

**Empowered Families Kansas Project 2020 Webinar Series: Part 3 of 4**

**Survivors of Domestic Violence and Their Children:  
Promoting the Parent/Child Bond**



Presented by Kristina Scott, LMSW, Child Welfare Project Coordinator  
Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence



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**Learning Objectives:**

After viewing this webinar participants will be able to:

1. Describe how promoting the parent/child bond can increase resilience with children exposed to domestic violence.
2. Describe at least 2 interventions to increase communication between non-abusive parents and their children.
3. Describe at least 2 strategies to rebuild, build, and strengthen the bond between non-abusive parents and their children.
4. Utilize the Domestic Violence Manual for Child Welfare Professionals as a tool to promote the parent/child bond between non-abusive parents and their children.



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### Introductions



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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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### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROTECTIVE FACTORS



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**SAFER AND MORE STABLE CONDITIONS**

**Influenced By:**

- Personal histories
- Cultural norms
- Adverse experiences
- Oppression
- Availability and accessibility of resources
- Change of circumstances
- Behavior of the abusive partner

**Stable Conditions Include:**

- Housing
- Employment
- Finances
- Transportation
- Child Care
- Education
- Interpersonal Reactions

(QIC DV in CW, 2019)

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**SAFER AND MORE STABLE CONDITIONS**

**Strategies for the Professional**

- Take time to understand what is safe for this specific family and circumstances.
- Develop personalized and flexible safety plans in partnership with the protective parent and children.
- Revisit and modify safety plans regularly and as circumstances change.
- Help parents secure resources to address stressors.
- Utilize your local Domestic Violence Agency to assist in safety planning for families, as well as for the worker.

(QIC DV in CW, 2019)

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**Creating Safe Spaces for Parents and Children**



- Allow parents and children to make decisions about how they will participate, when possible
- Remind parents and children that some of these activities such as, art and writing, can bring up emotions and memories
- Let parents and children know they can stop activities at any time
- Ask parents and children what they do to cope when they have a strong emotional reaction to something
- Support parents by anticipating and talking through difficult topics that may arise in their children's projects
- Support parents to hear and respect a diversity of feelings from their children.
- Implement a calming activity to end the meeting.

(Vermont Network Against Domestic & Sexual Violence, 2013)

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**SOCIAL, CULTURAL, AND SPIRITUAL CONNECTIONS**

**Can provide:**

- Concrete support
- Affiliative support.
- Emotional support
- Informational support
- Cultural support
- Spiritual support

- Increase children's self-confidence and self-esteem
- Foster resilience through social connections
- More likely to seek out resources
- Fosters a more optimistic view of the future
- Helps buffer against the negative effects of stress
- Promotes nurturing parenting behaviors that promote attachment
- Are fundamental to healthy brain development in children
- Promote language and social skills in children

(QIC DV in CW, 2019)

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**SOCIAL, CULTURAL, AND SPIRITUAL CONNECTIONS**

**Strategies for the Professional**

- Help them identify people they trust
- Identify how the family likes to spend time and create opportunities for them to do so
- Helping survivors connect safely to services and supports
- Engage family members and friends with education and resources
- Help children stay safely maintained with positive supports
- Educating those in the community about how to be an ally
- Create a plan for children to maintain contact with parents outside of supervised visitation

(QIC DV in CW, 2019)

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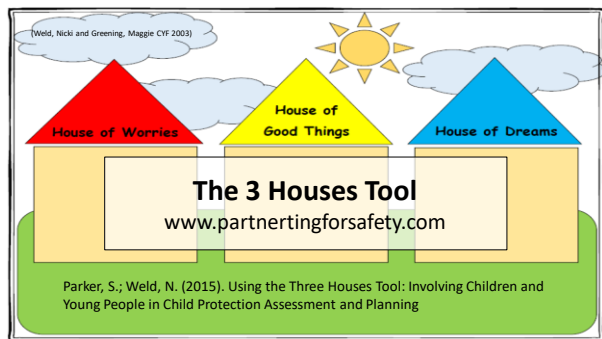
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MANUAL Section 6: Family Case Plans Promoting the Parent Child Bond Page 66

**HOUSE OF WORRIES**

- What's not safe in your home?
- What don't you like?
- What scares you?
- What are you worried about in your home?
- What activities are happening?

