

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ITS POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF CHILDREN

Emotional

- “Shame, guilt, and self-blame, “I caused it”, or “I should have been able to stop it”
- “Grief for family and personal losses
- “Confusion about conflicting feelings toward parents
- “Fear of abandonment, of expressing emotions, of the unknown, of personal injury
- “Anger about violence and the chaos in their lives
- “Depression, feelings of helplessness and powerlessness
- “Embarrassed by the effects of abuse and the dynamics at home

Behavioral (may be seen on opposite extremes)

- “Acting out versus withdrawing, aggressive versus passive
- “Overachiever versus underachiever
- “Refusal to go to school
- “Caretaking, more concern for others than self, acting as a parent-substitute
- “Lying to avoid confrontation, pretending everything is OK to avoid problems
- “Rigid defenses (aloof, sarcastic, defensive, “black and white” thinking)
- “Excessive attention seeking, often using extreme behaviors
- “Bedwetting and nightmares
- “Out of control behavior, not able to set own limits or follow directions
- “Reduced intellectual competency
- “Manipulation, dependency, mood swings

Social

- “Isolation from friends and relatives
- “Relationships that are frequently stormy, start intensely and end abruptly
- “Difficulty in trusting, especially adults
- “Poor anger management and problem solving skills
- “Excessive social involvement to avoid home life
- “Passivity with peers or bullying toward peers, play with peers exceedingly rough
- “Engaged in exploitative relationships, either as perpetrator or victim

Physical

- “Somatic complaints, headaches and stomachaches
- “Nervous, anxious, and short attention spans, frequently misdiagnosed as ADHD
- “Tired and lethargic
- “Frequently ill
- “Poor personal hygiene
- “Regression in development, thumb sucking
- “Desensitization to pain
- “High risk play and activities
- “Self abuse
- “Adolescent eating disorders, substance abuse, delinquency, suicide

