You might be a child's parent or guardian, their regular caregiver, or someone who cares for them. No matter what your relationship to the child, you can be someone they trust and count on.

You want the best for your child. You try to keep them safe and healthy as they grow. Raising children can be hard and may be harder when your family has experienced domestic violence. Focus, when you are able, on connecting with your child. This brochure offers some simple ways build that connection with your child and help them to feel loved.

If you are worried about your child or things seem to be getting harder, take a look at the resources on the back of this brochure for more help.

Learn More

National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-SAFE (7233);
TTY 1-800-787-3224

Child Abuse Hotline
1-800-422-4453

Sexual Assault Hotline
 1-800-656-4673 (HOPE)

StrongHearts Native Helpline
1–844-762-8483;
https://www.strongheartshelpline.org/get-help/

Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline
1-800-422-4453
https://www.childhelp.org/hotline/

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1-800-273-8255; https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/talk-to-someone-now/

Substance Abuse and Mental Health
National Helpline: 1-800-662-HELP (5347)

Changing Minds
www.ChangingMinds.org

Futures Without Violence
www.FuturesWithoutViolence.org

**The Power of Everyday Gestures
12 Ways Parents Can Help Young Children Who have Experienced Domestic Violence Heal**

Everyday gestures can make a big difference in your child's life.

Early Childhood National Centers

NATIONAL CENTER ON
Parent, Family and Community Engagement

FUTURES WITHOUT VIOLENCE®

12 Everyday Gestures

1. **Take care of yourself** so you can be there for your child. Whenever possible, get enough sleep, eat well, exercise and go to the doctor regularly.

2. **Focus on your healing.** Domestic violence can affect our parenting in ways that aren't always obvious. Reach out for help. Taking action towards healing will make it easier for your child to do the same.

3. **Play with your child and be part of their world.** Find activities that you can do together, like reading, singing, blowing bubbles, drawing, dancing or pretend play.

4. **Listen to your child to help them feel seen, heard and valued.** Show them you are listening by bending down to their level, making eye contact and putting down your phone.

5. **Make space for mistakes.** Mistakes are a natural part of learning. Praising your child's efforts will encourage them to keep trying even when things don't work out.

6. **Be your child's cheerleader.** Tell your child what you love about them and celebrate your child's discoveries as they explore the world around them.

7. **Inspire your child to try new activities** and help them build new skills, such as building blocks, puzzles, reading to them or playing with a ball.

8. **Stay close and comfort your child when they feel scared or overwhelmed.** Taking deep breaths together and counting slowly can help them calm down. Provide your child with a comfort object such as a pacifier, blanket or soft toy that helps them self-soothe and feel safe.

9. **Talk to your child about their feelings.** Naming their emotions can help them feel understood and identify what they are feeling. Help them figure out if they feel scared, frustrated, tired or angry.

10. **Create calm and predictable routines.** Help your child know what to expect by creating habits such as having breakfast every morning and going to bed at the same time. Bring your traditions, faith, and culture into these routines.

11. **Set clear rules and expectations about your child's behavior.** Use simple language such as "no hurting" or "let's clean up the blocks." Model good behavior and reward your child's efforts to follow family rules.

12. **Create a network of support for you and your child, and be a support for other parents.** At some point we all need to ask for help. It's good to talk to a trusted friend, faith leader or mental health professional about your situation.