



## **BUILDING RESILIENCY: CHILDREN EXPOSED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

### **SUPPORT THE SAFETY & STABILITY OF THE CAREGIVER & CHILDREN**

Supporting the non-abusive caregiver is essential for children to be and feel safe. Help the non-abusive caregiver take care of themselves and their child(ren) by offering safety planning, economic resources and community referrals in empowering, non-shaming ways.

### **VALIDATE CHILDREN'S FEARS, FEELINGS & EXPERIENCES**

Children exposed to domestic violence may have a lot of confusing feelings and fears. Be sure to not minimize, deny or ignore their concerns about their family's safety. Listen and validate what they choose to share with you.

### **CREATE CONSISTENCY, ROUTINE & STRUCTURE**

The instability and uncertainty of domestic violence can cause stress for children exposed. Stability and structure can positively support a child's ability to grow and heal safely. Facilitate daily routines and scheduled activities that children can predict and appropriately depend on.

### **ENCOURAGE UNINTERRUPTED QUALITY TIME & CAREGIVER-CHILD BONDING**

In their experience of surviving domestic violence, the non-abusive caregiver and child(ren) may have had limited opportunities to bond. In your role, encourage the non-abusive caregiver and child(ren) to spend safe, interactive quality-time together, without the interruption of abuse.

### **CELEBRATE FAMILY'S STRENGTH & CULTURAL PRIDE**

Many families surviving domestic violence find strength in their cultural traditions, celebrations and rituals. Support the non-abusive caregiver and child(ren)'s sense of belonging and family pride by learning and supporting their own family activities.

### **PRIORITIZE & UNDERSTAND THE CHILD'S PERSPECTIVE**

Children experience trauma very differently from adults. Avoid generalizing or labeling children's behavior as "bad" and become familiar with how the exposure to domestic violence impacts child development and behavior.