

Working with  
Survivors of  
Domestic Violence  
and Their Children



*A Resource Guide for  
Domestic Violence  
Advocacy Programs  
in Kansas*

*Developed by:*



[kcsdv.org](http://kcsdv.org)

# Working with Survivors of Domestic Violence and Their Children

## *A Resource Guide for Domestic Violence Advocacy Programs in Kansas*

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### TABLE OF CONTENTS

#### **SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION**

About this Guide.....	1.1
Impacts of Domestic Violence & Battering on Children.....	1.2
Children & Resiliency.....	1.8

#### **SECTION 2: ADVOCACY SERVICES FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH**

Advocacy Services for Children & Youth Impacted by Domestic Violence.....	2.1
---	-----

#### **SECTION 3: RESOURCES FOR ADVOCATES**

Resources for Advocates: Section Contents.....	3.1
Informed Consent When Working with Children & Youth.....	3.2
Model Informed Consent Form for Working with Children.....	3.4
Parent-Child Welcome Interview Packet.....	3.6
Parent Welcome Interview.....	3.7
Child Welcome Interview (ages 4-10).....	3.8
Teen Welcome Interview (ages 11-16).....	3.10
Suggested Activities for Children's Groups.....	3.12
Welcome & Introductions Module.....	3.15
Identifying & Expressing Feelings Module.....	3.18
Strengthening Sense of Self Module.....	3.22
Problem Solving Module.....	3.26
Healthy Ways to Deal with Anger Module.....	3.31
Dealing with Conflict Module.....	3.35
Defining Healthy Relationships Module.....	3.38
Wrap-up & Closing Module.....	3.41
Cultural Considerations.....	3.45

#### **SECTION 4: RESOURCES FOR ADVOCATES & SURVIVORS**

Resources for Advocates & Survivors: Section Contents.....	4.1
Developmental Stages of Children/ Etapas del Desarrollo en los Niños.....	4.2
Age-Appropriate Ideas to Use with Children/ Ideas Adecuadas para Utilizar con los Niños Según sus Etapa de Edad.....	4.10
Positive Parenting: 10 Effective Tips/ Ser Padres Positivos: 10 Consejos Efectivos.....	4.14
Parenting Children & Youth Impacted by Domestic Violence/ Criando Niños y Juventud Afectada por la Violencia Doméstica.....	4.18
Fostering Resilience: 10 Tips When Working with Children/ Fomentando Resiliencia: 10 Consejos Cuando Trabaja con Niños.....	4.20
Building Bonds: Activities to Strengthen Mother-Child Relationships/ Construyendo Uniones: Actividades para Fortalecer las Relaciones Entre Madre e Hijo.....	4.24

#### **SECTION 5: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & READINGS**

Additional Resources & Suggested Readings.....	5.1
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**Working with Survivors of Domestic Violence and Their Children:  
A Resource Guide for Domestic Violence  
Advocacy Programs in Kansas**

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The information in this manual is intended to assist domestic violence advocates when working with survivors of domestic violence and their children. The editors and staff of the Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence do not render legal services and specifically disclaim any liability, loss, or risk from the use and application of any of the contents of this manual.

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# INTRODUCTION

## ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This resource guide was developed by the Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence (KCSDV) in collaboration with advocates across the state. It is intended to be used by domestic violence and sexual assault programs that provide confidential, voluntary, and free advocacy services to adult survivors<sup>1</sup> of domestic violence<sup>2</sup> and their children.

The safety and well-being of survivors and their children are inextricably linked. This guide provides advocates with resources and tools to better serve survivors and their children by working with them as a unit.

This guide is based on the notion that advocacy services for survivors and their children should focus on:

- Joining with survivors in their efforts to rebuild relationships and bonds with their children;
- Supporting survivors' roles as parents; and
- Engaging children in safe, age-appropriate play and activities that enhance resiliency to the impacts of abuse and violence in the home.

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<sup>1</sup> The term “survivor” refers to a person who is, or has been, subjected to a pattern of abusive and coercive behaviors by an intimate partner or former intimate partner. Gender-specific language is used throughout this guide as women are disproportionately represented as survivors of domestic violence. The terms “she,” “her,” “mother,” and “non-abusive parent” may be used to refer to the survivor of domestic violence. This is not intended to suggest that men can not be survivors of domestic violence. Appropriate services should be offered to male survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

<sup>2</sup> The term “domestic violence” refers to a pattern of abusive and coercive behaviors used by a perpetrator/batterer/abusive partner to dominate and gain power and control over an intimate partner or former intimate partner. These behaviors and tactics include the use of sexual violence, physical violence, stalking, emotional abuse, economic abuse, intimidation, isolation, male privilege, coercion and threats, the use of children, and minimization, denial, and blame for the behavior.

## IMPACTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & BATTERING ON CHILDREN

Perpetrators<sup>3</sup> of domestic violence (batterers) often create an environment of fear and intimidation that can affect every member of a family, including children. Survivors of domestic violence are often left with the difficult task of repairing damage done to their relationship with their children at the hands of the batterer, and often seek advocacy services to lessen the impact of battering behavior on the children.

The effects of battering on children are a reflection of the batterer's parenting style.<sup>4</sup> As the primary perpetrator of violence and of psychological aggression in the home, the batterer should be seen as responsible for the exposure of the children to violence and abuse.<sup>5</sup> Through tactics of control, entitlement, and possessiveness, batterers can negatively impact children by:<sup>6</sup>

- Creating role models that perpetuate violence;
- Undermining the mother's authority and the mother-child bond;
- Retaliating against the mother for her efforts to protect the children;
- Sowing divisions within the family; and
- Using the children as weapons against the mother.

The Power and Control Wheel<sup>7</sup> describes the tactics, tools, pressures, and rationales batterers use to obtain and reinforce power, domination, and control over the adult survivor of domestic violence. Using the tactics on the Power and Control Wheel, the following describes the impact of domestic violence and battering on children.

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<sup>3</sup> The term “perpetrator” refers to the person who exercises a pattern of abusive and coercive behaviors against an intimate partner or former intimate partner. This document may use “batterer” and “abusive partner” to refer to the perpetrator of domestic violence.

<sup>4</sup> Bancroft, L., & Silverman, J. (2002). *The batterer as parent*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> Bancroft, L. (2002). *The batterer as a parent*. *Synergy*, 6(1), 6-8. (Newsletter of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges).

<sup>7</sup> Developed by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, Duluth, MN.

## Power and Control Wheel



## Power and Control Wheel as it Applies to Children

### USING INTIMIDATION

Making her afraid by using looks, actions, gestures

- smashing things • destroying her property • abusing pets
- displaying weapons.

### Batterer may use intimidation by:

- Using looks, actions, and gestures to intimidate or cause fear in the family.
- Destroying property to show authority, intimidate, or punish the family.
- Using male or adult size to intimidate the mother or the children.
- Abusing pets to send messages or threats of violence to the family.
- Displaying or cleaning weapons in front of the family to send of messages or threats of violence.
- Using violence in front of the children.

### USING EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Putting her down • calling her names • making her think she's crazy • playing mind games  
• humiliating her • making her feel bad about herself • making her feel guilty.

### Batterer may use emotional abuse by:

- Forcing the children to engage in put-downs or name calling of the mother.
- Putting the children down or calling the children names.
- Humiliating the mother in front of the children.
- Forcing the mother to engage in embarrassing acts in front of the children.
- Undermining her value as a mother (i.e., making the mother believe she is an unfit parent, telling the mother the children do not love her).
- Shaping how the children view their mother.
- Being inconsistent in visitation, discipline, or parenting.

### **USING ISOLATION**

Controlling what she does, who she sees and talks to, what she reads, where she goes • limiting her outside involvement • using jealousy to justify actions.

### **Batterer may use isolation by:**

- Not letting the mother see or spend time with the children.
- Limiting opportunities for the mother and the children to get help from outside sources.
- Not allowing the children to participate in age appropriate activities outside of the home.
- Not allowing the children to invite friends into the home.
- Controlling access to trustworthy adults (i.e., school counselors, grandparents, extended family members).
- Not allowing the mother to respond to the children's needs (i.e., hurts, fears, basic needs).

### **MINIMIZING, DENYING, AND BLAMING**

Making light of the abuse and not taking her concerns about it seriously • saying the abuse didn't happen • shifting responsibility for abusive behavior • saying she caused the abuse.

### **Batterer may use minimization, denial, and blame by:**

- Shaping the children's understanding of the source of the violence by blaming the mother.
- Making the children believe the mother is to blame for the violence.
- Pitting family member against family member.
- Fostering instability and creating confusion for the children by denying the violence happened.
- Normalizing the violence.
- Making light of the violence.
- Causing the children to feel guilty and to believe they are to blame for the violence.



### **USING CHILDREN**

Making her feel guilty about the children  
• using the children to relay messages • using visitation to harass her • threatening to take the children away.

### **Batterer may use children by:**

- Making the mother believe anything that happens to the children is her fault.
- Using the children as confidants.
- Threatening to take the children away, make an SRS report, or hurt the children if the mother reports the abuse or tries to leave the batterer.
- Exposing the children to the abuse (i.e., through direct observation, overhearing, or knowing about the abuse).
- Undermining the mother's efforts to parent the children.
- Probing the children for information about the mother or her new partner.
- Controlling the use of contraception or having children born close together; overwhelming the mother.
- Causing physical harm to the children as a result of violence toward the mother.
- Physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect perpetrated directly against the children.

### **USING MALE PRIVILEGE**

Treating her like a servant • making all the big decisions • acting like the "master of the castle" • being the one to define men's and women's roles.

### **Batterer may use male privilege by:**

- Forcing the mother and the female children to do household duties.
- Teaching the children to not respect women.
- Centering family life around the batterer.
- Demanding the children keep quiet about the abuse.
- Demanding the mother handle the unpleasant or demanding tasks of child rearing.
- Showing poor emotional boundaries.
- Teaching that women are weak or stupid.
- Having the ultimate authority but assuming no responsibility, including household chores or parenting.
- Establishing rigid gender roles for the children.
- Creating rules for everyone in the household to follow and changing the rules without warning.



**USING  
ECONOMIC  
ABUSE**

Preventing her from getting or keeping a job • making her ask for money • giving her an allowance • taking her money • not letting her know about or have access to family income.

**Batterer may use economic abuse by:**

- Creating poor credit for the mother so that she is unable to get financing on her own.
- Controlling the family finances or withholding information about the family finances.
- Giving the mother a meager allowance for her and the children's needs.
- Withholding child support.
- Refusing to help pay for necessities.
- Creating reasons for the mother to lose her job (i.e., calling her work frequently, making her miss work, withholding transportation).
- Disrupting child care arrangements needed to maintain employment.



**USING COERCION  
AND THREATS**

Making and/or carrying out threats to do something to hurt her

- threatening to leave her, to commit suicide, to report her to welfare • making her drop charges
- making her do illegal things.

**Batterer may use coercion and threats by:**

- Threatening to report the mother to welfare to impact her economic benefits or to initiate a child maltreatment investigation.
- Threatening that SRS will take the children away.
- Making threats to harm the mother or the children if the mother leaves him.
- Threatening to report the mother or the children to immigration authorities.
- Making threats of retaliation toward the children who disclose abuse to outside helpers.
- Threatening to abandon the children.
- Making threats of suicide or other self-harm.

## CHILDREN & RESILIENCY

Research suggests that despite the tremendous barriers and obstacles women who are battered face, they continue to nurture their children and build better lives for themselves and their families.<sup>8</sup>

When working with mothers and children impacted by abuse and violence in the home, it is important to remember that children are not uniformly affected by their exposure to domestic violence,<sup>9</sup> and that children's recovery after exposure to domestic violence depends largely on the quality of their relationship with the non-abusive parent.<sup>10</sup>

Several factors in the lives of children can affect their resilience, including their development of talents and interests, their access to close relationships with trustworthy adults, their ability to escape self-blame, and the strength of their peer relationships.<sup>11</sup> Key elements of children's healing in the aftermath of violence include:<sup>12</sup>

- A close relationship with the non-abusive parent;
- Safe environments that include structure, limits, and predictability;
- Good relationships with siblings and peers;
- Connection to other loved ones;
- Opportunities to talk about events and express and release distressing feelings; and
- Access to close relationships with trustworthy adults.

Survivors should be reassured that their children's behaviors and reactions to abuse and violence may be normal given the circumstances. Restoring the mother-child bond is fundamental to the well-being of both survivors and their

*Advocates should seek to enhance resiliency and recovery in children by joining with the survivor in her efforts to rebuild her relationship and bond with the children, supporting her role as a parent, and engaging the children in safe, age-appropriate play and activities.*

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<sup>8</sup> Sullivan, C., Nguyen, H., Allen, N., Bybee, D., & Juras, J. (2000). *Beyond searching for deficits: Evidence that physically and emotionally abused women are nurturing parents*. *Journal of Emotional Abuse*, 2(1), 51-69.

<sup>9</sup> Jaffe, P., Wolfe, D.A. & Wilson, S. (1990). *Children of battered women*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

<sup>10</sup> See review of studies in Heller, S., Larriue, J., D'Imperio, R., & Boris, N. (1998). *Research on resilience to child maltreatment: Empirical considerations*. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 23(4) 321-338. See also Bancroft, L., & Silverman, J. (2002). *The batterer as parent*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

<sup>11</sup> Roy, M. (1988). *Children in the crossfire: Violence in the home-how does it affect our children?* Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications, Inc.

<sup>12</sup> Bancroft, L. (2004). *When dad hurts mom: Helping your children heal the wounds of witnessing abuse*. New York: G.P. Penguin Group.

children.<sup>13</sup> The work to rebuild trust and reestablish a positive mother-child relationship needs to be supported on an ongoing basis, even long after the domestic violence ends.

Advocates should seek to enhance resiliency and recovery in children by joining with the survivor in her efforts to rebuild her relationship and bond with the children, supporting her role as a parent, and engaging the children in safe, age-appropriate play and activities.

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<sup>13</sup> Cheshire Domestic Abuse Partnership, Cheshire's Children's Centres and Domestic Abuse. *Integrating early and preventative responses*.

# ADVOCACY SERVICES FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH IMPACTED BY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Best practices<sup>1</sup> indicate that the following services should be offered to mothers and their children who are working with domestic violence advocacy programs. Additionally, services should be offered and tailored in a way that meets the unique needs of the individual.

