Children’s Domestic Violence Wheel

How violence affects children

Isolation
Inability to develop social skills; feeling alone and different; keeping harmful “secrets;” can’t have friends over because of the need to hide the violence; not trusting of adults

Emotional Abuse
Doubting reality; fear of doing wrong; inconsistent limits and expectations by caregiver; fear of expressing feelings; inability to learn at school; low self esteem

Physical and Mental Effects
May feel guilt and shame; think it’s their fault; may regress to early stages of development; cranky; crabby; demanding and withdrawn; crave/need nurturing from anyone

Sexual Abuse
Shame about body; feeling threatened or fearful of their sexuality; learning inappropriate sexual talk and behavior; having access to pornographic magazines and movies

Intimidation
Putting children in fear by using looks, loud actions, gestures, or voices and by smashing things and destroying property; fear for their physical safety

Sexual Stereotyping
Copying abuser’s dominant and abusive behavior; copying victim’s passive and submissive behavior; unable to express feelings or who they are

Threats
Learning to manipulate because of their own safety issues due to effects of violence in family; expressing anger in a way that is violent and/or abusive or not expressing anger at all because of their own fear

Using Children
Being put in the middle of fights; may take on roles/responsibilities of parents; give up being children; seen and not heard; being used to solve conflicts; asked to take sides

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F: Education/Revised Handouts/Children’s DV Wheel