

Exercise

Possible impacts to children of experiencing domestic violence

- Kinaesthetic exercise

- 1** Get four sheets of A4 paper and write one of the following age ranges at the top of each page:
 - Pre-birth
 - 0-5 years
 - 5-10 years
 - 10-15 years
- 2** Cut out the impact statements on the next page and the following page.
- 3** Place each statement on the piece of paper that you feel is right.

If working with a couple, encourage discussion and debate about the activity.

Could some of these impacts go in more than one place? If so, you can write them on any duplicate page(s).

IDEA:

You could place the pages on different walls using blue tack to add some physical movement into the exercise.

They may become anxious or depressed.

They may have difficulty sleeping.

They have nightmares or flashbacks.

They can be easily startled.

They may complain of physical symptoms such as tummy aches and may start to wet their bed.

They may have temper tantrums and problems with school.

Children may start to use alcohol or drugs, begin to self-harm or develop disordered eating.

They may behave as though they are much younger than they are.

They may become aggressive or they may internalise their distress and withdraw from other people.

They may have a lowered sense of self-worth / self-esteem.

Older children may begin to play truant, their schoolwork suffers.

Children may feel angry, guilty, insecure.

The mother may have a miscarriage due to a physical assault.

They may present as alone, frightened, powerless or confused.

They may have ambivalent feelings towards both the abusive parent and the non-abusing parent.

Baby will experience higher levels of the stress hormone, cortisol.