

How can I help my children to recover from domestic abuse?



When supporting children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse, it is important to keep the following points in mind:

Nurturing: Make sure that you, other caregivers, and family members are nurturing and can support the child/ren in developing healthy caring relationships. This is important because when children are provided with positive relationships, they are better able to heal and thrive.

Emotions: Allow children to express and explore their emotions in a safe and supportive environment.

Check in regularly: After being exposed to domestic abuse, children need social support to feel recognised and valued. Sometimes children don't want to talk about what happened. Be led by the child and give them time and space to share their experiences when they feel ready.

Listen: Listen to what the children have to say. Listening to children, can help the connection to improve, if children start sharing traumatic events they have seen or heard, be supportive and neutral and answer their questions honestly but in an age-appropriate manner. When children don't have clarity regarding

what happened, their imagination may make things a lot worse than what happened, being honest will help the children to begin to make sense of what happened and help them to feel safe and to gain trust.

Spend time with them: Provide creative and imaginative opportunities or just be with them, doing activities such as reading a book, cooking, or watching a film. The idea is to spend quality time with them and build upon moments of connection.

Explore coping strategies: Reassure and help children find healthy coping strategies that work for them, such as spending time with friends or family, engaging in sports or exercise, writing in a journal, or creating art.

Encourage friendships: Encourage children to spend time with friends who make them feel happy and confident, which can increase their self-worth and confidence.

Manage challenging behaviour in healthy ways:

Children's behaviour could be a sign of trauma caused by domestic abuse. Try and set clear boundaries for unacceptable behaviour and put in place logical consequences. You could put together a "house rules" list, displayed on your fridge or kitchen wall and agree with the children what the rewards for acceptable behaviour

may be and the consequences for unacceptable behaviour. By doing this together with the children, they feel that they have a choice, they know what will happen if they "break the rules" or when they behave, children need rules for the sense of feeling safe and for consistency.



Further support: Explore further support such as play therapy, counselling, support through school, or children's services, depending on each child's needs.

Support in the community and resources: Research what support is available in your community, including people, places, activities, and other resources that may be helpful for you and the children.

Taking care of yourself: Make sure to take time for yourself and do activities that make you feel good, such as exercise or a relaxing hobby. Speak to family or friends for support when needed.

Useful websites:-

Kooth - kooth.com

The Hideout - thehideout.org.uk

NSPCC - nspcc.org.uk/keepingchildrensafe

Childline - childline.org.uk

Respect - respect.uk.net

Young Minds- Youngminds.org.uk

Useful telephone numbers:

Young We Are With You (formally Addaction)

Support around drugs and alcohol - 08003047021

Childline - 0800 1111

Mental Health

- CAMHS- 01522535189
- Healthy Minds- 08002346342
- Supporting Minds- 01522 274151
- Lindum Listening Ears- 01522 804126

Apps:

- Hollie Guard- Available on Android and iPhone
- Bright Sky- Available on Android and iPhone

- MyPlan- Available on Android and iPhone