being sexually assaulted also;
 - DV Homicides in 2005 per the FBI Uniform Crime Report
 - 1,181 Females
 - 329 Males

Exposure to Domestic Violence:

Not all children are affected by domestic violence in the same way.



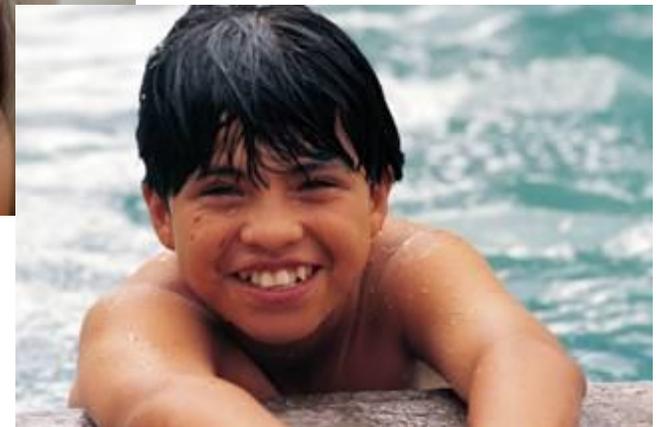
Examples of How Children are Exposed

- hearing threats of physical harm
- feeling tension building in home prior to assault
- being hit/threatened while in mother's arms
- hearing/seeing assault on their mother
- being denied care because mother is injured or depressed
- being forced to watch or participate in violence against their mother
- seeing aftermath of violent incident
- having their relationship with their non-violent parent undermined
- being taken hostage to force mother to return home
- being enlisted by violent parent to align against mother
- experiencing the loss of a parent due to murder/suicide

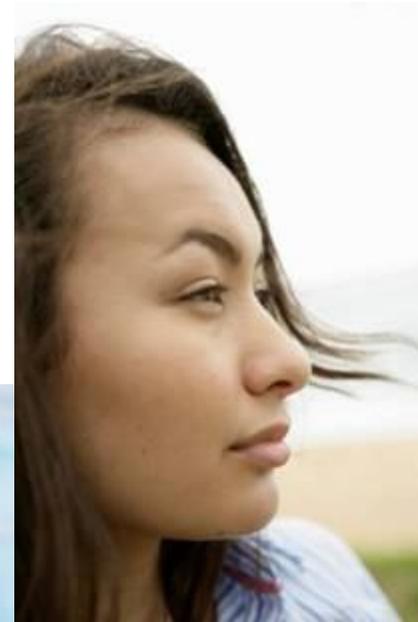


Factor: The Child's Age

The younger the child, the more harmful the impact may be.



Factor: The Child's
Developmental Stage



Exposure to domestic violence can affect the tasks or milestones of the particular child's stage of development.

Factor: Severity, Proximity, Duration and Frequency of Exposure



A child directly exposed to extreme, ongoing and/or frequent violence is more likely to be seriously emotionally harmed.

Factor: The Child's Gender

Boys and girls may be affected differently



Factor: The Child's Role in the Family

Children exposed to domestic violence take on different roles in families that may change over time.



- Caretaker
- Confidant
- Assistant
- Overachiever/ “perfect”
- Referee
- Scapegoat

Factor: Presence or absence of
loving, supportive adults

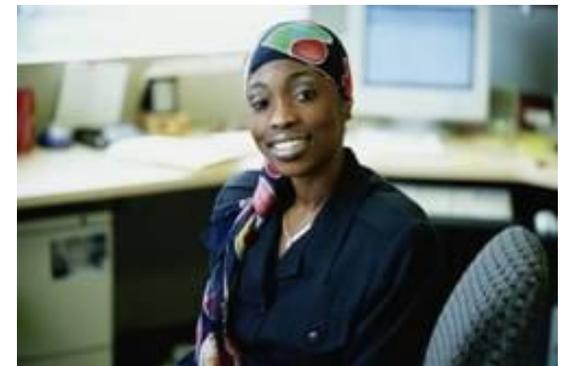
The single most critical factor in how children weather exposure to domestic violence is the presence of at least ONE loving and supportive adult in their life.

