



## Empowered Families Kansas Project Webinar: Fostering Resilience in Children Exposed to Domestic Violence

Presented by:

Kristina A. Scott, LMSW, Empowered Families Kansas Child Welfare Project Coordinator  
Bre Kirkhart, Empowered Families Kansas Child and Youth Services Coordinator



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## Audio/Sound



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– Dial 1-866-595-6426 Code: 1990359149

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## Learning Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

1. Recognize at least 3 battering tactics used by abusive parents and how those impact parenting.
2. Identify at least 2 protective strategies that survivors of domestic violence use to keep their children safe and mitigate the effects of the abuse.
3. Identify at least 2 strategies to increase resiliency in children who have been exposed to domestic violence.
4. Explain how to locate the different domestic violence advocacy programs in Kansas.



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## Introductions




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### What does KCSDV do?

- Technical Assistance
  - Can help to answer questions or provide resources around:
    - Domestic Violence
    - Sexual Violence
    - Stalking
    - Dating Violence
- Referrals to local and national resources
- Training for your agency, both in-person and remotely through webinars
- Educational materials and resources including the most recent research
- Building collaboration between local domestic violence advocacy programs and local community partners, including child welfare agencies, community mental health centers, local courts, etc.


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### KCSDV Projects

- Advocacy
- Children & Youth
- Criminal Justice
- Education and Training
- Immigration
- Legal Advocacy
- People with Disabilities
- Prison Rape Elimination
- Outreach Advocacy
- Prevention
- Protection Orders
- Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner & Sexual Assault Response Team
- Underserved Communities




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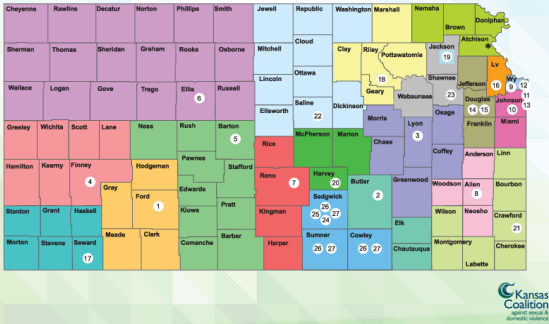
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## Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocacy Programs in Kansas




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## Services Provided by Advocacy Programs

- Crisis Intervention
- Supportive Counseling
- Hotline Services
- Support Groups
- Medical Advocacy
- Court Advocacy
- Law Enforcement Advocacy
- Emergency Accommodation
- Personal Advocacy
- Shelter
- Child/Youth Services
- Parent & Child Advocacy
- Community Awareness & Education



(KCSOV, 2013)




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## Domestic Violence (DV)

- **DEFINITION:** Domestic violence (battering) is a pattern of abusive and coercive behavior used to gain dominance, power, and control over an intimate partner.
  - It includes the use of illegal and legal behaviors and tactics that undermine the victim's sense of self, free will, and safety.
  - Battering behavior can impact other family members and can be used in other family relationships.

Adapted from: Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs. (1984). *Power and Control Wheel*. Definition written by KCSDV, 2010




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## Prevalence of Domestic Violence

- **Anyone** regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, class, race, lifestyle, or religion may experience domestic violence at the hands of their partner.
- However, research consistently shows that women are at significantly greater risk of domestic violence than men.
- **1 in 4** women and **1 in 7** men have been the victim of **severe physical violence** (e.g., hit with a fist or something hard, beaten, slammed against something) by an intimate partner. (CDC, 2011)
- **1 in 15** children are exposed to intimate partner violence each year, and **90%** of these children are eyewitnesses to this violence. (Finkelhor, Hamby, Ormrod, & Turner, 2011)




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## Prevalence of Domestic Violence in LGBT Populations

- **44%** of lesbian women,
- **61%** of bisexual women,
- **26%** of gay men and
- **37%** of bisexual men
  - Experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner at some point in their lifetime. (CDC, 2011)
- **30 to 50%** of transgender people experience intimate partner violence at some point in their lifetime. (Brown & Herman, 2015)




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## Kansas DV Statistics

- In **2016**, there were **23,004** DV incidents reported to law enforcement.
- In about **48%** of reported incidents the offender was arrested.
- In **2016** there were **19 domestic violence homicides**, making up **12.8%** of total homicides in the state.
  - Down from **2015**, where DV homicides made up **22.9%** (30)

(Kansas Bureau of Investigation, 2016)




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## Kansas DV Statistics, cont'd

**866 DV Victims Served in One Day in Kansas**  
September 14, 2016

**417** adult and children domestic violence victims found refuge in emergency shelters or transitional housing provided by local domestic violence programs.

