

Power and Control Dynamics

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FOR THE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT
OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT



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Violence *free*
COLORADO™

Together we can end relationship abuse

As Colorado's state domestic violence coalition, Violence Free Colorado works with hundreds of organizations and individuals in local communities across the state to prevent and end relationship violence, and support those affected by relationship abuse.

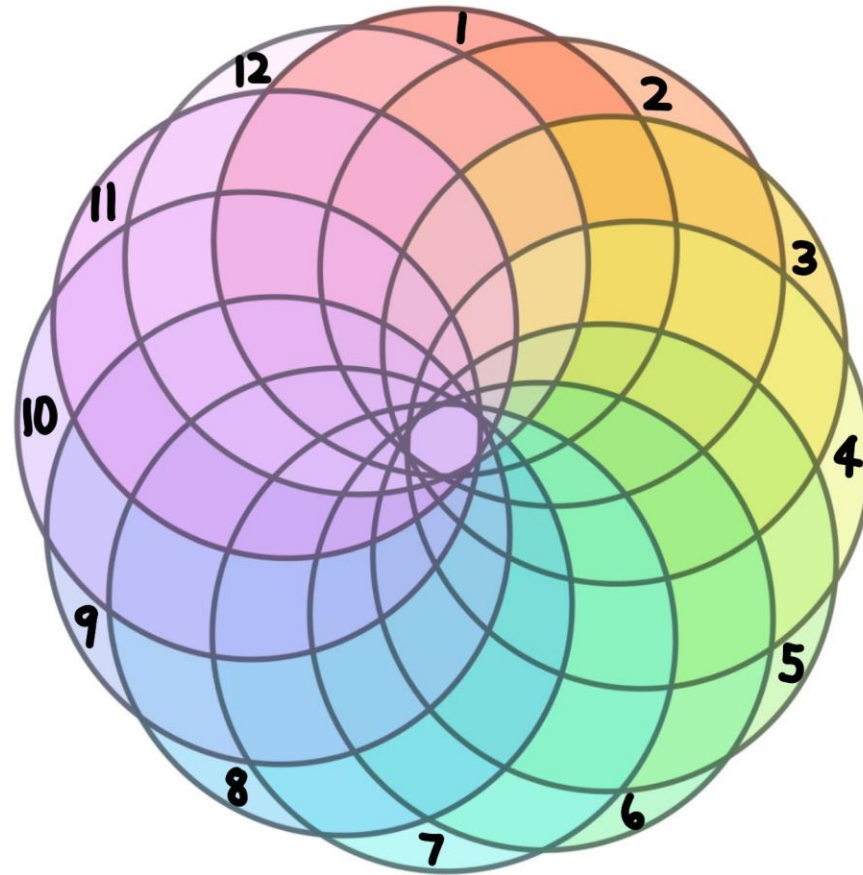


Agenda:

- Domestic Violence
 - Power and control
 - Cycle of violence
 - DV dynamics
 - Lethality indicators
- Impacts on child development
 - Recognizing signs
- Intersections of Domestic Violence and children
- How to support children who witness violence.



INTERSECTIONALITY



- 1 Race
- 2 Ethnicity
- 3 Gender identity
- 4 Class
- 5 Language
- 6 Religion
- 7 Ability
- 8 Sexuality
- 9 Mental health
- 10 Age
- 11 Education
- 12 Body size
- (...and many more...)

Intersectionality is a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it locks and intersects. It is the acknowledgement that everyone has their own unique experiences of discrimination and privilege.

