

KIDS AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

domestic violence from a kid's perspective

"We need your help.
We've been hurt.
We've seen and heard bad things.
We wish you can help us and make us feel safe once more."
—Nine-year-old survivor of domestic violence

KIDS SPEAK ABOUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:

I knew I should call 911, but he is my dad.
I wanted to protect her, but I didn't know how.
My friends can't come over anymore.
I hate it when they yell.
I don't know why we don't just leave.
I'm afraid of what might happen when I go to school.

DID YOU KNOW?

We see, hear, remember, and worry about much more than grown-ups think we do. You may think we're asleep or distracted, but we know when you're fighting. We are more likely to be abused in a home where abuse is already happening.

WHAT IT'S LIKE FOR US

We SEE it. "She couldn't breathe. I thought he was going to kill my mom."
We HEAR it. "I hide under my bed because the noise scares me."
We GET it. "I wish they wouldn't lie about what's happening."
We HOLD it. "I worry about it all the time and feel like it's my fault."

HOW MANY KIDS ARE EXPOSED TO VIOLENCE?

Over their lifetimes, more than one in five children witness family assault, and more than one in six witness one parent assault another parent or parental partner (National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 2015).



LISTEN TO US

If we tell you there's fighting at home or if you're worried about us, please help! Don't be afraid to ask us what's going on at home. Tell us you're a safe person we can talk to. Thank us for having the courage to tell you. Remind us the violence is not our fault. Call the numbers on this brochure for more help. Help us make a Safety Plan (see below).

KEEP US SAFE

Grown-ups talk to us about "stranger danger" and fire safety. We need you to talk to us about how to stay safe when violence is happening in our homes, too.

A SAFETY P.L.A.N.

Prepare: Talk to us about how to be safe and how to practice our plan with an adult we trust.

Leave: Tell us where we can go to be safe, like a safe place in our home or neighborhood.

Ask for help: Teach us how to call 911 and how to talk to adults we trust when we need help.

Never get in the middle: Help us understand that it is not our job to stop the violence.

HOW WE RESPOND TO VIOLENCE

Some of us respond differently to violence, but we may respond by having trouble sleeping, having stomach aches or headaches, or wetting the bed. We may get in trouble or start getting bad grades. We may feel angry, confused, sad, lonely, guilty, and afraid for you and for ourselves.

ADVOCATES CAN HELP.

For more information, call the Virginia Statewide Hotline at 1.800.838.8238 (text at 804.793.9999) or a resource below: