CHILDREN’S EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE

15.5 MILLION children in the United States live in families in which partner violence occurred at least once in the past year. (1) Being exposed to one type of violence puts children at an increased risk of being exposed to other violence. This is known as polyvictimization.

WHAT IS CHILDREN’S EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE (CEV)?

- Children’s exposure to violence refers to children who witness or are victimized by home violence, child abuse and neglect, and community violence (school, bullying, gangs, assaults, etc.).
- Exposure to violence, particularly multiple exposures, can interfere with a child’s physical, emotional, and intellectual development.

CEV IN YOUR HOME

(Per the National Survey of Children’s Exposure to Violence, 2009)

- Children’s reactions to exposure to violence can be immediate or appear much later.
- Reactions differ in severity and cover a range of behaviors.
- Nearly 1 in 10 (9.8 percent) saw one family member assault another in the past year.
- 37% of children surveyed were victimized in the previous year.
- 51% of those victimized were sexually victimized.

1 in 10

(10.2 percent) suffered from child maltreatment (including physical and emotional abuse, neglect, or a family abduction) during the past year.

THE MEDIAN NUMBER OF PAST-YEAR EXPOSURES TO VIOLENCE WAS THREE.

FAMILY MEMBERS CAN HELP BY:

- Remaining calm and reinforcing a stable and safe environment
- Keeping a regular schedule or routine for meals, quiet time, playtime, and bedtime
- Helping children prepare for changes and new experiences
- Spending more time together as a family
- Being patient and letting children identify and express feelings
- Providing extra attention, comfort, and encouragement

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT SAFESTARTCENTER.ORG

(Infographic designed by WFAF and Center Associates Media. © 2012 Child Welfare Alliance for Families and Children, Inc.)