

YOU ARE THE ONLY ONE WHO CHANGE THIS. If you are the victim of domestic violence and you have children, you can get out of this situation and take your children to a place of safety. There are resources available for you and your children to change your lives and break this cycle of violence. Children do not have a choice and, although they can choose a different life as adults, they cannot erase their past. Your children are depending on you to direct them into a healthy life – they don't know how to do it on their own and they cannot do it on their own. You must make the choice.

If you are the batterer – **YOU ARE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN CHANGE THIS.** You are an adult. You can make the choice to change. There are resources available to you to make these changes. Your children need a "father" not just a "father-figure" who uses the title as a way to exert power and control and demand respect.

Respect can never be demanded. Respect is earned. Respect is given to someone who has earned it.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

The simplest answer is that we must end domestic violence. The next answer lies with the parents themselves. The most critical protective resource to enable a child to cope with exposure to violence is a strong relationship with a competent, caring, positive adult, most often a parent.

Community support will also enable a child to see that there others who care about them and will give them the role models they need to see that violence in any relationship is neither normal nor acceptable.

Help break the cycle of abuse –
The key to a future of non-violence
is our children.

They need to know there is help.
They need to know that abuse is
not normal and is not acceptable.

TOGETHER WE CAN
STOP VIOLENCE
AND CHANGE
OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE.

If you or someone you
know is being abused—
Call for help now.

Abuse is wrong
Abuse is a crime
Silence is not the answer.

Call the Police
Call the Sheriff
Call City Life

**24 Hour Emergency Number
208.870.5532**

City Life

9—4:30 Mon-Thurs
Friday closed -
Except by appointment only

Email:
fleda@citylifeinc.com
Web:
www.citylifeinc.com

Children & Domestic Violence



BOISE COUNTY

Living With Purpose & Dignity

Help for:

*Victims of Crime
Domestic Violence
Sexual Assault*

City Life

1648 N Washington
Emmett ID 83617
208.870.7414

Children face a dual threat when living in homes where domestic violence exists

- ◆ Threat of witnessing violence
- ◆ Threat of being a victim of violence

Unfortunately, parents often minimize or deny the impact of domestic violence on children. Children observe and internalize more than we realize.

- Children can provide clinicians with detailed accounts of abuse that parents never realized they witnessed
- Many research studies have suggested that as many as 90% of children in violent homes witness their fathers battering their mothers
- In homes where domestic violence occurs, children are physically abused and neglected at a rate 15 times higher than the national average.
- Studies have found that in 60% to 75% of families in which a woman is battered, children are also battered.

Children begin to model what is observed in the home.

- There is the old maxim, "children learn what they live – what goes on at home is "normal" to them because this is what they are familiar with
- One study showed that 30% of those who witness violence in the home become perpetrators of violence. This is considerably higher than the 2% to 4% found for children in the general population
- Another study found that children who witness their father's violence have a 1,000% greater rate of spousal abuse than sons who did not witness abuse
- In homes where domestic violence exists, daughters are exposed to a risk of sexual abuse at a rate 6.51 times greater than girls in

non-abusive families

- It has also been found that girls who grow up in violent homes have a greater tendency toward becoming involved in abusive relationships as teens and adults
- Children in abusive homes may also eventually become abusive toward their mothers

Unless there is successful intervention, the cycle of abuse may continue into future generations.

One study found that half of the men who abuse their female partner also abuse their children.

Domestic violence impacts children emotionally, behaviorally, socially and physically.

Emotional Impact:

Anger Mood Swings Depression
Grief Guilt Fear

Behavioral Impact:

Delinquency, lying, fighting, stealing, manipulation, out-of-control, eating disorders, alcohol/drug abuse, poor grades, self-abuse, ADHD symptoms, Truancy, difficulty in concentrating, difficulty in relationships, nightmares, running away.

Social Impact:

Bullying, poor problem solving skills, difficulty in controlling emotions, lack of motivation, difficulty with trusting adults, alienation, involvement in abusive relationships

Physical Impact:

Injuries from participating in high-risk events, tired, lethargic, regression, sleep disorders, frequent illness, bed-wetting, pain desensitization, poor personal hygiene, unexplainable headaches and stomachaches, short attention span, harm to self, suicide/homicide, eating disorders, alcohol/drug abuse

The children do not deserve to have to live in this atmosphere. Although it is a proven fact that children who have a mother and a father who form a

family do better in every way, children in abusive homes do not have a "mother and father." They have a mother who is a victim who is focused on survival and a father who is not functioning in the true role of a father. No matter how good a father a batterer may claim to be, he is undermining every positive thing he may do with his children by being an abuser! A batterer is not a good father – he is a batterer who happens to have children. A mother who is the victim of domestic violence is a victim first and a mother second. This is not by choice. Any woman who lives with continual battering is forced to be a survivor before she can be anything else. She must survive in order to be a mother thus; she is a victim first and foremost. Everything she does, including being a mother, must center around the batterer, his behavior, where he is at in the cycle of violence and all of her responses and actions are determined by this. Children know this and, even if they are secondary victims, they are victims nonetheless.

Statistically, the risk to the children is actually doubled! They are not only secondary victims to their mother's abuse, they are also at high risk as primary victims of physical and/or sexual abuse. If a woman is not motivated to get out of a violent situation for her own protection, she should, at the very least, consider the fact that her children may be dual victims of the batterer. If they are not primary victims, they are still victims and their lives are profoundly, negatively affected. Boys tend to act out with more aggression and risk-taking behavior. Girls tend toward self-destructive behavior. Both boys and girls tend to move into similar relationships and the cycle of violence continues through generations in some families.