- **Identify the needs of children in the areas of:**
  - Health;
  - Education;
  - Age-appropriate physical and mental development;
  - Impacts of battering behavior; and
  - Impacts of child abuse and neglect, and teen dating violence.
- **Introduce mothers and their children to the program, services, and staff, and help them feel safe and comfortable.**
- **Offer services, advocacy, and referrals to address issues and goals discovered while working with the program.**
- **Engage in activities that enhance children’s resiliency by:**
  - Supporting and fostering a strong, intimate bond between mothers and their children;
  - Creating a safe, nurturing space for children; and
  - Showing children undivided attention.
- **Offer individual and group services to children that help them:**
  - Define healthy relationships;
  - Know that the abuse and violence is and was not their fault;
  - Enhance resilience to the impacts of witnessing violence or experiencing child abuse, neglect, and teen dating violence;
  - Identify feelings and emotions, and learn healthy ways to express feelings and emotions;
  - Improve social and problem-solving skills;
  - Discover their personal strengths and those of their family; and
  - Have fun.
- **Provide mothers with:**
  - Information about the impacts of domestic violence on children;
  - Opportunities to discuss parenting with both women’s and children’s advocates, and other mothers in similar circumstances;
  - Support for their efforts and strategies in enhancing their children’s resiliency to the impacts of abuse and violence; and
  - Support for their strengths as parents.

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<sup>1</sup> See Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence (2003). *Children’s Packet*. Available at: <http://www.wcadv.org/>; Bancroft, L. (October 2009). Materials presented at the webinar “*Meeting the Post-Separation Needs of Battered Women and Their Children*” hosted by Jewish Women International’s National Alliance to End Domestic Abuse; Praxis International (September 2008). Materials presented at the conference “*Children, Their Mother’s Who are Battered, and How We Intervene,*” Seattle, WA.; and Baker, L. & Cunningham, A. (2004). *Helping children thrive: Supporting woman abuse survivors as mothers*. Centre for Children and Families in the Justice System.

# RESOURCES FOR ADVOCATES

This section includes resources and tools for advocates to use when working with survivors of domestic violence and their children.

## SECTION CONTENTS

- Informed Consent When Working with Children & Youth..... 3.2
  - Model Informed Consent Form for Working with Children..... 3.4
- Parent-Child Welcome Interview Packet..... 3.6
  - Parent Welcome Interview..... 3.7
  - Child Welcome Interview (ages 4-10)..... 3.8
  - Teen Welcome Interview (ages 11-16)..... 3.10
- Suggested Activities for Children’s Groups..... 3.12
  - Welcome & Introductions Module..... 3.15
  - Identifying & Expressing Feelings Module..... 3.18
  - Strengthening Sense of Self Module..... 3.22
  - Problem Solving Module..... 3.26
  - Healthy Ways to Deal with Anger Module..... 3.31
  - Dealing with Conflict Module..... 3.35
  - Defining Healthy Relationships Module..... 3.38
  - Wrap-up & Closing Module..... 3.41
- Cultural Considerations..... 3.45

## **INFORMED CONSENT WHEN WORKING WITH CHILDREN & YOUTH**

At the forefront of advocacy services should be confidentiality for survivors of domestic violence and their children. Under the Violence Against Women Act 2005, advocacy programs are prohibited from disclosing individual information or personally identifying information that they collect.<sup>1</sup> It is essential that advocacy programs maintain client confidentiality, including the confidentiality of children. Compromising survivor confidentiality places survivors' safety at greater risk. Additionally, if survivors believe that their or their children's information could be revealed to third parties, they may be distrustful of the advocacy program, inhibited from revealing information, and less likely to turn to the advocacy program for much needed assistance and safety.

In limited circumstances, the advocacy program can release survivor information. Advocacy programs can release information if the survivor provides informed, written, reasonably time-limited consent to the release of the information.<sup>2</sup> The only other situation where an advocacy program can release survivor information is when required by statutory or court mandate.<sup>3</sup> If the advocacy program is required to reveal survivor or child information by statutory or court mandate, the advocacy program should notify the survivor of the disclosure and take steps to continue to protect their safety and privacy.<sup>4</sup>

Prior to providing services on behalf of children, advocates should ensure that mothers are making informed decisions about the services their children will receive, including potential issues surrounding mandatory reporting of child abuse. Advocates should provide empowerment-based advocacy that is grounded in the belief that services are directed by the survivor, and that the survivor must have all the information she needs to make informed decisions for herself and her children.

Services for children should not be mandated or required as a condition of services for the mother. If a mother refuses services for her children, continue to provide advocacy for the mother and periodically check-in with her on issues related to her children and parenting.

The model form included in this section is designed to help advocates have meaningful conversations with survivors about potential consequences prior to providing services on behalf of children.

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<sup>1</sup> 42 U.S.C. §§ 13925(b)(2)(A)-(D) (2006).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

## Instructions for Using the Model Informed Consent Form

Seek informed consent prior to providing services on behalf of children by reviewing the following with the non-abusive parent:

- Discuss confidentiality with the parent and her rights regarding services. Disclose and thoroughly discuss any limitations to confidentiality and when her information may be shared with a third party (i.e., mandatory reporting of child abuse by a licensed professional). **This conversation should occur prior to the mother disclosing any information.**
- Explore and discuss with the parent what her child does and does not know about why they are receiving services.
- Ask the parent if there is anything she does or does not want you discussing with her child.
- Discuss with the parent what services are available regarding her child.
- Ask the parent if there are any other issues related to her child that the program should be aware of (e.g., custody, school enrollment, health care).
- Ask the parent what goals and tasks you can help her accomplish related to her child.

Following this conversation, review with the parent each statement on the Model Informed Consent Form, thoroughly explaining any implications to the individual's unique situation. Have the parent initial each statement after the conversation. Both the parent and advocate sign and date the form.



## Model Informed Consent Form for Working with Children [Insert program name]

**READ FIRST:** Before you decide whether or not to let [program name] provide services on behalf of your child, an advocate will discuss with you any potential risks and benefits that could result from your child receiving services from [program name].

### Parent Initials

\_\_\_\_\_ I have been informed of [program name]’s confidentiality policies and procedures.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that [program name] has an obligation to keep my child’s and my personal information and records confidential unless I sign an informed, written, and reasonably time-limited consent to the release of information.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have been informed of services provided by [program name] that are available for my child.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that I have a right to refuse services for my child at any time by verbally informing any staff of [program name].

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that information shared by my child to staff of [program name] will be kept confidential, unless my child discloses harm to self or others.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that if my child discloses harm to self or others that I will be notified and an advocate will work with me on the issue.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that if staff of [program name] identify problems my child may be having, that staff of [program name] will talk with me about it and work with me to address the situation.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that if my child discloses child abuse or neglect to a mandated reporter as defined by Kansas law that a report of that matter will need to be made to the SRS Protection Reporting Center hotline. I have been informed by an advocate under what circumstances this may need to occur.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that if my information has to be disclosed for any reason, that staff of [program name] will make reasonable attempts to notify me and that necessary steps will be taken to protect my privacy and safety.

I have read the above statements and initialed each statement to show that I understand what they mean. I give my informed consent and permission for [program name] to provide services to my child.

---

**Parent**

---

**Date**

---

**Advocate**

---

**Date**

# PARENT-CHILD WELCOME INTERVIEW PACKET

This interview packet is designed for advocates to use as a conversation guide when working with survivors of domestic violence and their children. This packet contains the ***Parent Welcome Interview***, ***Child Welcome Interview (ages 4-10)***, and ***Teen Welcome Interview (ages 11-16)***. These interviews can be used for mothers and their children staying at shelter or can be adapted for outreach services.

The *Parent Welcome Interview* gives mothers the opportunity to discuss how their children are doing and share any concerns they may have about their children. It should be used in a collaborative way to build rapport with mothers who often have not had the opportunity to talk about their children's and family's needs in a safe, confidential environment.

## **The following are ways to best use the Parent-Child Welcome Interview Packet.**

### **Parent Welcome Interview:**

- Begin by having a conversation with the mother about services for her child and obtain the signed informed consent form prior to working with the child.
- Always start by completing the *Parent Welcome Interview* with the mother prior to completing any other interview related to children.
- Share with the mother the *Child* or *Teen Welcome Interview* to be filled out with her child.
- Discuss with the mother any shelter rules related to children and youth.

### **Child or Teen Welcome Interview:**

- Complete the *Child* or *Teen Welcome Interview* only after you have completed the *Parent Welcome Interview* with the mother.
- Use this opportunity to build a relationship with the child or teen and to let them know you are here for them.
- Discuss confidentiality with the child or teen. Explain that you may have to tell their mother if they tell you something serious that can not be kept secret (e.g., harm to self or others).
- Discuss with the child or teen any shelter rules related to children and youth, and ask them to agree to these rules.
- Give the child or teen a tour of the shelter and show them where to find things they might need.
- Make this a fun event and include other children or teens in shelter, if appropriate.

## Parent Welcome Interview

Advocate: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mother: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Ask the mother questions about her child to gain a better understanding from her point of view. Use this as a guide to help you develop ideas of how to work with the child and to help support the mother-child relationship. Complete one interview per child.

### **What are some of your child's favorite...?:**

- Hobbies
- Sports or games to play
- Toys
- Foods
- School subjects
- People/friends to spend time with

**What are some of your favorite things to do with your child?**

**What are a couple of things you feel your child is good at?**

**What are some activities you feel would be helpful for you and your child?**

**What are some resources you feel would be helpful for you and your child?**

**How do you think your child is feeling about being here?**

**Is there anything I can do to help reduce any fears your child may be having while staying here?**

**What does your child know about why you are here?**

**What are three top-priority goals you have related to your child?**

**In what ways can I assist you in accomplishing these goals?**

## Child Welcome Interview (ages 4-10)

Advocate: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

First name: \_\_\_\_\_ Nickname: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Ask the child if they would like to color or draw a picture and offer to participate. Use the drawings to engage the child in conversation (i.e., What are you drawing? Why? How does that make you feel?). Let the child know that while they draw, you will be asking some questions that will help you get to know them better. Use age-appropriate interactions and language.

**Note:** The following questions will help you stay focused on the child as an individual and will help give indications of how they are feeling and thinking. Use this opportunity to get to know the child and ask additional questions, as needed.

### What are your favorite...?:

- Hobbies
- Sports or games to play
- Toys
- Foods
- School subjects
- People or friends to spend time with
- TV shows
- Characters or video games

**Can you tell me a couple of things you are really good at?**

**What are some fun things you like to do with your friends?**

**What are some of your favorite things to do with your family?**

**What are the names of people in your family (dad, mom, brothers, and sisters)?**

**If you could change anything, what would it be?**

**Do you know why you and your mom came here? *If they don't know, let them know they are here to visit a safe place.***

**On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being the worst and 10 being the best, how do you feel about being here?**

**Let the child know that:**

- Regardless of their age, it may feel uncomfortable and strange to be here and they may even feel scared. Let the child know all those feelings are completely normal and that they can talk to you or other staff any time about anything that may be bothering them. Explain that all staff will try to make them comfortable and safe while they are here.
- Other families will be staying too (for shelter), and that they are all here because they also need a safe place to stay (or visit).
- There are child-related rules in place at the shelter (e.g., “One important rule here is that you not tell anyone else where you are staying and who else you have met here.” Let the child know that this is a safe place for everyone, and that it is important that no one know the location of this safe place or who else is staying). Thank them for agreeing to the rules.
- You will give them a tour of the shelter and show them where to find things.

## Teen Welcome Interview (ages 11-16)

Advocate: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

First name: \_\_\_\_\_ Nickname: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Let the teen know you will be asking some questions to get to know them better and to learn more about them. Have some things like play dough, trinkets, or slinkys in a basket nearby that they can fidget with while going through the questions. Explain to the teen any services available to them while in shelter.

**Note:** The following questions will help you to stay focused on the teen as an individual and will help give indications of how they are feeling and thinking. Use this opportunity to get to know the teen and ask additional questions, as needed.

### What are your favorite...?:

- Hobbies
- Sports or games to play
- Toys
- Foods
- School subjects
- Movies
- TV shows
- Clubs or school activities
- People or friends to spend time with
- Video games

**Can you tell me a couple of things you are really good at?**

**What are some fun things you like to do with your friends?**

**What are some of your favorite things to do with your family?**

**What are the names of people in your family (dad, mom, brothers, and sisters)?**

**If you could change anything about your family, what would it be?**

**On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being the worst and 10 being the best, how do you feel about being here?**

**Is there anything you had to leave at home that you are concerned about (e.g., pet, sports equipment, Ipod)?**

**Is there anything you are curious about?**

**Is there anything I can do to make you feel more comfortable?**

**Do you have any questions for me?**

---

**Let the teen know that:**

- Regardless of their age, it may feel uncomfortable and strange to be here and they may even feel scared. Let the teen know all those feelings are completely normal and that they can talk to you or other staff any time about anything that may be bothering them. Explain that all staff will try to make them comfortable and safe while they are here.
- Other families will be staying too (for shelter), and that they are all here because they also need a safe place to stay (or visit).
- There are rules that apply to teens at shelter (e.g., “You have to be supervised by an adult while you are here, even though you may be old enough to stay at home alone. This does not mean you are not trustworthy. We have this rule in place because safety is our top priority.”) Thank them for agreeing to the rules.
- The program has policies about confidentiality. Teens should also have access to trustworthy adults. Let the teen know about the program’s confidentiality policies, including policies about mandatory reporting. Let the teen know if they disclose information that cannot be kept confidential (e.g., disclosing harm to self or others), that the advocate will let the teen know first and support the teen in telling their mother.
- You will give them a tour of the shelter and show them where to find things.



# **SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN'S GROUPS**

## ***Suggested use for children ages 6-12***

### **Introduction**

Advocates engaged in providing group work for children are frequently tasked with deciding what to do with a diverse age range of children. These modules and suggested activities for children's groups were designed to provide advocates with engaging activities and dialogue to use with children impacted by abuse and violence in the home.

Advocates often balance tasks of engaging children in shelter settings, working with mothers on child-specific goals, and organizing and leading support groups for children. Formality of children's groups often depends on time, resources, and staff support. Among the multiple settings in which advocates provide group work for children include, but are not limited to:

- Providing supervision for children while mothers' participate in the adults' support group;
- Leading a children's support group simultaneously to the adults' support group, at times in the same location;
- Engaging children in group work within a shelter setting; and
- Leading a children's support group independent of the adults' support group and in a location other than shelter.

Formality of children's groups range from the first setting listed, typically the most informal, to the last setting listed, the most structured and formal type of children's group. The latter setting meets on a regular basis at a scheduled time every week, and requires the mother's commitment to bring her children to the group on a weekly basis, independent of the services she may be receiving.

The framework here is intended to be flexible and can be adapted to meet the unique needs of these different group settings. Regardless of the level of formality, quality interaction with caring adults enhances children's resilience to the impacts of abuse and violence in the home.

