

Living In Fear: The Effects of Domestic Violence on Children

Objectives of Training

- Learn about the cycle and dynamics of domestic violence
- Understand dangers and risks to children
- Know warning signs of child abuse
- Recognize impact of DV on children
- Learn about childhood trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
- How professionals can help
- Protocols of children on the scene



This subject can be hard to talk about and hard to think about. Please feel free to move around, stand up, step out, or whatever you need to do to take care of yourself.



What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence, or intimate partner violence, is a ***pattern*** of abusive behaviors that is used by one partner to gain power and control over another intimate partner. Domestic violence can include physical, psychological, verbal, financial, sexual, spiritual or emotional abuse.

Domestic violence is about ***power*** and ***control***. Its purpose is for the person causing harm to gain power and control over the person(s) experiencing harm.



Who Are the PWCH and Who Are the PWEH?

Perpetrators

- At least 85% of domestic violence cases, women are the people who experience harm and men are the people who cause harm.
- 30 to 60% of PWCH of intimate partner violence also abuse children in the household

Victims

- 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men have experienced harm of severe physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime.
- 1 in 15 children are exposed to intimate partner violence each year, and 90% of these children are eyewitnesses to this violence.

Characteristics of

- Witnessed abuse as a child or was abused as a child
- Low opinion of women
- Jealous and possessive
- Demanding of partner's time and attention
- May be socially charming
- Does not take responsibility for his actions
- May use drugs/alcohol
- Treats partner and children as possessions
- Undermines partner's parenting abilities and authority
- Manipulative
- Unreasonable demands
- May have a criminal history
- May be loving and kind at times

Substance abuse may influence the severity of the violence during a violent episode, but it ***does not*** cause domestic violence.

Why Does the PWEH Stay?

- They are in love
- Hope for change
- Isolation
- Lack of resources
- Fears no one will believe them
- Afraid of losing custody of children
- They have tried before
- PWCH has threatened to kill her and/or the children if she leaves
- No support system in place

On average, it takes a PWEH 7 attempts of leaving before she leaves the PWCH permanently

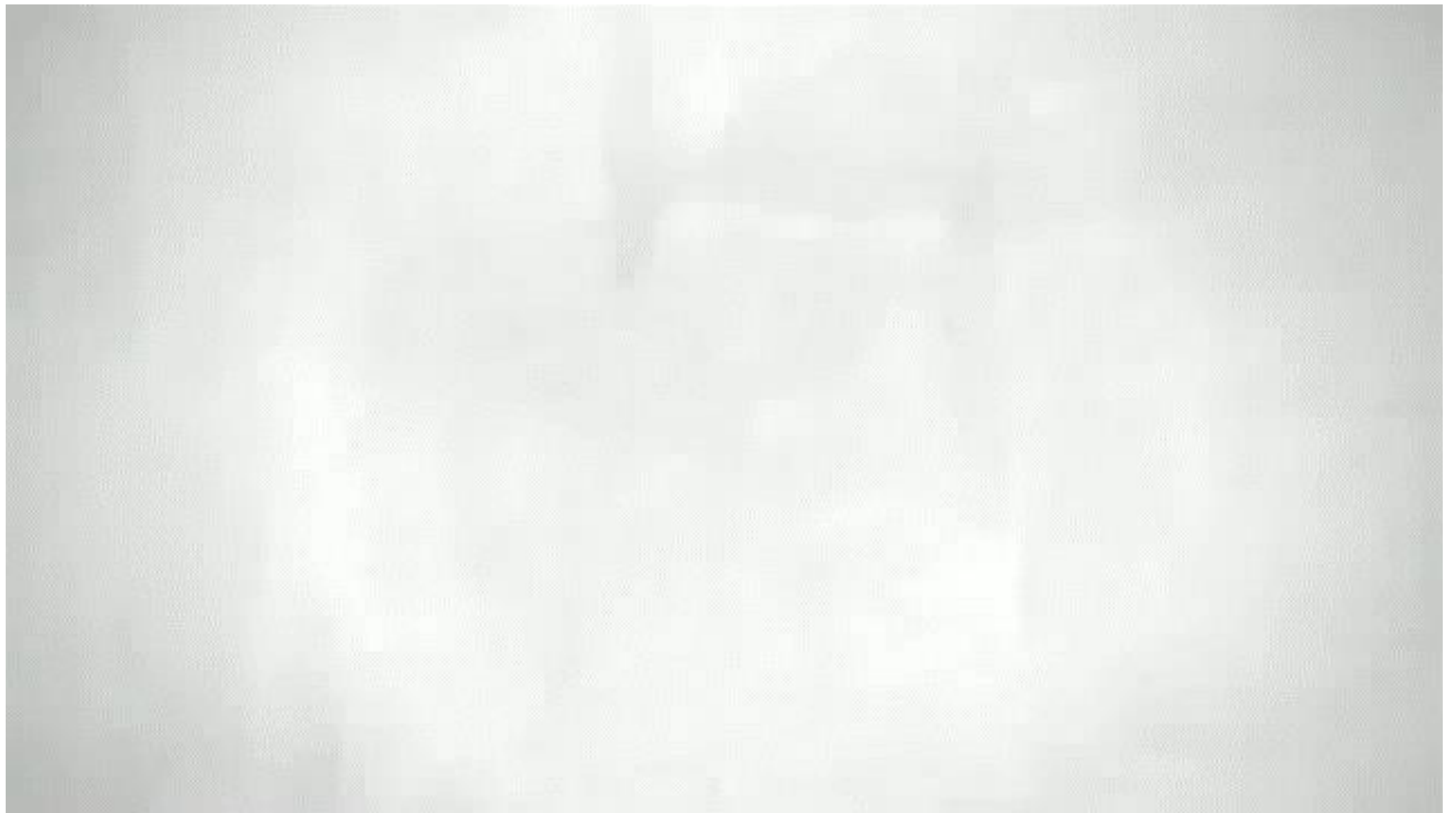
Leaving is a process for the PWEH, not an event

Up to 75% of domestic assaults reported to police are made after separation.

