

TIES 2002

Teachers in Industry for Educational Support

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & RESILIENT, RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR

What Educators Need to Know

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CHILDREN AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Curriculum Unit Summary

What is Domestic Violence?	Children as the Victims	What Educators Can Do
<p>ALT 1 – Definition of Domestic Violence Participants will learn the definition of Domestic Violence</p>	<p>ALT 1 – Indicators of Domestic Violence Participants will gain understanding of the connection between domestic violence and children’s behavior.</p>	<p>ALT 1 – Safety Planning for Parents and Students Participants will learn about safety planning for parents and children living in violent homes.</p>
<p>ALT 2 – Myth or Facts/Cycle of Abuse Participants will learn some of the myths about domestic violence. They will gain an understanding of the cycle of abuse that is common in most violent relationships.</p>	<p>ALT 2 – Effects of Domestic Violence on Children Participants will increase their understanding of behavioral and emotional problems that may result from domestic violence.</p>	<p>ALT 2 – Understanding Anger and Violence Participants will learn to conduct a class or small group presentation to help students understand why they become angry and ways to safely express anger.</p>
<p>ALT 3 – Nurturing Families vs. Dysfunctional Families Participants will compare and contrast the dynamics of the nurturing family vs. the dysfunctional family.</p>	<p>ALT 3 – Activities to Help Students Who Experience Domestic Violence Participants will learn practical techniques to help youth who have experienced domestic violence.</p>	<p>ALT 3 – Smart and Safe Kids Participants will learn to conduct a class presentation to help students practice techniques to keep themselves safe.</p>

Section Two: Children as the Victims

ALT One: Indicators of Domestic Violence

Summary

Domestic violence occurs among all races and socioeconomic groups. Statistics indicate that violence will occur at least once in two-thirds of all marriages and 3.3 million children in the United States, between 3 and 17 years, are yearly at risk of exposure to parental violence. A child may become a direct victim of a parent's aggression if the parent's anger toward a spouse is taken out on the child, or the child may be inadvertently injured by getting in the middle of parents' violence or attempting to stop the fighting. They sense the tension in the house and also witness the consequences of the abuse after it has occurred such as broken furniture, holes in walls, torn clothes, and bruises. In general, 70% of men who abuse their female partners also abuse their children. Thus, it is important that educators learn to recognize the indicators that a student is living with violence and be prepared to offer needed support.

Competencies

Educators will learn to recognize the behavioral characteristics of children who witness domestic violence.

Time

This information could be presented in a teacher in-service in 15-30 minutes.

Materials

Power Point or an overhead projector could be used.

Instructions

Provide information and allow for large and small group discussion. Teachers need to watch for the following indicators in their students.

Indicators of Domestic Violence in Children

1. Increased problems at school including aggressive behavior (belief that violence can solve problems and be used to control others)
2. Increased acting out and behavior problems including lying, aggression, stealing, truancy, etc.
3. Difficulty paying attention and concentrating which may result in slow academic progress
4. Failure to complete assigned homework (home is disorganized and inconsistent)
5. May withdraw and become reclusive rather than acting out (depression is common)
6. May take on the role of “family hero” or caregiver, and be very protective of siblings
7. May develop inflated sense of responsibility (become a “little adult”)
8. May show increased anger at the victim of violence (it is unsafe to direct anger at the abuser)
9. May learn to disrespect victim of violence because abuser models/encourages that behavior
10. May confuse love and violence because they learn that people hit those they love; this may show up at school in poor friendship skills.
11. May develop emotional problems such as poor self-esteem and depression
12. May demonstrate self-destructive behaviors (alcohol, drugs, eating disorders, intentionally hurting self, including cutting, scratching and burns, etc.)
13. May develop distrust for most authority figures (or all adults)
14. May develop poor boundaries (too closed off or too open)

Closure

Participants will be provided with a copy of the handout: Indicators of Domestic Violence in Children and encouraged to keep it available for reference.

