



Recommendation 1905 (2010)¹

Final version

Children who witness domestic violence

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Referring to its [Resolution 1714 \(2010\)](#) on children who witness domestic violence, the Parliamentary Assembly reiterates that the situation of children witnessing domestic violence, and the particular dangers they are exposed to, are too often neglected with regard to related policies. It therefore considers that the reinforcement of specific action for such children is needed at all political levels and that different aspects of the specific impact of domestic violence on girls and boys must be taken into account.
2. The Assembly therefore calls on the Committee of Ministers to instruct the Ad hoc Committee on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (CAHVIO) to:
 - 2.1. consider the question of children who witness domestic violence in a future Council of Europe convention which focuses on violence against women, including domestic violence, as already recommended by the Assembly in its [Recommendation 1847 \(2008\)](#) on combating violence against women: towards a Council of Europe convention;
 - 2.2. provide children concerned, in the respective articles of the future convention, with a veritable status of “secondary victims” in order to appropriately consider, having regard to the gender dimension, the impact that situations of domestic violence can have on them;
 - 2.3. include in the future convention provisions regarding the development of comprehensive and transversal social services, the access to which is guaranteed for all children and which ensure that the interests of children will not be overshadowed by problems which predominantly concern adults;
 - 2.4. insist, in appropriate articles of the future convention, on the importance of education of children, from the earliest age, towards behaviour based on mutual respect and non-violence, that is, on the prevention of an intergenerational transfer of domestic violence.
3. It also invites the Committee of Ministers to:
 - 3.1. instruct the committees represented in the Group of Specialists on child-friendly justice (CJ-S-CH) to include in the future Council of Europe guidelines on child-friendly justice, presently being drawn up, adequate procedural measures in respect of the taking of evidence from children having witnessed domestic violence, both during the investigation phase and during court proceedings, in order to avoid the repetition of humiliating testimony and to lessen the traumatising effects of proceedings;
 - 3.2. further harmonise children’s rights in all Council of Europe policy areas and better co-ordinate its action, notably via the Council of Europe Platform on Children’s Rights, in order to contribute to higher visibility and more efficient implementation of European standards at national level.

1. *Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 12 March 2010 (see [Doc. 12111](#), report of the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee, rapporteur: Mrs Ohlsson; and [Doc. 12155](#), opinion of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, rapporteur: Mrs Rupprecht).*