

NELCWIT'S SERVICES

All of our services are free and confidential.

24 HOUR HOTLINE: If you or someone you know is dealing with domestic violence or sexual assault, our hotline can offer support, connect you with counselors, safe homes, shelters, and other resources, and provide referrals.

413-772-0806 or 888-249-0806
24 hours/day, 7 days/week

Call the number above for any of the following:

COUNSELORS AND ADVOCATES: Counseling, advocacy, and resources for women who are living with, escaping, or recovering from domestic violence or sexual assault.

SUPPORT GROUPS:

Domestic violence support group, ATRIUM group, drum circle, and more.

RESTRAINING ORDER ASSISTANCE:

SAFEPLAN advocates at the courts in Greenfield and Orange can assist you with the restraining order process.

CHILD-SAFE COUNSELORS:

Our counselors use art and activities to work with children 3-17 who have witnessed or experienced domestic violence. They can also work with non-offending parents.

ACCESS TO SHELTER:

Our hotline staff can help you find safety through our network of safe homes and our connections with shelters.

911 CELL PHONES:

Come to our office 9-4, Monday-Friday, to pick up a cell phone which is programmed to dial 911. These cell phones do not have service and cannot make or receive other calls.

INFORMATION AND SUPPORT IN SPANISH:

Call our Latina advocate, 413.772.0871 x109

If someone you know is experiencing emotional, physical, or sexual abuse, there *is* someone to talk to.

24-hour HOTLINE:

413-772-0806
Franklin County
—or—
1-888-249-0806 (V/TTY)
Toll Free

Free and Confidential
24 hours/day, 7 days/week

COME TO OUR OFFICE
at 479 Main Street, Greenfield:
9 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Monday through Friday
or call the hotline for a FREE,
CONFIDENTIAL appointment.



NELCWIT is funded by contracts with the Massachusetts Departments of Public Health, Department of Social Services, Executive Office of Public Safety, and Office of Victim Assistance; by the United Way of Franklin County; by the Haymarket People's Fund and other private foundations, and by donations from supporters.



NELCWIT

NEW ENGLAND LEARNING CENTER FOR WOMEN IN TRANSITION



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE and CHILDREN

**New England Learning Center for Women
in Transition**

479 Main Street, PO Box 520
Greenfield MA 01302
(413) 772-0871

North Quabbin office:

131 W. Main Street
Orange MA 01364
(978) 544-9857

www.nelcwit.org

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How to Support a Child Who Has Witnessed Domestic Violence

- Let children know that the violence they experienced is *never* their fault.
- Establish a helping relationship. A positive relationship with an adult is the most powerful tool for helping children heal from traumatic events.
- Provide a structured and predictable environment so the child knows what to expect.
- Allow children to talk freely about the violence in their lives.
- Help the parents to understand that young children think differently than adults and need careful explanations about scary events.
- Remind children who live with violence that they are lovable, competent, and important.
- Work together with other caregivers in the child's life.
- Help children learn nonviolent ways of playing and dealing with conflict.
- Be a role model. Show children how to work out issues respectfully and non-violently.

—Information from the Child Witness to Violence Project,
Boston Medical Center

Each year more than 3.3 million children witness domestic violence.

The Connection Between Domestic Violence and Child Abuse

- ◆ Children who live with domestic violence are at high risk of being abused themselves.
- ◆ Children and infants may be injured by violence intended for a parent, or if they attempt to intervene.

What are the Effects of Domestic Violence on Children?

Both young and older children are powerfully affected by violence, especially if the victim or perpetrator is a family member. Parents may hope or assume the child will forget, but even very young children remember traumatic events and are affected by them for years.

Domestic violence is terrifying for children. Many have physical, emotional, or behavioral reactions, including:

- ◆ Trouble concentrating
- ◆ Sleep difficulties including bedwetting and nightmares
- ◆ Health complaints with no clear medical cause
- ◆ Aggressive behavior, angry outbursts
- ◆ Repeatedly acting out violent events
- ◆ Worries, fears, over-reaction to loud noises or sudden movements
- ◆ Loss of skills learned at an earlier age, “babyish” behavior
- ◆ Loss of interest in friends, school, or other activities the child used to enjoy
- ◆ Increased separation anxiety
- ◆ Anxiety because they feel adults are not able to protect them
- ◆ Feeling guilty, believing the violence is their fault
- ◆ Showing no feelings ◆ Changes in appetite ◆ Learning and speech delays

Older children and teens who have lived with domestic violence may be more likely to engage in risk-taking behaviors.

Children who witness violence may be more likely to become perpetrators or victims of violence in their teen and adult years.

—Information from the Child Witness to Violence Project, Boston Medical Center

Help is available.

NELCWIT's Child-Safe counselors use art and activities to work with children ages 3-17 who have witnessed or experienced domestic violence, and offer advocacy and help with parenting skills to non-offending parents.

For more information or to arrange an appointment,
call 413-772-0806 or 888-249-0806.