

# Delaware Domestic Violence 24-Hour Hotlines

New Castle County  
(Bilingual English/Spanish)  
302-762-6110

Kent & Sussex Counties (English)  
302-422-8058

Kent & Sussex Counties (Spanish)  
302-745-9874

**Call your local hotline for more  
information and support.**

Available resources and referrals  
include:

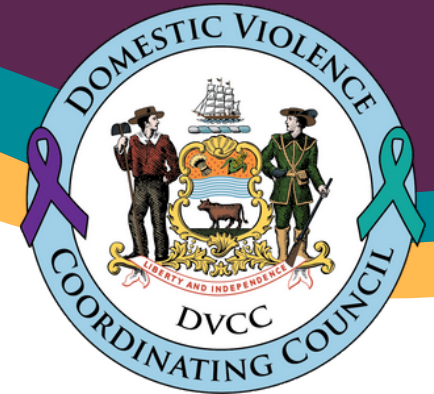
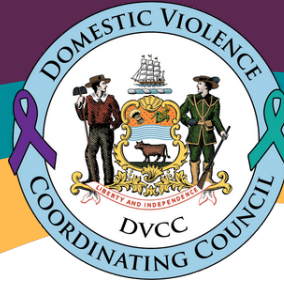
- Safety Planning
- Shelter
- Advocacy & Case Management
- Legal Assistance & Court Advocacy
- Group/Individual Counseling
- Housing Assistance
- Financial Literacy & Empowerment

Additional resources for children  
are available on the DVCC website.  
Scan the QR code below.







# Domestic Violence

## How it Affects Children



## Contact Us

-  [DVCC\\_information@delaware.gov](mailto:DVCC_information@delaware.gov)
-  302-255-1700
-  [dvcc.delaware.gov](http://dvcc.delaware.gov)
-  900 N. King Street, Suite 300  
Wilmington, DE 19801

Be aware of the  
impact & how to help

Created by:  
Domestic Violence Coordinating Council

## Witnessing Domestic Violence

Children who witness domestic violence or are victims of abuse themselves are at serious risk for long-term physical and mental health problems.

Children might struggle with behavioral problems, cognitive effects, and social difficulties.

**Children from violent homes are at greater risk of becoming adult victims of abuse or abusers themselves.**

Witnessing domestic violence can create a cycle of violence by normalizing abuse as a part of family life.

A boy who sees his mother being abused is **10x** more likely to abuse his female partner as an adult.

A girl who grows up in a home where her father abuses her mother is more than **6x** as likely to be sexually abused as a girl who grows up in a non-abusive home.

**Children in homes where one parent is abused may feel fearful and anxious. This can cause them to react in different ways, depending on their age.**

### Preschool-aged Children

Young children who witness violence may experience

- ◆ Increased bed-wetting, thumb-sucking, crying, and whining.
- ◆ Difficulty falling or staying asleep;
- ◆ Stuttering or hiding
- ◆ Severe separation anxiety

### School-aged Children & Teens

Children & teens who witness violence may feel guilty about the abuse and blame themselves for it. They may also

- ◆ Have poor self esteem
- ◆ Skip school, not participate in school activities, or get bad grades
- ◆ Have difficulty sleeping or sleep during school
- ◆ Have trouble making friends
- ◆ Get into trouble more often, bully others, start fights
- ◆ Have a lot of headaches and stomachaches
- ◆ Engage in risky behaviors, like unprotected sex or alcohol/drug use

### Children from violent homes might...

- ◆ Feel the need to protect a parent being abused, may want to understand “why” their abused parent stays with the abuser.
- ◆ Experience confusing feelings toward one or both parents, such as feeling close to abusive parent, or strong hate towards the abusive parent, or anger/blame toward the parent being abused.
- ◆ Feel a sense of guilt for not being able to protect their family from the abuse and/or guilt for still loving the abuser.

**Children can heal from abuse and trauma with the proper support.**

Treatment and support can make a big difference; children are more likely to be successful recovering from abuse or trauma when they have adults they can trust, healthy friendships, and a high self-esteem.

- ◆ Help them feel safe & talk about their fears
- ◆ Talk about healthy relationships & boundaries
- ◆ Foster a reliable support system
- ◆ Get them professional help

Therapy can help children and their families explore, reframe, and address the trauma while also providing coping strategies. **Call the 24-hour hotlines listed in this pamphlet to learn more.**