Largest Predictor of a PWEH in Leaving:
Economic Resources

#WhyIStayed





Children and Domestic Violence

Witnessing violence between parents or caretakers is the strongest risk factor of transmitting violent behaviour from one generation to the next.

Boys who witness domestic violence are twice as likely to abuse their own partners and children when they become adults.

Those who grow up with domestic violence are 6 times more likely to commit suicide and 50% more likely to abuse drugs and alcohol

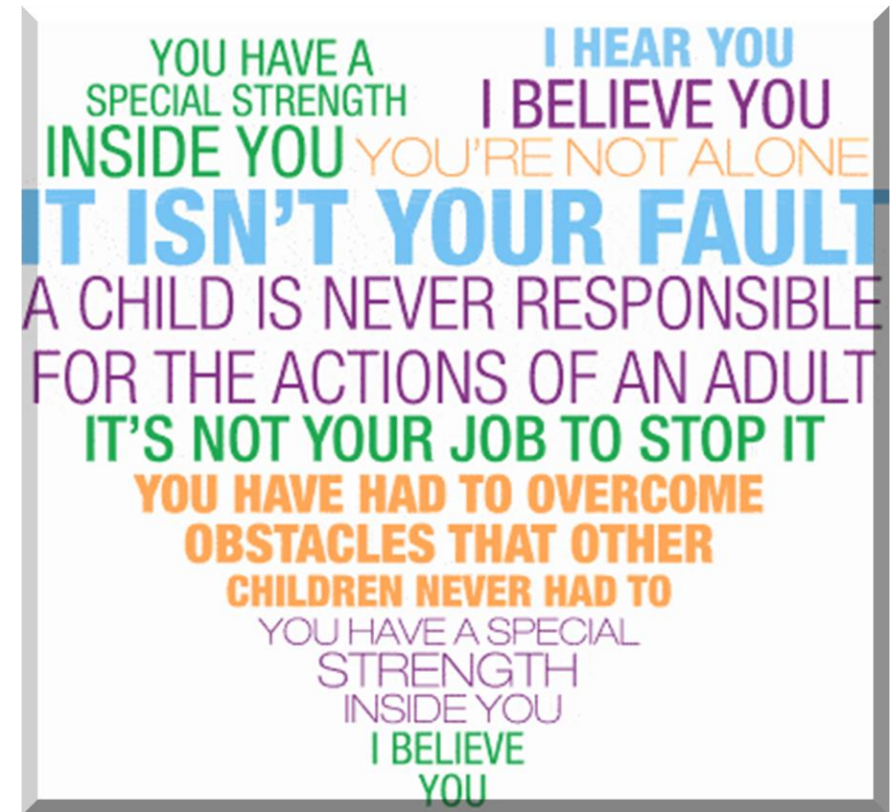


