



CHILDREN & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Children's responses to domestic violence vary with age and developmental stage. In addition, children's responses depend on the severity of the violence, their proximity to the violent events, and the responses of their caregivers.

ReMoved Part 1

- <https://youtu.be/1OeQUwdAjE0>

ReMoved Part 2

- <https://youtu.be/I1fGmEa6WnY>

Immediate Reactions

Children's immediate reactions to domestic violence may include:

- Generalized anxiety
- Sleeplessness
- Nightmares
- Difficulty concentrating
- High activity levels
- Increased aggression
- Increased anxiety about being separated from a parent
- Intense worry about their safety or the safety of a parent



Long-term effects, especially from chronic exposure to domestic violence, may include:

- Physical health problems
- Behavior problems in adolescence (e.g., delinquency, alcohol or substance abuse)
- Emotional difficulties in adulthood (e.g., depression, anxiety, PTSD)
- Exposure linked to poor school performance: impaired ability to concentrate; difficulty completing school work; and lower scores on measures of verbal, motor, and social skills.

In addition to these physical, behavioral, psychological, and cognitive effects, children who have been exposed to domestic violence often learn destructive lessons about the use of violence and power in relationships.

Children may learn that it is acceptable to exert control or relieve stress by using violence, or that violence is in some way linked to expressions of intimacy and affection.

These lessons can have a powerful negative effect on children in social situations and relationships throughout childhood and in later life.



Exposure to Domestic Violence: Age Breakdown

Birth to 5	Age 6-11	Age 12-18
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sleep and/or eating disruptions• Withdrawal/lack of responsiveness• Intense separation anxiety• Inconsolable crying• Developmental regression, loss of acquired skills• Intense anxiety, worries, and/or new fears• Increased aggression and/or impulsive behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nightmares, sleep disruptions• Aggression and difficulty with peer relationships in school• Difficulty with concentration and task completion in school• Withdrawal and/or emotional numbing• School avoidance and/or truancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Antisocial behavior• School failure• Impulsive and/or reckless behavior, e.g.,<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School truancy• Substance abuse• Running away• Involvement in violent or abusive dating relationships• Depression• Anxiety• Withdrawal