

RESOURCES FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS

Division of Indian Work
(612) 722-8722

Hennepin County Domestic Abuse
Service Center (Native American advocate onsite)
(612) 348-5073

Indigenous Women's Life Net
(612) 879-1784

Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center
(612) 728-2000 (Two-Spirits/Native LGBTQ
Support)

Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault
Coalition (Two-Spirit/Native LGBTQ support)
651-646-4800

StrongHearts Native Helpline
1-844-7Native (1-844-762-8483)

Women of Nations
(651) 222-5836

StandPoint (Formerly Battered Women's Legal
Advocacy Project)
(612) 343-9842

Domestic Abuse Project
(612) 874-7063 x 232

Minneapolis Crisis Nursery
(763) 591-0100

Minnesota Day One Crisis Line
1-866-223-1111

OutFront Minnesota
(Includes LGBTQ support)
(612) 822-0127

Native children are not only affected by historical, inter-generational trauma (violence); they also experience an accumulation of violence occurring in their homes, schools, and communities, regardless where they live. "American Indian and Alaska Native []children suffer exposure to violence at rates higher than any other race in the United States. The immediate and long term effects of this exposure to violence includes increased rates of altered neurological development, poor physical and mental health, poor school performance, substance abuse, and overrepresentation in the juvenile justice system. This chronic exposure to violence often leads to toxic stress reactions and severe trauma; which is compounded by historical trauma."

*United States Attorney General's Advisory
Committee Report on American Indian/Alaska
Native Children Exposed to Violence: Ending
Violence so Children Can Thrive, 2014*

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WAKHÁDHEŽA
**(Lakota/Dakota: Child/Children,
the Sacred Ones)**

How Domestic Violence Impacts Children

Information and Resources for Native Communities in Minnesota



**MINNESOTA
JUDICIAL BRANCH**
FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Honoring and Protecting the Sacredness of a Child

If you are a parent in an abusive relationship, acknowledge that not only you, but your child is at risk. A child may suffer as a result of the violence even if they are not present during the incident. A child is impacted by domestic violence if they see or hear the violence, or otherwise see or feel its aftermath.

Allow your child to safely express their feelings, let them know it is not their fault and plan for their safety. It is important to help them ***be and feel safe***. Listen to them, continue to build trust and provide space and time for safe, fun and meaningful activities. Assure them:

- ❖ You love them
- ❖ It is ok to safely express and talk about their feelings, including feelings of rage, anger, and sadness, and it is not their fault
- ❖ Anger and frustration is normal, violence is not
- ❖ It is okay to feel angry with your parent/s- it doesn't mean you don't love them
- ❖ You are creating a safe place for them
- ❖ Support healthy relationships with family, peers, school and within the community

Exposure to Domestic Violence

Studies show that domestic violence affects children. Ignoring a child's exposure to violence can negatively impact their cognitive development, as well as their mental or physical health. Additionally, all children are at risk of physical injury or assault when domestic violence is present. A child may experience behavioral, emotional, and psychological changes that may include:

Infants

- Being "fussy" or inconsolable
- Decreased responsiveness
- Trouble sleeping and eating
- Normal attachment (bonding) needs not met

- Unable to understand/process parental cues/communications

Preschool Age

- Aggression, yelling, irritability
- Trouble sleeping
- Trouble interacting w/ peers
- Stranger or separation anxiety
- Fear, anxiety or sadness
- Feeling unsafe
- Self-blame

School Age

- Depression and anxiety
- Anger, aggression, insecurity
- Bed-wetting
- Mimicking the abusive parent/partner's violent or abusive behavior
- Truancy from school, poor school performance
- Isolation, low self-esteem
- Distracted, inattentive
- Pro-violent attitude resolving conflict

Adolescents

- Suicidal ideation, depression
- Teen dating violence (either as victim or perpetrator)
- Delinquency/Truancy/Running away
- Teen pregnancy, substance abuse
- Pro-violent attitude resolving conflict
- Feeling rage, shame

Long Term into Adulthood

- A child exposed to the father abusing the mother is the strongest risk for transmitting violent behavior from one generation to the next and is more likely to experience partner violence in adulthood

- Post-trauma stress disorder, depression, anxiety, low self-esteem

Pregnancy

A woman experiencing domestic violence during her pregnancy may be prevented from getting prenatal care by her abuser. Studies indicate pregnant women subjected to domestic violence may be at a higher risk for depression, substance abuse and experience a difficult pregnancy, including premature labor. Other research indicates there is a relationship between domestic violence during pregnancy and having negative pregnancy outcomes, such as hemorrhaging, low birth weight of child, pre-term birth, and resulting maternal or perinatal death (stillbirth). Pregnant women who experience domestic violence should talk with their medical provider and a domestic abuse advocate about protecting themselves and their unborn child during pregnancy.

How does a child "witness" domestic violence?

- Seeing a parent subject to physical/sexual violence, including hitting, slapping, punching, shoving, kicking, pulling by hair, sexual assault or rape.
- Being in the middle of an assault, either by accident, provoked by the abuser, or because the child tries to intervene
- Overhearing physical violence, sexual assault, rape, tension or conflict in the air, cries, slaps, screams, breaking glass, or sensing their parent's fear
- Seeing a parent's injuries: bruises, blood, scrapes, cuts
- Seeing the aftermath: broken furniture, holes in the wall, smashed cell phone, phone torn out of wall, broken glass

- Being used and manipulated by the abuser to hurt the battered parent