

# Listening and Helping Children who have Experienced Domestic Violence – **Children Can Survive**

Tiina Muukkonen  
Development Manger  
The Federation of Mother and  
Child Homes and Shelters

Stop the Backlash – Stop Domestic violence 26.-27.11.2019



**You can  
survive  
domestic  
violence.**

WORKING AGAINST VIOLENCE  
FOR 40 YEARS.

# The Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters

- Work is based on safeguarding the best interests of the child in society and in all decision-making. It means continuously evaluating the impact of decisions on children and influencing the best interests of the child. 12,600 people use the services of the member associations every year, of whom about 4,500 are children.
- 30 member associations, 700 employees, 1800 volunteers.
- 10 first homes, 8 first homes specializing in substance abuse treatment, and 17 shelters. Daytime services in domestic violence cases is provided in 22 associations for victims of violence, perpetrators and children.
- <https://ensijaturvakotienliitto.fi/>
- <https://nettiturvakoti.fi/>



# Content

- Children and Domestic violence in Finland
- How to help - Orientation matters
- The Core of domestic violence work with children



**You can  
survive  
domestic  
violence.**

The graphic features the text 'You can survive domestic violence.' in a bold, sans-serif font. The words 'You can' and 'survive' are in orange, while 'domestic violence.' is in black. A small orange butterfly icon is positioned to the right of the word 'violence'.

**WORKING AGAINST VIOLENCE**

**FOR 40 YEARS.**

# Child Abuse and Maltreatment School Health Survey (2019) by FNHW

In the last year

- **One third** of girls have experienced sexual suggestion and harassment
- 10% of the girls has experienced **sexual violence**

## Parental **mental violence**

- Girls: 4-5 grades 17%, **8-9** grades **37%**, high School 34% & vocational college 33%
- Boys: grade 4-5 17%, 8-9 Grades **19%**, high School **19%** & vocational college 14%

## Parental **physical violence**

- Girls: 4-5 grade 11%, grade 8-9 **15%**, high School & vocational collage 9%
- Boys: 4-5 grade **15%**, 8-9 grade 9%, high school and vocational collage 5%

**5%** of children are customers in **Child Protection Services**



# Physical violence

- Globally, 25-50% of children are exposed to serious and repeated physical violence, much of which is punitive violence by educators (WHO 2006)
- 26.7% of victims of domestic violence are children (Statistics Finland 2017)
- 12% of 4-year-old parents (n = 348) reported having targeted child abuse (Hietamäki 2018)
- More than 40% of parents report having used disciplinary violence in raising a child (Hyvärinen 2017)
- Physical violence between siblings: girls report 19%, boys report 14%
- 6% of mothers report having used serious violence during the year (Ellonen & Pösö & Peltonen 2015)
  - Unsatisfactory experience with services increases risk of disciplinary violence: Insufficient and inappropriate assistance



# Domestic violence of child's perspective

- Child as a **witness** - target is the other parent/adult
- Direct **target** physical, mental or sexual violence

→ Being as witness or target are both equally harmful for the child



# Adverse Childhood Experiences ACE Study (Felitti et al. 1998)

1. Emotional Abuse
2. Physical abuse
3. Sexual abuse
4. Physical casting (neglect)
5. Emotional throwing
6. Substance abuse in the home
7. Mental illness at home
8. Mother cared violently
9. Differential
10. Criminal behavior