That **ONE** adult
may be **YOU!!**



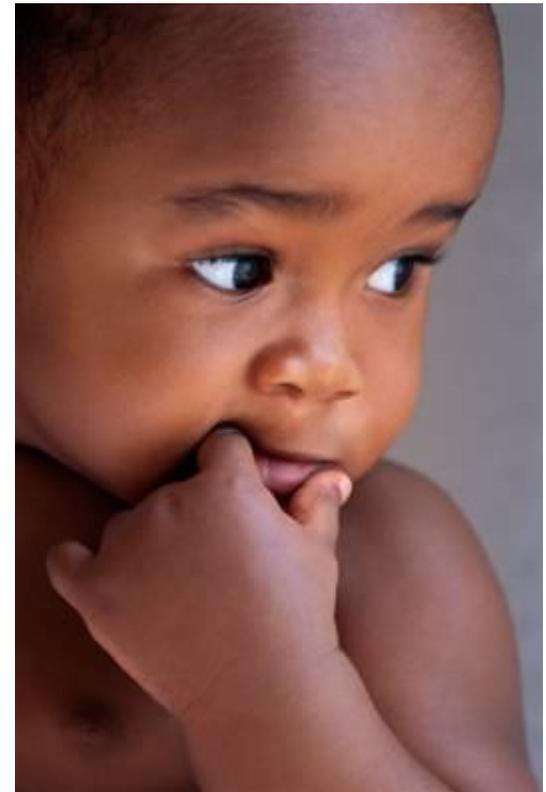
Factor: Responsiveness of systems

Knowledgeable and skilled professionals who understand and respond effectively to families can play a significant role in how children are impacted.



The impact of exposure to domestic violence on infants and young children may show up as...

- low birth weight
- exaggerated startle response
- somatic complaints
- regression in toileting or language
- sleep disturbances
- difficulty attaching to caregiver
- hyper-vigilance
- separation anxiety
- eating disorders



In school-aged children:

Some kids “over-control” their emotions or behaviors (these are internalized effects of exposure to DV). These children “hold things in”.



Some kids “under-control” their emotions or behaviors (these are externalized effects of exposure to DV). These kids are more likely to explode, act up or act out. They cannot manage their impulses.

For adolescents, exposure to DV
can result in kids being more likely to . . .

- Use drugs or alcohol
- Be harmed when they intervene in an assault
- Display attitudes supporting the use of violence
- Use violence in their own intimate relationships



What Does Trauma Look Like?

Children who may need professional help:

- Cry easily or constantly
- Appear emotionless or extremely withdrawn
- Have repeated or intrusive thoughts about the event
- Have trouble sleeping and/or nightmares
- Be “triggered” by a sound, smell, or other reminder of the experience
- Have difficulty concentrating
- Worry excessively leading to physical complaints (i.e. stomachaches)



Supporting Children Affected by Domestic Violence



Resource Parents can Support Children and Promote Healing

- Create a predictable world
- Add structure and clear expectations
- Pay close attention to non-verbal cues
- Avoid struggles for power and control
- Model healthy and respectful relationships



Resource Parents can Support Children and Promote Healing



- Give children choices whenever possible
- Help children learn not only what *not* to do, but what to do instead
- Teach children to put feelings into words
- Validate children's feelings about their parents
- Create opportunities for children to be successful (i.e. sports, music, art, academics, peer relationships)
- Send the right messages

Resource Parents can Support Children and Promote Healing

- Prepare children for visits
- Advocate for children when they need help in other settings
- Be respectful of the children's parents
- Have fun together!
- Get support for yourself!



Reporting Domestic Violence

- In Kentucky, everyone is a mandated reporter of “spouse abuse” per KRS 209A.030 (see handout);
- Although many states mandate certain professionals report DV, the mandate in KY is on everyone;
- Kentucky is unique in that it has mandatory reporting paired with a social service system response.

Handouts

- KRS 209A.020 Definition of Terms
- KRS 209A.030 Mandatory Reporting
- KRS 209A.050 Immunity for Good Faith
- KRS 209A.080 Confidentiality Issues

References

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Filetti, Vincent J., et. Al, “Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Many of the Leading Causes of Death in Adults: The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study,” *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 1998; 14(4)

<http://download.journals.elsevierhealth.com/pdfs/journals/0749-3797/PIIS0749379798000178.pdf>

Useful Links

- Kentucky Domestic Violence Association
 - www.kdva.org
 - Information on regional programs for victims of domestic violence and their children
- Family Violence Prevention Fund
 - www.endabuse.org
 - FREE resources for a variety of domestic violence related materials for adults and children

Thank You.

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