911 Call (Neighbor)



Dangers to Children

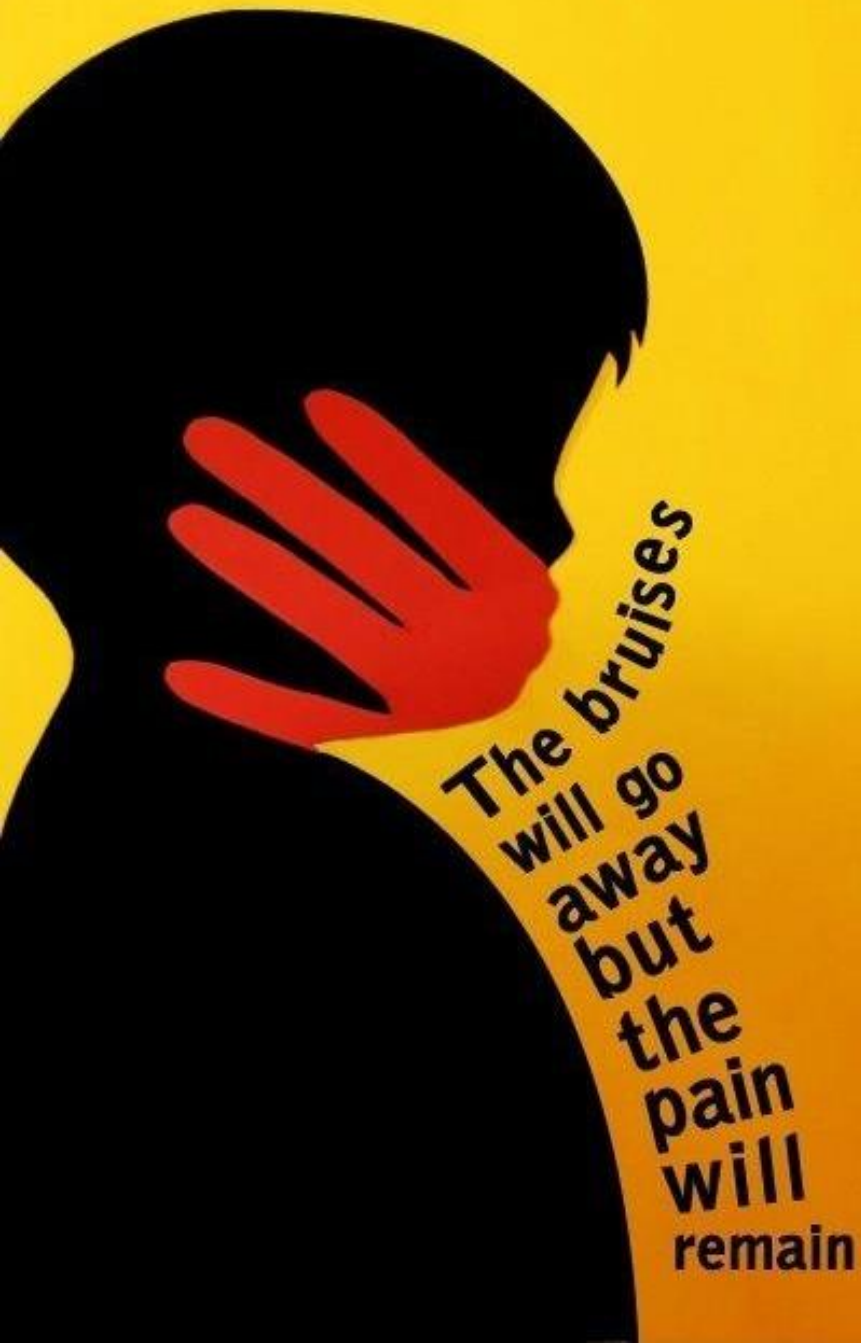
- Injury
 - Intentional
 - Accidental
 - Manipulation tactic
- A PWCH who threaten suicide rarely die alone, will kill someone else before killing themselves, including children



Impact on Children

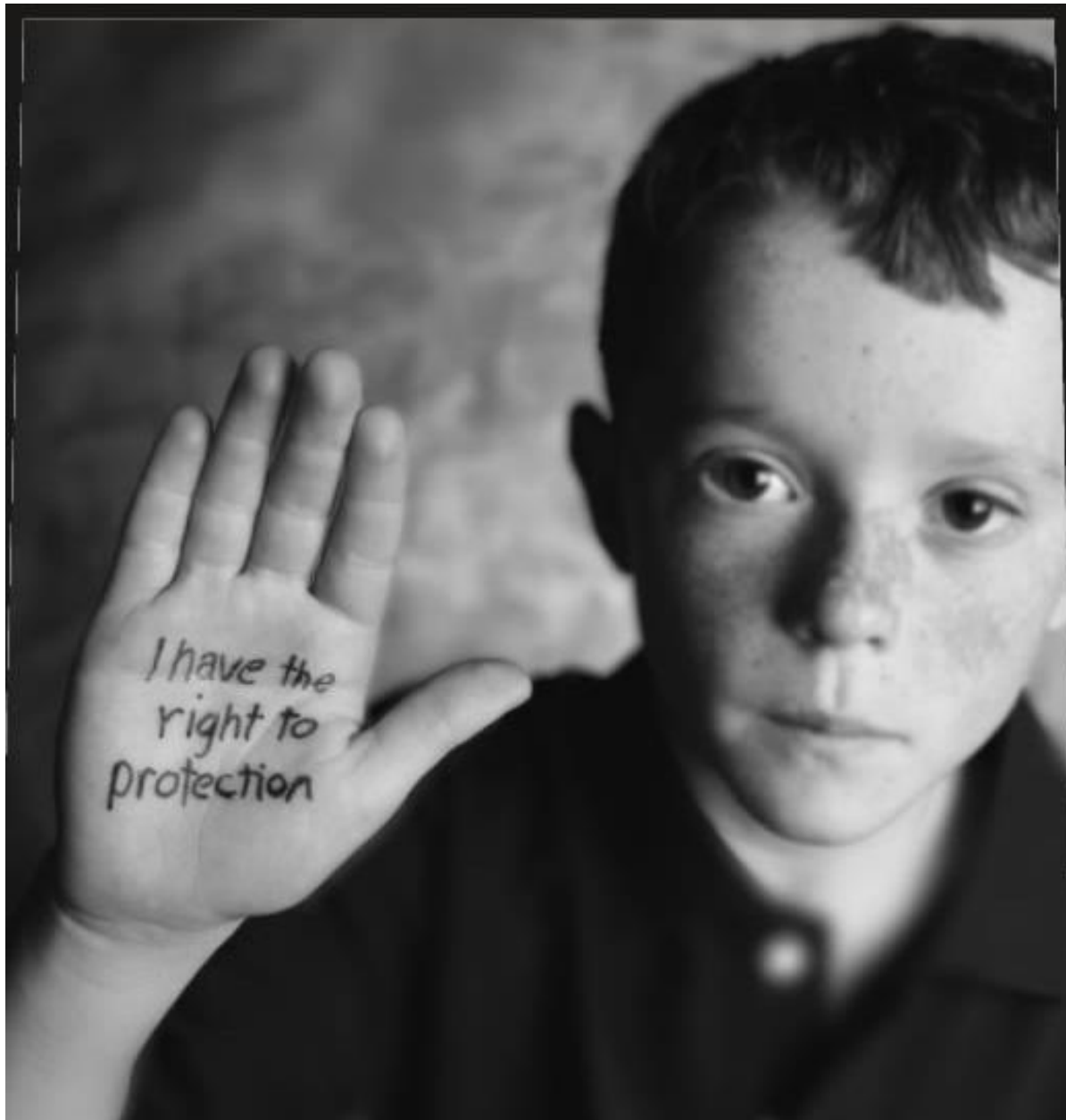
- Children may experience:
 - Confusion
 - Fear
 - Stress
 - Anger
 - Helplessness
 - Loneliness
 - Embarrassment
 - Feelings of aggression
 - Bed-wetting
 - Insomnia
 - Antisocial behavior