- Kimberlé Crenshaw -

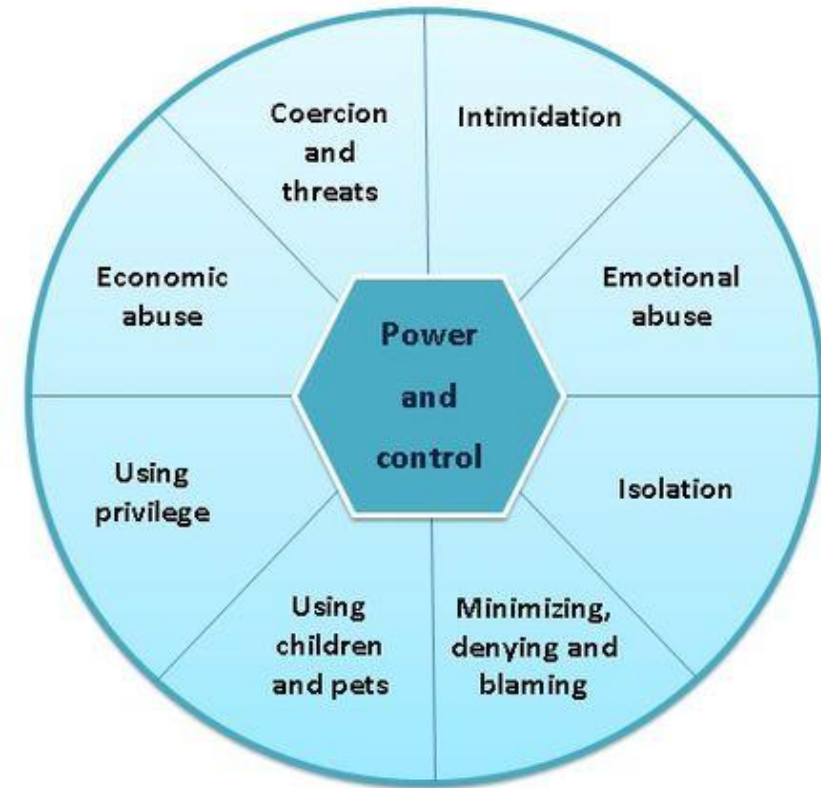
@sylviaaduckworth



Domestic Violence Power and Control

A **pattern** of coercive behavior, rather than an isolated incident, used by one person to **gain power and control** over another in an intimate or formerly intimate relationship.

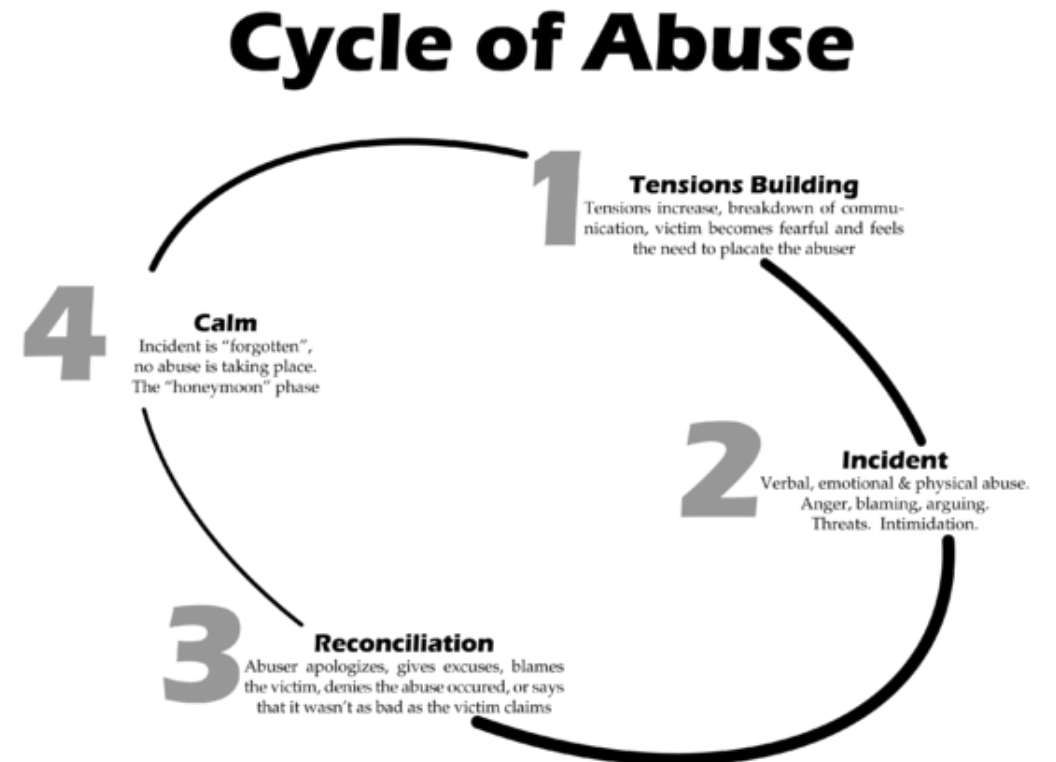
[Resource](#)