### **Goals of Activities**

The goals of these activities are:

- To create a safe space for children to talk, to learn, to be heard, and to hear others who share similar circumstances;
- To foster resilience and build strengths in children by focusing on their life experiences in a way so children will understand that abuse and violence in the home was and is not their fault, that the use of violence and abuse is not okay, and that there are trustworthy and caring adults who care about their safety; and
- To provide children in the group information and activities on expressing feelings, developing healthy self-concepts, problem-solving skills, and dealing with conflict in safe, effective ways.

## **Suggested Age Range**

Although these activities were designed for children ages 6-12, discussions and activities can be adapted to meet the needs of different age ranges.

## **Module Length**

The recommended length of each module is 1 to 1.5 hours. This may vary depending on the size of the group and the age ranges of group members. Consider having a back-up activity planned for all meetings in case you need to fill more time or adapt to the specific circumstances of the group.

## **Module Topics**

There are eight modules. The first module is designed for welcome and introductions, and the last for closings and endings. Aside from these first and last modules, each can be pulled out and used independently.

The modules and activities consist of the following topics:

- Welcome and Introductions
- Identifying and Expressing Feelings
- Strengthening Self-Concept
- Problem Solving
- Healthy Ways to Deal with Anger
- Dealing with Conflict
- Defining Healthy Relationships
- Wrap-up and Closing

## **Module Outline**

Each module outline includes:

- A. Introductions and Icebreaker (10-15 minutes)
- B. Check-in (10-15 minutes)
- C. Topic of the Week (10-15 minutes)
- D. Activity of the Week (15-30 minutes)
- E. Check-out (10-15 minutes)

## **Group Set-Up**

The recommended group set-up is to have chairs in a circle for group members to sit and have discussion, with additional appropriate spaces for children to work on their activities. Consider also having healthy snacks available for group members.

# Welcome & Introductions Module

Consider asking mothers to join for the Welcome and Introductions Module, as this helps show children they are supported in participating in the group. This also gives mothers a chance to see the group structure as well as topics and activities to be covered in the next seven modules. If this is not possible, consider providing mothers with a brief summary of what is covered in the groups.

## Materials needed:

- *Flipchart (or large paper)*
- *Manila folders (one for each group member)*
- *Crayons or markers*
- *Magazines*
- *Glue*
- *Scissors*
- *Tape*
- *Any other art supplies available*

## A. Introductions and Icebreaker

1. Group leader(s) welcome everyone.
2. Let group members know the agenda of activities for today.
3. Have a conversation with group members about upcoming sessions and topics so they have an idea of what to expect in the upcoming groups. Group members should feel comfortable suggesting topics and activities to the group leader.
4. Explain the structure of the groups.
  - a. Structure for all modules consists of:
    - i. Introductions and Icebreaker (10-15 minutes);
    - ii. Check-in (10-15 minutes);
    - iii. Topic of the Week (10-15 minutes);
    - iv. Activity of the Week (15-30 minutes); and
    - v. Check-out (10-15 minutes).
5. Explain to group members that some things might come up during groups that trigger uncomfortable or upsetting feelings. Let group members know that the group leader is available anytime a group member wants to talk after the group, or during the group if more than one group leader is available.
6. Lead the icebreaker activity and give the first example.

- a. Have each group member start by introducing themselves, and ask them to complete the following sentence: “My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and something I like doing is \_\_\_\_\_.”

## **B. Check-in**

1. Check-in with group members by asking how they are feeling today (mad, sad, glad, afraid), and if anything needs sharing from their week. It is each group member’s choice on whether to share.

## **C. Topic of the Week: *Group Ground Rules***

**Note:** If the ground rules activity is not feasible to do as a group process, the group leader should create some basic ground rules for the group that are posted and visible during all group sessions. These should be briefly reviewed with group members at the beginning of every session.

1. Let group members know all groups must have ground rules in order for them to be effective. Lead a discussion with group members by asking:
  - a. Do you have rules at school? In your classroom?
  - b. What are those rules?
  - c. What would your classroom be like without rules?
  - d. How are the rules helpful?
2. Explain to group members that this group will need the same kinds of rules so that the group works for everyone. Ask group members:
  - a. What kind of rules do you think we should have for this group?
3. Have group members give examples, and put their responses on the flip chart.
4. Without being too restrictive, create some basic ground rules for the group. Write these on the flip chart or keep a list so they can be posted and visible during all group sessions. Create ground rules that create safe spaces for everyone, including:
  - a. No violence (e.g., hitting, slapping, kicking, name calling, or put-downs);
  - b. Listen when others are talking (i.e., take turns speaking); and
  - c. What is said in the group stays in the group. Let group members know that this includes not talking about other group members’ personal information outside of the group (e.g., at school). Let group members know that if they disclose harm to self or harm to others, that their parent may need to be told. Let group members know that you will always tell them first if you plan to talk to their parent, or that you will help them tell their parent themselves, if they choose.

5. After group members understand and agree to the group ground rules, have each group member sign the ground rules flip chart.

**D. Activity of the Week: *Activity Folders***

1. Explain to group members they will be decorating a manila folder to hold the activities they work on each week. They can color, draw, cut out pictures from magazines, or decorate it with pictures of things they enjoy doing. Make sure each group member's name is on their folder. This is a good beginning activity since it does not force a lot of interaction. Remember that some group members may be nervous about attending group for the first time.
2. Use the artwork to engage in conversations with group members to get to know each group member better. Give group members praise about their originality and creativeness. Ask individual group members:
  - a. What are you drawing?
  - b. What made you decide that?
  - c. How does that make you feel?
3. Give group members at least 20 minutes to work on their folders. At the end of the activity, ask if anyone would like to discuss their folder with the group.

**E. Check-out**

1. Check-out with group members by asking:
  - a. How did you feel about the first group?
  - b. Do you have any questions?
  - c. How are you feeling (mad, sad, glad, afraid)?

# Identifying & Expressing Feelings Module

## Materials needed:

- *Flipchart of group ground rules (see Welcome & Introductions Module)*
- *Paper plates (one per group member)*
- *Crayons or markers*
- *Construction paper*
- *Magazines*
- *Glue*
- *Tape*
- *Scissors*
- *Any other art supplies available*

## A. Introductions and Icebreaker

1. Group leader(s) welcome everyone.
2. Let group members know the agenda of activities for today, and remind them of last session's topic and activity, if appropriate.
3. Lead the icebreaker activity and give the first example.
  - a. Have each group member start by introducing themselves, and ask them to complete the following sentence: "My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and something I like doing is \_\_\_\_\_."
4. After the icebreaker, review the ground rules for the group and make sure any new members sign their name to the ground rules sheet.

## B. Check-in

1. Check-in with group members by asking how they are feeling today (mad, sad, glad, afraid), and if anything needs sharing from their week. It is each group member's choice on whether to share.

## C. Topic of the Week: *Identifying and Expressing Feelings*

### Group Leader's Notes:

Children impacted by domestic violence may need permission to express their feelings openly and in a healthy way. The batterer may have taught the child that it was not okay to express feelings, or may have displayed unhealthy ways to express feelings through the use of abuse and violence.

Learning to identify feelings can help children to understand what they are feeling, why they are feeling that way, and how feelings can be expressed in a healthy way.

1. Explain that today's topic will focus on what feelings are, what feelings may look like on the outside, and how feelings are expressed.
2. Use the following questions to lead a discussion about feelings:
  - a. What are feelings?
  - b. What do feelings look like?
3. Explain that everyone has feelings, and that feelings are important because they represent our emotional sensitivity and response to situations.
4. Feelings typically fall into four basic categories; glad (happy), sad (upset), mad (angry), and afraid (scared).
  - a. If your friend says to you, "I feel okay today," or "I feel bored today," does that tell you how they are feeling? Your friend may be sad about the loss of a pet, mad about getting in trouble, or afraid of doing poorly on a test. Using glad, sad, mad, and afraid helps you clearly express to someone else how you feel.
5. People have a lot of feelings. At times, people may have several feelings at once, and that is okay. Some people choose to share their feelings while others keep them inside. Ask the following questions:
  - a. How do we express feelings verbally?
  - b. How do we express feelings non-verbally?
6. People express feelings in a variety of ways. Verbal examples include telling someone how you feel or how something makes you feel. Non-verbal examples include laughing, smiling, frowning, crying, drawing, painting, and through other forms of expression. At times, people express feelings in violent ways, such as hitting or breaking things. Ask the following question:
  - a. What might happen if we express feelings non-verbally instead of verbally?
7. When people express feelings non-verbally instead of verbally, miscommunication may happen or someone may be hurt by the actions. Let group members know that it is okay to express feelings openly, verbally and non-verbally, when we and others are not hurt by the words or actions. Ask the following questions:
  - a. Have there been times when you were told it was not okay to express your feelings? What was happening? What did that feel like?
8. When someone's safety is at-risk, it may not be okay to express feelings openly, verbally and non-verbally. For example, the batterer may not allow the child to express feelings openly without fear of punishment. Be prepared to talk about this and safety plan with group members around the issue, as needed.



### D. Activity of the Week: *Feelings Pie*

1. Have group members draw four different sections (lines) on a paper plate. Draw one line down the middle of the plate from top to bottom, and one line from side to side (i.e., as if each were a big slice of pie).
2. Ask group members to write the names of the feelings discussed (mad, sad, glad, afraid) at the top or bottom of each section.
3. Have group members draw a picture to represent each feeling. Show group members pictures of different feelings, or go through magazines to find different feelings (e.g., someone smiling, someone crying or frowning) to cut out.
4. Encourage group members to be as creative as they want, using circular faces, colors or markers, or anything they feel represents that feeling.
5. After group members have finished drawing, ask if anyone would like to share a slice of their pie with the group. Ask the following questions:
  - a. Is there a time in your life when you have felt that way?
  - b. Tell me something that would make you feel that way.
  - c. If you were feeling that way, how would you verbally tell someone?
6. Practice identifying feelings and verbally expressing feelings with group members. Let group members know that we use the check-in and check-out process at each group as an opportunity to practice verbally expressing our feelings in a healthy way.
  - a. “When \_\_\_\_\_ happens, I feel \_\_\_\_\_.”
7. Have a conversation about the group members’ feelings and emotions so they can learn to identify when they are feeling a certain way. Ask the following questions:
  - a. How would you feel if...:
    - Your brother or sister keeps coming into your room?
    - The kids at school are teasing you?
    - You did not get the toy you wanted at the store?
    - You were yelled at?
    - You made a mistake?
    - You helped a friend or family member?
    - You do not get to play with your friends?
    - You get to go to your favorite restaurant?
8. Once group members have a good understanding of identifying feelings, further the conversation by asking the following questions:

- a. How have you expressed any one of those feelings we talked about during the activity?
- b. How does someone know when you are feeling sad? Do you tell anyone how you are feeling?
- c. How do people in your family express their feelings?
- d. Can we control our feelings or the way we behave because of our feelings?
- e. Can we feel more than one feeling at a time? If so, can you give an example?

**E. Check-out**

1. Check-out with group members by asking:
  - a. What was one thing you liked about today's group?
  - b. How are you feeling (mad, sad, glad, afraid)?

# Strengthening Sense of Self Module

**Note:** This module may be more appropriate to use if all group members are older.

## Materials needed:

- *Flipchart of group ground rules (see Welcome & Introductions Module)*
- *1 Ball*
- *Shop Front Activity sheet (one per group member)*
- *Crayons or markers*
- *Any other art supplies available*

## A. Introductions and Icebreaker

1. Group leader(s) welcome everyone.
2. Let group members know the agenda of activities for today, and remind them of last session's topic and activity, if appropriate.
3. Lead the icebreaker activity and give the first example.
  - a. Have group members sit in a circle on the floor and roll a ball to each other. When group members get the ball, have them introduce themselves and tell the group one thing that makes them feel good about themselves, or what they do to feel happy when they are sad. Roll the ball until everyone has had a turn.
4. After the icebreaker, review the ground rules for the group and make sure any new members sign their name to the ground rules sheet.

## B. Check-in

1. Check-in with group members by asking how they are feeling today (mad, sad, glad, afraid), and if anything needs sharing from their week. It is each group member's choice on whether to share.

## C. Topic of the Week: *Strengthening Self*

### Group Leader's Notes:

Batterers and the tactics they use can impact a child's sense of self. For example, if a child is surrounded by negative comments and harsh words, it may be more difficult for them to see they are truly important in someone else's eyes.

During the school age stage of development, a child's sense of self is largely based on how the child perceives important people in their life will judge them. The existence of quality relationships with caring and trustworthy adults is important in helping children create a positive sense of self. Children can be nurtured and their sense of self strengthened by responding to their interests and efforts in a positive way, and with praise and support from caring adults. Treating children with respect and asking for their thoughts and feelings on certain subjects also helps strengthen their sense of self.

1. Explain that today's topic will focus on how we think and feel about ourselves (sense of self), how people get a positive sense of self, and why a positive sense of self is important.
2. Begin by leading a discussion about sense of self. Ask the following question:
  - a. What is our sense of self?
3. Sense of self is how people feel about themselves, both inside and out. This can include how people believe others' think and feel about them, and how worthy and deserving people feel they are. People can feel good or bad about themselves. Ask the following questions to further the discussion:
  - a. How does a person get a positive (healthy) sense of self?
  - b. Is a positive sense of self something we naturally have? Is it something we are born with or something we work to build?
4. A positive sense of self is not something people gain at once; it is something that can be strengthened and deepened by focusing on the positive aspects of life and accomplishments, such as good grades in school. Having important people in life that care about us and our safety helps strengthen our sense of self. Ask the following question:
  - a. Why is a positive sense of self important?
5. A positive sense of self is important because all people deserve to feel good about themselves, their life, and their accomplishments. Everyone deserves a positive sense of self.
6. Explain that people's bodies are able to do many different things that are good. Our arms can give people hugs, our fingers can color beautiful pictures, and our words can make others feel special. Sometimes, the positive aspects of life and the things people are good at are harder to see. Today, we are going to spend time thinking about all the positive things our bodies and minds do, and make them visible for everyone to see on our shop front window.

