

**You can help!**

Children who are victims of, or witnesses to violence may experience symptoms of trauma immediately, days, or months after the violent incident occurs.

If your child has exhibited any behaviors outlined in this pamphlet or if you are concerned that your child may have been a witness to, or a victim of violence, *he/she will need help* to recover from this traumatic event.

Your local police, school, and pediatrician can connect you with the proper resources to help children who have experienced trauma.

For more information, please contact the District Attorney's Office at (508) 584-8120. Or visit us on the web at [www.mass.gov/da/plymouth](http://www.mass.gov/da/plymouth)

**Child Witness/Victim to Violence:  
A Parent's Guide**



Office of Plymouth County  
District Attorney

**Timothy J. Cruz**

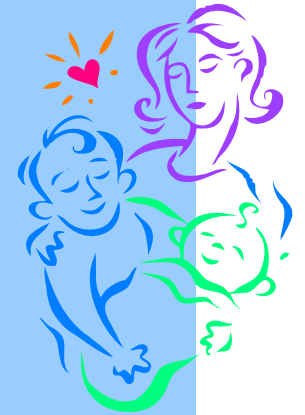
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**32 Belmont Street  
P.O. Box 1665  
Brockton, MA 02303**

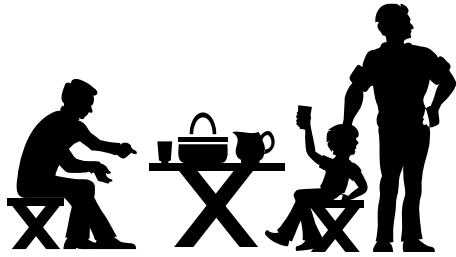
**Phone: 508-584-8120**

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**a community initiative  
to help parents protect  
children**



## IT'S ABUSE

People often misconceive abuse. Although physical abuse is most common and recognizable, the following behaviors infringe on others' rights and are considered actionable, abusive offenses:

- bullying
- yelling and demeaning
- threatening
- intimidation

Because you can't see the effects of these types of abuse, witnesses and victims are ashamed to come forward for help. Silence won't help: let's help our children learn to confide by confirming trustworthiness and security in their parents, school officials, police officers, and health care professionals.



## Call for help

Department of Mental Health  
Crisis Line: (508) 897-2100  
Info Line: (508) 897-7210

Parental Stress Line  
1-800-632-8188

Parents Helping Parents  
1-800-822-1250

The Child Witness/Victim  
to Violence Project  
is a partnership between  
the Plymouth County  
District Attorney's Office,  
Dept. of Public Health,  
Dept. of Social Services, and  
Department of Mental Health.

## How do child witnesses and victims of violence react?

*Children ages 5-17 might:*

- cry, whimper, scream, and act clingier than usual
- have difficulty moving or move around in a daze
- show fearful facial expressions
- revert to childish behaviors: such as; thumb-sucking, bed-wetting, or being scared of the dark
- have nightmares, flashbacks, or difficulty sleeping
- exhibit outbursts of anger and fighting
- complain of stomach aches or illnesses that have no medical basis
- neglect school work or refuse to attend school
- avoid reminders of the event and hide emotions
- abuse illegal substances
- engage in anti-social behavior, become withdrawn or isolated
- seem depressed, anxious, guilty, or indifferent
- have angry fantasies of revenge that interfere with recovery
- be at risk for suicide