

WHERE TO FIND HELP

Portland Area Services

Portland Police Department
874-8519=Victim/Witness Advocate

**Community Policing Centers
(neighborhood resources)**

Parkside: 756-8137 Munjoy Hill 756-8135
Midtown: 772-1371 West End 780-0495
Portland Housing: 773-4753

Sweetser

1-800-434-3000 (Portland)
Crisis Intervention Program

Ingraham Crisis Response

774-HELP (Cumberland County)
direct access to crisis intervention and support
www.ingraham.org

Family Crisis Services

874-1973, 1-800-537-6066 (TTY)
domestic violence support– crisis, shelter, & referrals
www.familycrisis.org

**Sexual Assault Response Services of Southern
Maine**

1-800-313-9900, 1-888- 458-5599 (TTY)
advocacy and support for victims of sexual assault
www.sarsonline.org

Center for Grieving Children

775-5216
helps children cope w/ death and dying
www.cgcmaine.org

Community Counseling Services

874-1030, 874-1043 (TTY)
counseling and referral services
www.commcc.org

Kids Legal Aid of Maine

1-866-624-7787, 207- 828-2308 (TTY)
legal services for low-income Maine children
www.kidslegalaid.org

Maine Health & Human Services

1-800-452-1999, 1-800-963-9490 (TTY)
to report child abuse or neglect

State-wide Resource Referral

211
For information & referral to crisis response services

WHEN TO LOOK FOR HELP

- * If a child is physically hurting his/herself or others
- * If a child is hurting animals
- * If a child's parent , or the child, has been the victim of violence
- * If a child's problem has gone on for 3-4 months with no change
- * If a child shows five or more of the behaviors listed in this brochure

If you are worried about a child you know, remember that you play a very important role. Call for help.



WHO TO GO TO FOR HELP

- * Someone at your child's school
- * Clergy
- * Health Care Providers
- * Counselors



If the person you talk to does not know how to help, try someone else or call one of the programs listed on the back page.

TIPS FOR PARENTS AND OTHER CAREGIVERS

Raising our Children in a Violent World



Support through Difficult Times

**Violence Intervention Partnership
Children Who Witness Violence
Collaborative**

Adapted from Child Witness to Violence
Project-Boston Medical Center, Boston, MA

We all Want the Best for Our Children

However, many things may interfere with the way children grow, learn and behave. Some are obvious such as the death of a loved one. Others are less clear, such as growing up with violence at home or in the community.

Although we think that children are not aware of violence, they usually see and hear more than we believe they do.

“I heard a loud noise and I thought it was a monster, but it wasn't. It was my Daddy. He makes loud monster noises.”

It is helpful to listen carefully to children's worries and let them know that adults are doing everything possible to keep them safe.

“After what happened in my neighborhood, I don't go outside anymore. I'm too scared.”

Children often communicate difficult feelings with their actions rather than words.

“A three year old boy loves to play with animals at his pre-school. Teachers report that the story he plays over and over again is big animals violently assaulting the smaller animals.”

What You May See if a Child is Having Trouble

- * Sleep troubles, nightmares, fear of falling asleep
- * Headaches, stomach aches, aches and pains (somatic symptoms)
- * Increased aggressive behavior and angry feelings
- * A very high activity level (hyperactivity)
- * Constant worry about possible danger (hypervigilance)
- * Loss of skills learned earlier (such as toilet training, naming colors, math facts, etc.)
- * Withdrawing from friends and activities
- * Not showing feelings about anything (emotional numbing)
- * Worrying a lot about the safety of loved ones
- * Having trouble concentrating
- * Repetitive play about the violent event

These are some of the problems that might show up at home, school or another familiar setting when a child sees or hears violence. These same problems can also come up because of other things. If a child you know has several of these problems, witnessing violence may be one of the causes.



Supporting Children

- * Healing begins with relationships. A helpful, supportive adult is the most powerful tool that we have to help children feel safe.
- * Give children permission to tell their stories. It helps children to be able to talk about the violence in their lives with trusted adults.
- * Give clear, simple explanations about the scary events. Young children think differently than adults. They do not really understand the true causes of violence and will often blame themselves.
- * Help children know what to expect. Have rules and routines so that children can predict what will come next.
- * Build self-esteem in children. Children who live with violence need daily reminders that they are lovable, competent and important.
- * Teach alternatives to violence. Help children learn to solve problems and play in non-violent ways.
- * Take care of your own physical and emotional needs. Find someone to talk to in a safe, confidential setting about your own worries.