**D. Activity of the Week: *Sense of Self Shop***

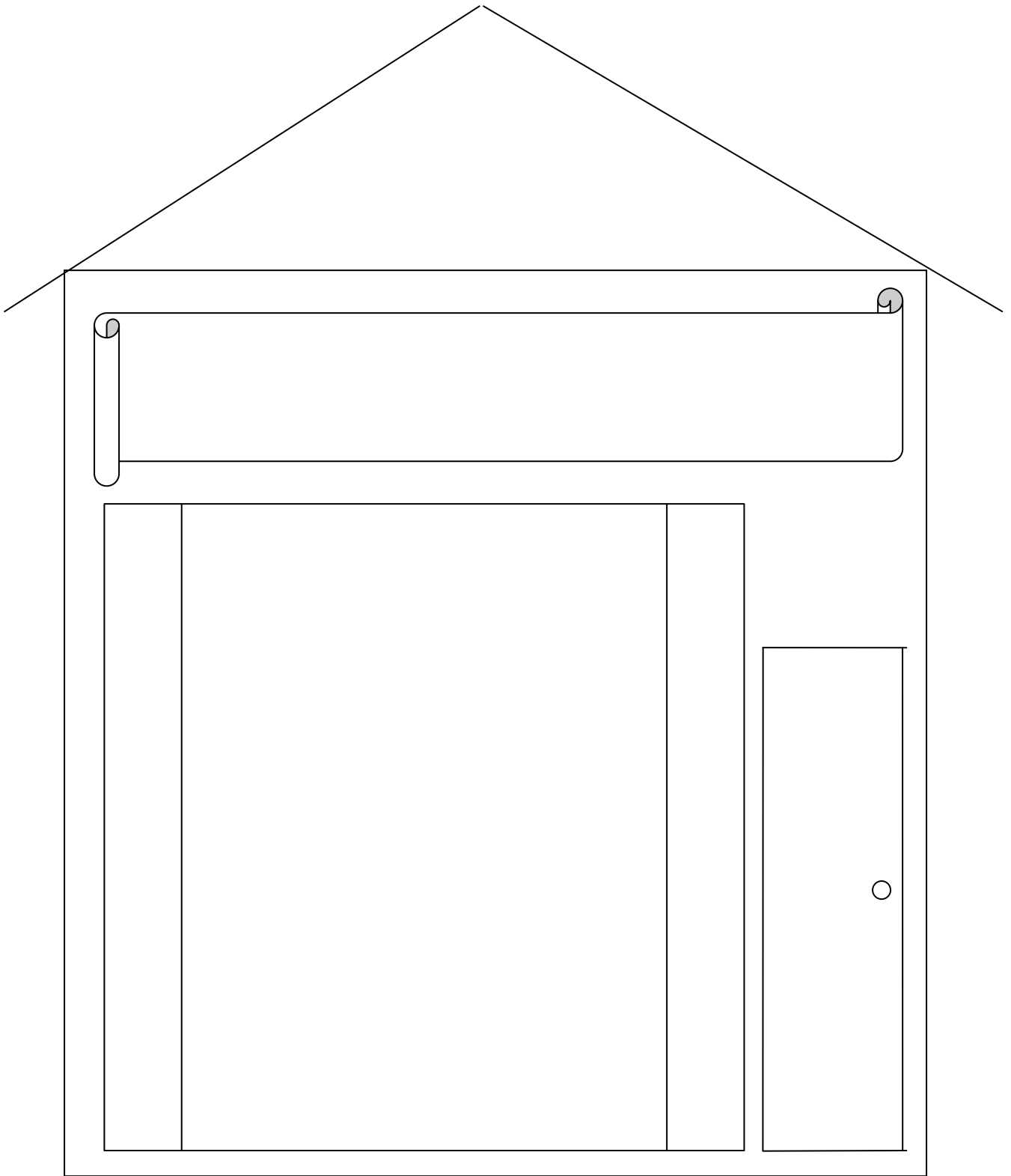
1. Use the "Shop Front Activity Sheet" located at the end of this module and have group members name their shop. Have them write this name on the shop banner. This name can be whatever the group member would like.
2. Brainstorm with group members all the things they are good at doing with their bodies, hearts, and minds, and have group members decorate their shop window with these things. These things can be anything the group member would like. Show praise and encouragement for their creativity, and for identifying so many things they are good at.

3. After group members are finished decorating their shop front window, ask the following questions:
  - a. How did it feel to decorate the shop window?
  - b. Was it hard for you to come up with things you are good at? Was it easy?
  - c. Did it surprise you how many wonderful qualities you have?
  - d. Is there anything you should add to your shop windows?
4. Ask if anyone would like to discuss their shop front with the rest of the group.

**E. Check-out**

1. Check-out with group members by asking:
  - a. What was one thing you liked about today's group?
  - b. How are you feeling (mad, sad, glad, afraid)?

# Shop Front Activity Sheet



# Problem Solving Module

## Materials needed:

- *Flipchart of group ground rules (see Welcome & Introductions Module)*
- *1 Paper bag*
- *1 Pair of scissors*
- *1 Bag of choices activity sheet*

## A. Introductions and Icebreaker

1. Group leader(s) welcome everyone.
2. Let group members know the agenda of activities for today, and remind them of last session's topic and activity, if appropriate.
3. Lead the icebreaker activity and give the first example. This icebreaker is designed to encourage teamwork among group members.
  - a. Group leader should pick one item in the room. Write this item down on a piece of paper, and tell group members they have to ask "yes" or "no" questions to figure out the item that was picked (i.e., "Is it blue?" or "Is it round?").
  - b. Have group members take turns asking questions. Remind group members that even questions that are answered "no" are helpful in figuring out the item.
4. After the icebreaker, review the ground rules for the group and make sure any new members sign their name to the ground rules sheet.

## B. Check-in

1. Check-in with group members by asking how they are feeling today (mad, sad, glad, afraid), and if anything needs sharing from their week. It is each group member's choice on whether to share.

## C. Topic of the Week: *Problem Solving*

### Group Leader's Notes:

Everyone has times in life when they need to use problem solving skills. Problem solving is about considering choices and making decisions. When children have the skills and knowledge to problem solve, they often do their best to make good decisions. As adults, people are expected to be responsible for all the choices and decisions they make.

1. Explain that today's topic will focus on problem solving, including identifying problems, learning to problem solve, and making choices that are safe and best.
2. Lead a discussion about problem solving. Ask the following questions:

- a. What is problem solving? What are choices?
  - b. How do you know when you have a problem that needs to be solved?
  - c. How do you know when you have made a good choice in solving a problem?
3. Explain that problem solving are the steps taken when making a decision. A good choice is one that is fair and does not hurt yourself or others. The first step is to identify the problem, the second step is to think through all the possible choices for that problem, and the third step is to find a solution and make a decision that is fair and safe for everyone.
  4. Choices should be based on things you know are right and healthy for yourself and others.

**D. Activity of the Week: *Bag of choices***

1. Use the “Bag of Choices Activity Sheet” located at the end of this module and cut the scenarios into strips. Place the scenario strips into the paper bag, and have each group member pull one strip from the bag and read it aloud, or read it for them, if needed.
2. Ask each group member to answer the following questions about their scenario strip:
  - a. What is the problem?
  - b. What are all the choices you could make in this situation?
  - c. What would you do to solve the problem or what would your decision be?
3. Engage group members in a discussion about safe and fair choices they can make in order to solve problems. If the group is large, consider having group members work in pairs to solve the problems.

**E. Check-out**

1. Check-out with group members by asking:
  - a. What was one thing you liked about today’s group?
  - b. How are you feeling (mad, sad, glad, afraid)?



## Bag of Choices Activity Sheet

### **Find a puppy**

You and a friend are playing at the park down the street and find a puppy roaming around. It isn't wearing a collar and you have no way of knowing who he belongs to. You and your friend both want to take the puppy home with you.

What can you do in this situation? How would it make you feel?

### **Homework left at home**

You worked hard on a big homework assignment. When you get to school, you realize you left your homework at home. You try calling your mom, but no one answers.

What can you do in this situation? How would it make you feel?

### **I want that toy**

Your friend has a toy that you want, but your parents won't buy it for you. Your friend won't let you play with their toy and is even teasing you with it.

What can you do in this situation? How would it make you feel?

### **Television**

You and your sister or brother are fighting over who gets to watch the television. You only have one television in the house.

What can you do in this situation? How would it make you feel?

### **Riding bikes**

You invite your friend to go ride bikes and she brings along another friend that you don't know very well. She didn't ask or tell you the other friend was coming.

What can you do in this situation? How would it make you feel?

### **Sleepover**

You have a sleepover with your friends and your family orders pizza for everyone. You have a friend that says she hates pizza and won't eat any.

What can you do in this situation? How would it make you feel?

### **Stolen folder**

You have a decorated folder at school that you just got from your favorite aunt. You come in from lunch break and it is no longer on your desk.

What can you do in this situation? How would it make you feel?

### **Saying bad things**

Your friends are telling you to call a girl in your class a bad name. You know that you could get in trouble and hurt her feelings.

What can you do in this situation? How would it make you feel?

### **The football game**

You and your best friend are supposed to be going to the swimming pool. You get a call from another friend inviting you to go to a football game, your favorite sport. You know your best friend is not invited and really wanted to go swimming.

What can you do in this situation? How would it make you feel?

### **The stranger**

You and a friend are playing after school at the playground and a man comes up to you and asks if you'd like to go to Dairy Queen. He tells you he'll buy everyone anything they want.

What can you do in this situation? How would it make you feel?

### **The diary**

You walk up to some friends at school and they have found a diary on a girl's desk. One of the boys begins to read it and starts making fun of what the girl has written.

What can you do in this situation? How would it make you feel?

# Healthy Ways to Deal with Anger Module

## Materials needed:

- *Flipchart of group ground rules (see Welcome & Introductions Module)*
- *Pen or pencil*
- *Finish the story activity sheet (one per group member)*

## A. Introductions and Icebreaker

1. Group leader(s) welcome everyone.
2. Let group members know the agenda of activities for today, and remind them of last session's topic and activity, if appropriate.
3. Lead the icebreaker activity and give the first example.
  - a. Have each group member introduce themselves.
  - b. Ask all group members to stand in a circle, and let them know they are going to be walking different walks. Allow enough time for group members to become engaged and figure out what each walk would look like. Once group members have a good idea of expressing different walks, add more feelings to the walk.
  - c. Ask group members to:
    - i. Walk a happy walk;
    - ii. Walk a scared walk; and
    - iii. Walk an angry walk.
4. After the icebreaker, review the ground rules for the group and make sure any new members sign their name to the ground rules sheet.

## B. Check-in

1. Check-in with group members by asking how they are feeling today (mad, sad, glad, afraid), and if anything needs sharing from their week. It is each group member's choice on whether to share.

### C. Introduce Topic of the week: *Healthy Ways to Deal with Anger*

#### Group Leader's Notes:

Batterers often display anger in ways that are hurtful and violent. Those living with the batterer may not be allowed to be angry or express their anger at how they are treated. Anger is a normal feeling, and everyone gets angry. Learning to express our anger in appropriate ways is important for children who live with batterers. This includes not hurting others, not hurting themselves, and not hurting things. If people do not learn to express anger in a healthy way, it can sometimes lead to aggression or unhealthy behaviors.

1. Explain that today's topic will focus on healthy ways to deal with anger.
2. Start by leading a discussion about anger. Ask the following questions:
  - a. What is anger?
  - b. Does everyone get angry?
3. Explain that everyone gets angry, and that this is a normal feeling and emotion. It is a feeling people get when they are mad or upset. At times, people will feel angry because they are afraid, frustrated, confused, sad, or anxious. Ask the following question:
  - a. What are all the ways to deal with anger, good (healthy) and bad (unhealthy)?
4. Healthy ways to deal with anger include communicating verbally that you are angry (i.e., "I am angry about \_\_\_\_\_."), creative expression (e.g., painting, drawing, journaling, writing), and talking to the person you are angry with to reach a solution. Unhealthy ways to deal with anger include using physical violence, breaking things, throwing things, and stomping around the house. Ask the following question:
  - a. Why is it important to deal with anger in a healthy way?
5. Explain that it is important to deal with anger in a healthy way so that you, others around you, and things do not get hurt.

### D. Activity: *Finish the Story*

1. Let group members know they are going to be storytellers. Have each group member complete the "Finish the Story Activity Sheet" located at the end of this module.
2. After group members have finished their story, ask them to share it with the group.
3. After group members have shared their stories, lead a discussion using the following questions:
  - a. What do you do when you are angry?

- b. How do you look when you are angry? How do you sound?
  - c. What is it like to be angry?
4. List these answers on a flipchart or piece of paper and use this to talk about other ways people can handle their anger in positive ways, such as taking a time out to calm down, taking deep breaths, doing a physical activity, or talking to someone about their feelings. Make sure group members know that these are not punishments for feeling angry, but rather an opportunity to collect their thoughts by themselves and calm down, or possibly to keep themselves and others safe.

**E. Check-out**

- 1. Check-out with group members by asking:
  - a. What was one thing you liked about today's group?
  - b. How are you feeling (mad, sad, glad, afraid)?

## Finish the Story Activity Sheet

1. A boy had a really bad day. Write about what had happened to him.
2. Because his day was so bad, he began to feel very angry. Write about how the boy is feeling.
3. Since he was so angry, he has hurt someone he loves. Write about how him being angry made him do something he wouldn't do when we was happy.
4. The boy wants to figure out a way to stop being angry. Describe what he is thinking.
5. The boy wants to control his anger in a healthy way that doesn't hurt him or others. Describe some ways he can do that.
6. Let's finish this story with a happy ending. Write about how the boy ends up no longer being angry.

# Dealing with Conflict Module

## Materials needed:

- Flipchart of group ground rules (see Welcome & Introductions Module)
- Flipchart (or large paper)
- Pen or pencil

## A. Introductions and Icebreaker

1. Group leader(s) welcome everyone.
2. Let group members know the agenda of activities for today, and remind them of last session's topic and activity, if appropriate.
3. Lead the icebreaker activity and give the first example.
  - a. Have each group member start by introducing themselves, and ask them to complete the following sentence: "I am special because \_\_\_\_\_."
4. After the icebreaker, review the ground rules for the group and make sure any new members sign their name to the ground rules sheet.

## B. Check-in

1. Check-in with group members by asking how they are feeling today (mad, sad, glad, afraid), and if anything needs sharing from their week. It is each group member's choice on whether to share.

## C. Topic of the Week: *Dealing with Conflict*

### Group Leader's Notes:

Batterers often create a climate of chaos and conflict and may use tactics of abuse and violence to resolve conflict. Children need to understand they have choices when dealing with conflict that do not include the use of abuse and violence.

Children are faced with conflicts every day in which they must decide how to choose between their own interests and the interests of others. The goal is for children to learn to think about choices in conflict situations, come up with solutions to resolving the conflict, and develop the skills to carry out solutions in a positive and healthy manner.

1. Explain that today's topic will focus on how to handle conflict.
2. Lead a discussion about dealing with conflict. Ask the following questions:
  - a. What is conflict?
  - b. Is there a time in your life where you did not agree with someone?
  - c. Are there benefits to settling conflict in a positive and healthy way?