Effects on Children

- Feelings of guilt and shame
- Feeling responsible for abuse
- Violence may become a coping mechanism
- May keep secrets → lying becomes a learned behavior
- Self-abusive behaviors
- Sleeping pattern changes
- Frequent illnesses or health problems (somatic responses)
- Isolation
- Taking on parenting roles
- Depression and anxiety



Domestic Violence Facts

- The U.S. Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect suggests that **domestic violence may be the single major precursor to child abuse and neglect.**
- 30 to 60% of perpetrators of intimate partner violence also abuse children in the household.
- A child witnessed violence in 22% (nearly 1 in 4) of intimate partner violence cases filed in state courts
- There is a common link between domestic violence and child abuse. Among victims of child abuse, 40% report domestic violence in the home

Risk Factors of Child Abuse



- Poverty
- Stress
- Mental Illness
- Social Isolation
- Unrealistic Expectations
- Unrelated Paramours
- Lack of Parenting Knowledge
- Childhood History
- ***Domestic Violence***
- Substance Abuse
- Special Needs
- Unplanned Pregnancy

Warning Signs of Abuse in Children

Infants

- Decreased responsiveness
- Fussiness
- Trouble eating and sleeping

Pre-School

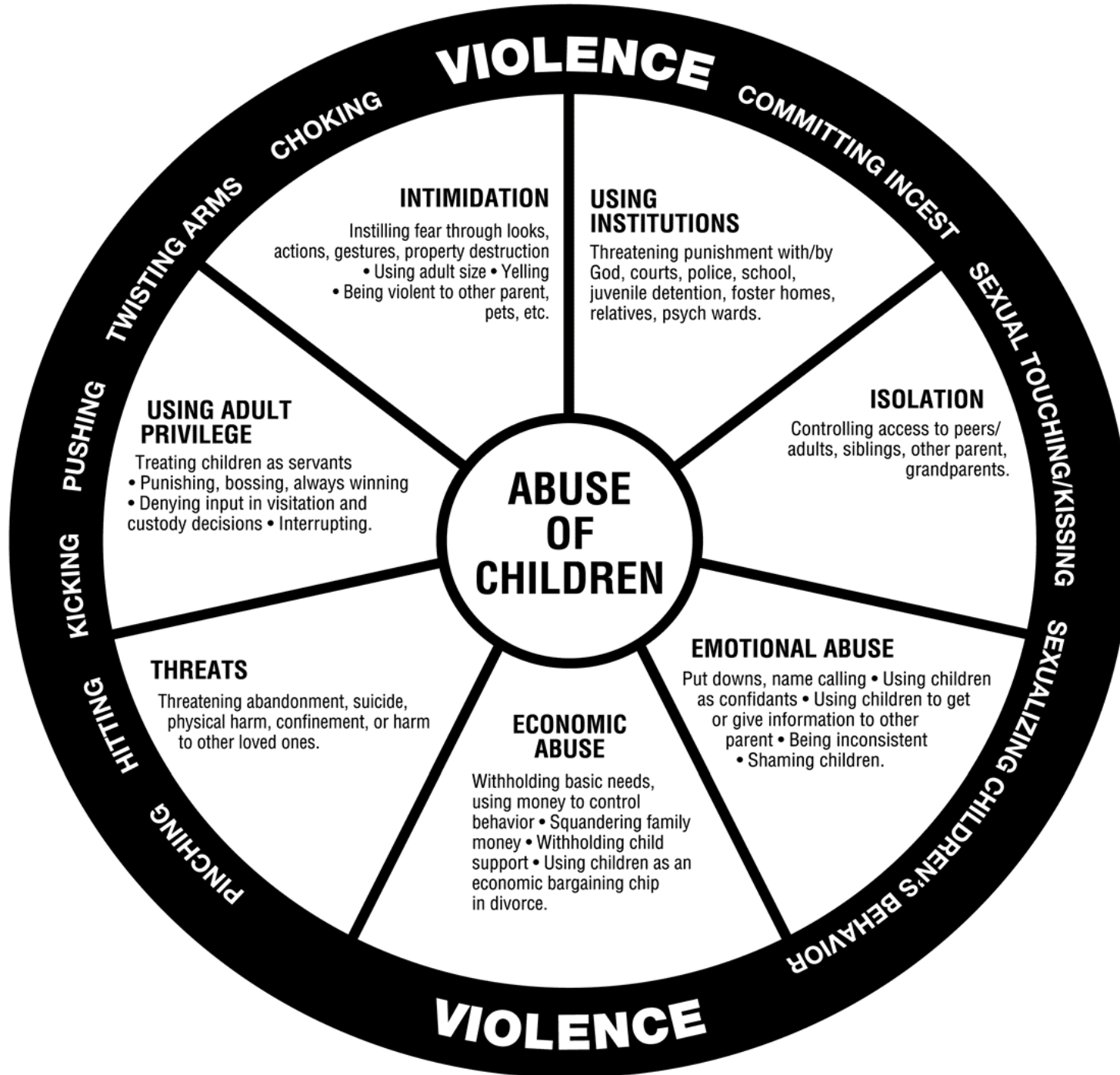
- Aggression
- Behavior problems
- Frequent bed wetting
- Isolating themselves from peers
- Feeling unsafe
- Suffering separation anxiety
- Bad dreams
- Self-blame
- Lower verbal skills

