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unicef 
for every child

- ◆ Early Childhood Centers as creative and safe spaces!



The Effects of Domestic Violence on Children

Reducing risks : Improving Lives

On Children

You are the bows from
which your children
as living arrows are
sent forth.

Kahlil Gibran





Improving the lives of children

We talk about kids
subject to violence in
their home so that we
may improve their
lives....

Children need our help.

- ◆ In a national survey of more than 6,000 American families, 50 percent of the men who frequently assaulted their wives also frequently abused their children.

Wife assault and child abuse are co-occurring events.

<http://endabuse.org/resources/facts/>



Life shouldn't be scary.

- ◆ Slightly more than half of female victims of intimate violence live in households with children under age 12.

<http://endabuse.org/resources/facts/>

Violence Crosses gender

- ◆ While violence against women by men is most talked about, women also perpetrate violence against men. Further violence can be an issue in same-sex relationships regardless of gender.
- ◆ While raising violence against women still remains a difficulty in many jurisdictions, many men and same-sex couples find a greater stigma associated with raising the issue and hence these populations often go unserved.

Children should be counting blessings, not bruises.

- ◆ Studies suggest that between 3.3 - 10 million children witness some form of domestic violence annually.

<http://endabuse.org/resources/facts/>

Domestic Violence Defined from a Child Perspective

- ◆ Hostile, abusive or neglectful behaviour targeted at the child directly by parent or adult in the home
- ◆ Child's direct exposure to acts of violence between adults in the home as in the case of seeing, hearing or smelling abusive behaviour
- ◆ Child's indirect exposure to acts of violence as when seeing bruises, broken objects, distressed parent, blood or other evidence in the aftermath

Psychosocial development

- ◆ Our progress through each stage of development is in part determined by our success, or lack of success, in all the previous stages.

Eric Erikson and the epigenetic principle.



We evolve through social interaction

- ◆ Socialization imprints on personality and our personality impacts on others. Their reaction to our personality then determines our socialization... and so on.



Walk a mile in their shoes...

Formative experiences teach us how to interact with the world.



We are determined by our formative experiences

I thought the whole world was just like me, until we moved away.. Then I learned I was different.



Violence in the home provides it's own experience...

Children are subject to violence as targets as in cases of abuse; directly as witnesses; and indirectly when exposed to the aftermath

- ◆ Infants and toddlers
- ◆ Preschoolers
- ◆ School age
- ◆ Adolescence

Boys will be boys and girls will be girls

Boys are at risk of:

- ◆ Learning that males are violent
- ◆ Learning to disrespect women
- ◆ Using violence in his own relationships
- ◆ Confusion or insecurity about being a man
- ◆ Attacking parents or siblings

Girls are at risk of

- ◆ Learning that male violence is normal
- ◆ Learning that women don't get respect
- ◆ Accepting violence in her own relationships
- ◆ Embarrassed about being female
- ◆ Becoming pregnant

Domestic violence has an impact on children

- ◆ Thinking constantly about the traumatic event.
- ◆ Having nightmares.
- ◆ Avoiding places, people, or activities that re-mind them of the event.
- ◆ Losing interest in doing things that they liked before.
- ◆ Feeling alone, empty, sad, anxious, or uncaring.
- ◆ Becoming irritable, angry, and easily startled.

When children are exposed to domestic violence, it shows...

◆ Behavioral, social, and emotional problems

- higher levels of aggression, anger, hostility, oppositional behavior, and disobedience; fear, anxiety, withdrawal, and depression; poor peer, sibling, and social relationships; low self-esteem.

It hurts them...

- ◆ **Cognitive and attitudinal problems**
 - lower cognitive functioning, poor school performance, lack of conflict resolution skills, limited problem-solving skills, acceptance of violent behaviors and attitudes, belief in rigid gender stereotypes and male privilege.



...and can last a lifetime.



◆ **Long-term problems**

- higher levels of adult depression and trauma symptoms, increased tolerance for and use of violence in adult relationships

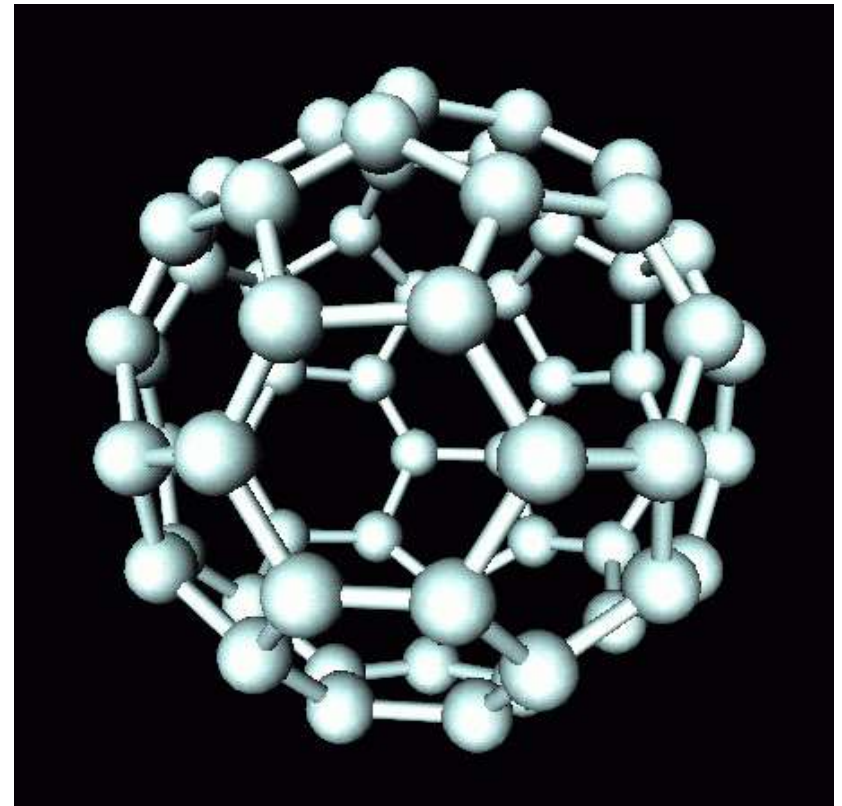
When Intervening...

Safety first.



When Intervening...

Structure second.



When Intervening...

Treatment third.



When Intervening...

and support
throughout



And we do this because...

Cost of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence in the United States costs an estimated \$67 billion annually.

<http://www.ag.state.la.us/violence/statistics.htm>

- Impact on Business
- Impact on the Healthcare System
- Economic Impact on the Legal System
- Economic Impact on Social Service Systems: Public and Private

But more importantly...

Because we care.



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