

THE EFFECTS OF VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN

Children who experience violence or stress may...

1. Re-live the trauma
 - dreams
 - fantasies
 - playing it out over and over again
 - talking over and over about the trauma
 - nightmares
 - distress at triggers
2. Show changes in normal behavior
 - withdrawal
 - regression
 - loss of energy
 - increased risk-taking behaviors
 - depression
 - narrow range of emotions
 - symptoms of illness
3. Show an increased state of arousal
 - inability to concentrate
 - sleep disturbances
 - increased aggression
 - easily upset
 - disrupted patterns of eating
 - hyperalertness
 - irritability and anger
 - increased startle response
 - anxiety and fearfulness
4. Have feelings that unnecessarily burden them
 - feelings of guilt and responsibility
 - seeing oneself as bad or worthless
 - feelings of loss of control
 - sense of helplessness
 - pessimism about the future
 - fear that it will happen again
5. Have delayed or impaired development
 - social development
 - moral development
 - psychological disorders
 - school problems
 - intellectual development
6. Have difficulty with relationships
 - identification with the aggressor
 - damaged sense of trust
 - damaged sense of autonomy
 - increased aggression
 - lack of empathy
 - withdrawal from friends

Even infants and toddlers may experience these effects.