[Power and Control Wheels](#)

Cycle of Abuse/Violence

- Increase in frequency and severity
- Can get shorter between phases
- This can be predictable
- Survivors often know cycle, but do not have a name for it.
 - Safety plan around survivor's experience



Domestic Violence Dynamics

Minimizing/denying/blaming

Isolation

Coercion and control

Economic Abuse

Privilege

Intimidation

Emotional abuse

Children

Physical abuse

Lethality indicators

- Leaving
- Animal abuse
- Suicidality
- Believes they could die
- Threats to kill survivor
- Pregnancy
- Choking or strangulation
- Weapons
- Positions of power
- Loss of job



"Context Is Key"

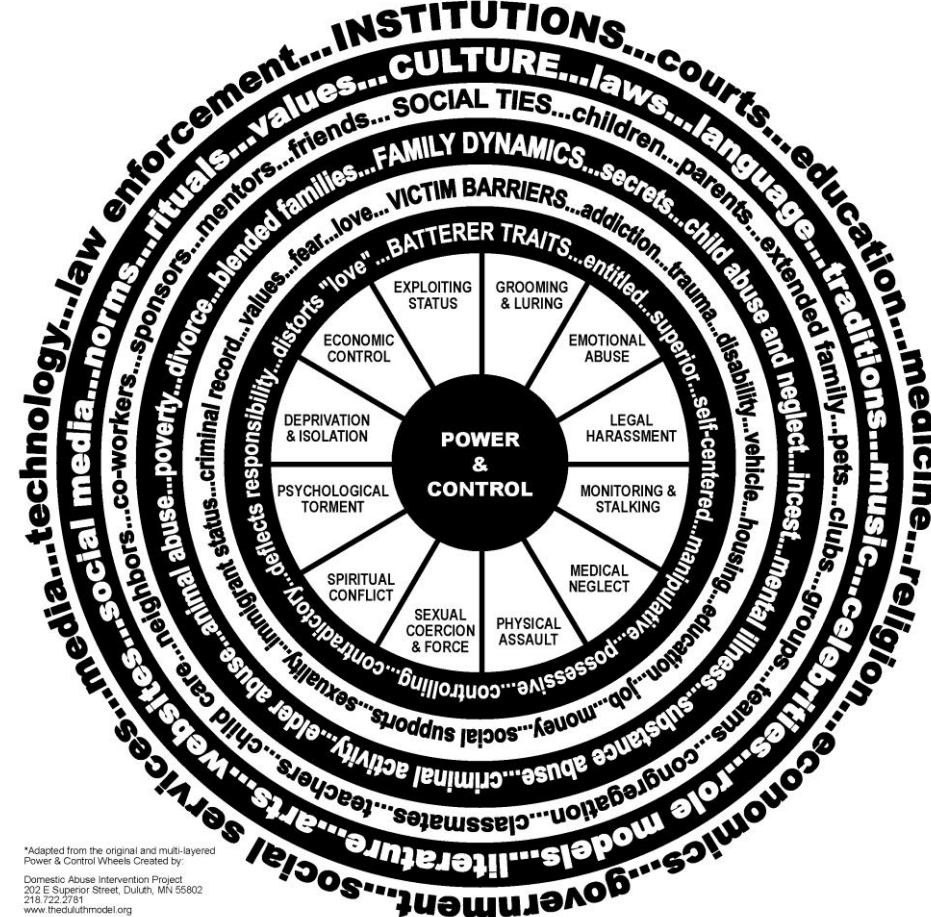
THE MAZE of COERCIVE CONTROL

The Recreated (Power & Control) Wheel*

Created by Kathy Jones, Survivor and Advocate

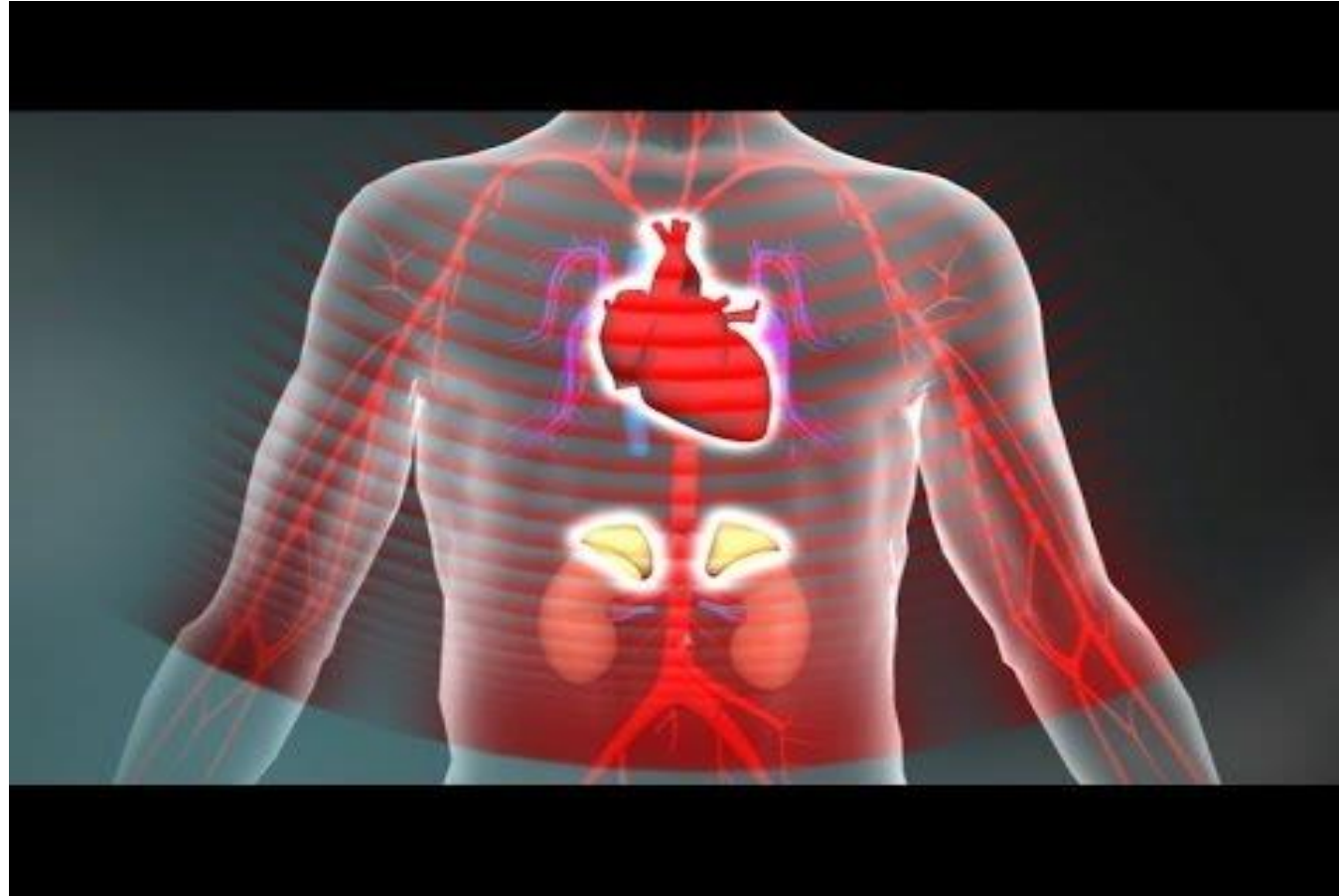
'Where Has Our Kathy Gone?'

