

Signs of Childhood Domestic Violence

Different children respond to childhood domestic violence differently.

When there are signs, they may come in a variety of forms, more subtle or more pronounced. Here are some possible signs or symptoms – behavioral, social, emotional and cognitive.

	Infants	Pre-School	School	Adolescents
Behavioral	Being Fussy Decreased Responsiveness Trouble Sleeping Trouble Eating	Aggression Behavior Problems Yelling, irritability Trouble Sleeping Frequent bed wetting Repetitive play in which disturbing themes are expressed	Aggression Acting out, frequent outbursts Disobedience Bullying others Frequent bed-wetting Repetitive play in which disturbing themes are expressed	Dating violence Bullying others Use of drugs or alcohol, criminal behavior Running away Attempting suicide Inflicting self-harm Frequent tardiness or absence from school, activities, work Early sexual activity
Social	Trouble interacting with or getting along with peers isolating themselves from others Starting easily and frequently	Trouble interacting with or getting along with peers isolating themselves from others Starting easily and frequently	Fewer and poor quality peer relations Starting easily and frequently	Few quality relationships Dating violence (victim or perpetrator) Teen pregnancy Starting easily and frequently
Emotional/ Psychological	Attachment needs not met	Emotionally withdrawn or detached Fear/ anxiety, sadness, worry PTSD Feeling unsafe Separation anxiety Trouble eating	Emotionally withdrawn or detached Frequent physical complaints Fear and anxiety, depression Separation anxiety Low self-esteem, shame PTSD emotional responses not matching situation Trouble eating Frequent health complaints	Emotionally withdrawn or detached Substance abuse Frequent thoughts of suicide PTSD Feeling rage, shame Unresponsiveness Frequent health complaints
Cognitive	inability to understand	Self-blame Difficulty trusting others Bad dreams Efforts to avoid thoughts, feelings, or conversations associated with the issue Difficulty concentrating Lower verbal skills	Self-blame Distracted, inattentive Lack of interest in hobbies or activities Academic problems Pro-violent attitude Difficulty trusting others Bad dreams Illusions, hallucinations, and flashbacks Efforts to avoid thoughts, feelings or conversations associated with the issue	Short attention span, difficulty concentrating Lower verbal skills Lack of interest in hobbies or activities Pro-violent attitude Defensiveness Difficulty trusting others