

# Argumentative essay on why domestic violence towards children is a problem in cal...

[Sociology](#), [Violence](#)



## **Introduction**

Domestic violence towards children could be sexual, physical, emotional or economic abuse (McCue 6). Emotional abuse is a part of all these abuses. Research indicates that the longer the violence continues on children the greater the danger it poses to a child (McCue 6). A child's resilience is affected significantly through direct abuse. Children who are direct victims of abuse tend to have problematic behaviour (Dowd et al 5). Nelson (14) gives an example of domestic violence where the father poured kerosene on his infant son because he was upset with the mother. Scenarios such as these are common.

The family institution is believed to be where most violent incidents occur either towards the partners or the children. Perpetrators of domestic violence include the males, females and younger children who abuse the smaller children. Most people believe that violence is perpetrated by males, but recent studies show that most domestic violence's are carried out by women (Nelson 2). Children at three years old are shooting other children.

Furthermore, perpetrators of domestic violence towards children are in most cases the parents or one of the two. Programs such the Family Violence Prevention Fund is aimed at educated offenders' concerning domestic violence.

Most children usually suffer from witnessing domestic violence. Issues such as culture, economics, legal and political issues tend to accelerate domestic violence. In families where finances are strained tensions are usually high. Lack of jobs also plays a role since the parent at the end of the may relieve his stress on the spouse or a child. Children in most cases are subjected to

witnessing the violence, which in turn they may repeat the same thing on fellow children. Consumption of alcohol tends to impair human judgement and emotions are heightened. In addition, most teenagers are not aware of their rights. Because of continued abuse, a child develops a fear that if he reports the matter to anyone or the relevant authorities the parent or spouse will even be more abusive. Sometimes in cases where the perpetrator, maybe the man is prosecuted, the wife may decide to withdraw the charges if they were filed by the teenager. This may be because the father could be the sole bread winner. In schools, children who have witnessed abuse tend to have negative perspective towards life.

Anti-social behaviours may be observed in these children. These may include use of drugs, sexual activities especially in teenagers and school truancy (Dowd et al 6). Parents who have an account of being battered when they were children tend to repeat the same violence in their children. This is because they view it as a way of solving problems. Their parents solved the problem the same way so to it seems appropriate to abuse their children. Cases of domestic violence reported are usually inconsistent. Some children will be abused all their lives without reporting it to the necessary authorities. Lack of reporting these incidences makes it difficult to conduct clinical research, which may help in understanding the key motivator of parents who abuse their children (Satin et al. 428).

### **Why the cycle of abuse will be present in California**

Drugs and alcohol consumption influences a person's behaviour to a great extent (McCue 37). However, alcohol is not the cause why children are

abused, but is normally used to justify the actions of the offender. In addition, when children report to their mothers that they have been abused either physically or sexually by their father or close relatives, they tend to assume the accusations. These women who are disillusioned that their husbands or a close relative cannot do such a thing tend to encourage the abuse unknowingly. According to Humphreys and Stanley (100), an eleven year old girl found it to be hard to disclose the abuse she had received from her father to her mother because she feared that the mother would tell the father who would react by abusing her again.

### **What to do to address Domestic Violence in California**

Prosecutors are faced with the challenge of victims failing to testify. Buzawa and Buzawa (200) note that more than 50 percent of victims in court cases refuse to testify in domestic violence cases. In addition, some of the activities that can be employed to reduce domestic violence towards children include linking community residents to services and establishing social norms that are acceptable in the community. Further, creating leadership networks in the communities, modifying social conditions in the community that promote domestic violence, and providing institutions that serve the needs of the community (Fullwood 4).

### **Current Programs and actions in place in California and their outcome**

In January 2000, the State of California passed new laws to curb domestic violence. These laws require the arrest of any person violating restraining order violations. In addition, domestic violence is extended to former

spouses and cohabitants. Furthermore, the police are required to remove all firearms at the scene of domestic violence, and are supposed to provide relocation funds to victims of domestic violence.

California has established a number of shelters where children and teens can be able to seek shelter in instances where they are abused. California requires that persons who abuse children attend a fifty-two week program where they discuss the effect of abusing children (Dowd et al 8). This program educates the offenders on the characteristic and attitudes that support abusive behaviour.

### **What These Programs Lack**

Some of the laws do not compel the district attorney to prosecute violations of restraining order in cases sent to them by the police. In addition, these programs such as the shelters lack a community based approach of handling domestic violence towards children. Involving the community in trying to stop this menace is beneficial since the community has further information on the teens or children that are adversely affected by domestic violence. Furthermore, community members will have additional practical approaches on how cases of domestic violence on children can be minimized by creating an effective reporting network for themselves. Moreover, these shelters be short of the capital to handle a large number of children because of financial constraints and inadequate staff who in most situations do not have the necessary qualifications.

## **How Are Teens Affected By Domestic Violence**

Psychologically teens will have high levels of anxiety and depression compared to normal teens that are not abused (Dowd et. al. 5). Emotions the teens will portray may include distrust, shame, grief, fear, anger and powerlessness. In addition, teens experiencing these emotions may have suicide tendencies; engage in drug abuse, premarital sex and school truancy.

Poor performance will result because of exposure to domestic violence. Research indicates that teens that experience abuse tend to experience learning difficulties. In addition, these teens are likely to cheat and disobey authority in schools (Dowd et. at 7). Furthermore, their social skills will be low as they may find had to associate with other teens. In case of conflict or disagreement, teens that have undergone abuse will likely react to the situation in a violent manner. This violent behaviour in most cases evolves to bullying and fighting.

Domestic abuse on teens tends to have long term effects. Girls who are abused when young will tend to tolerate abusive relationships when older, while boys tent to be abusive in their relationship when they grow up. This is because the child grow up knowing that being abusive is acceptable in the society, so they do not feel as if they are doing anything wrong when being abusive or when they are abused in their relationships (Dowd et al. 7).

## **Actions the State of California Can Employ To End Domestic Violence of Children**

The State of California should be committed to ensuring efficient legal measures such as civil remedies and penal sanctions are included to ensure

protection of children. In addition, the state should increase the number of education programmes in the communities as well as in the schools to ensure teens are aware of their rights in case they are abused at home (Unicef 10). Moreover, protective measures such as guidance and counselling should be offered to teens that experience domestic violence as a way of rehabilitating their behaviour.

The state should also combine efforts with the neighbourhood to establish a more compact information network so that reporting of incidences of domestic violence is done on time. The state may be able to raise awareness by using the community to influence many people than when acting alone.

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