



Children and Domestic Violence

When there is domestic violence/intimate partner violence in the home, children are “silent witnesses.” Children pay attention to what is happening within their environment and are insightful and perceptive, often communicating their awareness and reactions in their behaviors. Here are some ways that children may react to violence in the home:

- ▶ Act withdrawn or as if the abuse is no big deal.
- ▶ Suffer from trouble sleeping or nightmares.
- ▶ Experience loss of appetite, stomachaches, or headaches.
- ▶ Become anxious, fearful or moody, and worry about your safety.
- ▶ Demand adult attention and misbehave when they don't get it.

- ▶ Argue or fight with other children, become violent, or bully other kids.
- ▶ Exhibit dating violence – mistaking jealousy and controlling behavior for love.
- ▶ Use drugs or alcohol, run away from home, or get into trouble with the law.

Factors like your child's age, relationship with the abuser, type of abuse, and availability of other supports can affect the impact on the child.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Provide a chance to talk about the violence. When children share their worries, they feel less alone. Ask how they are feeling and really listen.

Let them know you love them and want to keep them safe. Make a safety plan for yourself and your children. Choose the safest time to leave and figure out where you will go and how to get there. Keep important papers (including your children's health and school records), keys, a set of clothes, and some money with someone you trust. Domestic violence programs can help with safety plans.

Be realistic. Don't make promises to children ("I won't ever go back to them..." or "We will be safe now...") that you may not be able to keep. Reassure them but be realistic in what you tell them.

Understand their feelings. Children often feel guilty when they cannot stop the abuse and when they have good feelings toward the abusive parent. Children often feel confused, overwhelmed, anxious, and unsure of their feelings toward both parents. They may grieve the loss of a parent when/if they are separated from them.

Reassure your children that the abuse is not their fault.

Do your best to build a loving, peaceful home for your children. Parenting classes and support groups can help you to be a consistent, nurturing parent.

If you are being abused, please seek the help you need. Whenever possible, contact domestic violence programs before you are in a crisis or emergency. Call the following numbers for help:

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV)

800-799-7233 or 800-787-3224 (TTY)

Learn more at www.pcadv.org, website for the PA Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Check out [our blog](#) for more information on this topic and resources on our website.



Welcome to Our New CBCAP Network Member Agencies!

PFSA welcomes a new member of the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) Network: **KidsPeace**. PFSA is proud to partner and collaborate with diverse, dedicated, and committed organizations that advance the important work of preventing child abuse and neglect. Thank you for your commitment and dedication! To find out more about **CBCAP Network** benefits or to learn more about becoming a CBCAP Network member, [visit our website](#).



MANDATED REPORTER TRAINER SPOTLIGHT

Maggie Saxe



We recently interviewed Maggie Saxe, who has been a contracted trainer for PFSA since 2018. Here is what she has to say about why she is so passionate about training mandated reporters.

Why do you care about training mandated reporters of child abuse?

I enjoy doing the mandated reporter training because I feel that the reporting and recognition of child abuse is also essential to preventing child abuse. As mandated reporters make up the vast majority of reporters of child abuse, I believe that it is critical to have ongoing, continuing education in regard to child abuse and neglect.

Why do you feel it is important for mandated reporters to receive training?

The more knowledge we have as a community, the more we can intervene on behalf of vulnerable children and youth.

How does your experience and background assist you in training mandated reporters?

I feel that my position at a CYS agency is helpful because I encourage all participants in every session to reach out to their local CYS agencies and communicate with them about any questions and concerns. I always emphasize that there may not always be an agreement or consensus but that everyone is working towards the best interest of these vulnerable children and that having ongoing communication between all agencies is vital.

We appreciate the wealth of knowledge Maggie brings to each training she provides to mandated reporters. She looks forward to meeting you in her trainings!

Visit Our Store

PFSA has educational resources available in our online store. You can find informative materials covering a wide range of topics designed to assist caregivers, parents, and professionals in an effort to protect children. Please visit pafsa.org/store to learn more!

Read Our Blog

Our blog is the best way to get timely information on ways to help stop child abuse, recent staff developments, and prevention strategies. Read more at pafsa.org/blog.



UPCOMING PFSA TRAININGS

Families in Recovery (FiR) New Facilitator Training

This research-based program is a great resource for parents, guardians, and caretakers recovering from substance use disorder. The program aims to teach healthy coping and parenting skills while balancing the needs of recovery.

New FiR facilitators will be fully prepared to implement the program and provide training after attending a two-day session that covers content, education, and implementation of the curriculum. FiR facilitators come together during training to share program implementation experience, ideas, and insights.

