If you or someone you know is experiencing DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, the children involved are also being hurt. Here’s how you can help:

**What is domestic violence?** Whenever a person intentionally hurts their partner in any way. This includes physical, psychological, verbal and sexual abuse, as well as abuse to property and pets. Domestic violence may include less obvious forms of abuse such as control of finances, isolation from friends and family, criticism and sexist comments, jealousy and possessiveness.

◊ Domestic violence is widespread and occurs in **ALL** socioeconomic groups
◊ **3 to 10 million children** will witness the abuse of a parent or adult caregiver in their home
◊ There **ARE** ways to **protect your children and yourself** from violence

**When a child lives in a violent home:**

> They are afraid. Even if they are not being directly abused, a child **IS** affected. In addition to immediate feelings of extreme fear, isolation and confusion, a child can develop a lifelong fear of and inability to trust others.

> They often have feelings of helplessness or guilt › for the abuse, which can result in anxiety, withdrawal, depression, aggression.

> They witness rigid stereotypes › (often of men having more control) which may translate into a belief that these roles are normal and could result in a lack of conflict resolution skills.

> They feel conflicted because of anger › toward the offender (often a parent) and can lose touch with what is right and wrong.

> They see violence and manipulation as a normal part of a relationship, and often have an increased tolerance for violence, making them more prone to become offenders or victims themselves as adults.

**Help your child:**

> Call the Virginia Family Violence and Sexual Abuse Hotline 800-838-8238 or the local helplines (see the left column).

> Focus on nurturing your child with love, trust and respect.

> Provide emotional security for your child.

> Provide physical security including shelter, food, medical attention and appropriate clothing.

> Provide consistent discipline and a consistent schedule.

> Give affection both physically and verbally.

> Give your child your time.

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**Children who live with any kind of violence ARE affected, even if they’re not the direct victim.**

*For your children and yourself, please reach out for help!*

For more information, please visit:
www.scanva.org
or call the VA 24-Hour Helpline at **888-552-7096**

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**SCAN**
Building hope for children & families in Northern Virginia

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**ALLIES IN PREVENTION COALITION**
An initiative of SCAN of Northern Virginia