

## Here are some things that can happen to children when there is violence at home

Children are affected by violence in their family. It can hurt as much as if the violence was done to them. It affects them now, and it affects them later. It changes how they behave and how they deal with their feelings. It changes how they learn and grow up. It changes how they deal with people and situations.

Here are some things that can happen to children when there is violence at home

### **babies and toddlers**

- cry a lot
- can't sleep
- put on weight

### **pre-schoolers**

- cling to you
- get pushy, start fights
- worry, feel afraid

### **early school-aged**

- feel like the violence is their fault
- try to stop the abuse

### **aged 6 to 10**

- have trouble at school
- have trouble making friends

### **teens**

- skip school, drop out, run away
- have violent dates
- pretend there is no family violence to help them cope

These children can grow up accepting violence as part of life.

## Nova Scotia Department of Justice - Court Services Division - Victim Services

We offer help and information for victims of crime. There is no cost for this service.

Contact the Provincial Victim Services Office in your area:

**Dartmouth:** Serves all of HRM  
277 Pleasant Street, Suite 306  
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, B2Y 4B7  
Telephone: 424-3307

**Kentville:** Serves Annapolis, Kings, West Hants, Lunenburg, Queens, Shelburne, Yarmouth, and Digby Counties  
49 Cornwallis St., Suite 204  
Kentville, Nova Scotia, B4N 2E3  
Telephone: 679-6201  
Toll Free: 1-800-565-1805

**New Glasgow:** Serves Pictou, Guysborough, East Hants, Antigonish, Colchester, and Cumberland Counties  
115 Maclean St., 2nd Floor  
New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, B2H 4M5  
Telephone: 755-7110  
Toll Free: 1-800-565-7912

**Sydney:** Serving Cape Breton, Richmond, Inverness & Victoria Counties  
136 Charlotte St., 4th floor  
Sydney, Nova Scotia, B1P 1C3  
Telephone: 563-3655  
Toll Free: 1-800-565-0071

**Criminal Injuries Counselling Program:**  
Contact number for all of Nova Scotia  
P.O. Box 7, Halifax, NS, B3J 2L6  
Telephone: 424-3309  
Fax: (902) 424-2056  
Toll Free: 1-888-470-0773

## Counselling for Children Who Witness Intimate Partner Violence



You can get help for your child, with counselling from the Criminal Injuries Counselling Program.

*Locations and phone numbers are on the back of this pamphlet.*

Witnessing family violence affects children. It affects them now, and it affects them later. *Counselling can help change that.*

Children can have Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Here's what can happen to a child who has PTSD.

- They have nightmares and flashbacks to the violence.
- They worry a lot. They are afraid, angry, get upset easily, and try to be perfect.
- They look for ways to stay away from things that remind them of the abuse.

#### How they might feel

- sad
- guilty
- lonely
- frightened

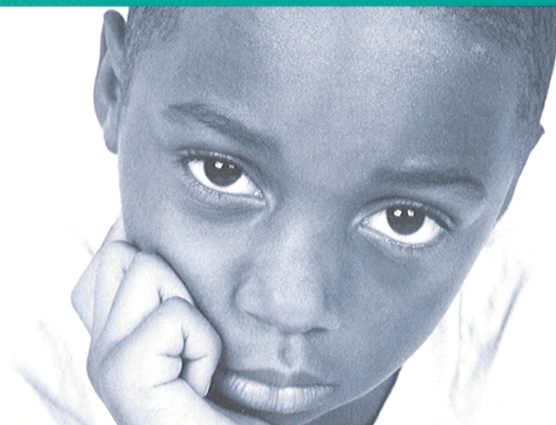
#### How they might act

- wet the bed
- slow to learn how to do things
- blame themselves for the violence
- don't have friends
- don't trust people
- get a lot of headaches and stomach aches
- hurt themselves
- take their anger out on other people
- can't control their actions.

#### Things they might do

- get into fights
- break the law
- do drugs, drink a lot
- get involved in sex when they are not ready
- think about suicide

## The Criminal Injuries Counselling Program can help children



## Here is how it works

- the violence happened on or after January 1, 2008
- the child is younger than 20
- the violence is reported to the police
- the police investigate
- the program gets the report on the investigation from the police

## What you need to do

There are things you need to do according to the law

- report the crime to the police. Intimate partner violence is a crime
- contact the nearest Provincial Victim Services office or the Criminal Injuries Counselling Program. Contact information is on the back of this pamphlet. The staff will give you an application form, help you fill it out, and talk to you about the program.
- work with the police and other officials when they investigate the crime
- work with the police and other officials when they take the person to court
- the police must finish investigating the crime. They will then send their report to program staff. Staff will get in touch with you to let you know what happens next.

## Your child may be able to get counselling.

Here is what happens

- your application must be approved
- you will get a list of counsellors who work in your area and who are approved to do this work
- you can choose a counsellor from the list
- the counsellor will bill our program directly when they talk to your child

When you make your first appointment, ask the counsellor if they charge the rate the program pays. If they charge more, you can decide to choose a different counsellor or pay the extra fee.