Children as Victims

ALT One: Indicators of Domestic Violence in Children

Handout One

Indicators of Domestic Violence in Children

1. Increased problems at school including aggressive behavior (belief that violence can solve problems and be used to control others)
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Section Two: Children as the Victims

ALT Two: Effects of Domestic Violence on Children

Summary

A child may become a direct victim of abuse from a parent, or may be indirectly involved, as he or she tries to understand his or her parents' aggression toward each other and does not receive the security and nurturing needed while growing up. The experience of witnessing domestic violence can have serious and long-lasting effects on children, regardless of whether the children have been directly abused by a parent. These negative effects may be diminished if the child benefits from intervention.

Competencies

Educators will learn to recognize the effects of witnessing violence in the home and the resulting behavioral and emotional problems in children.

Time

This information could be presented in a teacher/staff in-service in 15-30 minutes. When providing the information to a parent, allow for an hour or more

Materials

Power Point or an overhead projector could be used.

Instructions

Provide information and allow for large and small group instruction. Stress that children are affected by domestic violence whether they are the direct victim or only witness the violence. When children are indirectly involved they still try to understand the parents' aggression toward each other and develop distrust for adults. They often do not receive the security and nurturing that they need.

Effects of Domestic Violence on Children

1. **Death or Physical Injury:** The child may be hurt if he or she becomes the victim of a parent's aggression, if the parent's anger toward a spouse is taken out on the child, or if the child attempts to stop the abuse by getting in the middle of parents' violence.

2. **Role-Reversal:** Children may feel that they have caused the violence between their parents or that they should be able to prevent it or stop it. They may attempt to take care of their parents and may feel guilty or a failure when they find that they cannot successfully do so.
3. **Emotional Difficulties:** Difficulties such as low self-esteem and depression are common in all members of violent families. These feelings lead to suicide attempts and suicide.
4. **Aggressive Behavior:** Children who learn that aggression is an effective, acceptable way to behave may repeat this behavior, especially if it is learned from a respected parent.
5. **Submissive, Withdrawn, Behavior:** Children who have been abused or who identify with the role of the victim may become passive and withdrawn, rather than aggressive, in response to conflict. They may become unable to assert themselves and may grow up to believe that it is “normal” to be a victim and to withdraw since this is the role they have already known.
6. **School Problems:** These may include academic difficulties due to difficulty paying attention, concentrating and being alert at school. Truancy may also be an issue as children sometimes feel that they may be able to control the fighting if they stay home. Peer difficulties often result as aggressive behavior occurs during conflict with peers.
7. **Running Away:** Frequently children feel that the only solution to the home situation is to escape.
8. **Abusing alcohol or drugs** may also be an attempt to escape from the home situation and may be a modeling of parent’s use of alcohol and drugs.
9. **Poorly Formed Adult Relationships:** As adults, we usually choose partners who have experienced similar situations to our own and who see the world as we do. Children from violent homes, therefore, often choose others who, like themselves, may enter the relationship with unrealistic expectations, poor self-images, and limited resources about how to act when under pressure.
10. **Abusive Behavior:** Children who have grown up around violence may retaliate with abuse toward their parents, may abuse their own spouses, or may abuse their children. Research shows that under stress we act in ways we have learned, and children in violent homes learn violence.

Closure

Participants will be provided with a copy of the handout: Effects of Domestic Violence on Children and encouraged to keep it available to evaluate the behaviors of students and to help to determine if they may be the result of domestic violence.

Children as the Victims

ALT Two: Effects of Domestic Violence on Children

Handout One

Effects of Domestic Violence on Children

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Section Two: Children as the Victims

ALT Three: Activities to Help Students Who Experience Domestic Violence

Summary

The experience of witnessing domestic violence can have serious and long-lasting effects on youth, regardless of whether they have been directly abused by a parent or have simply been present during the violence. Research points to a strong tendency for the cycle of violence to continue in the next generation. Therefore, it is very important that educators learn how to meet the needs of students who experience domestic violence.

Competencies

Educators will demonstrate techniques to help youth who have experienced domestic violence.

Time

This information could be presented in a teacher in-service in 30 minutes.

Materials

Power Point or an overhead projector could be used.

Instructions

Provide information and allow for large and small group discussion.

Activities teachers can use to help students who experience domestic violence.

