

For Children

What should you NOT do if your Mom and Dad fight?

- You should not try to stop the fight....you may get seriously hurt.
- You should not feel that you are responsible for your parents fighting....it is **NOT** your fault.

What SHOULD you do if Mom and Dad fight?

- You should talk to another adult ...someone you trust, like a grandparent or other relative, or a teacher or pastor. Tell them how it is upsetting you to see your Mom and Dad fight. Tell them if it happens often.
- Do not try to break up the fight... you might get hurt.
- Stay in your room or go to a neighbour's house to be safe.

Things to remember.

- Violence is NOT okay.
 - It's not okay for parents to fight.
 - It's not your fault.
 - You deserve to be safe.
- If you are worried about your Mom and Dad fighting, call:

Crisis Centre on 328-0922

All children deserve to be given:

Trust and Respect

Children should be encouraged to talk about their feelings and should be listened to carefully.

Physical Security

Children deserve to be nurtured, clothed, given an education and kept safe by their parents.

Discipline

Children need to be given rules appropriate to their age. Parents should be consistent in disciplining their children.

Time

Children should have their parents' interest in their lives, whether at home, school or socially.

Encouragement and Support

Children should be encouraged in any activity they undertake, sports, classes at school, etc.

Affection

Children should be shown love and affection

Care for Yourself

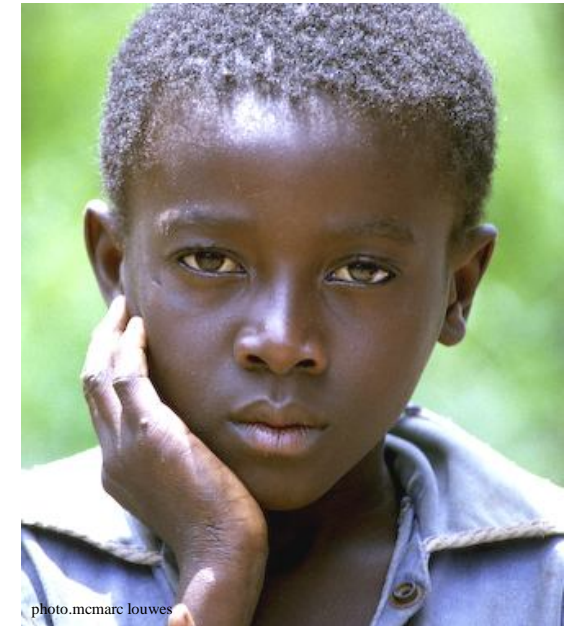
All parents should take care of themselves so that they can take care of their families. Parents who are fighting are often too distracted to notice that their children are hurting. They are so taken up with their own problems that they neglect their children.

Children must be assured that it is **NOT** their fault that the parents are fighting. They must be assured that the parents are doing their best to work out their problems without violence.

If parents decide to separate, children should be assured that both parents still love them.

Little Ears, Little Eyes-

Invisible victims of
Domestic Violence



The Crisis Centre
P.O.Box EE-17910
Nassau Bahamas
24-Hour Hotline: 328-0922
Or call 322-4999
Fax: 328-7824
email: bahamascrisiscentre@yahoo.com
www.bahamascrisiscentre.org

When Parents are Fighting

It is normal for people to disagree and sometimes we become angry when someone else does not think the same way as we do. This can happen especially when we have had a bad day or when someone at work or school has annoyed us or hurt us in some way. That can make us irritable.

Usually, we calm down and respect the other person's point of view. We may not agree with them but we can learn to accept that we do not all think alike.

Most couples argue from time to time. They have a lot of responsibility and that can be very stressful.

In most cases, parents sit down quietly and discuss any concerns they may have and come to a decision which benefits them both and their children.

Sometimes though, if one or both parents are very angry, they find it difficult to reach a solution and may get into a fight.

This can be very frightening for children in the home as they watch or hear Mom and Dad hurting each other. They do not know what to do. They feel they should do something to stop the fight but they are afraid. They are worried that Mom and Dad are going to be seriously hurt.

**REMEMBER.....IF PARENTS
FIGHT,
CHILDREN NEED TO BE
ASSURED THAT IT IS NOT
THEIR FAULT.**



**If you are, or anyone you know
is, being abused,
please call the Crisis Centre on
328-0922.**

**We offer free counseling for
anyone who is experiencing any
form of family violence
or abuse.**



Effects of Family Violence on Children

Children may exhibit a wide range of reactions to exposure to violence in their home. Younger children often do not understand what is happening and think they "must have done something wrong." Self-blame can result in feelings of guilt, and anxiety. Children may become withdrawn and experience difficulty in eating and sleeping, generally anxious and may complain of headaches, stomach aches, etc.

Older children, in addition to similar experiences as the younger child, may become more isolated, have low self-esteem, become rebellious and do poorly in school. They may become violent themselves, especially boys, while girls tend to withdraw and become very quiet.

Adolescents who are witnessing violence at home tend to fail at school, sometimes dropping out, engage in substance abuse, Many, especially boys try to intervene in family disputes and fights, which can result in injury to themselves.

Feelings experienced by children

- Sadness for family problems.
- Shame, guilt, and self blame.
- Confusion about conflicting feelings toward parents.
- Fear of abandonment, or having to leave the home.
- Anger.
- Depression and feelings of helplessness and powerlessness.
- Embarrassment of knowing friends and neighbours know about the violence.