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& Domestic Violence**

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Portsmouth
Rochester
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Sexual Assault Support Services

Portsmouth
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A FACT SHEET ABOUT THE EFFECTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN

Each year, an estimated 3.3 million children are exposed to violence against their mothers or female caretakers by family members.

(American Psychological Association, Violence and the Family: Report of the APA Presidential Task Force on Violence and the Family (1996), p. 11)

In homes where domestic violence occurs, fear, instability, and confusion replace the love, comfort, and nurturing that children need. These children live in constant fear of physical harm from the person who is supposed to care for and protect them. They may feel guilt at loving the abuser or blame themselves for causing the violence.

(Domestic Violence, Understanding a Community Problem, National Woman Abuse Prevention Fund)

Studies find child witnesses to exhibit more aggressive and antisocial, as well as, fearful and inhibited behaviors, and to have lower social competence.

(Christopheropoulos et al., 1987, Children of abused women, Journal of Marriage and the Family, 49, 611-619)

Children who witness violence were also found to show more anxiety, aggression, depression, and temperament problems, less empathy and self-esteem, and lower verbal, cognitive, and motor abilities than children who did not witness violence at home. There is also some support for the hypothesis that children from violent families of origin carry violent and violence-tolerant roles to their adult intimate relationships.

(Susan Schecter and Jeffrey Edleson, "In the Best Interest of Women and Children: A Call for Collaboration Between Child Welfare and Domestic Violence Constituencies". Protecting Children, The American Humane Association, 1996)

Forty to sixty percent (40-60%) of men who abuse women also abuse children.

(American Psychological Association, Violence and the Family: Report of the APA Presidential Task Force on Violence and the Family, 1996, p. 40).

Children in homes where domestic violence occurs are physically abused or seriously neglected at a rate 1,500% higher than the national average in the general population.

(National Woman Abuse Prevention Project, Washington, D.C.)

For information or help,
call toll free 1-800-277-5570
for sexual assault,
or 1-866-644-3574 for
domestic violence.

Boys who witness family violence are more likely to batter their female partners as adults than are boys raised in non-violent homes.

(Georgia Department of Human Resources, Family Violence Teleconference Resource Manual, Battered Families . . . Shattered Lives, January, 1992).

Girls who witness their mother's abuse have a higher rate of being battered as adults.

(Georgia Department of Human Resources, Family Violence Teleconference Resource Manual, Battered Families . . . Shattered Lives, January 1992).

In one study, 27% of domestic homicide victims were children.

(Florida Governor's Task Force on Domestic and Sexual Violence, Florida Mortality Review Project, 1997, p. 45, table 11).

When children are killed during a domestic dispute, 90% are under age 10, 56% are under age 2.

(Florida Governor's Task Force on Domestic and Sexual Violence, Florida Mortality Review Project, 1997, p. 51, table 28).

The 14 member programs of the New Hampshire Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence assist survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence, and members of their families, with 24-hour crisis lines, emergency shelter, counseling, support groups, and help dealing with police, medical and court personnel. In 2003, Coalition member agencies assisted 7,664 battered women, 417 men, and provided shelter to 645 women and children, and four men.

Visit our webpage: www.nhcadsv.org

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