1. Teachers, counselors and other school personnel need to be trained in how to identify and respond to the signs of abuse or domestic violence. If you believe that the student has been abused, you ARE a mandated reporter. Know the procedure for contacting Children's Services
2. Be willing to listen to the child and encourage them to talk to you or to another adult
3. Let the student know that they did not cause the violence and that they are not responsible for other people's behavior

4. Support them by using statements such as “I believe you”, “It’s not your fault”
5. Help the student to feel secure. Consistency in routine is important
6. Lessen their responsibility if you sense that they have taken on the adult role. Sometimes these children strive desperately to comply and to be the “perfect child”. Encourage them to be children and to play. Help them to set more realistic expectations for themselves and to recognize that it is “OK to be a child”.
7. Students who have experienced domestic violence have difficulty establishing true friendships because they have learned that very few people can be trusted. Distrust leads to isolation. By providing the student with someone who can generate an on-going relationship, a very positive experience can evolve. Help to find a mentor or arrange for a contact with Big Brothers/Big Sisters Program or other similar programs. Encourage the development of trusting relationships and strong friendships.
8. Recognize that they may lack the confidence or social skills to interact appropriately and comfortably. Help the student to learn appropriate socialization through individual and/or group training as well a good modeling. Provide opportunities such as cooperative learning activities, partners, “study buddies”, etc. in which the student will be encouraged to work with others and, thus, begin to trust others.
9. Understand that concentration and attention may be weak. Provide frequent breaks and silent signals to help redirect the student.
10. Due to the lack of structure, consistency and parent support in the home, these students may not complete assigned work. Recognize that this may not be their fault. If possible, provide time and assistance at school to complete assigned work even though other students are required to complete it at home.
11. Because of disorganization and inconsistency in the home, teachers should not assume that the student is aware of what most of society deems “normal” life experiences. Help them by patiently teaching them what your expectations are for organization and behavior within the school environment.
12. Among the most prominent needs of children from violent homes is the development of: positive self-concepts, appropriate self-expression, repertoires of socially acceptable behaviors, self-help skills, and a sense of personal individuality. Provide them with opportunities to become involved with activities designed to improve knowledge of self and personal expression. Encourage any activities that will improve their self-concepts and possibly increase their interactions with others.
13. Large segments of normal childhood may have been missed along with the learning that should have taken place. This includes learning the skills of establishing friendships and feeling good about oneself. Their experiences have indicated to them that they are truly “bad kids”. The school can play a large role in helping the student to find areas in which he or she can be successful and helping to improve self-concept.

14. Teachers may see these children as “mature” when in reality they are taking on unnecessary adult roles. Giving them increased responsibility, for example jobs as monitors, only exacerbates the problems.
15. It is important that students from violent homes receive individual assistance and monitoring. Refer to the school guidance counselor and/or an outside agency. It is important that they learn techniques for non-violent problems solving as violence may be the only way they know to solve problems.

Closure

Participants will be provided with a copy of the handout: Activities teachers can use to help students who have experienced domestic violence.

Children as Victims

ALT Three: Activities to Help Students

Activities Teachers Can Use to Help Students Who Have Experienced Domestic Violence

1. Teachers, counselors and other school personnel need to be trained in how to identify and respond to the signs of abuse or domestic violence. If you believe that the child has been abused, you ARE a mandated reporter. Know the procedure for contacting Children's Services.
2. Be willing to listen to the child and encourage them to talk to you or another adult.
3. Let the student know that they did not cause the violence and that they are not responsible for other people's behavior.
4. Support them by using statements such as "I believe you", "It's not your fault".
5. Help the student to feel secure. Consistency in routine is important.
6. Lessen their responsibility if you sense that they have taken on the adult role. Sometimes these children strive desperately to comply and to be the "perfect child". Encourage them to be children and to play. Help them to set more realistic expectations for themselves and to recognize that it is "OK to be a child".
7. Students who have experienced domestic violence have difficulty establishing true friendships because they have learned that very few people can be trusted. Distrust leads to isolation. By providing the student with someone who can generate an on-going relationship, a very positive experience can evolve. Help to find a mentor or arrange for a contact with Big Brothers/Big Sisters Program or other similar programs. Encourage the development of trusting relationships and strong friendships.
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Section Three: Children as Victims

ALT Three: Smart and Safe Kids

Summary

33 million children in the United States between the ages of 3 and 17 years of age are at risk for exposure to parental violence. The National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect estimates that more than one million children are abused each year. Children need to learn that violence is wrong, emotional abuse is wrong and that everyone has the right to live free of violence and abuse. However, children also must understand that they can only control their own actions. Students need to learn how to keep themselves out of dangerous situations, what to do if something happens that is dangerous, doesn't *feel* right, or they don't like.