**HOUSE OF GOOD THINGS**

- Who is in the house that makes you feel safe?
- Who or what makes you happy in your house?
- What do you like about your House of Good Things?
- What activities are happening?

**HOUSE OF DREAMS**

- What would it look like if all your "House of Worries" were gone?
- Who is in the house?
- What activities are happening?
- What do you want to happen?
- What are your hopes for your house?

(KCSOV, 2018)

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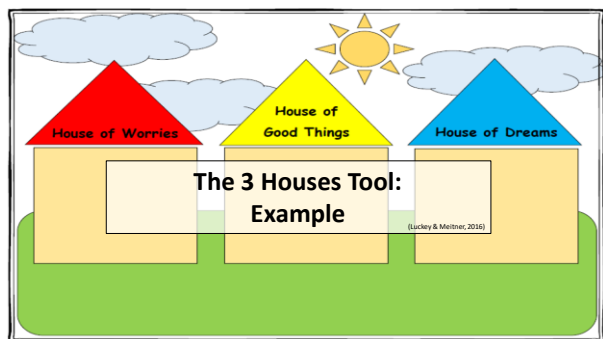
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**SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL ABILITIES**

- Expressing negative emotions in ways that don't cause harm (to self or others)
- Developing healthy relationships and interactions with others
- Considering the consequences of one's thoughts, emotions, and behavior before acting
- Planning and carrying out purposeful actions
- Persevering when first attempts are not successful
- Developing a sense of right and wrong.

(QIC DV in CW, 2019)

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**SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL ABILITIES**

**Strategies for the Professional**

- Identifying and recognizing emotions
- Connecting emotional states to behaviors or circumstances
- Normalizing and validating their emotions and experiences
- Tools to help recognize each other's stress responses and how to respond
- Calming and relaxation techniques
- Being transparent about what the family can expect and how services work
- Partner with the family
- Pacing casework and prioritizing goals
- Celebrating Accomplishments!!

(CIC DV in CW, 2019)

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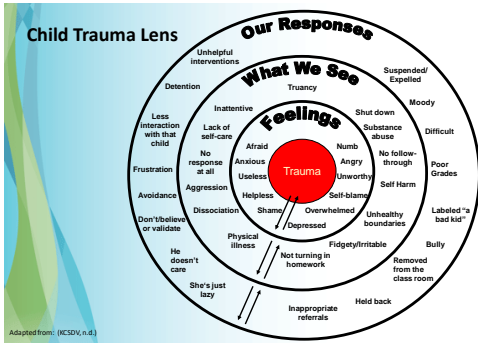
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Adapted from: (ICSDV, n.d.)