dvsurf5r@yahoo.com

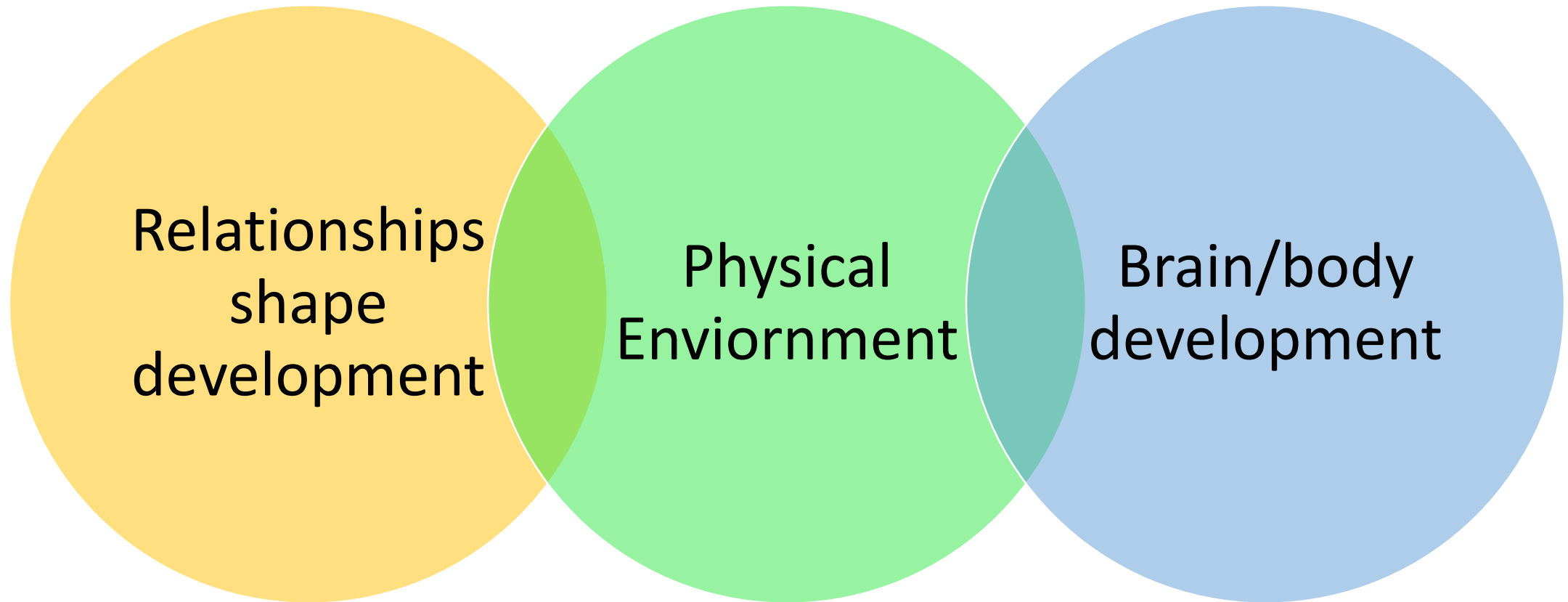


*Adapted from the original and multi-layered Power & Control Wheels Created by:
Domestic Abuse Intervention Project
202 E Superior Street, Duluth, MN 55802
218.722.2781
www.theduluthmodel.org

Impact on Child Development



Impacts on Children



Recognizing signs of trauma

- **Sleep difficulties:** Frequent waking, nightmares, fear of falling asleep
- **Somatic complaints:** Headaches, stomach aches, aches and pains with no clear medical cause
- **Increased aggressive behavior, angry outbursts**
- **Increased activity level**
- **Hypervigilance:** Worries, fears, overreaction to loud noises or sudden movements
- **Regression:** Loss of skills learned at an earlier age, “babyish” behavior
- **Withdrawal:** Loss of interest in friends, school, or other activities the child used to enjoy
- **Numbing:** Showing no feelings at all, not bothered by anything
- **Increased separation anxiety:** Refuses to go to school, very upset when left with babysitter or childcare provider
- **Distractibility:** Has trouble concentrating at school or home
- **Changes in play:** Repeatedly acts out or recreates violent events in play, less able to play spontaneously and creatively



Intersections of Domestic violence and child abuse

General Neglect

- Focus is on safety and survival
- Lack of sleep, food, touch
- Safer for kids to be in another room

Physical Neglect

- Control of space
- Lack of support system "unsafe" caregivers,
- Being left alone

Failure to thrive

- Access to money for food
- Decision making on meals
- Prenatal care

Medical Neglect

- Appts are inconsistent
- Insurance access
- Transportation
- Language barriers
- Blame

Educational Neglect

- Shelters
- Time is controlled
- School unsafe

Physical abuse

- Harsh discipline
- Takes lead on discipline
- Trauma

Emotional abuse

- Deny extent of abuse
- Shame and guilt,
- Normalizing of abuse

IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN & YOUTH BY DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE



