Healing the Invisible Wounds: Children's Exposure to Violence

Young Children (0-6)

Safe Start Center Web: www.safestartcenter.org E-mail: info@safestartcenter.org_ Telephone: 1-800-865-0965

What To Look For and How to Help:

School-aged (7-11)

Signs

What

to do

Cries more than usual Becomes less responsive Cries when you leave Eats more or doesn't want to eat Sleeps all the time or has trouble sleeping Has frequent temper tantrums Behaves like a younger child Asks many questions about the event Startles easily

Adolescents

Schedule time alone with you Soothe by singing and rocking Keep a regular routine Use storybooks to talk about feelings Shield from violent TV or books Don't leave them with people they don't know well Explain what will happen ahead of time

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Adolescents (12-18)

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Feels responsible for or guilty about the event Wants to be left alone Seems sad all the time Acts very hyper or very spacey Gets into trouble at school and at home Is more aggressive; gets into fights Has nightmares Eats more or less than before

Listen calmly, without judging Tell them what happened is not their fault Write down worries and talk about each one Help them find a safe place Don't make hateful comments Teach nonviolent ways to solve problems Let them make some decisions

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Complains about being tired Thinks about the event all the time Becomes more rebellious Wants to seek revenge Stops caring about their looks Skips school* Becomes violent * Drinks and uses drugs* Talks about dying* *Serious of

 Serious concerns requiring professional help

Adolescents (12-18)

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Be extra patient Ask, in private, what's wrong Respond calmly, without judging Provide safe and fun activities Encourage spending time with people they trust Help them make a plan to stay safe Don't make commitments you can't honor

Additional resources for parents about children's exposure to violence:



Hot Lines

Resources on Children's Exposure to Violence

Information and Resources

Books for Chil



National Crime Victim Helpline 1-800-FYI-CALL (394-2255) Interpreters in 170 languages Information about what to do if you are the victim of a violent crime and referrals to local services.

National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) TTY: 1-800-787-3224 Interpreters in 170 languages *Crisis intervention, safety planning, information and referrals for survivors and anyone calling on their behalf.*

Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-4-A-CHILD (422-4453) Interpreters in 170 languages Information, referrals to emergency and social services, and support for children and adults.



The Safe Start Center is funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice Programs,

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Books for Children



Hot Lines



Child Witness to Violence Project www.childwitnesstoviolence.org Family Communications www.fci.org **Family Violence Prevention Fund** www.endabuse.org National Child Traumatic Stress Network www.nctsn.org National Mental Health Information Center www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov New York University Child Study Center www.aboutourkids.org Parenting Resources, USA.gov www.usa.gov/Topics/Parents.shtml Zero to Three www.zerotothree.org

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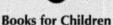
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Information and Resources





3-6 Year Olds

I Do and I Don't, Fred Rogers and Hedda Sharapan A Terrible Thing Happened: A Story for Children Who Have Witnessed Violence or Trauma, Margaret Holmes

7-11 Year Olds

Something Is Wrong at My House: A Book About Parents' Fighting, Diane Davis I Can Make My World a Safer Place, Paul Kivel

12-18 Year Olds

Autobiography of My Dead Brother, Walter Dean Myers The Rules of Survival, Nancy Werlin The Kids' Guide to Working Out Conflicts: How to Keep Cool, Stay Safe, and Get Along, Naomi Drew



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