



# Relationships that hurt

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

## HOW TO TELL IF A CHILD MIGHT BE LIVING IN A VIOLENT HOME:

- > Unusual or unexplained injuries
- > Chronic illnesses, headaches, or stomach aches
- > Signs of neglect such as poor hygiene or dirty clothes
- > Depression or low self-esteem
- > Violent behavior

## FOR ASSISTANCE CALL:

Alexandria Domestic Violence Program (703) 838-4911

Arlington Violence Intervention  
8am-5pm (703) 228-1550  
24 hour Crisis Line (703) 228-4848

Fairfax County Victim Assistance Network (703) 360-7273

Loudoun Abused Women's Shelter (LAWS) (703) 777-6552

Prince William (ACTS/Turning Points) (703) 221-4951

Virginia Family Violence and Sexual Assault Hotline 800-838-8238

If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, call 911.

**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.

**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!***

# SCAN

Building hope for children & families  
in Northern Virginia

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



**ALLIES IN PREVENTION**  
COALITION

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