Grade School

- Bullying others
- Poor quality peer relationships
- Emotionally withdrawn
- Emotional responses not matching situation(s)
- Lower reading levels
- Regression
- Self-abusive behaviors

Adolescents

- Dating violence
- Use of drugs or alcohol
- Early sexual activity
- Emotionally withdrawn or detached
- Frequent health complaints
- Short attention span
- Difficulty trusting others



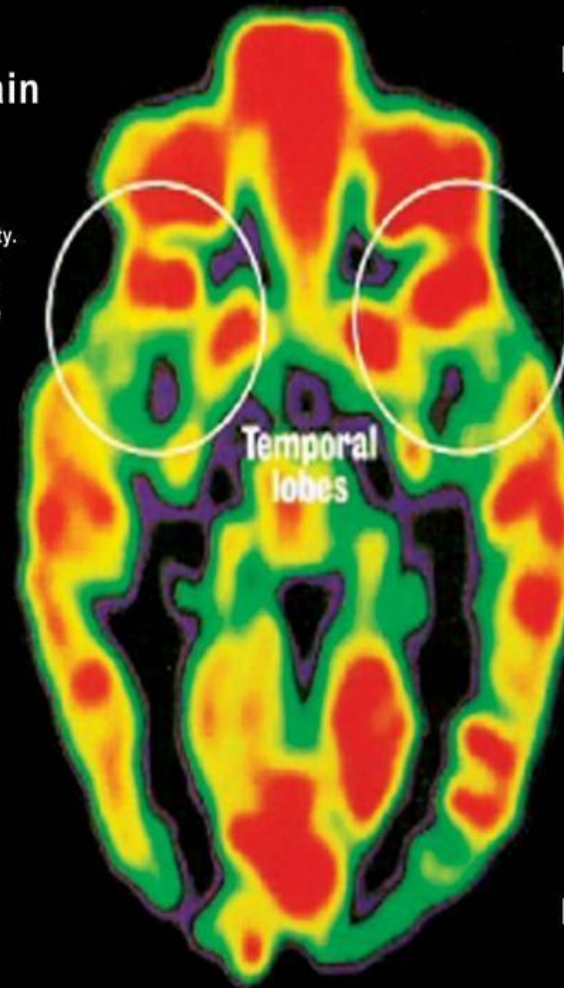
ACTIVITY

Childhood Trauma

- Trauma is the experience of an event by a child that is emotionally painful or distressful which often results in lasting mental and physical effects
- Fear and trauma influence the developing brain
- Experiences in childhood have greater impact on developing child than experiences later in life.

Healthy Brain

This PET scan of the brain of a normal child shows regions of high (red) and low (blue and black) activity. At birth, only primitive structures such as the brain stem (center) are fully functional; in regions like the temporal lobes (top), early childhood experiences wire the circuits.