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Discipline Techniques by Development Stages		
Young Children (Ages 3-5)	Emerging Children (Ages 6-12)	Adolescent (Ages 13-18)
<p><b>Role Modeling</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children learn by watching adults. At this age, showing children how to act and how to follow rules is crucial for learning.</li> <li>Bring a limit children with respect and kindness, they will learn positive behaviors.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Role Modeling</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are your child's greatest role model. Balance and treat others, including your child, the way you expect them to behave and treat others.</li> <li>Use play social skills and problem-solving for greater learning.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Role Modeling</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Although you've been busy and engage with you like he or she did as a child, what you do and say is still important.</li> <li>Help your teenager manage self-control by modeling control of your own emotions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Rules/Limits</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rules and expectations should be clear, simple, and enforced consistently by adults through consequences. This helps young children feel secure. For example, if you say, "You will have to get out of the bath if you keep splashing," make sure you follow through.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Rules/Limits</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish an end time for a negative consequence, such as loss of TV time for 2 days.</li> <li>Be consistent but also be flexible and allow for independent choice making when possible.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Rules/Limits</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set up rules for things such as homework, chores, time with friends, curfew, and driving and discuss them with your teenager.</li> <li>Give your teen control over some things, which will help to limit the number of power struggles and will ensure your teen respects your decisions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Encouragement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discipline is also about recognizing good behavior. Give praise to reward good behavior.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Encouragement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide your child with positive attention daily, including quality time spent just with him or her.</li> <li>Don't expect perfection. Praise their efforts so they know they are doing well and don't have to be perfect.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Encouragement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guide your teen in making decisions and solve problems with them. Ask for their input and share the best solution together.</li> <li>Encourage them to make their own choices while giving them their support.</li> </ul>
<p><b>No Physical Punishment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Never call your child names or hit them. You will teach them that this type of behavior is acceptable.</li> <li>Use physical contact and a calm tone when giving a direction, warning, or when enforcing a consequence.</li> </ul>	<p><b>No Physical Punishment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoid negative methods of behavior correction, such as sarcasm, teasing, verbal abuse, or physical punishment.</li> <li>As they do, let help children learn. Set up a behavior plan or chart to address negative behaviors. At this age, children are eager to work toward goals.</li> <li>Give praise and acknowledge good choices.</li> </ul>	<p><b>No Physical Punishment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When your teen breaks a rule, take away privileges such as screen time or time with friends and discuss why these consequences have occurred.</li> <li>Communicate with them about what they need to do to earn their privileges back.</li> </ul>

(CWIG, 2018)

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### Positive Parenting Techniques

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 used
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



(KCSO, 2018)

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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**

(NCTSN, 2013)

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### Additional Community Resources



- Child Advocacy Centers
- Child Visitation and Exchange Centers
- Substance Abuse Treatment Providers
- Employment Services
- Housing Assistance
- Salvation Army
- United Way
- Health Department
- Disabilities Organizations
- Legal Services
- Child Development Centers
- Attorneys knowledgeable about domestic violence
- Children and Youth Programs such as Big Brother's Big Sisters or Boys and Girls of America
- Home Visitation Programs
- Batterer's Intervention Program Providers

(KCD5V, 2018)

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### NURTURING PARENT-CHILD INTERACTIONS

- Promote a positive bond by promoting positive interactions
- Some parents may struggle with how to show love to their child
- Benefits for both the parent and the child
- Helps create a sustained sense of trust, and love
- Can buffer children from impacts of stress and trauma
- Can enhance parent's self-efficacy or belief they can parent well

(OJC DV in CW, 2019)

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### Strategies for the Professional



### NURTURING PARENT-CHILD INTERACTIONS

- Encourage parents to practice:
  - Active Listening
  - Expressing interests in their children's thoughts, feelings and activities
  - Establishing a positive routine
  - Soothing and comforting their children during stressful times
  - Creating a narrative
  - Advocating for their children in school and healthcare settings
- Help the parent and child talk together about the impact of DV in an age and developmentally appropriate way
- Acknowledge and praise positive interactions observed
- Preparing for supervised visits
- Providing resources and opportunities for the parent and child to just have fun!

(OJC DV in CW, 2019)

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### Strategies for Professionals, cont'd

- How do we start with where the parent is at?
  - Be attuned to non-verbal cues
  - Ask open-ended questions
  - Follow the parent's lead
  - Use Empathetic Inquiry
  - Practice Mindful Awareness and Self-Regulation
  - Engage in Collaborative Exploration
  - Strengthen Attunement and Responsive Parenting
  - Enhance capacity for Reflective Parenting

(Blumenfeld, 2015)

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### Strategies for Professionals, cont'd

- How can we help support parents and children to strengthen their bonds with each other?
- How can I use this task to better support the parent-child relationship?
- Do I routinely observe parenting strengths?
- What do I identify as positive, or think is working well, in the parent/child relationships I see?
- Am I able to share my observations directly with parents? How often?
- When I do share my observations about strengths with parents, what effect does this have on them?