- **449** adults and children received non-residential assistance and services.
  - Including :
    - Counseling
    - Legal advocacy
    - Children's support groups

(National Network to End Domestic Violence, 2016)




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## Use of Children by an Abusive Parent




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VIDEO:

## FIRST IMPRESSIONS: EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE AND A CHILD'S DEVELOPING BRAIN

(California Attorney General's Office & Crime and Violence Prevention Center, 2008)




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### Understanding the Use of Children by an Abusive Parent

- The effects of domestic violence on children are a reflection of the abuser's **Parenting Style**.  
(Bancroft and Silverman, 2012)
- The use of domestic violence by an abuser is a **Parenting Choice**.  
(Mederros, 2004)
- Many abusers' motivation to intimidate and control their partner through their children **Increases After Separation**, due to loss of other control tactics.  
(Bancroft and Silverman, 2012)




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### Children & Domestic Violence




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### Impacts: Behaviorally

- Changes in behavior or moods
- Reluctance to go to a particular place or see a particular person
- Premature sexualization
- Excessive nightmares
- Use of drugs and alcohol
- Socially withdrawn
- Running away
- Promiscuity
- Regression
- Sudden phobias
- Aggression



(Ferencik & Ramirez-Hammond, 2016)




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## Impacts: Long Term

- Sleep disturbance
- Change in appetite
- Pain, fatigue, tension
- Health Issues
- Hypervigilance
- Trouble concentrating
- Self-blame/shame
- Dissociation
- Feeling detached/numb
- Depression/hopelessness
- Anger
- Loss of identity
- Flashbacks
- Feeling stigmatized or marked
- Self-injury
- Drug/alcohol use
- Loss of important beliefs
- Suicidal thoughts or attempts

(Ferencik & Ramirez-Hammond, 2016)




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## Impacts: Influential Factors

- How serious and how frequent is/was the violence or threat?
- Was the child physically hurt or put in danger?
- What is the child's relationship with the victim and abuser?
- How old is the child?
- What other stress is going on in the child's life?
- What positive activities and relationships are in the child's life?
- How does the child usually cope with problems?

(National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2013)




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## Impacts: Culture

- Some components of trauma response are common across diverse cultural backgrounds. Other components vary by culture.
- Everyone defines trauma in different ways and use different expressions to describe their experiences.
- Be aware of how your own culture and background can influence your perceptions of different trauma responses.
- Cultural beliefs and values can contribute to strength and resilience in the face of trauma or can reinforce the child's trauma-related distortions.

(NCTSN, 2013)




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**FIRST impressions...**  
**EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE and**  
**A Child's Developing Brain**

VIDEO:  
**FIRST IMPRESSIONS:  
 EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE  
 AND A CHILD'S DEVELOPING BRAIN**  
 (California Attorney General's Office & Crime and Violence Prevention Center, 2008)

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**PROMISING FUTURES**  
**PROMOTING RESILIENCY**  
 among children and youth experiencing domestic violence

Almost 30 million American children will be exposed to family violence by the time they are 17 years old. Kids who are exposed to violence are affected in different ways and not all are traumatized or permanently harmed. Protective factors can promote resiliency, help children and youth heal, and support prevention efforts. Research indicates that the #1 protective factor in helping children heal from the experience is the presence of a consistent, supportive, and loving adult—most often their mother.<sup>11</sup>

PROTECTIVE FACTORS THAT PROMOTE RESILIENCY

| INDIVIDUAL  | FAMILY  | COMMUNITY   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Temperament</b><br>Ability to cope with stress in a healthy manner<br><b>Understanding</b><br>Ability to understand and process past experiences<br><b>History</b><br>Opportunity to experience a supportive environment<br><b>Conflict Resolution</b><br>Development of conflict resolution & negotiation skills<br><b>Expression</b><br>Opportunity to express feelings, thoughts, and needs<br><b>Culture</b><br>Ability to identify and utilize cultural strengths | <b>Role Models</b><br>Adult role models/mentors<br><b>Supportive Relationships</b><br>Positive relationships with family and friends<br><b>Health</b><br>Healthy diet/exercise<br><b>Networks</b><br>Supportive family members and friends<br><b>Stability</b><br>Stable living environment | <b>Access to Services</b><br>Access to mental health services<br><b>School</b><br>Positive school climate and supports<br><b>Mentors</b><br>Paid mentors & mentors-in-training<br><b>Neighborhood Cohesion</b><br>Safe & connected neighborhood |

Get started at [www.PromisingFuturesWithoutViolence.org](http://www.PromisingFuturesWithoutViolence.org)  
 National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233 (SAFE)  
 National Dating Abuse Helpline: 1-888-331-9474 or text "loveis" to 77854