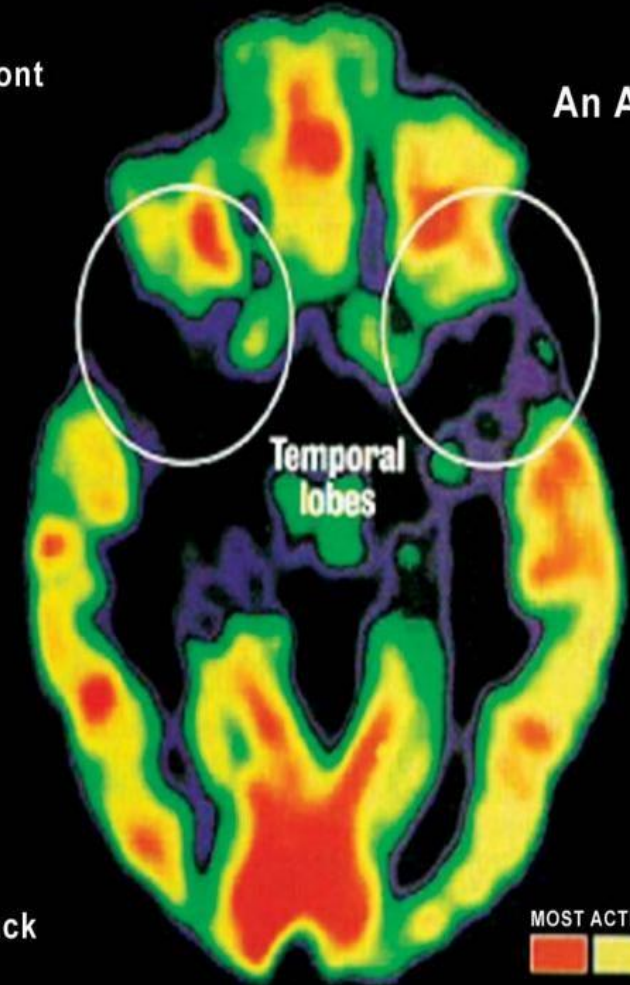


Front

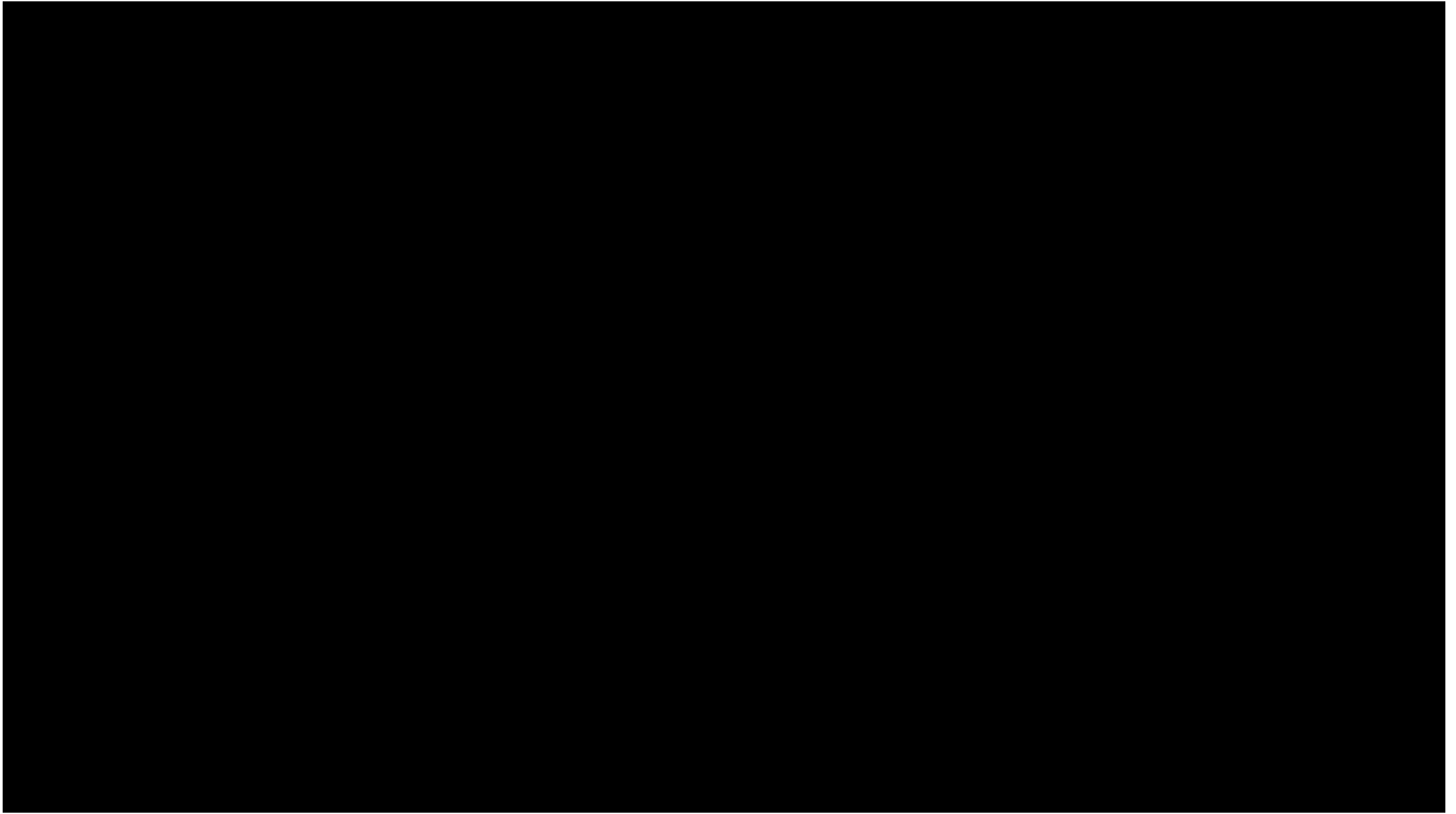
Back

An Abused Brain

This PET scan of the brain of a Romanian Orphan, who was institutionalized shortly after birth, shows the effect of extreme deprivation in infancy. The temporal lobes (top), which regulate emotions and receive input from the senses, are nearly quiescent. Such children suffer emotional and cognitive problems.



