

What Children Need

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Approximately 546,000 children living in the United States are victims of abuse and neglect. Children exposed to domestic violence are at increased risk of physical and other forms of children maltreatment compared with those who are not exposed to domestic violence.

Child Maltreatment Report (2023)

SUPPORTING CHILDREN EXPOSED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- Listen without judgment
- Use simple, reassuring language
- Validate their feelings
- Allow the child to guide the conversation
- Ensure physical and emotional safety
- Reassure the child they are safe
- Let the child know the violence is not their fault

Every child's experience is different and the response to the violence may be different too. The right time to talk to a child about violence in the home is whenever they are ready.



HOW TO REPORT SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT TO DCFS

- Call the DCFS hotline at
1-800-25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873)
- Make an online report at
<https://dcfsonlinereporting.dcf.illinois.gov>
The Online Reporting System should only be used for non-life threatening and non-emergency instances of abuse and neglect. If you believe the abuse or neglect you are reporting requires immediate action, you **MUST** call the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline to make your report.



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT TO DCFS, SCAN THE QR CODE



528 S. 5th St., Suite 211
Springfield, IL 62701
217-522-1129

WWW.PREVENTCHILDAUSEILLINOIS.ORG

The Effects of Domestic Violence on Children

RECOGNIZING SIGNS AND SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING



Domestic Violence Impacts Children!

KEY FACTS EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW



TEACH KIDS TO BE **S.A.F.E**

Stay out of the fight.

Ask for help.

Find an adult who will listen.

Everyone knows it's not your fault.

THE FACTS

Domestic violence is a pattern of **abusive behavior in any relationship** that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. This includes:

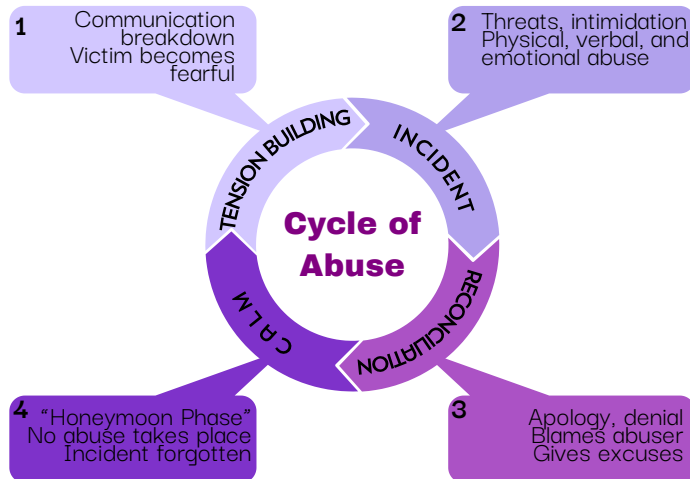
- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- psychological attacks, and
- economic coercion

Recent studies show:

- **1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men** have been victims of severe physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime.
- **1 in 15 children** are exposed to intimate partner violence each year, and 90% of these children are eyewitnesses to this violence.
- **On average, it takes a survivor 7 attempts of leaving before they leave the abuser permanently. Leaving is a process for the survivor, not an event.**

The survivor of such abuse is **never to blame** for the actions of the abusive partner.

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence



The Cycle of Abuse was created by psychologist Lenore Walker. The Cycle of Abuse does not represent all instances of domestic violence.

Many parents believe they can protect their children from exposure to abuse or violence. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, an estimated 1 in 15 children in the United States are exposed to intimate partner violence annually, and many experience it repeatedly.

WARNING SIGNS IN CHILDREN

Infants

- Frequent illness or other health problems
- Sleeping problems
- Excessive crying

Toddlers - All of the above, plus...

- Shyness or withdrawn behavior
- Reluctance to be touched
- Aggressive behavior, excessive biting and hitting
- Speech problems
- Loss of skills such as toilet training

School-Age - All of the above, plus...

- Increased aches and pains
- Headaches and/or stomach aches
- Stealing and lying
- Nightmares
- Eating disorders
- Self abusive behaviors
- Depression
- Perfectionism
- Regression
- Takes on parenting role
- Anger at siblings
- Drug/alcohol use

Teenagers - All of the above, plus...

- Helplessness or hopelessness
- Anger and confused feelings towards parents
- Isolation - doesn't bring friends home
- Delinquent behavior
- Sexual acting out
- Violent relationships with others
- Suicide thoughts and/or attempts

It is important to know that child abuse, domestic violence, and animal abuse are connected and often happen in the same family.

SUPPORTING A FAMILY THAT HAS EXPERIENCED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Community support can help a survivor stay out of the abusive relationship. Connect survivors to a local domestic violence shelter if possible as they can help with housing, orders of protection, and other helpful resources.

Free. 24/7. Confidential.
National Domestic Hotline
1 (800) 799-7233

Call or text 24/7
Illinois Domestic Hotline
1 (877) 863-6338