3. Conflict happens when two or more people cannot agree on something. Everyone deals with conflict, sometimes daily. During certain conflicts, one person may feel happy with the solution, while the other person may feel sad. For example, there may be conflict when someone else is playing with something you want to play with, or when you want to watch a certain TV show and someone else wants to watch a different show. At times, so much time is spent figuring out who wants what that no one is able to get what they want.
4. There are benefits to settling conflict in a safe and fair way. Resolving conflict in a fair and safe way can lead to feeling happy, whereas using unsafe or unfair ways of solving conflict can lead to feeling sad or hurt. For example, you may save a friendship if you handle conflict in a peaceful way, whereas you might lose a friendship if you were to handle conflict in violent way.

**D. Activity of the Week: *Solving Conflicts Peacefully***

1. Begin by ask the group "When a conflict is settled in a way that is not fair, how do you feel?" Answers may include feelings like mad, sad, upset, frustrated, and afraid. Use a flip chart or other visual aid to display group members' responses.
2. Brainstorm and discuss unsafe or unfair ways to respond during a conflict. Examples include:
  - a. Hitting the other person.
  - b. Saying something mean or rude about the other person.
  - c. Throwing things.
  - d. Saying you are going to throw something at or hit the other person.
  - e. Taking something from the other person.
  - f. Pushing the other person.
  - g. Kicking something or the other person.
3. Next, brainstorm and discuss safe and fair ways to respond during a conflict. Examples include:
  - a. Telling the other person you are mad, sad, or scared.
  - b. Listening to what the other person has to say.
  - c. Talking through the conflict together.
  - d. Taking deep breaths to calm down.
  - e. Walking away from the conflict.
  - f. Telling the other person you want them to leave.
  - g. Telling the person to please stop.
  - h. Telling a grown up about the conflict.

4. Ask group members for examples of conflict, either in their own life or in someone else's life. Have some examples prepared in case they are struggling with providing examples. Examples include:
  - a. You and your friend both reach for the last piece of pizza at the same time. You both want to eat it.
  - b. A boy from school borrowed a book from you and said he would bring it back to you tomorrow. The next day, he tells you he forgot to bring it back, and you need to use the book for your homework.
  - c. You want to play a new computer game you were given for your birthday, but your big sister is playing on the computer.
  - d. You are coloring and drop the marker you're using on the floor. Your friend picks up the marker and starts to color with it. You weren't finished using it to color your picture.
5. Spend time having group members role play safe and fair responses to the examples of conflict provided. Have each group member take a turn in resolving a conflict in a safe and fair way.

**E. Check-out**

1. Check-out with group members by asking:
  - a. What was one thing you liked about today's group?
  - b. How are you feeling (mad, sad, glad, afraid)?

# Defining Healthy Relationships Module

## Materials needed:

- Flipchart of group ground rules (see Welcomes & Introductions Module)
- 1 Role play scenarios activity sheet
- Flipchart (or large paper)

## A. Introductions and Icebreaker

1. Group leader(s) welcome everyone.
2. Let group members know the agenda of activities for today, and remind them of last session's topic and activity, if appropriate.
3. Lead the icebreaker activity and give the first example.
  - a. Have each group member start by introducing themselves, and answering the following question: "What is one of your favorite things about someone in your family, and why?" Use this opportunity to start defining healthy relationships. For example, if a group member says, "I like my big sister because she takes me out to dinner and to my favorite place," respond with something such as, "That's nice of your big sister. She is showing you she loves you and cares about you by taking you someplace you enjoy."
4. After the icebreaker, review the ground rules for the group and make sure any new members sign their name to the ground rules sheet.

## B. Check-in

1. Check-in with group members by asking how they are feeling today (mad, sad, glad, afraid), and if anything needs sharing from their week. It is each group member's choice on whether to share.

## C. Topic of the Week: *Defining Healthy Relationships*

**Group Leader's Notes:** A batterer's goal is to gain and maintain power and control in a relationship. Therefore, it is likely that children impacted by domestic violence will have seen characteristics of an unhealthy relationship at some point. It is important that children are taught about healthy relationships, including what they look like and how they may feel, and strategies to help create healthy relationships.

1. Explain that today's topic will focus on healthy relationships.
2. In order to build healthy relationships, people need to be able to respect and value not just their own feelings, but those of others, as well. Ask the following questions:

- a. Why are relationships important?
  - b. What is healthy relationship? What is it like? How does it feel?
3. Relationships and friendships are important because they are what connect people. Healthy relationships are based on the notion that both people in the relationship are equal; one is not better than the other. Qualities of healthy relationships include treating each other with respect, being trustful and trustworthy, and supporting each other unconditionally. Healthy relationships may have characteristics of safety, happiness, love, trust, affection, fun, laughter, support, comfort, kindness, no fear, and shared interests. Ask the following question:
- a. What is an unhealthy relationship? What is it like? How does it feel?
4. Unhealthy relationships may include a lack of respect, fear, lies, no fun, no trust, and not safe.
5. In healthy relationships, people know you are interested in them and their lives by not just talking about yourself, but also by asking questions about them and their life. Listening to your friends is important because you want them to listen to you when you need someone to talk to.

**D. Activity of the Week: *Role Play***

1. Assign group members into pairs. Use the “Role Play Scenarios” activity sheet located at the end of this module and read each pair one scenario. Ask them to role play each character in the scenario, and to practice or come up with ideas to share back to the group. Provide examples, as needed, and give positive feedback and encouragement.
2. After all group members have had an opportunity to role play, ask them to discuss with the group the ideas they came up with. Ask other members for ideas, as well.

**E. Check-out**

1. Check-out with group members by asking:
  - a. What was one thing you liked about today’s group?
  - b. How are you feeling (mad, sad, glad, afraid)?

## **Role Play Scenarios**

### ***Scenario 1: New girl at recess***

A new girl arrives at school and is sitting next to you in class. When it is time for recess, you notice she is by herself and no one is talking to her.

What are some things you could say or do to start building a healthy relationship with the new girl at school? What are some things you could talk about?

### ***Scenario 2: New boy during lunch***

At lunch, you notice a new boy at school. The new boy comes and sits down next to you.

What are some things you could say or do to start building a healthy relationship with the new boy at school? What are some things you could talk about?

### ***Scenario 3: Friend after school***

You have a friend over after school and you are both playing in your room. He brought a video game over that you really want to play.

What are some ways you could ask to play the game in a healthy way? What are some ways the friend could respond?

### ***Scenario 4: Eating dinner***

It is dinner time and it is just you and your older sister or brother. They are fixing dinner tonight and it is not your favorite food.

What are some ways you could tell your brother or sister that you would rather have something else? What are some ways the brother or sister might respond?

# Wrap-up & Closing Module

## Materials needed:

- *Flipchart of group ground rules (see Welcome & Introductions Module)*
- *My resources activity sheet (one per group member)*
- *Certificate of Participation (one per group member)*

## A. Introductions and Icebreaker

1. Group leader(s) welcome everyone.
2. Let group members know the agenda of activities for today, and remind them of last session's topic and activity, if appropriate.
3. Lead the icebreaker activity and give the first example.
  - a. Read the following statements to the group members, and have them stand up from their chair if the statement applies to them.
    - i. I have felt proud of myself.
    - ii. I have used problem solving skills.
    - iii. I have been able to tell someone how I am feeling.
    - iv. I have been able to calm myself down when I was angry.
    - v. I have felt like I could share things with this group.
  - b. Reassure group members that these are all things they can continue to work on and feel proud of, even though the group is coming to an end.
4. Remind group members to take their activity folders with them today to help remind them of the things that were talked about during each session.

## B. Check-in

1. Check-in with group members by asking how they are feeling today (mad, sad, glad, afraid), and if anything needs sharing from their week. It is each group member's choice on whether to share.

## C. Activity of the Week: *My Resources*

1. Consider planning something fun for the group members to do this last session. Choose something such as playing games or having a pizza party. Spend this time celebrating successes and having fun with the group members.
2. Before the end of group, complete with each group member the "My Resources" activity sheet located at the end of this module so that group members have resources to take with them.

4. Before check-out, hand each group member a certificate for participating in the group. This will give group members a sense of accomplishment which plays a large part in fostering resiliency in children.

**E. Check-out**

1. Check-out with group members by asking:
  - a. How do you feel about this being the last group?
  - b. Is there anything else you would like to share?
  - c. How are you feeling (mad, sad, glad, afraid)?
2. Thank group members for coming to group and participating.

## **My Resources**

**Someone I trust is:**

**Someone I can talk to is:**

**Someone that will listen to me is:**

**When I'm feeling sad or mad, something I can do to feel better is:**

**If I am not safe, I will:**

**More resources:**



# CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION



**This certificate goes to:**

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**CONGRATULATIONS!**

This certificate is presented to you for all the great work you have done.  
You should feel very proud of yourself!

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(Group leader's signature)

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(Date)

## CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

Domestic violence occurs in all communities and cultures, racial and ethnic backgrounds, socioeconomic statuses, geographical locations, and religions. As such, an important element of advocacy is the ability to recognize and become familiar with the different cultures and communities served by the advocacy program.

Culture is the shared experiences and commonalities that have developed or continue to evolve in relation to changing social and political contexts, based on the following:

- Race and ethnicity
- Education and literacy level
- National origin
- Sexual orientation
- Gender
- Religion and spirituality
- Age
- Socioeconomic status
- Disability status
- Immigration status
- Geographic location and isolation
- Time/generation/era
- Other axis of identification within the historical context of oppression<sup>5</sup>

Culture can shape how a person is affected by domestic violence, the types of services they may seek, and their interactions with service providers. Many culturally-specific communities may distrust or fear how they will be treated in formal services. They may feel misunderstood or feel a power imbalance, or a lack of service provider interest about their problems and how they either define help or are best engaged by helpers.<sup>6</sup> Advocates must be knowledgeable, responsive, and intentional about addressing the issues faced by all survivors in their communities, and must seek to maximize survivors' capacity to benefit from services through an understanding of each survivor's values, definitions of help, understanding of their social context, help-seeking behaviors, barriers to service delivery, and service needs.

Advocates must also be aware that their own personal culture will be displayed in their interactions with survivors. It is important for advocates to recognize their own stereotypes,

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<sup>5</sup> Information adapted from: Sujata Warriar, PhD from the New York State, Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence.

<sup>6</sup> Iglehart, A.P., & Beccerra, R.M. (2000). *Social services and the ethnic community*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

biases, and prejudices toward certain cultural groups, and work toward eliminating those beliefs and barriers as they often interfere with the way services are provided.

The following is a list of cultural considerations for advocates working with survivors and their children:

- Advocates should treat each child with respect and dignity, regardless of his or her culture, beliefs, national origin, immigration status, language, or ethnicity.
- Diversity exists both within and between cultures. Children and youth should never be labeled or assumed to identify with a certain cultural group.
- Children and youth are entitled to their cultural heritages and identities, and it is a critical part of children's development. It is appropriate for parents to have different cultural or religious views than their children.
- Culture should never be used as an excuse for abusive behavior. For example, it would be inappropriate and harmful to assume that someone perpetrates abuse because of their culture. It is equally harmful to assume that a victim "tolerates" abuse because of her culture.
- Services should be provided in the language preferred by the child. For example, the child may speak both English and Spanish, but may feel more comfortable communicating in Spanish.
- Children should never be used to interpret, even if the parent asks the program to do so. Interpreters should be professional and trained on the dynamics of domestic violence before being utilized by the advocacy program. Advocates should not have side conversations with interpreters, as the interpreter's job is to interpret exactly what is said by the survivor and advocate.
- Each child has their own unique strengths, skills, and forms of resiliency. It is critical to understand how culture influences the resiliency strategies children use in their healing process.
- Actions by a child that do not fit within the advocacy program's idea of "normal" should not be immediately perceived as inappropriate. Unless an action or behavior is harmful (such as abusive comments or violent behaviors), children should feel free to express themselves in ways they are comfortable.
- The more distinctly a child's cultural inheritance varies from that of the dominant society, the more it must be taken into account. Children need to feel that their cultures are being honored, not judged. Even if the advocacy program is unfamiliar with the child's culture, the program should make efforts to become informed.
- Advocacy services should be tailored to the unique needs, concerns, values, and beliefs of the diverse cultural and community groups in the advocacy program's service area.
- Advocacy programs should strive to incorporate culturally relevant items to ensure that survivors and their children feel comfortable. This may include various types of food, music, toys, and décor.

# RESOURCES FOR ADVOCATES & SURVIVORS

This section includes resources and tools that advocates can use together with mothers for strategies on parenting after violence, building bonds, and enhancing resiliency in children.

## SECTION CONTENTS

Developmental Stages of Children/ Etapas del Desarrollo en los Niños.....	4.2
Age-Appropriate Ideas to Use with Children/ Ideas Adecuadas para Utilizar con los Niños Según sus Etapa de Edad.....	4.10
Positive Parenting: 10 Effective Tips/ Ser Padres Positivos: 10 Consejos Efectivos.....	4.14
Parenting Children & Youth Impacted by Domestic Violence/ Criando Niños y Juventud Afectada por la Violencia Doméstica.....	4.18
Fostering Resilience: 10 Tips When Working with Children/ Fomentando Resiliencia: 10 Consejos Cuando Trabaja con Niños.....	4.20
Building Bonds: Activities to Strengthen Mother-Child Relationships/ Construyendo Uniones: Actividades para Fortalecer las Relaciones Entre Madre e Hijo.....	4.24

## **DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES OF CHILDREN**

### **Physical, Cognitive, Emotional, Language**

Parents of children exposed to abuse and violence often express concerns about their child's developmental well-being. This information was developed to help mothers understand predictable milestones of their child's development. It is important to remember that every child is impacted differently by abuse and violence, and that some children may not reach the following developmental stages at the same time as others, regardless of their exposure to abuse and violence. Different communities, cultures, disabilities, or medical conditions could affect these stages.

**Note:** If you feel your child is not developing appropriately for her or his age, you may need to talk to your pediatrician or doctor.

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#### **INFANCY STAGE: *Birth to 18 months***

**By the end of the infancy stage, the child should be able to:**

- Take information in through all five senses.
- Recognize the sound of your voice.
- Imitate others' expressions and sounds.
- Learn to problem solve (i.e., if they drop a toy, they will look to find it).
- Play by themselves for short periods of time.
- Start to use "I", "me," and "you."
- Follow simple instructions.
- Use noises to get what they need or want.
- Smile, coo, or babble to express happiness and excitement.
- Learn about social interaction by observing what is going on around them.
- Recognize others in distress, and show distress by crying.
- Have a growing bond and trust with familiar people, and show distress when separated from their caregiver.

