

## Services

- ◆ Educational group for children who have witnessed domestic violence
- ◆ Healthy relationships group for teens
- ◆ Safety planning
- ◆ Parent education
- ◆ Effects of domestic violence on children educational group for perpetrators and victims
- ◆ Parent/child activities
- ◆ Individual education based counseling
- ◆ Group activities/field trips
- ◆ Holiday programs

Hope.



Courage.



Strength.



Resilience.



For more information, contact:

**The Laurel Center**  
**Hotline: 540-667-6466**  
**Office: 540-667-6160**

or

Virginia Family Violence  
& Sexual Assault Hotline  
1-800-838-8238 (V/TTY)

[www.thelaurelcenter.org](http://www.thelaurelcenter.org)



THE  
*Laurel*  
CENTER

*Intervention for Domestic and Sexual Violence*  
*formerly The Shelter for Abused Women*

## Children and Domestic Violence

P.O. Box 14  
Winchester, VA 22604  
540-667-6466 Hotline  
540-667-6160 Office  
1-866-670-2942  
540-667-0138 Fax  
TTY Available



## What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behaviors used by one individual intended to exert power and control over another individual in the context of an intimate relationship. Domestic violence may appear in many forms, including physical, verbal/emotional and sexual abuse.

## How are Children at Risk?

Between 3.3 million and 25 million children experience domestic violence in their home each year. The number is greatly under-reported.

- ◆ 25% of victims of domestic violence are pregnant women
- ◆ 70% of children in domestic violence shelters are also victims of physical abuse or neglect
- ◆ 80% of runaways come from homes where domestic violence occurs
- ◆ Young criminal offenders are four times more likely to come from abusive homes

## Effects of Domestic Violence on Children

- ◆ Self-blame for being unable to prevent the abuse
- ◆ Depression, feelings of helplessness and powerlessness
- ◆ Anger about violence and chaos in their lives
- ◆ Regression in development, thumb sucking, etc., depending on age
- ◆ Poor anger management and problem solving skills
- ◆ Isolation from friends and relatives
- ◆ Difficulty in trusting, especially adults
- ◆ Excessive attention seeking, often using extreme behaviors
- ◆ Bedwetting and nightmares
- ◆ Out of control behavior, unable to set own limits or follow directions

*For more information on this topic, contact the Children's Coordinator at The Laurel Center.*

## Safety Planning

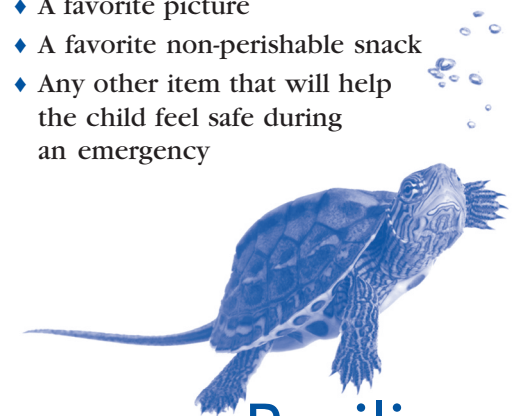
Children are often injured trying to defend their abused parent. Teach children how to stay SAFE:

- S** - Stay out of the fight.
- A** - Avoid getting trapped in a small room, closet, bathroom or kitchen where sharp objects are found.
- F** - Find a phone and call 9-1-1. (Teach children to tell the operator their address.)
- E** - Escape to a safe place, like a neighbor's house, until help arrives.

## Create a "Safe Bag"

Help children create a "safe bag" to take with them in an emergency. Help children pack:

- ◆ A favorite toy
- ◆ A favorite book
- ◆ A favorite outfit
- ◆ A favorite picture
- ◆ A favorite non-perishable snack
- ◆ Any other item that will help the child feel safe during an emergency



**Resilience.**