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Children Who See Too Much: Lessons From The Child Witness To Violence Project

etsy Groves offers rare insight and guidance for adults who seek to help children cope with trauma and violence. Now more than ever, we all need this help as images of disaster are an all too common element of childhood in America.”

—James Garbarino, Ph.D., author of *Parents Under Siege*

Children Who See Too Much

Lessons from the Child Witness to Violence Project
etsy McAlister Groves



Synopsis

For the last ten years Betsy Groves has been working with children traumatized by witnessing violence. In this book she shows how children understand, respond to, and are affected by violence, especially domestic violence. Groves makes the powerful case that traumatic events carried out by family members carry the most severe psychological risks for very young children. She uses clinical case studies to show that being young does not protect against the lasting effects of witnessing violence, and she offers ways adults can help.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The need for a book to help parents and caregivers whose children have seen violence has never been more apparent than in the days following the September 11 terrorist attacks on the U.S. While Boston Medical Center's 10-year-old Child Witness to Violence Project is specifically designed to do just that, this book by the project's founder, a licensed social worker, disappoints. The project, which works with young children who have witnessed evil firsthand (e.g., a parent's murder) or who are traumatized by news stories (such as the kidnapping of Polly Klass from her home), clearly has done much good in helping children cope. When Groves focuses on specific stories, like four-year-old Daquan, who was at home when his mother was murdered, or Jenna and Ben, who were present when their father attacked their mother, the book comes alive. But too often Groves strays from her subject and offers mini-primers on child development theories or television violence that are not nearly as insightful as her work with kids. Despite a tendency to oversummarize in order

to pad out this slim and somewhat uncohesive volume, Groves does make an impassioned case that youth is not a protection against violence and that domestic violence in particular has the most devastating effect on children. She warns that there are no quick fixes to help young children. What matters most is "the adult behind the strategy who says, 'I will listen to you' or 'I believe you can succeed.' "Her six-step plan for changing the world includes such commonsense notions as offering children steady, loving relationships and reintroducing civility into daily life. (Feb. Forecast: At press time, Beacon did not have plans to accelerate this book's publication schedule, so while many parents and educators could benefit from Groves's advice right now, they may have to wait until February. But by then, the shelves will probably be packed with related titles, thus stunting this one's potential.)

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These two books, which were both written before the terrorist acts of September 11, 2001, address children's exposure to violence in America. Based on the counseling and therapy programs of the Child Witness to Violence Project at Boston Medical Center (of which Groves is the founder), *Children Who See Too Much* is a slim but substantial book. The author's premise is simple: today's children are exposed to violence almost daily on TV, in video games, and, too frequently, in real life. Those who witness violence in their homes are not protected by their youth from its consequences; such violence leaves an indelible mark on the chemistry of their brains. Parents, professionals, and communities have a special role to play in helping such children cope with trauma. Readers will not find simple answers here; instead, Groves provides six practical steps that will help parents create a safer world, regardless of neighborhood or race. The Boston Medical Center model presented in this book is clearly a valuable one for other communities to copy. A chatty though helpful nuts-and-bolts how-to book, "Not My Kid" takes 21 chapters to present 21 steps on how to nurture nonviolent children. Muscari (nursing, Univ. of Scranton) begins by defining normal/abnormal behaviors in children of all ages. Then she guides parents through the specifics of raising nonviolent children even though the world around them is violent, arguing that the responsibility for eradicating drug use, bullying, intolerance, domestic abuse, and gun violence lies with parents and communities. In light of recent events, both of these excellent books may be in demand, Muscari's more by parents and Groves's more by community leaders. ["Not My Kid" is also available as a video, ISBN 1-58966-009-9, \$19.95. Ed.] Linda Beck, Indian Valley P.L., Telford, P.- Linda Beck, Indian Valley P.L., Telford, PA Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I needed to have this book for one of my college classes. It is a very good book for learning about children who have been through traumatic events.

excellent

Excellent book for professionals who deal with children or domestic violence and for parents who have been in domestic violence situations with their children. I read it several years ago when I checked it out of the library and decided it was definitely worth having in my library at work. I am a family law attorney and want to have it available for any clients that might want a closer look at what domestic violence can do to children and how they can help reduce the negative impact of what has already happened.

Although it was fairly easy to read and understand in laymen terms it was not relevant to my needs at this time.

I would like to know where this product is???? Ive never not received a product from , so please contact me with the reson it has not arrived. Nancy Tripp 918-734-4099

Whether you know a little or a lot about the impact of exposure to violence on children, this book is a compelling and powerful read. "Children Who See Too Much" is an excellent resource for anyone who wants to recognize and understand how we can help children impacted by violence, whether we are their teachers, social workers, mental health professionals, child welfare workers, other professionals, friends, or family members. Ms. Groves has woven together a compelling tapestry of children's stories, research findings, professional experience working directly with children, and thoughtful policy and practice recommendations. The information on how to talk to your children about terrorism and war makes this book particularly relevant in the complex world that children and their parents must now negotiate. Ms. Grove's extensive experience as a pioneer in the field of helping children exposed to violence has provided an invaluable resource and a must-read for those who care about the well-being of children and their families.

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