**FUTURES WITHOUT VIOLENCE**

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## Actions of the Protective Parent




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### Protective Strategies

Note: This is not an exhaustive list or a "checklist" of things the survivor needs to do

- Reaching out for help
- Staying active in children's lives (school, etc.)
- Leaving the relationship
- Staying in the relationship (Stark, 1999)
- Seeking legal assistance
- Maintaining family traditions


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
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### Protective Strategies

Note: This is not an exhaustive list or a "checklist" of things the survivor needs to do

- Maintaining children's routines
- Maintaining medical appointments
- Trying to find help for the abuser
- Working with DV/SA advocacy program
- Seeking safe shelter


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## Fostering Resiliencies, cont'd

- **Positive Parenting**
  - 1. Model good behavior
  - 2. Be clear about what it is you want them to do
  - 3. Praise good behavior
  - 4. Pay attention to language you use during arguments
  - 5. Explain the reasoning behind your request
  - 6. Stay calm when disciplining
  - 7. Offer choices
  - 8. Be reasonable and realistic
  - 9. Discuss adult matters with adults
  - 10. Set aside time for just you and your child




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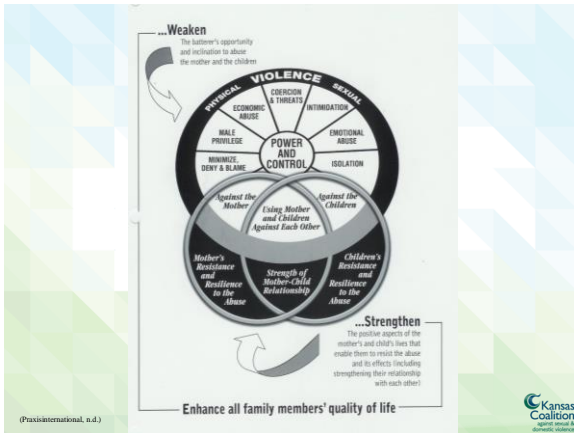
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## How to Talk, What to Listen For

- When your child is ready, talk with them about their feelings.
- Accept that your child may not want to talk right away.
- Show your child understanding and validate their feelings.
- Recognize that your child may be angry at you and inappropriately act out towards you.
- Remind your child how much you love them.



(NCTSN, 2013)

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## How to Talk, What to Listen For

- Let your child know the abuse or violence is and was not their fault.
- Let your child know you want them to be safe.
- Let your child know that violence is not okay (e.g., hitting, kicking, name-calling, slapping).
- Set limits and boundaries, if your child violently acts out, and reach out to others if you need help.
  - Speak with an advocate about positive ways to parent.
  - Set up advocacy services, counseling, or therapy.



(NCTSN, 2013)

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## How to Talk, What to Listen For

- Conversations with children can't always be planned—sometimes they just happen.
- The following tips will help you make the most of the conversation whether it's planned or spontaneous:
  - Explore your own feelings.
    - Your thoughts and feelings give children important information about how they should respond to their circumstances.
  - Take the lead.
    - When you open the conversation, you're telling your child it is safe to talk and that s/he doesn't have to be alone with his/her thoughts and worries.
  - Open with messages of support, like "I care about you and I will listen to you."

(NCTSN, 2013)




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### How to Talk, What to Listen For

- Ask what your child saw or heard or already knows.
- Support and acknowledge your children’s feelings, experiences, and their version of the story.
- Expect that your children will know more than you think, no matter how young they are.
  - If they are too young to get what’s going on, they may fill in the gaps with their imaginations and end up worrying about something that’s worse than reality.
- Let your child know it is always OK to ask you questions.
- Talk to your children in a way that’s right for their ages.
  - Use words that you know they understand.
  - Be careful not to talk about adult concerns or at an adult’s level of understanding.

(NCTSN, 2013)




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### How to Talk, What to Listen For

- If your child asks a question you’re not ready to answer, you can say, “That’s a really important question. I need some time to think about it and then we can talk again.”
- Monitor your own feelings.
  - A calm tone helps to convey a sense of security.
- Be alert to signs that your child is ready to end the conversation.
  - Children who have heard enough may get restless or silly, stop listening, or stop asking questions.
- Have other adults for your own support so your children are not your only support system.
- Be mindful of the age of your child.
  - For younger children, sharing too much of your worries or fears may make them more worried or upset.

