

# After A Child Is Exposed To **VIOLENCE**



**When your child is repeatedly exposed to violence**, either as a victim or as a witness, he or she faces a greater risk of having physical, emotional and intellectual challenges.

The type of violence that can do this includes sexual or physical abuse and neglect. Also, seeing or hearing violent acts in the home, school or neighborhood causes suffering, too.

This exposure impacts your child in serious ways and requires your love, support and guidance.

There are **three stages** your child may experience. *Your son or daughter may feel:*

## **1. Numb**

*Symptoms can include shock, anger, sorrow, guilt, and loss of appetite.*

### **WHAT YOU CAN DO :::::**

Help your child understand he or she is not responsible for what happened. Respect the child's feelings. Listen without judgment. Help your child move through this first stage with unconditional support and possibly professional help, such as counseling.

## **2. Disorganized**

*Symptoms can include depression, fatigue, anger, lack of focus and sleep difficulties.*

### **WHAT YOU CAN DO :::::**

Encourage your child to talk about his or her feelings. Provide stress-free distractions. Make sure your child feels loved and safe. Provide support, including professional services, to help your child move to the next stage.

## **3. Focused**

*Symptoms can include a better mood, improved appetite and increased energy.*

### **WHAT YOU CAN DO :::::**

Encourage your child to play and engage in other activities. Help your child see the emotional journey taken.

## **VIOLENCE HURTS.**

**Learn how to help guide your child on the road to recovery.**



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1-800-552-7096 Virginia Child Abuse Hotline (language line available)

800-Children (800-244-5373) Parent Helpline