#### ***Physical changes***

By 3 months:

- Lift head and chest while lying on stomach.
- Follow moving object with eyes.

- Reach for things to hold them.
- Wiggle and kick arms and legs.
- Recognize the bottle or breast.

By 7 months:

- Sit on their own with little to no support.
- Move objects from one hand to another.
- Help hold the bottle during feeding.
- Explore objects by mouthing them.
- Roll over.

By 10 months:

- Wave to people.
- Begin crawling and stand with support.

By the end of this stage:

- Use a spoon or fork and drink from a cup.
- Put in and take out small blocks from a container.
- Pull, push, or dump things without help.
- Stand alone, at least for a short period of time.
- Help in dressing by offering a foot or arm.

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD STAGE: *18 months to 3 years***

**By the end of this stage, the child should be able to:**

- Have mental images of familiar people that are not in their presence.
- Become better at problem solving.
- Realize pictures represent people or things.
- Begin to follow verbal instructions and master around 1,000 words.
- Play with other children and pretend play.
- Begin having a strong sense of self (i.e., may say “no” to adults or “this is mine”).
- Continue to learn social skills by playing and watching others.
- Begin to experience the emotions of guilt, shame, pride, and envy, and have a sensitivity to adult expectations.
- Become less anxious when separated from primary caregiver.

### ***Physical changes***

- Walk up steps.
- Take backward steps.
- Ride a tricycle or pedal cars.
- Wash and dry hands.
- Dress self.
- Feed self.

### **PLAY AGE STAGE: 3 to 5 years**

#### **By the end of this stage, the child should be able to:**

- Begin to realize the difference between reality and appearance (i.e., a stuffed animal is not a real animal).
- Learn from doing things hands-on and imitate adult behavior.
- Start to calm themselves through thinking aloud or talking to themselves.
- Ask a lot of questions about how, why, and when, even though it is still difficult for them to see things from someone else's perspective and realize others have different thoughts.
- Understand there is a difference in genders.
- Begin playing longer and more cooperatively with children their own age and friends start becoming important.
- Develop a sense of self and make judgments about themselves on their worth.
- Read and interpret the emotions of others, and to control their own emotions (i.e., by doing things such as hiding, covering eyes or ears).

### ***Physical changes***

- Five senses are fully developed.
- Swing without help.
- Brush teeth and wash face.
- Throw and catch balls.

### **SCHOOL AGE STAGE: 6 to 12 years**

#### **By the end of this stage, the child should be able to:**

- Understand others' viewpoint and understand their thoughts are different than others'.
- Focus on more than one aspect of a problem at a time, improving their problem-solving skills.
- Speak, write, and communicate better and longer.
- Express how they are feeling.
- Feel more than one emotion at the same time.

- Start looking for more acceptance from friends rather than adults.
- View themselves in terms of how well they make friends and how well they do in school, and care about their physical appearance.
- Choose more rule-based games when playing.
- Have increased emotional awareness of self and others.
- Begin grasping moral rules of right and wrong.
- Develop and show social skills such as empathy and compassion.

### ***Physical changes***

- Begin losing baby teeth, permanent teeth are coming in.
- Become almost as coordinated as adults and have a good sense of balance.
- Small muscles are developing rapidly and body strength improves.
- Girls are almost two years ahead of boys in physical maturation and may even begin menstruation.

### **ADOLESCENCE STAGE: *12 to 18 years***

#### **By the end of this stage, the child should be able to:**

- Have more complex thoughts and express feelings through talking.
- See the world in a broader view with more abstract thoughts.
- Use reasoning and logic.
- Feel more concerned about body image and physical changes.
- Be less affectionate with parents and more influenced by peers.
- Seek more independence and freedom.
- Show moodiness, and feel anxiety from school and peer pressure.
- Dating may raise issues of intimacy, sexuality, and relationships.

### ***Physical changes***

- Feel hormonal changes from puberty.
- Growing body hair, boy's voices may deepen.
- Motor skills are highly developed.



## ETAPAS DEL DESARROLLO EN LOS NIÑOS

### Física, Cognitiva, Emocional, Lenguaje

Los padres de niños expuestos al abuso y la violencia frecuentemente expresan preocupación por el bienestar de desarrollo de su hijo. Esta información fue desarrollada para ayudar a las madres a entender los hitos predecibles del desarrollo de su niño. Es importante recordar que cada niño es afectado diferentemente por el abuso y la violencia, y que algunos niños no llegan a las siguientes etapas de desarrollo al mismo tiempo que otros, sin importar su exposición al abuso y la violencia. Las diferentes comunidades, cultura, discapacidades o condiciones médicas pueden afectar estas etapas.

**Nota:** Si piensa que su hijo no está desarrollando adecuadamente para su edad, tal vez necesite hablar con su pediatra o doctor.

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#### ETAPA DE LA INFANCIA: *Del Nacimiento a los 18 meses*

**Al finalizar la etapa de la infancia, el niño debería ser capaz de:**

- Asimilar información usando los cinco sentidos.
- Reconocer el sonido de su voz.
- Imitar las expresiones y sonidos de otras personas.
- Aprender a resolver problemas (p. ej., si se le cae un juguete, tratará de encontrarlo).
- Jugar solo durante cortos periodos de tiempo.
- Empezar a usar “Yo”, “mí” y “tu/usted”.
- Seguir instrucciones simples.
- Usar los sonidos para obtener lo que necesita o quiere.
- Sonreír, gorjear, o balbucear para expresar alegría y emoción.
- Aprender acerca de la interacción social al observar lo que sucede a su alrededor.
- Reconocer angustia en otras personas y demostrar angustia llorando.
- Tener aumentada unión y confianza con personas que son familiares, y muestra angustia cuando es separado de su cuidador(a)

#### **Cambios físicos**

A los 3 meses:

- Levantar la cabeza y el pecho mientras esta acostado boca abajo.
- Seguir los objetos con los ojos.

- Alcanzar y retener las cosas.
- Menearse y patear los brazos y las piernas.
- Reconocer el biberón o el pecho (materno).

A los 7 meses:

- Sentarse solo con poco o sin ser apoyado.
- Cambiar objetos de una mano a la otra.
- Ayudar a sostener el biberón durante la alimentación.
- Explorar los objetos llevándolos a su boca.
- Darse vuelta.

A los 10 meses:

- Saludar con la mano.
- Empezar a gatear y pararse sin apoyo.

Al final de esta etapa:

- Usar una cuchara o tenedor y tomar de una taza.
- Colocar y sacar bloques pequeños de un recipiente.
- Halar, empujar o tirar cosas sin ayuda.
- Pararse solo, al menos por cortos períodos de tiempo.
- Ayudar a vestirse ofreciendo el pie o brazo.

### **ETAPA DE LA NIÑEZ TEMPRANA: de 18 meses a los 3 años**

**Al final de esta etapa, el niño debería ser capaz de:**

- Tener imágenes mentales de personas familiares que no están presentes.
- Mejorar la solución de problemas.
- Darse cuenta que las fotografías representan a personas o cosas.
- Empezar a seguir instrucciones verbales y dominar al rededor de 1,000 palabras.
- Jugar con otros niños y jugar juegos figurados.
- Empezar a tener un fuerte sentido de sí mismo (p. ej., puede decirle a los adultos “no” o “esto es mío”).
- Continuar aprendiendo destreza social jugando y observando a otros.
- Empezar a experimentar las emociones de culpa, vergüenza, orgullo y envidia, y tener sensibilidad a las expectativas de los adultos.
- Estar menos ansioso cuando es separado de su cuidador(a) primario(a).

### ***Cambios físicos***

- Súber escalones.
- Dar pasos hacia atrás.
- Montar un triciclo o carro de pedales.
- Lavar y seca las manos.
- Vestirse solo.
- Comer solo.

### **ETAPA DE LA EDAD EL JUEGO: de los 3 a los 5 años**

#### **Al final de esta etapa, el niño debería ser capaz de:**

- Empezar a notar la diferencia entre la realidad y la apariencia (p. ej., un animal de peluches no es un animal de verdad).
- Aprender hacer las cosas e imitar el comportamiento del adulto.
- Empezar a calmarse a sí mismo mediante el pensamiento en voz alta o hablarse a sí mismo.
- Hacer muchas preguntas acerca de ¿Cómo?, ¿Por qué? y ¿Cuándo? aun cuando todavía es difícil ver las cosas con la perspectiva de otros y dares cuenta que otros tienen pensamientos diferentes.
- Entender que hay diferencia en los géneros.
- Empezar a jugar durante más tiempo y cooperar más con los niños de su misma edad; y los amigos empiezan a ser importantes.
- Desarrollar sentido de sí mismo y juzgarse a sí mismo acerca lo que vale.
- Leer e interpretar las emociones de otros y a controlar sus propias emociones (p. ej., haciendo cosas como esconderse, cubrirse los ojos o los oídos).

### ***Cambios físicos***

- Los cinco sentidos completamente desarrollados.
- Columpiarse sin ayuda.
- Cepillar sus dientes y lavarse la cara.
- Lanzar y agarrar pelotas.

### **ETAPA DE EDAD ESCOLAR: de los 6 a los 12 años**

#### **Al final de esta etapa, el niño debería ser capaz de:**

- Entender los puntos de vista de otros y entender que sus pensamientos son diferentes a los de los demás.
- Enfocarse en más de un aspecto de un problema a la vez, mejorando su destreza para resolver problemas.
- Hablar, escribir y comunicarse mejor y durante más tiempo.

- Expresar como se siente.
- Sentir más de una emoción a la vez.
- Empezar a buscar más la aceptación de sus amigos que de los adultos.
- Verse a sí mismo en términos de lo fácil que hacen amistades y lo bien que le va en la escuela, e importarle su apariencia física.
- Elegir más juegos basados en reglas cuando juega.
- Notarse más de la conciencia emocional de sí mismo y de otros.
- Empezar a comprender las reglas morales del bien y el mal.
- Desarrollar y demostrar destreza social tales como la empatía y la compasión.

### ***Cambios físicos***

- Empieza a perder los dientes de leche, los dientes permanentes están saliendo.
- Se vuelve casi tan coordinado como los adultos y tener un buen sentido del balance.
- Los músculos pequeños se están desarrollando más rápidamente y la fuerza del cuerpo mejora.
- Las niñas están casi dos años más avanzadas que los niños en la madurez física y pueden hasta comenzar la menstruación.

### **ETAPA DE ADOLESCENCIA: de los 12 a los 18 años**

#### **Al final de esta etapa, el niño debería ser capaz de:**

- Tener pensamientos más complejos y expresar sentimientos hablando.
- Ver el mundo con una vista más amplia con pensamientos más abstractos.
- Usar razonamiento y lógica.
- Sentir más preocupación acerca de la imagen de su cuerpo y los cambios físicos.
- Ser menos cariñoso con los padres y más influenciado por los compañeros.
- Buscar más independencia y libertad.
- Mostrar malhumor, y sentir ansiedad por la presión escolar y de los compañeros.
- Las citas pueden suscitar asuntos de intimidad, sexualidad y las relaciones.

### ***Cambios físicos***

- Sentir los cambios hormonales de la pubertad.
- Crecimiento del vello corporal, la voz de los chicos se hace profunda.
- La destreza motor es altamente desarrollada.

## **AGE-APPROPRIATE IDEAS TO USE WITH CHILDREN**

This list includes inexpensive, age-appropriate ideas that advocates or mothers can use or suggest when interacting with children.

### **INFANCY STAGE: *Birth to 18 months***

During this stage, it is not so much the activity that is important but interaction and bonding time between the child and someone safe.

- Soft objects
- Stuffed animals
- Books they can hold, touch, turn the pages, look at the pictures, and be read from
- Rattles or something they can hold and be stimulated by
- Toys that have buttons that play a song, teach words, or light up
- Blocks or toys that fit or stack into a container so they can take them out and put them back (e.g., plastic cups, plastic mixing bowls, cleaned containers from yogurt, butter, or sour cream that fit into one another)
- Toys for the bath, squeaky toys, sponge-like toys, toys that can squirt water (e.g., cleaned shampoo bottles)
- Role playing toys such as fake telephones, radios, and food objects

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD STAGE: *18 months to 3 years***

- Balls that are small and soft that can be rolled back and forth and easily handled by a child
- Little drum sets, or something they can bang on that makes noise
- Large blocks where they can start to work on shapes and colors
- Books that do not have a lot of words, but colorful pictures
- Bubbles
- Simple puzzles with knob pieces
- Objects to help them imitate and pretend such as kitchen supplies (e.g., plastic cookie cutters, spoons, measuring cups, or rolling pins)

### **PLAY AGE STAGE: *3 to 5 years***

- Books with more words and more of a story; rhymes
- Crayons, finger paints, or washable markers

- Games, card games such as memory or matching games (keep the cards face up), animal dominoes
- Balls for throwing, kicking, or running to catch
- Help in the kitchen, stirring something, washing off vegetables, drying dishes
- Play dough
- Small cars and trucks, things that they can push and roll

### **SCHOOL AGE STAGE: 6 to 12 years**

- Choices of different activities
- Outdoor exercise, walks, jump rope, jacks, kites, or obstacle courses (activities that are not competitive but rather work to build relationships)
- Dance, music, drama experiences
- Matching and sorting games
- Games that have simple rules
- Projects about family, school, friends
- Helping in the kitchen or in the yard raking leaves or watering plants

### **ADOLESCENCE STAGE: 12 to 18 years**

- Opportunities to help younger children (e.g., babysitting, tutoring, mentoring)
- One-to-one conversations with adults
- Variety of activities in large and small groups
- Working on projects at the library
- Using the internet for school work
- Activities that involve talking about safety risks, drug and alcohol abuse, and teen dating violence may now be appropriate
- Structured alone time
- Participating in problem-solving activities
- Participating in school activities such as sports, student council, clubs, or theater and arts

# **IDEAS ADECUADAS PARA UTILIZAR CON LOS NIÑOS SEGÚN SUS ETAPA DE EDAD**

Esta lista incluye ideas económicas y adecuadas para las etapas de edad, que la trabajadora o la madre pueden utilizar o sugerir al interactuar con los niños.

## **ETAPA DE LA INFANCIA: Nacimiento hasta los 18 meses**

Durante esta etapa, no es tanto la actividad que es importante si no interactuar y la unión entre el hijo y alguien seguro.

