“VIP helped me so much. I used to be so angry and fight all the time. They helped me learn to talk about my feelings instead of fighting. They helped me feel like I belong and have goals for my life.”

— 15-year-old VIP member
What is VIP?
The Violence Intervention Program (VIP) at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) promotes a “trauma-informed” approach to helping patients who come to CHOP’s Emergency Department or Trauma Unit for treatment after being involved in a fight or being assaulted and suffering traumatic stress.

How Can We Help?
VIP provides client-centered, family-focused intervention services for assault-injured youth and their families during and after a hospital visit to promote physical and emotional healing and prevent re-injury.

After an upsetting event, youth may be more easily excited, re-experience the event in their heads, or avoid situations or locations where the event occurred. These feelings can be a normal response to a traumatic event. However, if they last too long (more than a month) and impair functioning in everyday activities, then the youth may benefit from receiving treatment for their post-traumatic symptoms.

Know the Symptoms
Post-traumatic stress symptoms may be triggered by experiencing or witnessing an upsetting event.

Post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms include:
• Intrusive, unwanted thoughts about the event
• Re-experiencing the event through nightmares or flashbacks
• Distress at reminders of the event
• Having trouble concentrating or sleeping
• Feeling “jumpy” or “on edge”
• Avoiding things related to the event
• Feeling emotionally numb or detached

Other symptoms can include new fears, bellyaches, headaches, or feeling in a daze or “spacey.”

VIP Leadership Team
Joel Fein, M.D., M.P.H., Program Director
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Rachel Myers, M.S., Operations Manager
Laura Vega, M.S.W., L.S.W., Violence Prevention Specialist

Our Team Helps With:
• Medical follow-up
• Victim’s assistance
• Peer support groups
• Emotional support for traumatic stress
• Trauma-focused therapy
• School advocacy
• Legal advocacy
• Housing referrals
• Parenting education and resources
• Enrichment activities
• Life skills training
• Substance abuse assistance

Helpful Resources
• CHOP Violence Prevention Initiative chap.edu/violence
• Victims Compensation Assistance Program (VCAP) > 1-800-233-2339
• Penn Center for Youth and Family Trauma Response and Recovery > 215-829-5467
www.med.upenn.edu/traumaresponse
• School District of Philadelphia Bullying Hotline > 215-400-SAFE (7233)
• Pennsylvania Department of Education Office for Safe Schools > 1-877-750-6315
• National Child Traumatic Stress Network www.nctsn.org

Contact Us
For more information, please contact Laura Vega, M.S.W., L.S.W., at 215-590-3118.
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