



Domestic Violence is a CRIME! Know your RIGHTS!

Effects of Domestic Violence on Children

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www.stopdvkern.org

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Four million children a year witness domestic violence.

Children who witness battering or other abuse between their parents may experience feelings that include:

- Fear for their own and/or other parent(s)' safety
- Confusion about what and why it happened
- Sense of betrayal
- Anxiety about the future
- Anger with one or both parents
- Sense of loss
- Emotional injuries; example: low self-esteem
- Depression
- Guilt over not being able to protect their parent(s)
- Using denial as a coping style
- Fear of abandonment
- Stress related ailments
- Shame and isolation regarding the abuse
- Sad, withdrawn and moody
- Constant anxiety

Children who have witnessed battering or other abuse between their parents may experience behavior problems that include:

- Demanding excessive attention and being very clingy.
- Aggressive behavior that acts out violence
- Danger and/or violence seen as "normal"
- Cognitive/language/speech problems
- Stress-related physical and/or psychological illnesses; headaches, ulcers, rashes
- Testing limits of parent(s); talk back, yelling, disobedience
- Nightmares - become more fearful when parent(s) leave them
- Wetting bed. Having accidents during the day, especially if a younger child
- Don't want to play with other children in cooperative way
- Taking excessive and/or inappropriate amount of responsibility
- Thoughts and/or attempts of suicide
- Delinquency and/or poor school attendance due to illness
- Poor school adjustment. Inability to focus or concentrate
- Run away from home or being sent to live with another relative
- Substance abuse to relieve emotional pain
- Early marriages or pregnancies
- Inability to experience a "normal" childhood or adolescence
- High risk of abusing/neglecting their own children
- Repeating the violence in their own relationships/marriages