- Objetos blandos
- Animales de peluche
- Libros que pueden sostener, tocar, pasar las páginas, mirar los dibujos y que los pueden leer
- Sonajeras o algo que puedan sostener y que les estimule
- Juguetes que tienen botones que tocan canciones, enseñan palabras, o se iluminan
- Bloques o juguetes que entran o se pueden entrar en un recipiente y luego sacarlos colocarlos de nuevamente (p. ej., vasos plásticos, platos hondos, recipientes limpios de yogur, mantequilla o crema agria que quepan uno dentro del otro)
- Juguetes para el baño, juguetes que hacen ruido, juguetes de esponja, juguetes que lanzan un chorro de agua (p. ej., botellas limpias de champú)
- Juguetes de actuación tales como teléfonos de mentira, radios y objetos comestibles

## **ETAPA DE LA NIÑEZ TEMPRANO: de los 18 meses hasta los 3 años**

- Pelotas que son pequeñas y blandas y se pueden hacer rodar de un lado a otro y son fácilmente manipuladas por un niño
- Juegos pequeños de tambores, o algo que ellos puedan golpear y hacer ruido
- Bloques grandes donde ellos puedan empezar a trabajar con formas y colores
- Libros que no tienen muchas palabras, si no dibujos coloridos
- Burbujas
- Rompe-cabezas simples con piezas que tienen una manija
- Objetos que le ayuden a imitar y fingir, tales como utensilios de cocina (p. ej., cortadores de galletitas plásticos, cucharas, tazas de medir o rodillos)

## **ETAPA DEL JUEGO: de 3 hasta los 5 años**

- Libros con mas palabras y más de una historieta; rimas
- Lápices de colores, pinturas para pintar con los dedos, o rotuladores lavables
- Juegos, juegos de cartas tales como juegos de memorización o de igualar dos dibujos

- Pelotas para lanzar, patear o correr para cogerlas
- Ayudar en la cocina, removiendo algo, lavando los vegetales, secando los platos
- Plastilina/macilla
- Carros y camiones pequeños, cosas que puedan empujar y rodar

### **ETAPA DE EDAD ESCOLAR: de los 6 a los 12 años**

- Elección de diferentes actividades
- Ejercicios al aire libre, caminatas, saltar la cuerda, yaquis, papagayos/cometas o senderos con obstáculos (actividades que no son competitivas si no que promueven el hacer relaciones)
- Baile, música, experiencias de drama
- Juegos de igualar dos dibujos o de clasificar
- Juegos de reglas simples
- Proyectos acerca de la familia, la escuela, los amigos
- Ayudar en la cocina o en el patio rastrillando hojas o regando las plantas

### **ETAPA DE ADOLESCENCIA: de los 12 hasta los 18 años**

- Oportunidades para ayudar a niños más jóvenes (p. ej., cuidar niños, ser tutores, ser mentores)
- Conversaciones de uno a uno con adultos
- Una variedad de actividades en grupos grandes y pequeños
- Trabajar en proyectos en la biblioteca
- Usar la Internet para trabajos escolares
- Las actividades que involucren hablar de los riesgos de seguridad, el abuso de drogas y el alcohol, y la violencia en las citas entre adolescentes pueden ser adecuadas ahora
- Momentos estructurados de soledad
- Participar en actividades para resolver problemas
- Participar en actividades escolares como deportes, el consejo de estudiantes, clubes, o el teatro y el arte



## POSITIVE PARENTING: 10 EFFECTIVE TIPS

Change can be difficult for children. When significant life changes happen, such as staying in a shelter or living someplace new, you may notice a difference in your child's behavior. These tips can provide you with ideas about ways you can encourage positive behavior from your child.

### 1. **Model good behavior**

Children learn by copying what others do. Model good behaviors such as respecting yourself, respecting others, being polite, being honest, being compassionate, and being able to express emotions in a healthy way. Decide what behaviors and attitudes you want for your children and model them.

### 2. **Be clear about what it is you want them to do**

Rather than saying "don't," "stop" or "no," try teaching them what to do instead by using positive language.

<b>instead of:</b> "Don't slam that door!"	<b>try:</b> "Close the door gently."
<b>instead of:</b> "Stop hitting the dog!"	<b>try:</b> "Pet the dog nicely."
<b>instead of:</b> "No yelling!"	<b>try:</b> "Use your inside voice."
<b>instead of:</b> "No name-calling!"	<b>try:</b> "Use respectful language when talking to others."

### 3. **Applaud good behavior**

Negative behaviors catch our attention, and it is easy to pay more attention to negative behaviors than positive behaviors. Applauding children's good behavior encourages more good behavior.

**Examples:** "Great job putting away your dolls."  
 "I like how you shared with your brother."  
 "Thanks for letting me know you were going to be late so I don't have to worry."

### 4. **Pay attention to language you use during arguments**

Words like "you" and "why" can sometimes sound confrontational when used in an argument. Avoid making "you" statements and asking "why" questions, and try making "I" statements instead.

<b>instead of:</b> "You are making me so mad!"	<b>try:</b> "I feel mad when people call me names."
<b>instead of:</b> "Why do you always do this?"	<b>try:</b> "I don't understand why this happens."

### 5. **Explain the reasoning behind your request**

Explaining why you are asking your child to do something may help them comply more quickly, and over time could help them learn that some behaviors have certain effects or consequences.

<b>instead of:</b> "Turn that music down!"	<b>try:</b> "Mommy isn't feeling well and if that weren't so loud, I could lay down for a while."
<b>instead of:</b> "Get off of that!"	<b>try:</b> "If you fall off the table you could really hurt yourself."

## **6. Stay calm when disciplining**

Discipline should be something that is thought out and used to teach your children. All parents get upset, frustrated, exhausted and irritable at times, so when children aren't behaving, these two things can be a bad mixture. Try counting to three, taking a deep breath and thinking about what you will say before reacting. Children won't always listen if they are used to hearing you yell, and they may learn to tune it out. Let your words get your point across, not the volume of your voice. This also is helpful when there is an extreme need for yelling, such as stopping your child from going into the street. Your child will not be used to yelling and will be able to really hear you.

## **7. Give your child choices**

Children learn by making decisions for themselves. Try giving your child two choices (that you are satisfied with) when you want them to do something. This will help with their sense of independence and future decision-making skills.

**instead of:** "Do you want milk?"    **try:** "Do you want your milk in a big cup or a small cup?"

**instead of:** "Pick up your toys!"    **try:** "Would you like to pick up your toys now or after lunch?"

**instead of:** "Get in timeout!"    **try:** "Do you want to take your timeout in your bedroom or in the living room?"

## **8. Be reasonable and realistic**

Consider what is reasonable, realistic and age appropriate when setting expectations for your child. Going grocery shopping during a child's nap time will most likely mean that the child will be tired and cranky at the store. Expecting your teen to be home fifteen minutes after school ends may be unrealistic because of their age and social life.

## **9. Discuss adult matters with adults**

Young children may be upset if they hear you talking about adult issues they don't understand. Try to keep a clear line of what you share with your child and what you share with an older family member or friend. It is unfair to confide in children about your adult problems if you expect to remain in charge. Be aware that children may be listening while you are talking with others, even if they are in the other room.

## **10. Set aside time for just you and your child**

Setting aside time for just you and your child helps build bonds and great memories with your child. Don't let other distractions take away from your time together or your child may not feel important and may begin to act out to get attention. Try scheduling a set day and time each week for you and your child to spend quality time together. If you have multiple children, consider scheduling an activity for everyone, but have a "listening rule" in place so that when one child is talking, everyone listens and gives their undivided attention.

## SER PADRES POSITIVOS: 10 CONSEJOS EFECTIVOS

El cambio puede ser difícil para los niños. Cuando ocurre un cambio significativo, tal como hospedarse en un refugio o algún lugar nuevo, usted puede notar una diferencia en el comportamiento de su niño. Estos consejos le pueden proporcionar ideas acerca de las maneras en que usted puede promover un comportamiento positivo en su hijo.

### 1. **Sea modelo del buen comportamiento**

Los niños aprenden copiando lo que otros hacen. Modelar buenos comportamientos, tal como respetarse a sí mismo, respetar a los demás, ser cortés, ser honesto, ser compasivo y ser capaz de expresar sus emociones de una forma saludable. Decida cuales comportamientos y actitudes usted quiere para sus hijos y sea modelos de los mismos.

### 2. **Sea claro acerca de lo que quiere que ellos hagan**

En lugar de decir “no lo hagas”, “para” o “no”, trate de enseñarles qué hacer usando un lenguaje positivo

**en lugar de:** “¡No tires esa puerta!”

**pruebe:** “Cierra la puerta con delicadeza.”

**en lugar de:** “¡Deja de pegarle al perro!”

**pruebe:** “Acaricia al perro suavemente.”

**en lugar de:** “¡Deja de gritar!”

**pruebe:** “Usa tu voz interna.”

**en lugar de:** “¡No digas insultos!”

**pruebe:** “Usa un lenguaje respetuoso cuando hables con otras personas.”

### 3. **Aplauda el buen comportamiento**

Los comportamientos negativos capturan nuestra atención, y es fácil prestar más atención a los comportamientos negativos que a los comportamientos positivos. Aplaudir el comportamiento positivo de los niños fomenta más comportamiento bueno.

**Ejemplos:** “Buen trabajo al guardar tus muñecas.”

“Me gusta que compartiste con tu hermano.”

“Gracias por dejarme saber que vendrías tarde para no tener que preocuparme.”

### 4. **Preste atención al lenguaje que usa durante las discusiones**

Las palabras como “tú” y “¿por qué?” pueden sonar polémicas cuando se usan durante una discusión. Evite decir “tú” y “¿por qué?”, y trate de decir “yo” mejor.

**en lugar de:** “¡Tú me estás enojando tanto!”

**pruebe:** “Me enojo cuando me dicen insultos.”

**en lugar de:** “¿Por qué siempre haces esto?”

**pruebe:** “Yo no entiendo por qué siempre sucede esto.”

### 5. **Explique el razonamiento detrás de su petición**

Explicar por qué le está pidiendo a su hijo que haga algo puede ayudarlo a cumplirlo más rápidamente y a la larga le puede ayudar a aprender que algunos comportamientos tienen ciertos efectos o consecuencias.

**en lugar de:** “¡Baja esa música!”

**pruebe:** “Mami no se siente bien y si esa música no estuviese tan fuerte, me podría recostar un rato.”

**en lugar de:** “¡Bájate de eso!”

**pruebe:** “Si te caes de esa mesa te puedes lastimar mucho.”

## **6. Mantenga la calma mientras impone un castigo**

El castigo es algo que debe de ser pensado y utilizado para enseñar a nuestros hijos. Todos los padres se enojan, frustran y son irritables a veces, así que cuando nuestros niños no se están comportando bien, estas dos cosas pueden ser una mala combinación. Intenta contar hasta tres, respirar profundo y piensa acerca de lo que va a decir antes de reaccionar. Los niños no siempre van a escuchar si están acostumbrados a oírle a usted gritar, y pueden aprender a ignorarlos. Deje que sus palabras demuestren su objetivo, no el volumen de su voz. Esto también ayuda cuando hay una necesidad extrema de gritar, tal como para detener al niño de salirse a la calle. Su hijo no estará acostumbrado a oírle gritar a usted y podrá ser capaz de escucharlo bien.

## **7. Déle opciones a su niño**

Los niños aprenden tomando decisiones por sí mismos. Pruebe a darle a su niño dos opciones (con las que usted está satisfecho) cuando quiera que hagan algo. Esto le ayudara con su sentido de independencia y la destreza para tomar decisiones en el futuro.

**en lugar de:** “¿Quieres leche?”

**pruebe:** “¿Quieres leche en un vaso grande o en un vaso pequeño?”

**en lugar de:** “¡Levanta tus juguetes!”

**pruebe:** “¿Te gustaría levantar tus juguetes ahora o después del almuerzo?”

**en lugar de:** “¡Estás castigado!”

**pruebe:** “¿Quieres hacer tu castigo en tu habitación o en la sala?”

## **8. Sea razonable y realístico**

Considere lo que es razonable, realístico y adecuado a la edad cuando establezca expectativas para su niño. Ir de compra durante la hora de la siesta de su niño lo más seguro es que esto cause que el niño este cansado y irritado en la tienda. Esperar que su adolescente llegue a casa quince minutos después de salir de la escuela puede que no sea realístico dada su edad y la vida social.

## **9. Hable de temas de adultos con los adultos**

Los niños jóvenes pueden disgustarse si le escuchan hablando acerca de temas de adultos que ellos no entienden. Trate de mantener una línea abierta acerca de lo que comparte con su niño y lo que comparte con un miembro de la familia o amigo mayor. No es justo que confíe a sus hijos sus problemas de adulto si espera mantenerse al mando. Este consciente que los niños pueden estar escuchando mientras hablas con otros, aun si están en el otro cuarto.

## **10. Reserve tiempo para solamente usted y su niño**

Reservar tiempo para usted y su hijo solamente le ayuda a fomentar uniones y grandes memorias con su niño. No permita que otras distracciones le resten a su tiempo junto a su niño o su niño no se sentirá importante y empezara a actuar mal para conseguir atención. Intente programar un día fijo cada semana para que usted y su niño pasen tiempo de calidad juntos. Si tiene varios niños, considere programar una actividad para cada uno, pero imponga una regla de “escuchar” para que cuando un niño este hablando, todos escuchen y le presten su total atención.

## **PARENTING CHILDREN & YOUTH IMPACTED BY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

Mothers often do incredible jobs parenting their children in spite of the abuse that they face.<sup>1</sup> The abusive partner's continuous undermining of the mother's parenting as well as the abusive partner's use of coercion and violence affect how difficult it will be to parent. Some children may show no behavior changes and others may display a wide range of behavior changes. These tips were developed to help mothers parenting children impacted by domestic violence.

1. Listen to your child.
2. When your child is ready, talk with them about their feelings.
3. Show your child understanding and validate their feelings.
4. Let your child know the violence at home is and was not their fault.
5. Remind your child how much you love them.
6. If your child wants to just talk, let them.
7. Let your child know you want them to be safe.
8. Let your child know that violence is not okay (e.g., hitting, kicking, name-calling, slapping).
9. Acknowledge that the violence at home may be scary and difficult for your child.
10. Accept that your child may not want to talk right away.
11. Interact with your child in a non-violent, non-threatening way.
12. Set limits and boundaries if your child violently acts out, and reach out to others if you need help. Recognize that your child may be angry at you and inappropriately act out towards you.
13. Talk with an advocate about positive ways to parent, if needed.
14. Don't expect your child to respond immediately to changes you are making.
15. Set up advocacy services, counseling, or therapy, if needed.

### **Why these tips are beneficial for you as a parent:**

- Children will feel safer knowing they can talk to you when they are feeling unsafe.
- Children will learn violence in the home is and was not their fault.
- Children will feel loved and understood.
- Children will learn that violence is an unacceptable way to solve problems.
- Children will learn that it is okay to talk about feelings.