(NCTSN, 2013)




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### How to Talk, What to Listen For: Helpful Messages

- Violence isn’t OK.
- It isn’t your fault.
- I will do everything I can to help you be safe.
- It’s not your job to fix what is wrong in the family.
- I want you to tell me how you feel. It’s important, and I can handle it.
- It’s OK to have mixed feelings about either or both of your parents.



(NCTSN, 2013)




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## Our Mailbox

Website: <http://www.femanvi.org/en/our-mailbox/>




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## Safety First

- The best way to keep children safe is to keep the protective parent safe.
- If the threat of violence is still present, talk with children about a plan for safety, including practice using the plan.
- Teach them not to get in the middle of an adult fight or place themselves in danger.
- If the danger is in the past, reassure children that they are now safe. Help them understand that their fears are connected to scary events from the past.

(NCTSN, 2013)




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## Safety First

### IMPORTANT!

If you feel unsafe now and need help for yourself, your family, or someone else in a domestic crisis, contact

- 911 for emergency police assistance
- The National Domestic Violence Hotline. Advocates are available to intervene in a crisis, help with safety planning, and provide referrals to agencies in all 50 states. Call the confidential hotline at 1-800-799-7233 or go to [www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org)
- Your local child protective services have resources for you if your children are in danger.

### STEPS TO PLAN FOR SAFETY: WHAT CHILDREN AND TEENS SHOULD KNOW

- How to call 911 in an emergency
- Names and phone numbers of trusted relatives, neighbors, or friends they can call or go to for help, day or night
- Hiding places and exits in the home
- To stay out of the middle of their parents' fights or arguments
- An agreed upon safety word, phrase, or gesture that can be used in times of danger to signal the use of your safety steps

(NCTSN, 2013)




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### What can we do?

- Encourage kids to ask questions—they may need help sorting out misunderstandings, like the belief that they are at fault for domestic violence, or responsible for fixing the family.
- Help them not to dwell on their worries and upset feelings. Instead help them focus on positive thoughts—a happy memory, a cuddly pet, or an activity they are good at.
- Encourage them to turn to a trusted adult—a teacher, a school counselor, a coach, a church leader—if they need someone else to talk to.

(NCTSN, 2013)




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### What can we do: Play!!

- **Play helps children feel:**
  - Connected to their parent(s)
  - More secure
  - Important
  - Worthy
  - Loved
- **Is part of healthy development**
- **Offers stability in an otherwise unstable or unpredictable time**
- **If a child is mimicking abuse they have witnessed:**
  - Use the moment to talk about and validate the child's feelings and worries.
  - For example, "It seems like you're thinking about what happened between Mommy and Daddy."



(NCTSN, 2013)




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### When to Seek Out Services

- **Children may have behaviors and mood changes that are normal after an upsetting event.**
  - Usually these changes start to go away once the stress in the home has gone down and the child feels safe again.
  - If the changes persist or otherwise worry you, be aware that there are people and places you can turn to for advice and help.
- **Seek out guidance if:**
  - Your child's behavior changes don't go away, or they get worse.
  - Your child is unusually sad, angry, or withdrawn.
  - You are concerned that your child may harm himself or others.
  - You are overwhelmed by your child's behavior.
  - The violence in the home has been extreme.

(NCTSN, 2013)




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## Services/Resources Available

- **Your Local Domestic Violence Program**
  - Personal Advocacy for direct and secondary victims
  - Support Groups
  - Assistance with navigating systems
  - Connection to other resources
- **Mental Health Providers Knowledgeable on DV**
  - Individual, group and family counseling
  - Case management services
- **Family Practitioner or Pediatrician**
- **Family members**
- **Close Friends**
- **Batterer's Intervention Programs (BIPs) for the abusive parent**



(NCTSN, 2013)

Kansas  
Coalition  
on  
Child Abuse &  
Neglect

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Healing from Trauma

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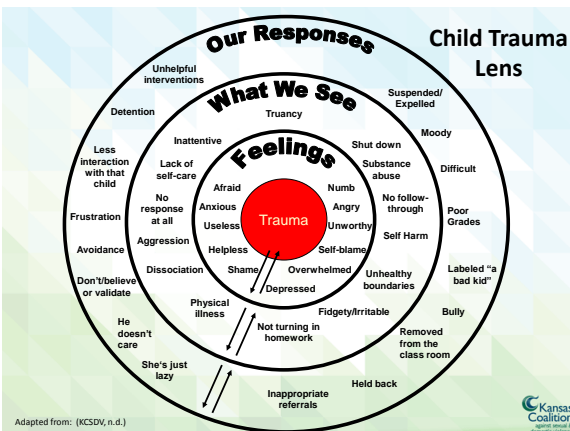
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## What are Triggers?

