



Children's Work Group Early Childhood Conference: February 2021

Creating Safety: Domestic Violence/Intimate Partner Violence

By Sarah Vrabic, Early Childhood Education Specialist, [Building Early Links for Learning \(BELL\)](#)

[People's Emergency Center \(PEC\)](#)

The February Children's Work Group Early Childhood Conference brought together representatives from seven community organizations with over 100 attendees to have a conversation about a topic that too often gets dismissed: domestic violence. Building Early Links for Learning (BELL) recognized the need to discuss this topic in our work with both housing and early learning systems – both systems work with families struggling with domestic violence, but rarely have opportunities to work together sharing resources and providing support to better serve those families.

We started this important conversation with a Lunch & Learn in January and by popular demand, expanded it to our February Early Childhood Conference. Our goal was to break down any existing silos between the housing and early learning systems, bringing awareness of the vast variety of supportive programs available to all involved.

We facilitated a safe and transparent space for people to talk openly about this topic by reminding guests and presenters about the importance of a safety plan. Domestic violence experts were available on the call to provide additional confidential support.

One in three people will experience domestic violence in their lifetime. We should not shy away from discussing something that affects all of us. Particularly during the pandemic, when everyone is more isolated, and so many are isolated in unsafe environments, we need to *learn* about domestic violence and *do* more to improve how we serve families working through it.

Panelists for the day included representatives from:

Women Against Abuse

Acclaim Academy

People's Emergency Center

Open Door Abuse Awareness Prevention (ODAAP)

City of Philadelphia Domestic Violence Strategies Program

Lutheran Settlement House

Examples of discussion topics included:

- How childcare programs understand and work with Protection from Abuse (PFA) orders
- How housing program case managers at PEC create safety plans with their clients
- How programs like ODAAP and Lutheran Settlement House are teaching youth about emotional awareness and respect to prevent abuse from occurring.

Listen to recording of the event [here](#).

Please click [here](#) for access to the slides and resources shared during the event.

And, remember the **24/7 Philadelphia Domestic Violence Hotline** is 1-866-SAFE 014.

For more information, or to be added to the invitation list, contact <mailto:policy@pec-cares.org>

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