

EFFECTS OF WITNESSING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN

Age	Physical	Emotional	Behavioral	Developmental
Prenatal	Poor Nutrition Beatings Increase risk of Miscarriage	N/A	N/A	Increased Miscarriages Low Birth Weight
Birth to 2 Years	Low Weight Digestive problems No Appetite	Irritability Sadness Anxiety	Sleep Problems Startles easily Cries Excessively Excessive Screaming	Failure to Thrive
2 to 6 Years	Lack of Bowel Control Lack of bladder control Stomach aches	Fear Anxiety Guilt (feels responsible for abuse) Separation anxiety Lacks self confidence Self Centered	Acts out Very aggressive (mimics abuse) Verbally abusive Defiant Very Withdrawn Clingy/Whining Tries not to be noticed Problems making/keeping friends Regressing to younger behavior	Poor Verbal skills Quiet, doesn't talk Poor cognitive skills Poor motor skills Poor impulse control Fears new things, people
7 to 12 Years	Bedwetting Stomach aches/ulcers Headaches Insomnia Eating Disorders	Low self esteem Denial & Secrecy Indifference to abuser Fear & Anger Guilt (can't protect Mom/loves the abuser) Self Blame Nightmares Ashamed and embarrassed	Aggressive, bully Violent towards (peers, animals, siblings) Lies & Steals Self-abusive Withdrawn or clingy Deny violence in home Doesn't invite friends home	Poor Grades or failure School Phobia Poor Impulse control Learning disabilities Poor peer relationships few or no friends
13 to 18 Years	Bedwetting Stomach aches/ulcers Headaches Severe acne Eating disorders	Low Self-esteem Loneliness & Isolation Extreme anger Anxious, fearful, withdrawn Uncommunicative Indifferent, No Emotion, blames others especially parents	Very Violent Criminal activities Self-destructive (substance abuse, promiscuity, self mutilation, suicidal ideas, delinquency, risk taking) Take on Parent/caretaker role Runaway or stays away from home Protective/abusive to mom Uses violence in dating Refused to bring friends home	Poor school performance, failure, truancy, drop out Immaturity Poor impulse control friends