**6/10 harmful childhood experiences are related to violence!**



# The matrix of educational violence

©

	Violence (violent acts)	Neglect (leaving things undone)
Physical	<b>Physical violence</b> Hitting, slapping Pulling, rough treatment Kicking, pushing Shaking, pulling Burning Hair-pulling, pinching Drugging, unnecessary medication Etc.	<b>Neglect of physical needs</b> Properly feeding, cleaning, clothing and caring for the child Protecting and safeguarding the child Providing proper living conditions for the child Looking after the child's health and seeking health care when necessary Educating the child Supervising and guiding the child and providing age-appropriate stimuli
Mental	<b>Mental violence</b> Describes events / situations involving a child and a close adult relative Threatening violence/symbolic aggression Intimidation by rejection or inflicting pain Ignoring Causing verbal offence Humiliating and despising Blaming, mental manipulation Blackmailing by withholding love and approval Isolating Obtrusiveness Jne.	<b>Mental neglect</b> Describes the relationship and interaction between the child and a close adult relative The parent's relationship and attitude to the child is negative, hateful or rejecting The parent is unresponsive to the child's needs The parent is emotionally distant or fails to respond sensitively to the child's emotions Interaction between the parent and child is not suited to the age of the child The parent is unable to recognize the child's personal boundaries The parent fails to support the development of the child's positive social skills



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[kasvatakannustaen.fi](http://kasvatakannustaen.fi)



# Orientations matters

1. Child centric work
2. Theory of well-being for a child
3. Trauma informed work, ACE and resiliens awareness
4. Integrative work



# Child protections three orientation

(Gilbert, Parton & Skivenes 2011, 16)

	Child centric	Family centred	Protective
<b>Why intervene</b>	Childs individual needs now and in future; society needs well-being and involving citizens	Family unit needs help	Childs maltreatment by parents
<b>The frame of problem</b>	Child development and inequal strating points	Social/psychological (systemic, poverty, rasism etc.)	Individual/ Moralistic
<b>Mode of intervene</b>	Early stage support and regulatory need for resolve	Therapeutic/ needs clarifcation	Juridic/ Investigative
<b>Aim of intervene</b>	Support childs well-being by social impact and offering equal opprtunities	Prevention/ social bonding	Protection, harm reduction
<b>State- parent relaitonship</b>	Compensatory/ companionship	Companionship	Hostail
<b>Relations to rights</b>	Childs rights/ parental responsibilities	Parents right to family life – mediation by professionals	Childrens and parents rights are monitored by legal sense

# Ways to meet a child - different orientations

- **Legal-formal**
  - Need for information from the child to the legal process or decision
  - Interaction's goal is to get facts
- **Leading and inquiring**
  - Researcher / employee-oriented way of seeking validation of an adult's own assumptions
- **Narrative orientation**
  - Focus on listening to the child and reciprocity
- **Interactive and participant narration**
  - The stories come from the interaction between the child and the adult
  - Help questions and commentary to support the child's narrative
  - Interaction goal sharing experiences to **support coping**



# Theory of well-being for a Child

Well-being is built **on emotions** and **in relationships**. It consists of

1. Safety
2. Positive self-image
3. Agency

Based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and research (eg Saywitz & Camparo 2010) that children should be asked and consulted on their own + right to special protection

[see Fattore, Mason & Watson \(2009\). When Children are Asked About Their Well-being: Towards a Framework for Guiding Policy](#)



# Trauma informed work and ACE & resilience awareness

- Childhood traumas affect
  - Stress from violence is like a poison to a child's brain
- All workers facing children should
  - Be able to talk about security, insecurity and violence
  - Understand the impact of violence on the child's behavior and emotions
  - Help the child get help and support resilience
- The adverse experiences of childhood are harmful even in adulthood - increased morbidity - so better act right away



# Integrative work

Our aim is to offer help for all family members: victims, perpetrators and children

Essential to make it work:

- **risk assessment, flexibility, non judgement, companionship with families** (Stanley & Huphreys 2017)

**In practice:**

- Using different methods and frames
- Typical that parents process are on in different timeschedule
- It is functional, when work starts from child protection and the whole family is been helped at the same time



# Different levels to Work with Children and Young people In 22 member organisations

1. Supporting well-being and health
2. Low threshold work
3. Special services
4. Demanding services



# Low threshold work Themes with children

1. Creating atmosphere: trust and safe
2. Working with parents, taking family and siblings to an account
3. Dealing violence and assessing the risk of reviolence (making a clear statement against violence)
4. Child's own story and find hope
5. Find resources & means and support surviving
6. Evaluate and assess the work period and need for more help

