

*“Longitudinal studies reveal that 50 – 75% of children growing up in families where domestic violence is present demonstrate “resilience and triumph”.*

*Tapping Innate Resilience in Children” by Z. Ruby White, NCJFCJ, Synergy, V7, No. 2, Summer 2003.*

Remember that it is the perpetrator’s choice to expose violence to their children. Do not blame the mother for the violence that is being perpetrated against her. Hold the perpetrator responsible for his actions.

### Children’s Emotional Reactions to Domestic Violence

Remember that every child has different coping mechanisms and will react differently to the violence. Do not make assumptions without learning about the specific child and case.

- Fear-of violence, of father (sometimes all men), of abandonment, of night-time (when violence has occurred), of upheaval and loss of family, of physical harm, of expressing feelings
- Anger- at father (for the violence), at mother (for not being able to stop the violence), at self (for not being able to protect the mother)
- Guilt- feels responsible for violence, for being “disloyal” to father/family, for having negative feelings about one or both parents
- Confusion- who’s responsible for care-giving? Conflict over feelings towards parents, unpredictable reactions from adults, child is unable to trust, belief that relationship equals violence
- Powerlessness- to change things, for not being able to fix the family
- Shame- for being part of a defective family