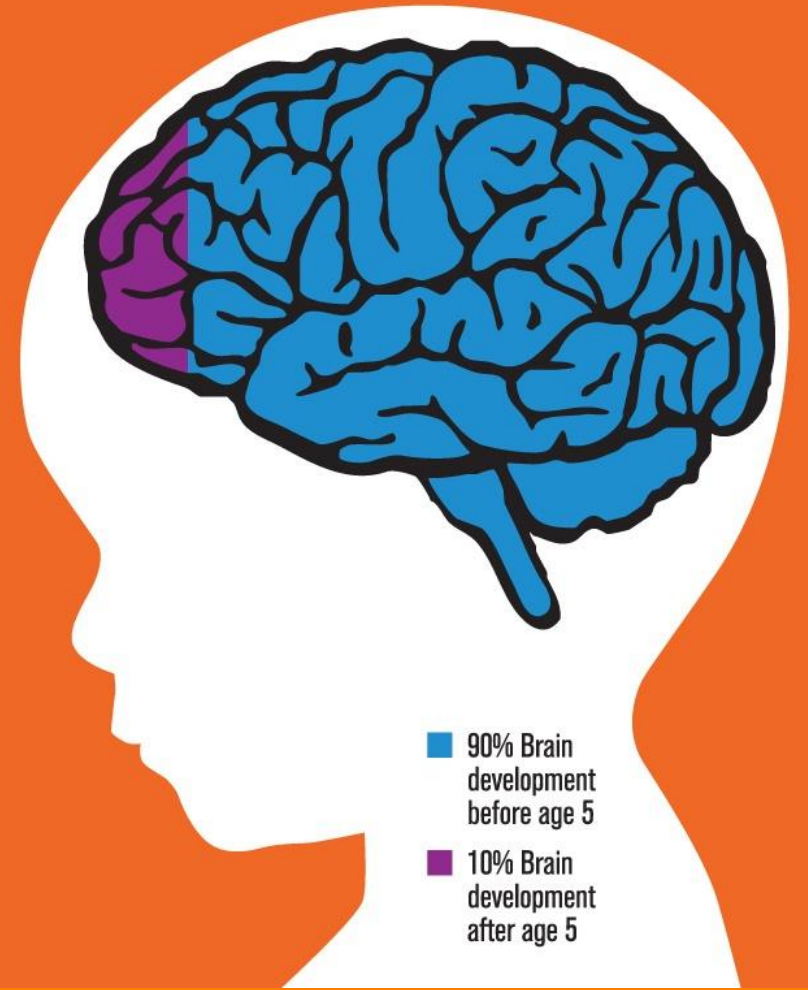
MOST ACTIVE LEAST ACTIVE



Childhood Trauma

- By age 3, the brain has reached 90% of its adult size
- Experiences of childhood define the adult
- Children reflect the world in which they are raised

90%
**of a child's brain
development
happens
before age 5**

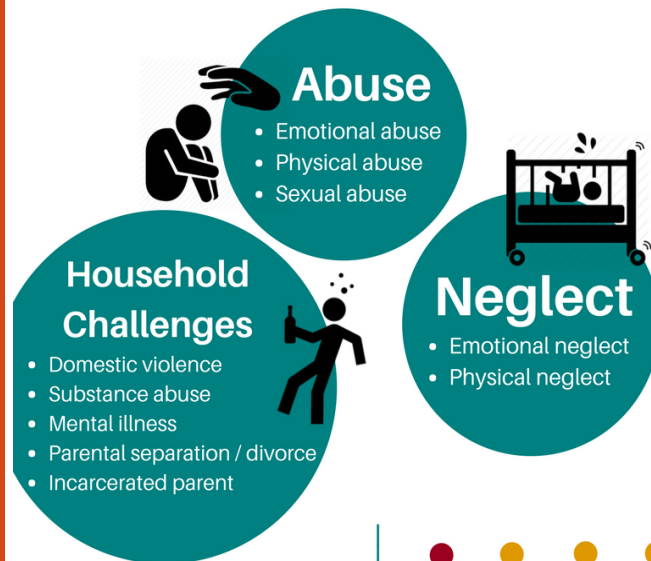


Source: Harvard Center for the Developing Child

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Traumatic events that can have negative, lasting effects on health and wellbeing



People with 6+ ACEs can die

20 yrs

earlier than those who have none



1/8 of the population have more than 4 ACEs



www.70-30.org.uk
@7030Campaign

4 or more ACEs

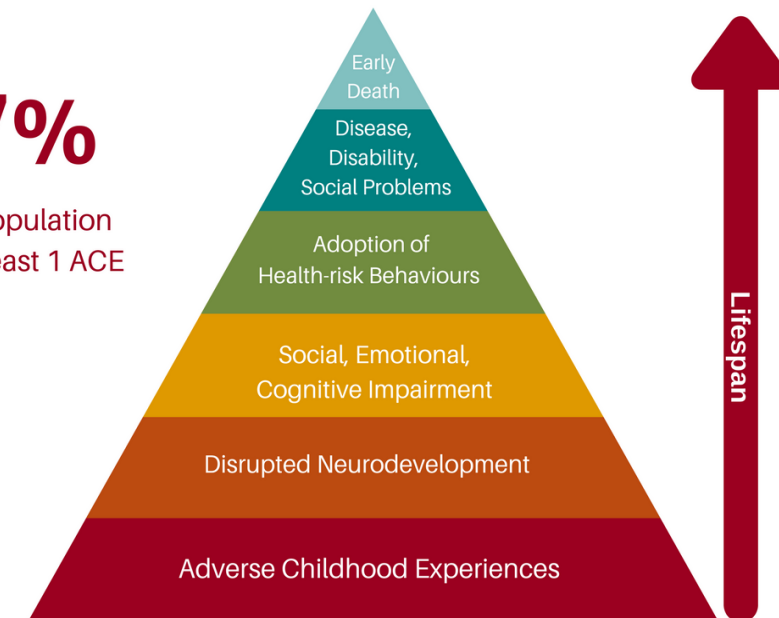


“Adverse childhood experiences are the single greatest unaddressed public health threat facing our nation today”

Dr. Robert Block, the former President of the American Academy of Pediatrics

67%

of the population have at least 1 ACE



ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES – ACES

THE IMPACT OF CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT
Adverse Childhood Experiences have been linked to:

