

Children exposed to violence refers to children who **see, hear** or **are aware** of the violence occurring.



Children can be exposed to violence in their homes, their schools, their neighbourhoods and also through the media.

Violent behaviour is learned, as a result children who witness violence are likely to become violent as adults.

In a study done in Canadian correctional facilities, 79% of Aboriginal and 85% of non-Aboriginal offenders reported that they were hit by their parent/caregiver.

GOALS OF COUNSELING

- ◆ Breaking the silence
- ◆ Understanding roles and responsibilities
- ◆ Learning to identify feelings
- ◆ Dealing with separation and divorce
- ◆ Prevent the child from feeling isolated
- ◆ Creating safety plans, increasing stability
- ◆ Symptom reduction
- ◆ Develop conflict resolution skills
- ◆ Identifying social supports
- ◆ Learning about the cycle of violence
- ◆ Building self esteem



CONTACT INFORMATION

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Moose Jaw Transition House

Children's Program

Children Exposed to Violence



Promoting and teaching
non-violence to one child at a time

HOW TO HELP A CHILD

- ◆ Understand and acknowledge that there is a reason for the child's behaviour
- ◆ Allow your child to talk about the abuse
- ◆ Let your child know that others fighting or arguing is not their fault
- ◆ Help them to identify feelings other than anger and help them to find safe ways to express those feelings
- ◆ Get support for yourself
- ◆ Believe and support the child
- ◆ Let the child know that it is alright to dislike someone's behaviour, but still love that person
- ◆ Help them to develop a safety plan
- ◆ Explain to children that all families are different but theirs is not the only family where violence happens



CHILDREN: THE FORGOTTEN VICTIMS



Depending on the age of the child, exposure to violence can have different effects on the child. Some facts to consider are:

- ◆ Children are present during 80% of interpersonal violence
- ◆ 25% of children who had resided in a shelter felt that it was alright for a man to strike a woman if the house was messy. After group counselling, none of the children supported a man ever hitting a woman
- ◆ Children who witness women being abused frequently experience post traumatic stress disorder
- ◆ Witnessing family violence is related to negative behaviour in children

THE 4 COMPONENTS OF THE PROGRAM

1. **Individual crisis/intervention Counselling** for children staying in the house or within the Community
2. **Educational presentations** in schools, to community groups and service providers
3. **Support groups** for children who are exposed to violence. These groups are offered 3 times per year, meet weekly for 6 weeks, and are for boys and girls ages 6 to 12. The groups are intended to help children to learn to break free from the cycle of violence.
4. **Parenting support** for caregivers of children who are exposed to violence. Support can be one on one or in a group setting.

Please call for more information.

