

## When Children Witness Domestic Violence—Possible Effects

Age	Physical	Emotional	Behavioral	Developmental
<b>0 – 2 Years</b>	Low weight Digestive problems No appetite	Irritability Sadness Anxiety Disrupted attachment	Sleeping problems Startles easily Excessive crying Excessive screaming	Failure to thrive
<b>2-6 Years</b>	Lack of bowel/ bladder control Stomachaches	Fear Anxiety Guilt Helplessness Powerlessness Depression Separation anxiety Lacks self-confidence Lacks feelings of safety and security	Acting out Aggressive (mimics abuser) Defiant Withdrawn Clingy Whiney Friendship problems Regressive behavior	Poor verbal skills Quiet Poor motor skills Impulse control Fears new things and people  *some of these behaviors are misdiagnosed as ADD/ADHD
<b>7-12 Years</b>	Bedwetting Stomachaches Headaches Insomnia Eating disorders	Low self-esteem Somatic complaints Ambivalence towards abuser Fear/Anger Guilt—can't protect victim Self-blame Nightmares Shame and embarrassment Powerlessness Depression	Aggressive Bullies Violent-may hurt others, pets Lies and steals Avoids confrontation Rigid defenses Self-abuse Mimics abuser Withdrawn or clingy Denies home violence Doesn't invite friends over Explosive temper	Poor grades or failure School phobia Poor impulse control Learning disabilities Poor peer relations Few or no friends  *some of these behaviors are misdiagnosed as ADD/ADHD
<b>13-18 Years</b>	Bedwetting Stomachaches Headaches Insomnia Eating disorders Ulcers Severe acne	Low self-esteem Loneliness and isolation Extreme anger Anxious/fearful Withdrawal Depression Powerlessness/ indifference No emotion Blames others especially parent	Very violent/risk taking Self-destructive Substance abuse Promiscuity Suicidal ideation Takes on parental role Avoids confrontation Rigid defenses Uses violence to solve problems Dating violence Not bringing friends home Abusive toward victim parent	Poor school performance Truancy Drop out Immaturity Poor impulse control Few friends Involved in abusive relationships