

# Potential Impacts at Different Ages

## Key Aspects of Development

## Potential Impact of Domestic Violence

### Infants and Toddlers

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|---|---|--|
| Take in information from the world around them through their senses.                                | → | Loud noises and vivid visual images associated with violence can be distressing.   |
| Form secure attachments.  | → | Parents may not be able to consistently respond to the infant's needs which may negatively affect the parent-child bond. |
| Become more active explorers of their world and learn through play.                                 | → | Fear and instability may inhibit exploration and play; imitating in play may be related to witnessed aggression.         |
| Learn about social interaction and Relationships from what they hear and observe in their families. | → | Learn about aggression in observed interactions.   |

### Preschoolers

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|--|---|---|
| Learn how to express aggression and anger, as well as other emotions, in appropriate ways. | → | Learn unhealthy ways of expressing anger and aggression; possibly confused by conflicting messages (e.g. what I see vs. what I'm told). |
| Think in egocentric ways.  | → | May attribute violence to something they have done.   |
| Form ideas about gender roles based on social messages.                                    | → | Learn gender roles associated with violence and victimization.  |
| Increased physical independence (dressing self, etc.).                                     | → | Instability may inhibit independence; may see regressive behaviors.   |

### School-aged Children (6 to 11 years)

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|--|---|---|
| Increased emotional awareness of self and others.  | → | More awareness of own reactions to violence at home and of impact on others (e.g., concerns about mother's safety, father being charged).                                   |
| Increased complexity in thinking about right and wrong; emphasis on fairness and intent. | → | Possibly more susceptible to adopting rationalizations rationalizations heard to justify violence (e.g., alcohol causes violence; victim deserved abuse).                   |
| Academic and social success at school has primary impact on self-concept.                | → | Ability to learn may be decreased due to impact of violence (e.g., distracted); may miss positive statements or selectively attend to negatives or evoke negative feedback. |
| Increased same sex identification.   | → | May learn gender roles associated with intimate partner abuse (e.g., males as perpetrators—females as victims).   |