

How are children affected by domestic abuse?

Discussing the effects of domestic abuse on children can be a challenging topic for parents. Please prioritise your well-being and take breaks when necessary. Don't hesitate to confide in a friend or family member about your emotions when reflecting on the impact of domestic abuse on children.

As a parent, you might assume that you've concealed the abuse from your children. You may believe they were asleep upstairs and didn't hear anything. However, when practitioners speak with children, they reveal that they heard and felt a great deal. They also report feeling confused, isolated, and frightened.

It's crucial to recognise that you've done everything in your power to protect your children. Additionally, the individual who bears responsibility for the impact of domestic abuse on children is the abuser.

Consider these statistics:

- Each year, at least 750,000 children witness domestic abuse.
- Nearly three-quarters of children on a Child Protection Plan reside in households where domestic abuse occurs.
- In 75% to 90% of domestic abuse incidents, children are in the same room or the adjacent room.
- The connection between child physical abuse and domestic abuse is significant, with estimates ranging from 30% to 66% depending on the study



The impact of domestic abuse:

Those children exposed to domestic may experience persistent anxiety and emotional distress. They might feel angry, guilty, insecure, frightened, powerless, and confused, leading to behaviours that impede their development and progress in life.

Here are a few ways domestic abuse can affect a child or young person:

- They lack a positive role model.
- The parent-child bond may be damaged.
- Negative self-beliefs can develop.
- They might be cut off from valuable sources of support.
- Their coping mechanisms can become problematic.
- They may believe that victimisation is normal and make excuses for the abuse.

If you're interested in learning more about how domestic abuse affects children, visit the [Building Blocks course page](#). This course aims to assist parents in comprehending the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people, how it affects them emotionally, and the best approach to support them in their recovery.