

What Teachers May See

As part of a class assignment, several students from McMaster's Social Work 4B03 class (Adult Family Violence), created some case studies for teachers to help increase their awareness about the ways that being exposed to woman abuse in the home can impact a child's learning in school. Here are some excerpts from their case studies:

Sebastian

I am writing this letter of apology for hitting John because you told me to. You said if I don't stop hitting then I am going to have to go to a different class. That is NOT fair because he made me mad because he made fun of my clothes. It is NOT my fault that my pants are from a village because my dad lost his job and my mom says she can't afford anything better even though I begged!

You got me in trouble at home when you call to say I've been bad. My dad yelled at my mom and told her it was all her fault even though I'm the one who didn't keep my hands to myself like you said. In my home the man is the king of his castle and dad said a true man takes what he wants without whatever force necessary. So I had to punch John because he didn't listen when I told him to leave me alone.

Charlotte

He accused my mom of having an affair with one of her coworkers. He pushed her, threw her to the ground, and hit her across the head. Finally, he threw her into the brick wall at the side of our house, hitting her repeatedly. When she did not get up, he suddenly quit and went into the house. It took weeks for her injured body and her many bruises to heal. I now recognize that I would never tell my friends or my teachers of his behaviour. As I could not sleep at night, I would fall asleep in classes, which eventually impacted my grades in school. Around that time, I was diagnosed with depression and became suicidal for the first time.