(Blumenfeld, 2015)

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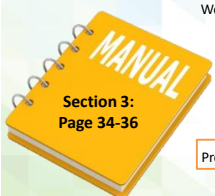
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### Understanding the Non-abusive Parent's Strengths

Worker should gather the following information and be able to explain how the non-abusive parent has:



Section 3:  
Page 34-36

- Promoted the **physical and emotional safety** of her children.
- Promoted the **wellbeing** of her children.
- Promoted a **nurturing and stable environment** for her children.
- Promoted her children's **healing form trauma**.



(Mandel, 2017)

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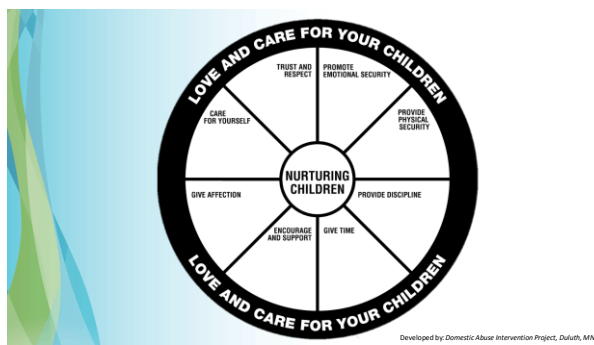
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Developed by Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, Duluth, MN

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Children and Domestic Violence for Parents Fact Sheet Series



<https://www.nctsn.org/resources/children-and-domestic-violence-parents-fact-sheet-series>

(NCTSN, 2015)

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### The Importance of 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."



(NCTSA, 2013)

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

(Lapierre, 2016)

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- A Growth Mindset
- Current situation is not permanent
- Develop a sense of purpose
- Take positive actions and make good choices
- Believe change is possible
- Evidence of their ability to face adversity

(QIC DV in CW, 2019)

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### Strategies for the Professional



- Solution-focused questions
- Recognize and validate safety and protective strategies
- Frame domestic violence in the context of trauma
- Identify and appreciate strengths
- Collaborative approach
- Understanding family, cultural, and spiritual beliefs
- Education on trauma and trauma responses
- Documenting positive changes observed



(OIG DV in CW, 2019)

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### Fostering Resiliency in Children



- Contributing factors include:
  - Responses from adults that are supportive and don't hold the survivor responsible.
  - Close relationships with trustworthy adults.
  - Ability to escape self-blame.
  - Good peer relationships.
  - Development of talents and interests (such as athletic, scholastic, or artistic)

- 10 Tips for Caregivers**
1. Treat them with respect.
  2. Accept them for who they are.
  3. Focus on strengths.
  4. Teach and practice empathy.
  5. Show flexibility.
  6. Show them undivided attention.
  7. Let mistakes be learning experiences.
  8. Teach problem-solving and decision-making skills.
  9. Use discipline to teach.
  10. Let them help.

(KCSOV, 2010)



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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.<sup>1</sup> 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>2</sup>

#### PROTECTIVE FACTORS THAT PROMOTE RESILIENCY

INDIVIDUAL		FAMILY		COMMUNITY	
<b>Temperament</b> How a child experiences and reacts to the world	<b>Relationships</b> Having a strong, positive relationship with a caregiver	<b>Role Models</b> Adults who model healthy relationships	<b>Supportive Relationships</b> Positive relationships with family and friends	<b>Access to Services</b> Having access to mental health, family support, and other services	<b>School</b> Positive relationships with teachers and staff
<b>Understanding</b> Having a clear understanding of one's own emotions and the emotions of others	<b>Expression</b> Having a safe and healthy way to express emotions	<b>Health</b> Having good physical and mental health	<b>Stability</b> Having a stable and safe home environment	<b>Neighbors</b> Having a supportive and caring neighborhood	<b>Neighborhood Cohesion</b> Having a strong sense of community and belonging
<b>Restory</b> Overcoming negative experiences and creating a new narrative	<b>Conflict Resolution</b> Having skills to resolve conflicts peacefully	<b>Networks</b> Having a strong support network of family, friends, and community			
<b>Culture</b> Having a strong sense of cultural identity and pride					