Early
death



Risky health
behaviors



Low life
potential

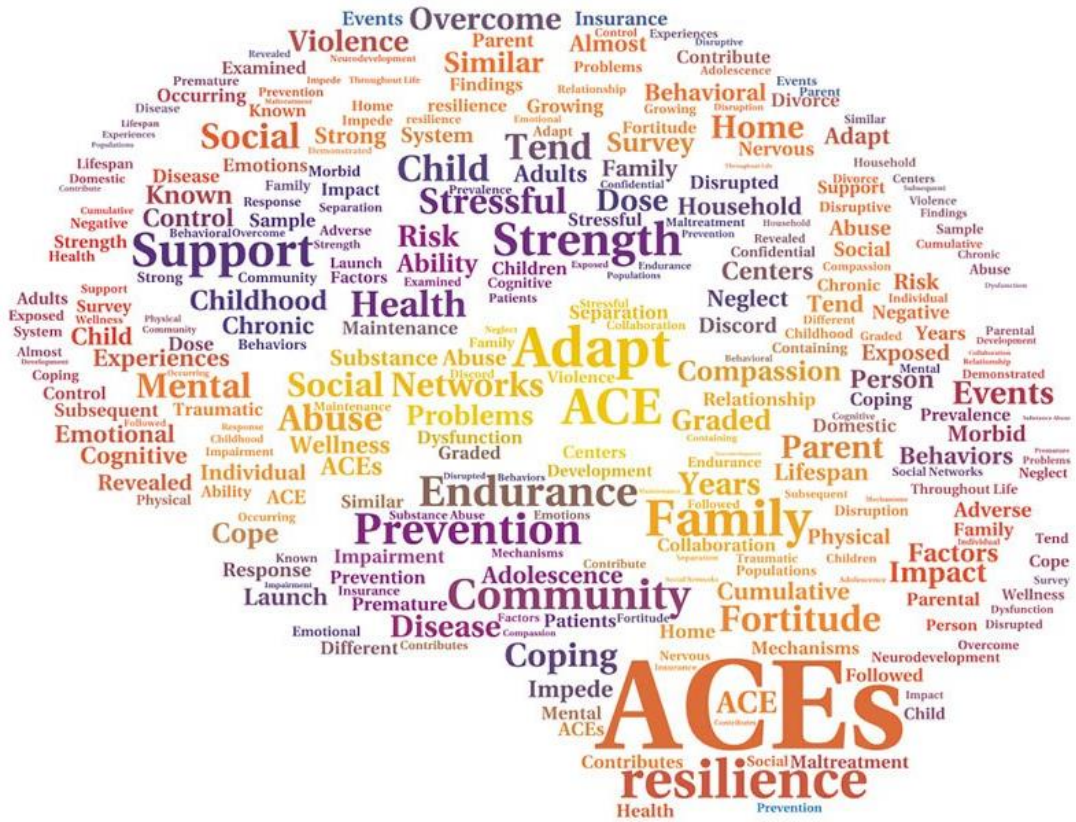


Chronic
health
conditions



ACEs are Unique

- No uniform response to living with domestic violence
- Children's responses vary greatly
- Children within the same family can be affected differently
- Each child's experiences and reactions are unique



What Children Need to Know

- They are not to blame for the violence
- It's ok to feel angry, but not ok to hit
- Learn alternatives to violent behavior
- They are not alone and other families sometimes have the same problems
- Help is available to keep them safe



Child Witnesses to Domestic Violence

Children on the Scene

1

Interview

2

Determine and
report child
abuse and
neglect

3

Ensure
children's care



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Interviewing children on the scene of Domestic Violence

- Identify children
- Safety plan
- Appropriate questioning
- Document
- LISTEN

Determine
and report
child abuse
and neglect



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Ensure Children's Safety



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Mandated Reporting

- Provide details (name of child/parents/guardians, birthdate, siblings, etc.)
- Identify if mandated reporter
- Describe specific event
- Laws protect confidentiality of mandated reporters



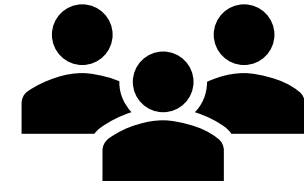
If you suspect, report!

1-800-25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873)

<https://dcfsonlinereporting.dcf illinois.gov>

v/

How Professionals can Help



- Knowledge is power
- Coordinated planning
- Seek out trainings
- Encourage victim to contact local DV shelter or programs
- Always hold the abuser accountable
- Safest place for a youth is with nonoffending parent

What CAN A PWEH Do?

- o Make plans to leave
- o Talk to family or friends
- o Develop a Safety Plan
- o DV shelter
- o Police
- o Order of Protection
- o Counseling

FREE. 24/7. CONFIDENTIAL

NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

HOTLINE

1 (800) 799-7233

You CAN Make a Difference

“Not all children exposed to violence suffer significant harmful effects. The most critical protective factor for a child is the existence of a strong, positive relationship between the child and a competent and caring adult.”

**EVERY KID IS
ONE CARING
ADULT AWAY
FROM BEING A
SUCCESS STORY.**

JOSH SHIPP

PRESENTED BY
circle
WITH 



J.D. Osofsky and E. Fenichel, editors
“Caring for Infants and Toddlers in Violent Environments:
Hurt, Healing and Hope”
Dec. 1993/Jan. 1994

Questions and Discussions

