

My child has been the victim of a crime

There are many things that you can do to help your child through this very difficult time.

You may be experiencing any or all of the following:

- Feeling hurt and/or angry
- Feeling like you should have been able to protect my child
- Feeling upset or angry that you or your child did not/could not do something to prevent the crime from occurring
- Focusing on retribution
- A desire to have my child return home

Although these are all normal reactions, they are usually not very helpful for your child.

Victims of interpersonal violence have had a traumatic experience. The way in which this trauma is expressed, however, is different for everyone.

Your child may feel:

- guilty, ashamed, dirty, afraid, or confused
- a loss of control and power over her/his life.
- S/he may not be comfortable telling you, perhaps feeling as though you need to protected from the trauma.
- S/he may be ashamed or fear being blamed or think that you will be angry at her/him.

Your child needs you to:

- Provide support and understanding , even if you don't agree with the decision s/he is making
- Do not blame or chastise her/him for what s/he did or did not do.
- Be a good listener and help your child to feel safe and secure.
- Accept that the feelings s/he may be experiencing are normal.
- Understand that s/he may be afraid and, for the moment, need a place to feel safe. This may or may not mean going home.
- Encourage your child to talk, but understand that each survivor has a different recovery pace.
- Let her/him know that you are available to listen.

The staff at VPVA is prepared to assist you and your child during this difficult period. It is also important to understand that even if the crime occurred a long time ago, your child may have emotional responses as if it just happened.

You can call VPVA at 856-225-2326.