

## **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AFFECTS CHILDREN**

Children often hear, see, and witness domestic violence and its after effects. Children have their own reactions and feelings that need to be addressed. Here are some things to look for and do for a child you care about

### **CHILDREN WHO WITNESS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

- May have delays in speech, walking, and in other areas of development.
- May feel guilty because they could not stop the abuse.
- May blame themselves for the abuse done to them or to others.
- May act out by hitting, bullying or swearing.
- May want to stay home from school to make sure others at home are safe.
- May run away from home to get away from the abuse.
- May seem depressed and withdraw from people and/or activities.
- May have problems sleeping and have nightmares and/or bedwetting.
- May have poor school performance.
- May feel constantly sick (headache, stomachache, and low or high energy level).
- May have constant anxiety and/or have trouble concentrating.
- May have fear of being left by their caretaker (become clingy, fear strangers, or fear being hurt).
- May feel bad or ashamed for still loving the abuser.
- May self-mutilate and/or have eating disorders.

### **WAYS TO HELP CHILDREN**

- Remember your actions are your child's best teacher.
- If you are the child's caregiver and you are in an abusive relationship, get help for yourself and recognize your child may need help.
- Tell children that using words or actions to hurt others is not O.K.
- Help children talk about their feelings and handle their feelings in ways that do not hurt others, (when angry take time out or talk to someone instead of hitting or yelling).
- Teach children to recognize when they have hurt someone.
- Teach children to be concerned about the feelings of others.
- Help children be positive about themselves. Encourage them to try new things and learn from mistakes.
- Teach children that they have the right not to be hurt and the right to receive help if they are hurt.
- Give children time to play; let them be children.
- Develop a safety plan with/for your child.
- Give children love and attention.

**IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT A CHILD WITNESSING DV –SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP!**

## Where Adults Can Get Help

### **SOS Shelter Help-line 754-4340**

24 hrs/day –7 days /week  
Advocacy, legal information  
Support & shelter

### **Crime Victims Assistance Center**

24 hr. Crisis Line-722-4256  
Victim's advocacy, counseling and support and education

### **Family & Children's Society**

729-6206  
Batterers Intervention Program ... “for men who want to change their behavior”.

### **Broome County Family Court**

778-2156

### **Where Adults Can Get Help for Children**

Crime Victims Assistance Center: 722-4256  
School Counselor or Social Worker  
Family & Children's Society: 729-6206  
Catholic Social Services: 729-9166  
Greater Binghamton Health Center: 773-4520  
Mental Health Clinic: 778-1992  
Other private therapists  
1<sup>st</sup> Call for Help: 729-9100

### **Child Abuse Hotline**

**1-800-342-3720**