Competencies

Students will learn that violence, abuse, and forced physical contact are never OK and will learn techniques to keep themselves safe.

Time

This information can be presented to a classroom in 30 minutes.

Materials

Paper for students to write name address and phone number. List of student's name, address and phone number.

Instructions

- Ask the students to describe what danger is. After the students give various answers, explain that danger and violence may occur in their homes and with people they know and trust. This may include family members, youth group leaders, or other adults who can develop relationships with children.
- Explain that today they will learn tricks and tips to help them to stay safe and to deal with dangerous situations.

Tips for staying safe:

1. Help the students to learn their full name, address and phone number. Provide paper for students to write this information. Make sure to have a list of student addresses and phone numbers in order to provide information to students who do not know this information. After students have written their information, pair students and have them practice with each other.
2. Teach calling 911 including when to use it, how to use it.
3. Explain use of a “code word” which only their family members know. Explain that they are never to tell their code word to anyone else. Encourage/assign the students to talk with their parents tonight to set up a family “code word”.
4. Ask students to describe what a “stranger is”. Explain that nice strangers can trick even adults. Explain why they are a “target” if they are alone (without others around them for help). Teach students what to do if approached by a stranger.
 - a. Say, “NO, get away from me.” loudly and firmly.
 - b. Scream.
 - c. Run away to a crowded place.
 - d. Tell a safe adult. (An adult that will listen, believe the child, and help)

Brainstorm the names of safe adults with the students.
5. Play “What If Game” using potentially dangerous situations. Ex:
 - a. What if the phone rings while you are home alone? (Try to trick them into telling their address and that they are alone and show them the danger in this.)
 - b. What if a nice man asks you to help him find his lost puppy or kitten?
 - c. What if a nice lady says your mom called her and asked her to give you a ride home because she was running late?
 - d. What if you get lost and someone you don’t know offers to take you to your parents? Explain that if they are lost they should look for a police officer, clerk or someone in charge, not just any adult.
6. Explain the difference between “good touches” (hugs from someone you love, pats on the back, high fives etc.) and “bad touches” (any touch to your private parts, any touch that *feels* wrong or uncomfortable, any forced physical contact that you don’t like). Teach them what to do if someone touches their private parts or asks them to touch their private parts. (This is never ok, even with a family member or someone they love. No one

except a doctor, nurse or in special circumstances, a parent, should touch their private parts).

- a. Loudly and firmly say: "Stop it, I don't like it, I'm going to tell." Yell loudly and don't stop yelling until you are safe. It's OK to say "NO" to an adult if they frighten them with requests or demands.
PRACTICE MANY TIMES
- b. Run away from the person to a place where there are other people.
- c. Tell an adult what happened.

Explain that 85% of the time molesters are someone they know and trust and that molesters try to give them feelings of affection, belonging, and trust.

7. Explain the importance of talking to a safe adult about what happened. Stress that it's OK to talk about private parts to an adult without embarrassment and that they did nothing wrong.
8. Define safe and unsafe secrets. Surprise parties and gifts are safe secrets; they don't make a child feel afraid. Unsafe secrets often make children feel scared or uncomfortable. Unsafe secrets always should be shared with an adult who will help.
9. Teach what to do if there is fighting in their home:
 - a. Get away to a safe place (another room, a neighbor, etc.)
 - b. Call for help if needed
 - c. Never try to break up the fight or get in the middle
 - d. Afterwards, talk to a safe adult about what happened. If possible, talk with your parents later and explain how much their fighting bothers you.

Evaluation/Assessment of Student's Competency

Ask classroom teachers to regularly review the student's name, address, and phone number, especially after students move. Ask teachers to also review the safety skills regularly.