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<sup>1</sup> Mandel, D. (2002). Working with batterers as parents. *Issues in Family Violence* 4(3).

## **CRIANDO NIÑOS Y JUVENTUD AFECTADA POR LA VIOLENCIA DOMÉSTICA**

Las madres frecuentemente hacen un trabajo increíble criando a sus hijos a pesar del abuso que enfrentan<sup>2</sup>. La continúa socavación de la capacidad de la madre por parte de la pareja abusiva así como el uso de coerción y violencia por parte de la pareja abusiva afectan cuán difícil será criar a los niños. Algunos niños no mostraran cambios en su comportamiento y otros pueden mostrar una gama amplia de cambios en su comportamiento. Estos consejos fueron desarrollados para ayudar a las madres que están criando niños afectados por la violencia domestica.

1. Escuche a su niño.
2. Cuando su niño esté listo, hable con él acerca de sus sentimientos.
3. Muéstrelle comprensión a su niño y déle validez a sus sentimientos.
4. Hazle saber a su niño que la violencia en el hogar no es culpa de él.
5. Recuérdele a su niño cuanto le ama.
6. Si su niño solo quiere hablar, permítaselo.
7. Hágale saber a su niño que usted quiere que este seguro.
8. Hágale saber a su niño que la violencia no está bien (p. ej., pegar, patear, decir insultos, bofetear).
9. Reconozca que la violencia en el hogar puede ser atemorizante y difícil para su niño.
10. Acepte que su niño tal vez no quiera hablar enseguida.
11. Relaciónese con su niño en una forma no violenta, no amenazante.
12. Establezca límites si su niño actúa con violencia, y busque ayuda si la necesita. Reconozca que su hijo puede estar enojado y actúa impropriamente con usted.
13. Hable con una trabajadora acerca de las formas positivas de ser padre, si lo necesita.
14. No espere que su niño responda inmediatamente a los cambios que usted está haciendo.
15. Programe servicios de abogacía, consejería, o terapia, si es necesario.

### **Por qué estos consejos son beneficiosos a usted como padre:**

- Los niños se sentirán más seguros sabiendo que pueden hablarle a usted cuando se sientan inseguros.
- Los niños aprenderán que la violencia en el hogar no es culpa de ellos.
- Los niños se sentirán amados y comprendidos.
- Los niños aprenderán que la violencia es una forma inaceptable de resolver problemas.
- Los niños aprenderán que está bien que hablen de sus sentimientos.

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<sup>2</sup> Mandel, D. (2002). Working with batterers as parents. *Issues in Family Violence* 4(3).

## **FOSTERING RESILIENCE: 10 TIPS WHEN WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

Resilience can be thought of as one's ability to bounce back from difficult situations. It is not something people have or don't have, it is something that anyone can learn and develop through behaviors, actions and thoughts. When a child is exposed to abuse and violence in the home, it is important to foster resilience in that child to lessen the impacts of the abusive partner's behavior.

### **1. *Treat them with respect.***

Treat children how you like to be treated. This means not interrupting, putting them down, or telling them how they should be feeling. Treating children with respect will help them treat others with respect, become more receptive and be better communicators.

### **2. *Accept them for who they are.***

If children are appreciated for who they are, they can develop a better, more optimistic attitude about life. They also will be more apt to reach out to others for help and learn how to better problem-solve.

### **3. *Focus on strengths.***

Resilient children need a sense of pride and accomplishment to keep moving forward when challenges arise. Not all children are naturally good at things like sports or art, but all children have strengths. Notice and draw attention to the child's strengths. For children to believe in themselves, they need to feel a sense of success and accomplishment from trustworthy adults.

### **4. *Teach and practice empathy.***

See the world through the child's eyes and validate their experiences and realities. If children know they are being heard, they will be more likely to open up and continue seeking guidance. This also teaches empathy, which is an important skill for building healthy relationships.

### **5. *Show flexibility.***

Adults need to model flexibility in order for children to be adaptable and receptive to new ways of doing things. If something is not working with the child, think about what could be done differently to get the desired results. This teaches children that there is more than one way to solve a problem and will help them when they face challenges in the future.

### **6. *Show them undivided attention.***

The feeling of being special and loved is essential to self-esteem. Set aside an uninterrupted period of time each day for children. This time can be with any trustworthy adult who loves and believes in the child.

**7. *Let mistakes be learning experiences.***

Mistakes are a natural part of life and children should know that. If a child has broken something by accident, let them know it is okay and that they are still loved. When adults get angry about mistakes, children learn to copy this behavior and blame others when things go wrong, or they may live in fear of making any mistakes.

**8. *Teach problem-solving and decision-making skills.***

Let children try to first figure out the answer on their own to develop their problem-solving abilities. Encourage them to come up with different solutions for problem areas and when they have a plan, tell them “That sounds like a good idea. Let’s try it and if that doesn’t work, we can come up with another idea.” There are times, especially concerning safety, when children should be told the answers and what to do.

**9. *Use discipline to teach.***

Discipline children in a way that is not intimidating or hurtful, and always praise them when they do something right. The goal is to have children learn to have self-discipline and act responsibly, even when adults are not nearby.

**10. *Let them help.***

Children like to be a part of something and like to help, even at a young age. Get them involved in charitable work or activities such as babysitting or cooking. Anything that gives children a sense of contributing fosters their self-esteem and gives them a sense of responsibility.

***Remember:***

“The most important factor in determining a child’s resiliency in the aftermath of exposure to battering behavior is the quality of the relationship with their non-abusive parent.”

~ Bancroft & Silverman



## **FOMENTANDO RESILIENCIA: 10 CONSEJOS CUANDO TRABAJA CON NIÑOS**

La resiliencia se puede decir que es la habilidad de uno a recuperarse de situaciones difíciles. No es algo que las personas tienen o no tienen, es algo que cualquiera puede aprender a desarrollar mediante comportamientos, acciones y pensamientos. Cuando un niño está expuesto al abuso y violencia en el hogar, es importante fomentar la resiliencia en el niño para aminorar el impacto del comportamiento del padre abusivo.

### **1. *Tráteles con respeto.***

Trate a los niños como a usted le gusta ser tratado. Esto significa no interrumpir, menospreciarlos o decirles como deben sentirse. Tratar a los niños con respeto ayudara a que ellos traten a otras personas con respeto, hacerse más receptores y mejores comunicadores.

### **2. *Acéptelos como quienes son.***

Si los niños son apreciados por quien son, ellos pueden desarrollar una mejor, más optimista aptitud acerca de la vida. También son más propensos a acercarse a otras personas para pedir ayuda y aprender cómo mejor resolver problemas.

### **3. *Concéntrese en sus cualidades.***

Los niños resilientes necesitan un sentido de orgullo y realización para continuar yendo adelante cuando los retos se presentan. No todos los niños son naturalmente buenos en cosas como deportes o arte, pero los niños tienen cualidades. Note y llame atención a las cualidades del niño. Para que los niños creen en sí mismos, necesitan recibir de los adultos un sentido de éxito y logro.

### **4. *Enséñele y practique la empatía.***

Vea el mundo a través de los ojos del niño y déle validez a sus experiencias y realidades. Si los niños saben que son escuchados, ellos serán más propensos a abrirse y continuar buscando consejo. Esto también les enseña empatía, que es una destreza importante para fomentar relaciones saludables.

### **5. *Muestre flexibilidad.***

Los adultos necesitan modelar la flexibilidad para que los niños sean adaptables y receptivos a nuevos modos de hacer las cosas. Si algo no está funcionando con el niño, piense en qué se puede hacer diferente para obtener los resultados deseados. Esto les enseña a los niños que hay más de un modo para resolver un problema y le ayudara a ellos cuando se enfrenten con retos en el futuro.

### **6. *Bríndeles toda su atención.***

El sentimiento de ser especial y amado es esencial para el autoestima. Separe un período de tiempo ininterrumpido cada día para los niños. Este tiempo puede ser con cualquier adulto confiable que ame y crea en el niño.

**7. *Permita que los errores sean experiencias de aprendizaje.***

Los errores son una parte natural de la vida y los niños deben saber eso. Si el niño ha roto algo por accidente, hágale saber que está bien, que aun le ama. Cuando los adultos se enojan por los errores, los niños aprenden a copiar este comportamiento y culpan a otros cuando las cosas salen mal, o pueden vivir con temor a cometer errores.

**8. *Enséñele destrezas para resolver problemas y tomar decisiones.***

Permita que los niños intenten primero solos encontrar la respuesta para desarrollar sus propias habilidades para resolver problemas. Anímelos a que encuentren diferentes soluciones a áreas problemáticas y cuando tengan un plan, les dice “Eso parece una buena idea. Vamos a intentarlo y si eso no funciona, podemos encontrar otra idea”. Hay momentos, especialmente cuando de seguridad se trata, cuando a los niños se les debe dar las respuestas y decirles qué hacer.

**9. *Use el castigo para enseñar.***

Castigue a los niños en una manera que los intimide o dañe y siempre elógielos cuando hacen algo bien hecho. La meta es hacer que los niños aprendan auto disciplina y actúen responsablemente, aun cuando los adultos no estén cerca.

**10. *Permítales ayudar.***

A los niños les gusta ser parte de algo y les gusta ayudar, aun en una temprana edad. Involúcrelos en trabajo o actividades caritativas tales como cuidar niños o cocinar. Cualquier cosa que les dé a los niños un sentido de que contribuyen les fomenta su autoestima y les dan sentido de responsabilidad.

***Recuerde:***

“El factor más importante en determinar la resiliencia del niño posterior a la exposición al comportamiento abusivo es la calidad de la relación con su padre no abusivo.”

~ Bancroft & Silverman

## **BUILDING BONDS: ACTIVITIES TO STRENGTHEN MOTHER-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS**

### ***Family***

Sit with your child and draw pictures of the family. Next to each family member, draw or write out what things each person does. For example, next to mom you could have things that show cooking, talking to kids about their feelings, and giving hugs. For a child, you could have things that depict playing, cleaning up after themselves, and doing their homework.

### ***Feelings***

Talk about feelings with your child. Go through magazines and cut out different expressions that signify a feeling, or have them draw different faces that express feelings. Use this time together to talk about emotions and identify feelings. If you are looking through magazines, ask questions like “why do you think that little boy is happy?” Take turns making facial expressions and guessing what feeling it is.

### ***Decision Making and Planning***

Let your child plan the activity to do something fun together. Allowing your child to make decisions can help foster independence and confidence in decision-making abilities.

### ***Memories***

Keep a journal of all the fun things you and your child have done together. Make a special point to add something to the journal with your child weekly.

### ***Life***

Plant something together and then take turns watering it, and watch as it grows. This can help teach responsibility and care for living things.

### ***Cooking***

Cook something with your child. Have your child help you bake a special treat, or have them help you cook dinner. Talk with your child about what ingredients you use, how to measure ingredients, potential dangers in the kitchen (stove, knives, sharp objects), and nutrition.

### ***Outdoors***

Spend time outdoors with your child. Take your child to the park to play, for a walk, or to play an outside game.

### ***Finances***

Talk to your child about money. Play games with your child that teaches them to spend, save and count money.

## **CONSTRUYENDO UNIONES: ACTIVIDADES PARA FORTALECER LAS RELACIONES ENTRE MADRE E HIJO**

### ***La familia***

Siéntese con su niño y dibuje la familia. Al lado de cada miembro de la familia, dibuje o escriba que cosas hace cada persona. Por ejemplo, al lado de mamá puede tener cosas que muestran cocinando, hablando con los niños acerca de sus sentimientos y dando abrazos. Para el niño, usted puede tener cosas que muestren el juego, limpiar después del juego, y hacer sus tareas.

### ***Sentimientos***

Hable de sus sentimientos con su niño. Busque revistas y recorte diferentes expresiones que signifiquen un sentimiento, o haga que ellos dibujen diferentes caras que expresen los sentimientos. Use este tiempo que están juntos para hablar de las emociones e identificar los sentimientos. Si está mirando una revista, haga preguntas como “¿por qué piensas que el niño está feliz?” Tomen turnos haciendo expresiones faciales y adivinando que sentimiento muestran.

### ***Tomar decisiones y hacer planes***

Permita que su niño planifique la actividad para hacer juntos algo divertido. Permitirle al niño tomar decisiones puede fomentar la independencia y confianza en la destreza para tomar decisiones.

### ***Memorias***

Lleve un diario de las cosas divertidas que usted y su niño han hecho juntos. Haga un esfuerzo para añadir al diario algo con su niño cada semana.

### ***Vida***

Siembren algo juntos y túrnense para regarlo, y obsérvelo mientras crece. Esto ayuda a enseñar responsabilidad y cuidar de cosas vivientes.

### ***Cocinando***

Cocine algo con su niño. Permita que su niño le ayude a hornear un gusto especial, o que le ayude a cocinar la cena. Hable con su niño acerca de los ingredientes que usted usa, como medir los ingredientes, los peligros potenciales en la cocina (la estufa, cuchillos, objetos afilados), y la nutrición.

### ***Al aire libre***

Pase tiempo al aire libre con su niño. Lleve a su niño a jugar al parque, en una caminata, o a jugar un juego al aire libre.

### ***Finanzas***

Háblele a su niño acerca del dinero. Juegue con su niño juegos que le enseñe a ahorrar y a contar el dinero.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & SUGGESTED READINGS

### **When Dad Hurts Mom: Helping your Children Heal the Wounds of Witnessing Abuse - by Lundy Bancroft**

This book offers understanding and support for mothers who are concerned about how their children are affected by a batterer's behaviors and actions. It explains how batterers may affect the familial relationships, ideas on ways women can protect their children and help them heal, and ways to work with systems that may become involved with the family.

### **The Batterer as Parent: Addressing the Impact of Domestic Violence on Family Dynamics - by Lundy Bancroft and Dr. Jay G. Silverman**

This book educates the reader about homes affected by domestic violence. It talks about the environment that battering men create for the children who live with them. It discusses how partner abuse affects each relationship in a family, while explaining how children's emotional recovery is inextricably linked to the healing and empowerment of their mothers.

### **Children Who See Too Much: Lessons from the Child Witness to Violence Project - by Betsy McAlister Groves**

This book explains that many children in the United States witness violence in their own lives in addition to what they see in the media. This book provides six practical steps that will help parents create a safer world for their children.

### **Help and Healing: A Caregiver's Guide to Helping Young Children Affected by Trauma - by Kathleen Fitzgerald and Betsy McAlister Groves**

Hope and Healing is a guide for people who care for children in a variety of settings. The authors define trauma and help those reading to recognize its effects on young children. It also provides tips, resources, and intervention strategies for working with children and their families, and for managing stress.