

Effect of DV on children

Children are not able to feel safe when they, or their mother is being hurt. Children see, hear and know about violence in their homes. All forms of violence in the family, affects children. Children and adolescents who have been exposed to domestic violence may display;

- ◆ Low self esteem
- ◆ Feelings of shame, distrust, anger, sadness and loneliness
- ◆ Physical reactions such as stomach-ache, headaches, bedwetting, eating difficulties and frequent illness
- ◆ Sleeping difficulties
- ◆ Difficulties relating to teaching staff and peers
- ◆ Aggression towards others
- ◆ Withdrawing from others, distracted or distant
- ◆ Difficulty identifying and managing their emotions.

Children who have experienced trauma often present with behaviours and symptoms similar to those of ADHD, ODD, OCD or Autism Spectrum Disorders. When assessing children it is important to always gain information about the child's family experiences as well as the presenting behaviours.

The BRIC project assesses the impact of the domestic violence on children and their primary attachment relationship and in partnership with the non-offending caregiver, develops a repair and resilience focused response.

Learning Circles

Learning Circles provide a forum for local practitioners delivering services to children and young people, to come together for the purpose of developing and reflecting on practice, networking, strengthening referral pathways, as well as a chance to collaborate and share ideas with likeminded people. Participants in Learning Circles will have the opportunity to participate in...

- ◆ Free training
- ◆ Exploration of relevant literature
- ◆ Trauma focused strategy presentations.

Learning Circles are held 4 times per year and are open to anyone working with vulnerable children, young people and families in St George and Sutherland Shire who are interested in learning more about supporting their clients who have been affected by trauma.

**For more information or to discuss a referral, please contact
The BRIC Project at Sutherland Shire
Family Services**

Phone: 9528 2933
ext.134 (Sarah) or ext.137 (Aimee)
Email: bric@ssfs.org.au

 sutherland shire
family services

**Building Resilience
in Children (BRIC)**

**Hurt in Relationship
Healed in Relationship**



This brochure is intended for practitioners' use only.

The Building Resilience in Children Project is an early intervention service which supports children/adolescents and their non-offending parent/carer who have been traumatised as a result of exposure to domestic violence.

BRIC focuses on resilience building opportunities for children and young people, aimed at alleviating some of the damaging effects of exposure to domestic violence.

The project works closely with the non-offending primary caregiver to support repair of the attachment relationship, often affected by the perpetrator's use of violence.

Carers are supported to recognise a child's emotional needs, often expressed through their behaviour and provide attentive and nurturing responses which are consistent and predictable.

The service has a two pronged approach focusing on direct therapeutic work with the non-offending caregiver and children where assessed as safe and suitable, as well as opportunities for collaboration and education for those working with children and young people in the St George and Sutherland Shire LGAs.

Who can use the service

Services are available to non-offending parents and caregivers and their children, living in the St George or Sutherland Shire LGAs, who have had past exposure or are experiencing current ongoing exposure to domestic violence in a post separation context.

The BRIC project can offer limited support to mother's experiencing current domestic violence. This work has a focus on education around the trauma and attachment impacts of domestic violence on children, only after a full risk assessment has taken place. Risk and safety will continue to be assessed and re-evaluated throughout any support provided.

What you need to know

- ◆ All services are free
- ◆ Home and school visits can be negotiated
- ◆ Referrals from professionals and self-referrals accepted
- ◆ Please contact BRIC workers prior to making a referral.

Services offered

BRIC supports families to repair the impact of complex trauma by;

- ◆ Providing information around the impact of domestic violence on children
- ◆ Providing support to strengthen their capacity to provide therapeutic interactions and experiences for children
- ◆ Fostering attachment between child and non-offending primary carer
- ◆ Providing opportunities for children to explore their experiences, strengths and develop resilience
- ◆ Providing group programs for children and their non-offending primary caregiver.

The BRIC project supports professionals to develop and reflect on practice by providing;

- ◆ The opportunity to participate in regular learning Circles
- ◆ Education & Training for schools about supporting traumatised children in the classroom
- ◆ Education & Training for professionals about the effects of domestic violence on children.