Closure

Remind the student that staying safe is partly their jobs. They must know their names, addresses and phone numbers, not go out alone, not be afraid to say NO to an adult if they are doing something that they don't like or trust. Emphasis the importance of finding an adult that they can trust and telling them when things happen that they don't like.

Section Three: Anger Management

ALT One: Understanding Anger

Summary

Anger is a normal human emotion and different people become angry about different things. Difficulties result when anger is not managed.

Competencies

1. Students will learn to recognize why they become angry and ways to let anger out without hurting themselves or others.

Time

30 – 60 minutes

Materials

Chalkboard and chalk or chart paper and marker, drawing paper, crayons or markers, Behavior handout copy for each student, Anger Control handout.

Instructions

1. Have students brainstorm what makes them angry. List on chalkboard or chart paper as students name.
2. Distribute drawing paper and crayons or markers and ask students to draw a picture of their body when they are angry. Color in red the parts of the body where they feel angry.
3. Ask students to complete the handout “Behavior.”
4. Brainstorm ideas for preventing or handling anger in positive and negative ways. Make two columns on chalkboard “Helpful Ideas” “Not Helpful Ideas”. List all ideas in the appropriate column with the students help. See Anger Control Activities handout.

Evaluation/Assessment of Student's Competency

Students will make a poster of at least three pictures of things they will do next time they get angry.

Closure

Explain that everyone gets angry. Anger is OK as long as they manage it. But, when they act inappropriately they get in trouble and lose privileges. Tell them that the next lesson will also help them to manage their anger.

Anger Management

ALT One: Understanding Anger Handout One

BEHAVIOR

DIRECTIONS: Mark all behaviors that you usually do when you get angry.

- Pretend that I'm not angry
- Use the silent treatment
- Call names
- Tease
- Insult and make smart remarks
- Talk behind someone's back
- Yell
- Push, shove, or kick
- Bite
- Curse
- Threaten others or to harm yourself
- Hit
- Slam doors
- Throw things
- Run away or hide

Anger Management

ALT One: Understanding Anger
Handout Two

ANGER CONTROL

The following lists provide some ideas for preventing or handling anger in positive and negative ways.

Helpful Ideas

Talk it out with someone
Count to “10”
Take a deep breath
Find a place to be alone
Listen to music
Punch a pillow
Clean or organize your room
Scream
Walk, jog, or run
Write it out
Talk to yourself
Play with clay or PlayDoh
Draw your feelings
Play a sport

Not Helpful Ideas

Eat a lot more (or less)
Fight
Threaten to hurt someone
Hurt yourself
Withdraw from everyone
Blame it on someone else
Take it out on an animal
Destroy property
Start a rumor
Run away from home
Laugh at the person
Yell at the person
Curse
Throw things

Section Three

ALT Two: Steps to Manage Anger

Summary

Anger is a normal human emotion and we should not try to eliminate it from our lives, but we do need to understand how to manage it.

Competencies

1. Students will learn four steps for controlling anger.

Time

30 – 60 minutes

Materials

Poster or transparency with “Four Steps for Controlling Anger”, handout for each student of Four Steps for Controlling Anger

Instructions

1. Teach and demonstrate each of the Four Steps for Controlling Anger using the handout.
 - Step 1: **Stop and Calm Down** – demonstrate deep breathing and self talk
 - Step 2: **Think** – ask what the best decision is to make and the probable consequences
 - Step 3: **Talk** – talk to the person you are mad at
 - Step 4: **Feel Good Again** – do something you enjoy and try to forgive and forget

Evaluation/Assessment of Student’s Competency

Students will each make a poster of the four steps to display in the classroom to reinforce the skill.

Closure

Explain that there is still more to learn about managing anger and they will learn more in the next session.

Anger Management

ALT Two: Steps to Manage Anger
Handout One

Four Steps for Controlling Anger

Step 1: Stop and Calm Down

Calm down your body by taking some deep breaths.
Calm down your mind by saying to yourself:

- “I won’t blow up.”
- “ I won’t get myself in trouble.”
- “I can control my temper.”

Step 2: Think

Think about:

- What will happen if you lose your temper?
- Whether you should stay...or walk away...