Get started at [www.PromisingFuturesWithoutViolence.org](http://www.PromisingFuturesWithoutViolence.org)  
 National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233 (SAFE)  
 National Dating Abuse Helpline: 1-866-331-9474 or text "loveis" to 77554

Promising Futures: Best Practices for Supporting Children, Youth & Families in Families Experiencing Domestic Violence



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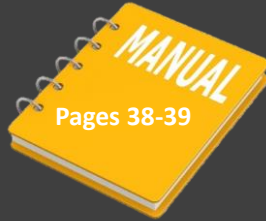
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### Section 3: Getting to Know the Family

Working with the Children: Promoting Resilience

Supporting the Non-Abusive Parent/Child Relationship



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### Activities to Foster Resilience

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### Family Story Time

- Safe way to explore feelings and experiences
- Normalizes their experiences
- Makes children feel less alone
- Can stimulate discussion about a difficult topic
- Help frame negative emotions with limits and boundaries
- Can build hope
- Can aid in the healing process



(Nelson, 2014)



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### Fostering Resilience in the Protective Parent's Words

- Family Routines/Rituals
  - Bedtime and Morning Routines
- Activities based on child's interests
- Activities based on child's age
- Verbalizing their love for their children
- One-on-one time with each child
- Communicating through art
- Parent Self-Care



#### Creating a Foundation of Love

(Nelson, 2014)



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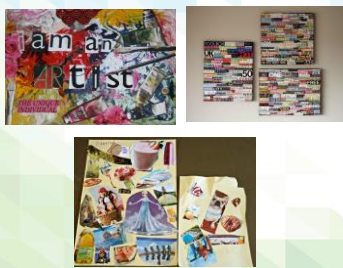
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### All About Me Collage



### Superhero



(Vermont Network Against Domestic & Sexual Violence, 2013)



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### Journaling



### Altered Books



### Found Poetry



(Vermont Network Against Domestic & Sexual Violence, 2013)



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### Rituals and Routines


#### Bedtime Beads

#### "Cooking & Communication"

(Domestic Network Against Domestic & Sexual Violence, 2013)



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### Activities to Foster Resilience

Please, Share  
Your Examples!

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### Resources

- **A Guide for Engaging & Supporting Parents Affected by Domestic Violence**
  - National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma and Mental Health
- **Write It Out: Using Words and Art to Strengthen and Heal Family Bonds**
  - Futures Without Violence
- **Parenting a Child Who Has Experienced Abuse and Neglect**
  - Child Welfare Information Gateway
- **Protective Factors for Survivors of Domestic Violence Issue Brief.**
  - QIC Domestic Violence in Child Welfare

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### Resources, cont'd

- Using the Three Houses Tool: Involving Children and Young People in Child Protection Assessment and Planning
  - Partnering for Safety
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network
  - <https://www.nctsn.org/>
- Promising Futures
  - <http://promising.futureswithoutviolence.org/>
- Child Welfare Information Gateway
  - <https://www.childwelfare.gov/>



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### Resources for LGBTQ

- The Network La Red
  - <http://nlr.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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Empowered Families Kansas Project 2020 Webinar Series

Only 1 webinar left!! Register now at the KCSDV website! [kcsdv.org](http://kcsdv.org)

Part 4: Working with Families Experiencing Domestic Violence: What Child Welfare Professionals can do to Hold Abusive Parents Accountable

- May 13: 10-11:30am

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**Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence**  
[www.kcsdv.org](http://www.kcsdv.org)  
 785-232-9784  
[coalition@kcsdv.org](mailto:coalition@kcsdv.org)



Kristina Scott, LMSW  
 KCSDV Child Welfare Project Coordinator  
 785-232-9784 ext. 336  
[kscott@kcsdv.org](mailto:kscott@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)


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