## THE MATRIX OF EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

	Guiding and being with the child	Closeness, warmth and joy
Physical	<p><b>Direction and touch</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supportive direction, guidance and regulation</li> <li>Making clear the relationship of cause and effect</li> <li>Conversation, negotiation and reasoning</li> <li>Consistent, clear boundaries</li> <li>A gentle touch, holding the child close or in the lap, caressing the child</li> <li>Accepting, encouraging looks and tone of voice</li> </ul>	<p><b>Good care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Age-appropriate care, clothing and nourishment</li> <li>Age-related stimulation</li> <li>Enabling physical movement that is typical of children</li> <li>Safety, protection and living conditions</li> <li>Education</li> <li>Hygiene, health and health care</li> <li>Age-appropriate supervision and guidance</li> <li>Prioritising children's needs</li> </ul>
Mental	<p><b>Presence and encountering child</b></p> <p>Describes events / situations involving a child and a close adult relative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Showing interest in the child and monitoring the child's initiatives</li> <li>Listening, verbalising and showing the child a good example</li> <li>Encouraging speech and feedback, supporting the child's strengths</li> <li>Thanking</li> <li>Recognising, verbalising and accepting emotions</li> <li>Supporting the development of regulating emotions and activities</li> <li>Taking care of the child's basic needs</li> </ul>	<p><b>A supportive relationship</b></p> <p>Describes the relationship and interaction between the child and a close adult relative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The parent is emotionally accessible to the child</li> <li>Keeping the child's perspective in mind</li> <li>A positive attitude and relationship with the child</li> <li>A developmentally suitable interaction with the child</li> <li>The ability to recognise the child's personal boundaries</li> <li>The ability to support the child's social development</li> <li>A feeling of joy from having the child and being with them</li> <li>A sensitive relationship, giving space to the child</li> </ul>



# What should adults do according survived children

1. Children should receive help in their experience as early as possible
2. The child should receive support, encouragement and positive attention
3. Information on what treatment is acceptable and what is not







Conference Theme:

## Hearing the Voice of Children and Young People

### CONFIRMED KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

**Howard Dubowitz**, Professor of Pediatrics  
University of Maryland School of Medicine, USA

**Linnea Karlsson**, Adjunct Professor, MD, PhD  
University of Turku, Finland

**Laura Lundy**, Professor  
Queen's University Belfast, Northern Ireland

**Jukka Mäkelä**, MD, Child Psychiatrist  
National Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland

**Jonna Turunen**, Master of Laws, Police, Detective Chief  
Superintendent  
Helsinki Police Department, Finland

**Pipsa Varlo**, MEd, Development manager  
Pesäpuu National Child Welfare Organisation, Finland

**Carolina Øverlien**, Associate Professor  
Norwegian centre for violence and traumatic stress studies,  
Norway

For further information, please see the website: [www.nfbo.org](http://www.nfbo.org)

**Welcome to the conference!**



# Key dates

- **October 7<sup>th</sup> 2019 Abstract submission opens.**
- December 1<sup>st</sup> 2019 Registration opens.
- January 15<sup>th</sup> 2020 Abstract submission closes.
- March 1<sup>st</sup> 2020 Notification of acceptance of abstracts.
- March 15<sup>th</sup> 2020 Early bird closes and the last date by which **presenters** must register for the conference.
- March 16<sup>th</sup> 2020 Regular fee opens
- Questions may be directed to [events@rtgsales.fi](mailto:events@rtgsales.fi)

[www.nfbo.org](http://www.nfbo.org)





Thank you!

Tiuku Pennola Photography

[tiina.muukkonen@etkl.fi](mailto:tiina.muukkonen@etkl.fi)