All organizations interested in implementing FiR are required to enter into a contract with PFSA and participate in the evaluation requirements of the program. Contracts include ongoing technical assistance, program development, facilitator calls, and assistance with data collection.

Dates: April 22 & 23, 2025 (*virtual*)
July 15 & 16, 2025 (*virtual*)

Time: 9:00 a.m.—3:30 p.m.
(*half-hour lunch break*)

Cost: Contact PFSA's Prevention Services Manager, Justin Donofrio (jdonofrio@pafsa.org), for paperwork or to ask questions.

Mandated Reporter Training

PFSA has several options for mandated reporter training for staff and volunteers. We provide certificates to participants and, upon request, will upload confirmation of the training to the Departments of State or Education for CE fulfillments under Act 31 and/or Act 48. CLEs are also available for attorneys.

LIVE IN-PERSON/VIRTUAL

Cost: Free

Register here for a virtual session.

INDIVIDUAL ONLINE, ON-DEMAND

Cost: \$30

Sign up here to take any time.

TRAIN-THE-TRAINER

This is an opportunity for organizations to develop their own quality, cost-efficient, in-house training program for employees on child abuse recognition and reporting.

Dates: April 23 & 24, 2025 (*virtual*)
July 29 & 30, 2025 (*virtual*)

Time: 9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.
(*half-hour lunch break*)

Cost: \$1,000 per trainer entering into a three-year contract with PFSA. Email Haven Evans, Director of Programs (hevans@pafsa.org), for paperwork or to ask questions.

Get involved and follow us on social!





APRIL 2 2025

Flag Planting

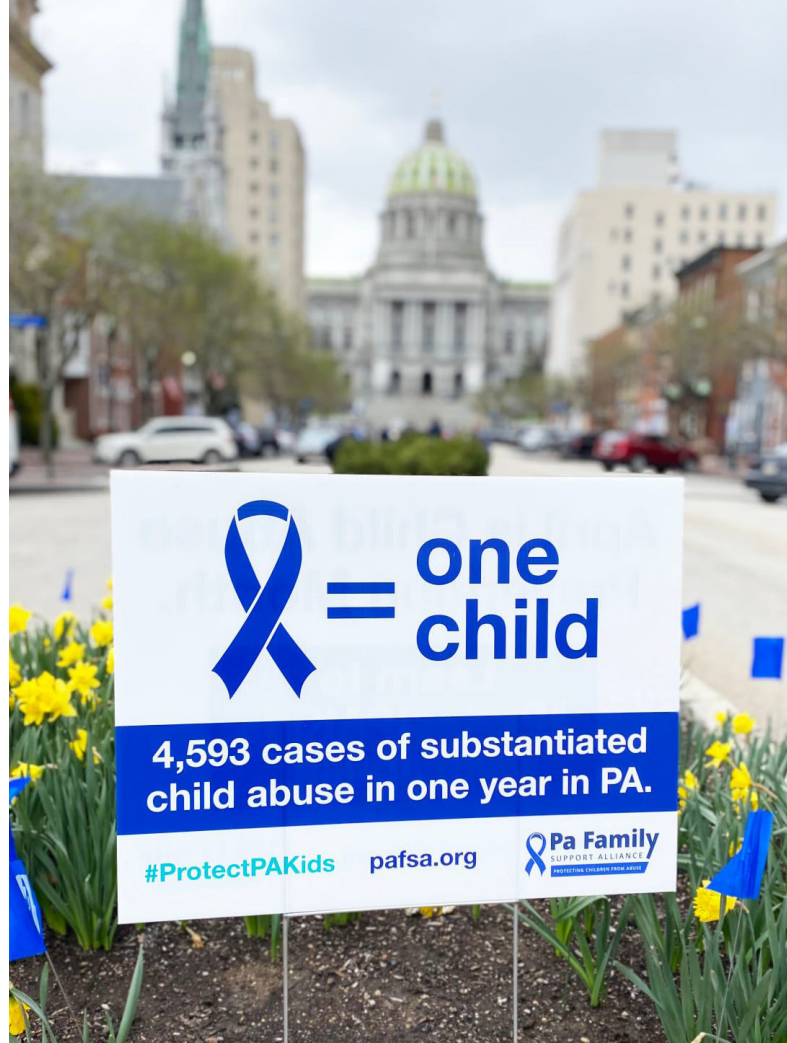
9:00am

3rd & State Streets in Harrisburg, PA

Award Ceremony

10:30am

Pennsylvania's Capitol Building Main Rotunda



#ProtectPAKids

Help us support families and communities across Pennsylvania by donating to PFSA today. Your gift will help PFSA continue to deliver successful training, education, and ongoing support to Pennsylvania families and children.

Visit pafsa.org/donate to learn more and donate.

