

Children Living in Homes with Domestic Violence How Children Feel When Abuse is Occurring between Parents

- ❖ · **Powerless** - because they can't stop the abuse
- ❖ · **Guilty** - believing they somehow caused the abuse
- ❖ · **Helpless** - because they feel a need to help solve the problem
- ❖ · **Angry** - blaming the victimized parent, assuming they are at fault
- ❖ · **Angry** - blaming the abusive parent for hurting members of the family
- ❖ · **Confused-** because the parents may try to force children to choose sides
- ❖ · **Afraid-** for themselves and all family members
- ❖ · **Isolated and insecure,** often making up excuses so they don't have to go home to explain why they can't invite friends over
- ❖ · **Dishonest and embarrassed** because they make up excuses for injuries and bruises
- ❖ · **Overwhelmed** by the situation, often leading to poor school performance and avoidance of their friends

Characteristics of Children Living in Homes where there is Violence

- ❖ · Lonely
- ❖ · Isolated—tend to not bring home friends
- ❖ · Uses violence and threats to solve problems
- ❖ · Difficulty in developing close relationships—has trouble separating self from conflict
- ❖ · Blames self--takes responsibility for the violence witnessed
- ❖ · Uses all energy to keep "the family secret"
- ❖ · Problems trusting others
- ❖ · Fear of failure—unwilling or fearful of trying something new
- ❖ · Over-achieving--feels need to be perfect
- ❖ · Limited physical expression in regards to body image
- ❖ · Accident-prone
- ❖ · Conflicting feelings of shame or guilt
- ❖ · Confusion about family roles
- ❖ · Identify with abusive parent to stay safe
- ❖ · Denial
- ❖ · Pseudo maturity--reversal of family roles
- ❖ · Developmental delays
- ❖ · Aggressive language or behavior
- ❖ · Preoccupation with violence
- ❖ · Unusual degree of fear
- ❖ · Associates love with violence
- ❖ · Feelings of powerlessness or hopelessness
- ❖ · Fear of abandonment
- ❖ · Need for attention

- ❖ · Trouble respecting authority figures
- ❖ · Regressive behavior (i.e.: bedwetting, baby talk, phobias, fear of dark)
- ❖ · Chronic run away

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