Prenatal	Developmental Needs	Potential Impact of DV
	Rapid physiological and neurological development	Increased cortisol in the stress response system of the pregnant parent may lead to poor fetal growth and later emotional and behavioral symptoms such as startling easily, hyper-arousal, and avoidance of physical contact
	Pregnant parent needs to obtain adequate rest, nutrition, and medical care	Isolation, stress, and withholding of resources may inhibit parent's ability to access adequate prenatal care
	A safe environment in which to fully develop	Physical violence may result in miscarriage, injury to fetus, or low birth weight
Age 0 – 1.5 Is the world OK?	Developmental Needs	Potential Impact of DV
	Form secure attachment with primary caregiver(s)	Non-offending parent(s) may be experiencing trauma response. Parents may not be able to consistently meet infant's needs, leading to deprivation of sleep, food, touch, etc.
	Take in information and begin learning about the world through use of senses	Loud noises and violent images can be distressing, and can shape learned information about the world.
	Determine whether or not the world is a safe place to be or if it is full of unpredictable events	Infants may experience threat or injury, and therefore experience the world as an unsafe place.

Age 1.5 – 3 Am I OK?	Developmental Needs	Potential Impact of DV
	Further exploration of the world through play	Child may be afraid to explore and play because of experiencing / witnessing tension or violence. Possible imitation of violence seen in play.
	Begin to individuate and assert independence (becoming mobile with the ability to walk away from parents, picking which toy to play with, making choices about what they like to eat, wear, etc.)	Child may try new things but experience failure and frustration without proper support given from caregivers. Child may become afraid to individuate.
	Observe interactions between people and begin learning about social relationships	Child may begin to learn aggressive behavior as a norm.
Age 3 – 6 How much can I do?	Developmental Needs	Potential Impact of DV
	Rapidly increase initiation and planning of activities; imagination should be encouraged.	Fear of doing things wrong may inhibit child's attempts to do things for themselves.
	Increase physical independence and test boundaries	Child may continue to experience fear of exploring and trying new things. Child may test boundaries unsupervised and be harmed.
	Learn to express emotion	May learn unhealthy expression of emotion, or not learn to express emotion at all. Children may learn to link anger and violence.
	Think in ego-centric ways	May begin to believe they are the cause of violence or that their actions can prevent violence of perpetrator. Child may be injured by trying to intervene and stop violence.
	Make meaning of the world based on observation; "Why?"	Confusion due to conflicting messages about violence they receive at home and elsewhere. Internalization of victim blaming.

Age 6 – 11 How well can I do it?	Developmental Needs	Potential Impact of DV
	Start to develop sense of achievement based on social and academic success; peer group starts to gain greater significance	Symptoms of trauma may inhibit success at school and socialization may be thwarted based on learned behaviors and lack of emotional regulation / expression.
	Initiative should be encouraged and reinforced so child gains confidence in ability to achieve goals	Parents may not be able to encourage or support initiative of child, or teachers may fail to see impact of trauma and instead label child based on behaviors. Child may begin to lack confidence and internalize negative labeling.
	Very impacted by societal norms regarding social location. They need affirmation of their identities based on social location.	If perpetrator is using superiority as tactic of abuse, child may be internalizing oppression and/or superiority based on own identities.
	Children begin to have complex thoughts about right and wrong.	They are more susceptible to accepting inaccurate, unhealthy explanations heard to excuse violence; such as the victim deserves the abuse.
Age 12 – 18 Who am I?	Developmental Needs	Potential Impact of DV
	Major transition between childhood and adulthood; Increased independence; Child is reexamining identity and finding out “who they really are” They explore possibilities and start to establish their own identity	Older children in household may feel responsibility to care for parent(s) and siblings (impacted by cultural expectations as well) and therefore feel they cannot pursue / explore interests
	Peer group is incredibly important and major source of social feedback	May see a higher degree of risk taking behavior based on what they have witnessed throughout childhood/adolescence. They may want to be alone and not be interested in spending time with friends.
	Incredible amount of physiological changes are occurring	Increase in size & stature may embolden adolescents to try to intervene when violence occurs, increasing their risk of injury.

How to support a child who has witnessed violence

- ✓ Healing begins in relationship
- ✓ Tell their story through talking and play
- ✓ Choices
- ✓ Inform non abusive parent of how kids respond to trauma/violence
- ✓ Alternative ways to conflict resolution
- ✓ Predictability
- ✓ Reminders of love, belonging
- ✓ Strengths







Resources

- [Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence](#)
- [National Center Against Domestic Violence](#)
- [Recognizing Signs of Trauma in Children and Youth](#)
- [211 Domestic Violence Shelters](#)
- [Power and Control Wheels](#)