Step 3: Talk

Talk to the person you’re mad at:

- Say what you’re mad about.
- Say what you want.
- Talk to someone you trust about the problem.

Step 4: FEEL GOOD AGAIN

Get rid of any anger that’s left by:

- Doing something active
- Doing things you enjoy
- Doing a relaxation exercise
- Trying to forgive and forget

From: Helping Kids Handle Anger

Section Three: Anger Management

ALT Three: Relaxation Techniques (Chill Out)

Summary

Stress results from worry, frustration, feelings of hurt and fear. Although anger may be used to discharge tension, it is generally ineffective for more than a few minutes and leads to additional stress. Relaxation techniques are often effective in reducing stress and are socially much more acceptable.

Competencies

1. Students will learn to recognize stress and practice techniques to reduce stress.

Time

30 – 60 minutes

Materials

Chalkboard and chalk or chart paper and marker, construction paper, pencil, and crayons or markers for each student, Relaxation Techniques handout

Instructions

1. Explain that many problems can develop if we don't learn to relax and handle the stress that we must all face each day. Give examples of physical discomforts such as headaches and stomachaches. Give other examples of social problems that arise when anger is used to discharge tension.
2. Ask the students to describe how they "chill." Write their ideas on the chalkboard.
3. When the list is complete, review the seven ideas on the Relation Techniques handout. Point out how the students' ideas fit into one of the categories.
4. Have the students make their own booklets. Distribute a piece of construction paper, a pencil, and crayons or markers to each student. Have the students fold the paper in half and then in half again to form a booklet. On the front of the booklet, have the students design a cover. For example, a student might draw a picture of him/herself

and call the book “How to Chill.” On each page of the booklet, have students write a word or two about ways to relax and illustrate the words they choose.

Evaluation/Assessment of Student’s Competency

Students will be able to describe at least two stress-reducing techniques that they will use. The teacher will encourage the use of appropriate techniques and monitor progress.

Closure

Encourage the students to take the booklets home and share them with their families. Tell the students that these same ideas work for everyone including grown-ups. Remind them that stress is part of everyday activities and anger is a normal human emotion. If they use stress-reducing activities and learn to manage their anger, they will have more friends and be better able to get along with their families, peers and adults.

Anger Management

ALT Three: Relaxation Techniques
Handout One

RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

1. Relaxation

Relaxing ideas include:

- Breathing deeply from the diaphragm
- Saying a calming word over and over
- Tensing muscles throughout your body, then loosening them.
- Sitting back and looking at a peaceful scene or imagining one

2. Positive thinking and visualization

Think thoughts such as: “I can do this” and picture yourself succeeding.

3. Staying healthy

Eat healthy foods and get enough rest.

4. Exercising

Note that exercise is very important, not just for general health, but because when we exercise, our body releases endorphins that are calming hormones.

a. Recreation

Having fun is important. Develop hobbies that you can pursue now and can continue to enjoy when you are older. Look beyond TV and video games!

b. Changing what you can!

Reduce stress by setting goals, using time wisely, and problem-solving. Make changes to reduce the stress within you. For example, if you are always nervous because you lose things, set a goal to become organized.

c. Expressing your feelings

Talk and us “I Messages.” Express yourself through writing in journals, art, and music. A pet can be a great listener, too!

From: Lively Lessons for Classroom Session, by Rosanne Sheritz Sartori

Transfer Activity

The lessons presented provide students with opportunities to practice resilient actions. Possessing resiliency helps students adjust and grow with change. With these skills the students have a greater opportunity to emerge successfully from the changes and problems that confront them. The goal of this program is to help the students to develop positive choices and to realize the self-affirming effect of making such choices. It is hoped that this will motivate the students to adjust to the difficulties in their lives.

Developing resiliency and effective decision-making skills helps students to be more effective in school and leads to greater effectiveness in other areas of their lives. These skills prepare them to be successful in the world of work. They will learn to be productive, are able to adjust to new demands, and to use their skills to reach goals they set for themselves.

Before new skills can be internalized they must be practiced on a consistent basis. The challenge for the students is to utilize these new learned skills as they face the many changes in their lives. Supportive adults, including their teachers and families, will be important to their success.