- Triggering occurs when a person is flooded with sensory memories of a traumatic event.
- A person can be triggered by sights, sounds, smells and even interactions with other people.
- Triggers can happen days, weeks, months or even years after a traumatic event.

(Ferencik & Ramirez-Hammond, 2016)




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## Trigger Plan

We can help children to **create a plan** to address triggers or flashbacks before they occur. This can help the child gain a **sense of control** over the trigger, or flashback and begin to **feel safe, again**. (Ferencik & Ramirez-Hammond, 2016)




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## Coping Strategies

- Humor
- Spirituality
- Artwork
- Listen to or create music
- Journal Writing
- Talk about the traumatic experience with safe people
- Physical exercises (bicycling, aerobics, walking)
- Relaxation exercises (yoga, stretching)
- Education about basic physiological reactions to trauma
- Prayer or Meditation
- Keep objects around that make you feel safe

(Ferencik & Ramirez-Hammond, 2016)




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### Coping Strategies, cont'd

- **Ground and bring yourself back to the present**
  - Stamp your feet, grind them on the ground to remind you where you are
  - Look around the room, notice the colors and specific details
  - Look at a clock or calendar
  - Listen to the sounds around you
  - Feel your body
    - The boundary of your skin, clothes, the chair or floor that is supporting you.
  - Snap an elastic band
    - That feeling is in the now, what you are re-experiencing was in the past.



(Laskey, 2011)

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### Coping Strategies, cont'd

- Hold ice in your hand until it melts
- Squeeze a rubber ball very hard
- Stand under a hot shower
- Listen to very loud music
- Leave the situation either physically, or mentally
- Build an imaginary wall between you and the situation



(Laskey, 2011)

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### Coping Strategies, cont'd

- **Focus on your breathe**
  - Practice slowing your breathing down
  - Breathe down to your diaphragm
  - Count to 5 as you breathe in and out
- **Recognize your physical boundary**
  - If you have lost a sense of where you end and the world begins rub your body so you can feel the edges of it, the boundary of you.
  - Wrap yourself in a blanket and feel it around you



(Laskey, 2011)

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# Elmo Says Breathe

(Sesame Street, 2012)



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZbzD0pyIA>



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“The emotional recovery of children who have been exposed to domestic violence appears to depend on the quality of their relationship with the non-battering parent more than on any other single factor.”

- Bancroft & Silverman, 2012



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## Resources

- Local domestic violence & sexual assault programs  
– <http://www.kcsdv.org/find-help.html>
- KCSDV  
– [www.kcsdv.org](http://www.kcsdv.org)
- Kansas Crisis Hotline  
– 1-888-END ABUSE (1-888-363-2287)
- National Domestic Violence Hotline  
– 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)  
– <http://www.thehotline.org/>
- Promising Futures- Futures Without Violence  
– <https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/children-youth-teens/promisingfutures/>
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network  
– <http://www.nctsn.org/>  
– [Children and Domestic Violence Fact Sheet Series \(2015\)](#)



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## Resources for LGBTQ

- **The Network La Red**  
– <http://tnlr.org/en/about-us/>
- **The Northwest Network of Bi, Trans, Lesbian and Gay Survivors of Abuse**  
– <http://www.nwnetwork.org/>
- **The National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs**  
– <https://avp.org/ncavp/>
- **FORGE**  
– <http://forge-forward.org/>
- **The Trevor Project**  
– Crisis Hotline for LGBTQ Youth: 866-488-7396  
– <http://www.thetrevorproject.org/>




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## Questions?




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## Contact Information

Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence  
634 SW Harrison  
Topeka, KS 66603  
[www.kcsdv.org](http://www.kcsdv.org)  
785-232-9784  
[coalition@kcsdv.org](mailto:coalition@kcsdv.org)

Kristina Scott, LMSW  
[kscott@kcsdv.org](mailto:kscott@kcsdv.org)

Bre Kirkhart, BSW  
[bkirkhart@kcsdv.org](mailto:bkirkhart@kcsdv.org)




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### KCSDV Connectedness: Awareness and Educational Opportunities

-  <https://www.facebook.com/KCSDV>
-  <https://twitter.com/kcsdv>
-  <https://www.linkedin.com/company/kcsdv>
-  [www.instagram.com/kcsdv](http://www.instagram.com/kcsdv)
-  [www.youtube.com/kcsdv](http://www.youtube.com/kcsdv)

**NATIONAL STALKING  
AWARENESS MONTH**  
JANUARY

**TEEN DATING  
VIOLENCE  
AWARENESS MONTH**

April is  
**Sexual Assault**  
Awareness Month

October is  
**Domestic Violence**  
Awareness Month



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