

When to Look for Help

If a child is physically hurting him/herself or other people or animals.

If a child's parent has been the victim of domestic violence or another form of violence.



If a child's problems have gone on for three to four months with no improvement.

If a child shows five or more of the behaviors listed in this brochure.

You can ask for help from someone at your child's school, your healthcare provider, a counselor, or your clergy person.

If the first person you talk to does not know how to help, try someone else or call on one of the programs listed on the back page of this brochure.

If you are worried about a child you know well, remember that you play a very important role. Call for help.

Where to Find Help

CARING UNLIMITED
York County's Domestic Violence Program
www.caring-unlimited.org
24 Hour Hotline
1-800-239-7298

YORK COUNTY CHILD ABUSE
PREVENTION COUNCIL
www.kidsfreetogrow.org
985-5975

PARENT RESOURCE CENTER
www.parentresourcecenter.info/
324-1371

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES
1-800-452-1999



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Caring Unlimited
York County's Domestic Violence Program

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Raising Our Children In a Violent World

Tips for Parents
And Other Caregivers



Support Through
Difficult Times

CARING UNLIMITED
24 Hour Hotline
1-800-239-7298

We All Want the Best for our Children

However, many things may interfere with the way children grow, learn and behave. Some are obvious, such as the death of a loved one. Others are less clear, such as growing up with violence at home or in the community.

Although we think that children are not aware of violence, they almost always see and hear more than we believe they do.

"I heard a loud noise and I thought it was a monster, but it wasn't. It was my Daddy. He makes loud monster noises when he's mad."

It is important to listen carefully to children's worries and let them know that adults are doing everything possible to keep them safe.

"After what happened in my neighborhood, I don't go outside any more. I'm too scared."

Children often communicate difficult feelings with their actions rather than words.

A three year old boy loves to play with toy animals at his preschool. Teachers report that the story he plays over and over again is big animals violently assaulting the smaller animals.

What You May See If A Child Is Having Trouble

Some problems that might show up at home, school or another familiar setting when a child see or hears violence are listed below. These same problems can also come up because of other things. If a child you know has several of these problems, witnessing violence may be one of the causes.

- ☹ Sleep troubles, nightmares, fear of falling asleep
- ☹ Headaches, stomach aches, aches and pains (somatic symptoms)
- ☹ Increased aggressive behavior and angry feelings
- ☹ A very high activity level (hyperactivity)
- ☹ Constant worry about possible danger (hypervigilance)
- ☹ Loss of skills learned earlier such as toilet training, naming colors, math facts, etc.
- ☹ Withdrawing from friends and activities
- ☹ Not showing feelings about anything (emotional numbing)
- ☹ Worrying a lot about the safety of loved ones
- ☹ Having trouble concentrating
- ☹ Repetitive play about the violent event

What You Can Do To Help Children Heal

- 😊 Healing begins with relationships. A helpful, supportive adult is the *most powerful tool* that we have to help children feel safe.
- 😊 Give children permission to tell their stories. It helps children to be able to talk about the violence in their lives with trusted adults.
- 😊 Give clear, simple explanations about scary events. Young children think differently than adults. They do not really understand the true causes of violence and will *often blame themselves*.
- 😊 Help children know what to expect. Have rules and routines so that children can predict what will come next.
- 😊 Build self esteem in children. Children who live with violence need *daily reminders* that they are lovable, competent and important.
- 😊 Teach alternatives to violence. Help children learn to solve problems and play in non-violent ways.
- 😊 Model nurturing in your interactions with children. Be a role model for children by resolving issues in respectful and non-violent ways.
- 😊 *Take care of your own physical and emotional needs*. Find someone to talk to in a safe, confidential setting about your worries.