

Handouts for the Webinar

Engaging Families Affected by Domestic Violence

February 24, 2014

Presenters

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Produced by

Family and Children’s Resource Program, part of the
Jordan Institute for Families
UNC-Chapel Hill School of Social Work

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NC Division of Social Services

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PRESENTER INFORMATION



CLAUDIA KEARNEY

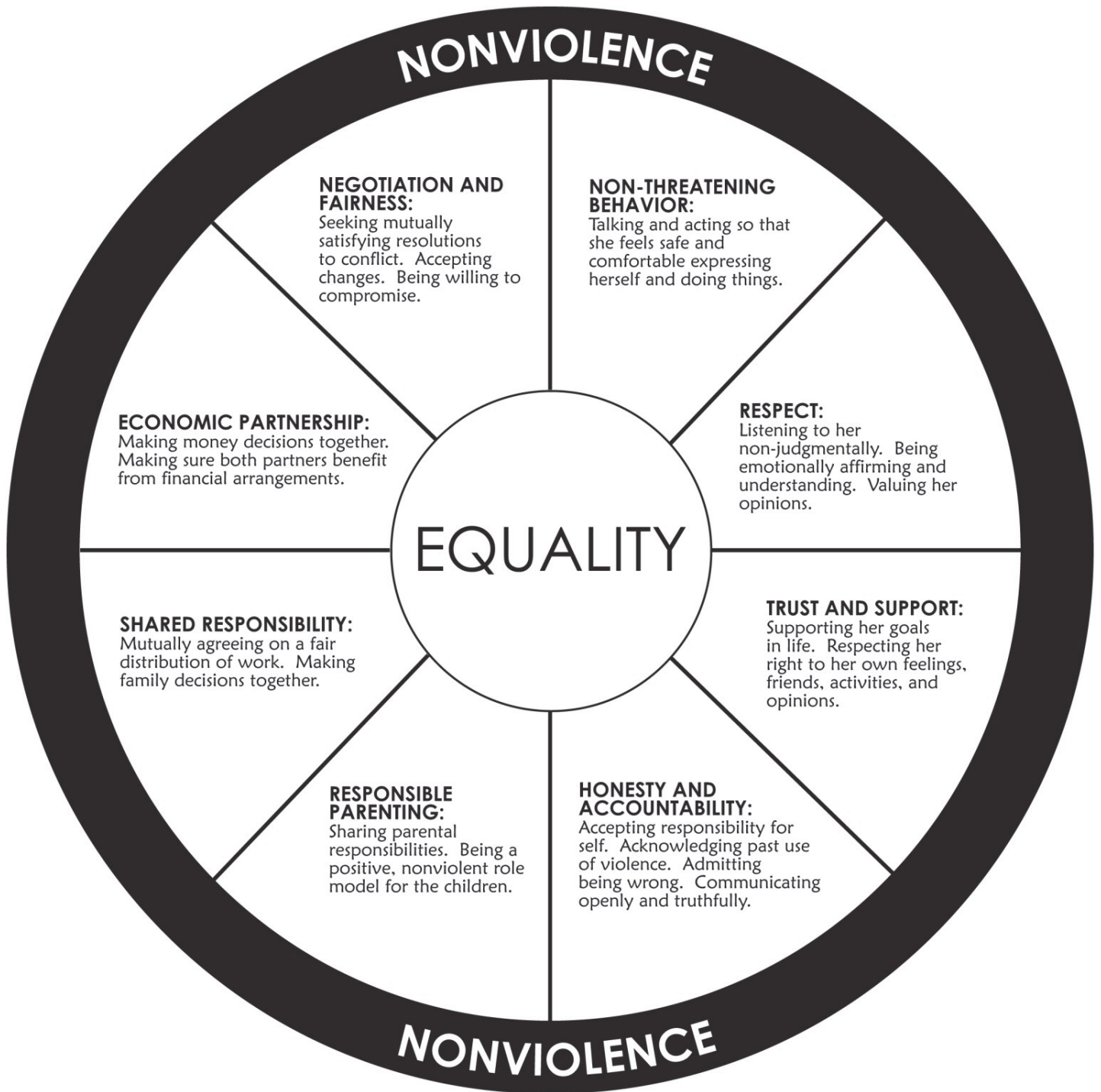
Claudia Kearney is a Trainer with the Center for Family and Community Engagement at North Carolina State University. She provides statewide training to North Carolina's county DSS workers, teaching the courses *Path Less Traveled* (CFTs that involve families experiencing domestic violence), *Step By Step* (An Introduction to CFTs), *Navigating CFTs* (for CFT Facilitators), and *Building Awareness and Culture Competency*. Claudia has 20 years of personal and professional domestic violence experience. Some of her past experience includes training and consulting with the North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence and North Carolina Division of Social Services Staff Development Team.



CRYSTALLE WILIAMS, MSW

Crystalle Williams has been a Social Services Program Consultant and Trainer with the North Carolina Division of Social Services' Staff Development Team since March 2005. She has over 18 years of experience working in child protective services and foster care. Crystalle currently provides statewide training to North Carolina's county DSS workers, teaching the courses *Domestic Violence Policy and Practice*, *CPS Assessments*, *CPS In-Home Services*, *Supervision in Child Welfare*, and *Foster Home Licensing*.

EQUALITY WHEEL



FATHERHOOD AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOMEWORK 2

Please answer the following questions for our next contact:

1. Can you identify 1 man in your life (different from the man you have identified previously) that was a good fathers? If so how could you tell?
2. What were the characteristics that you admired from this man?
3. What positive things did you learn about parenting from your father or father figures (uncles, cousins, brothers, stepfathers, mother's boyfriend etc.)?
4. Can you reflect over your life and identify men who where negative role models?
5. What negative things did you learn from your father or father figures about relationships with women?

6. What negative things did you learn about parenting from your father or father figures?

7. How could you try to change the negative things that you have taught your children about violence?

8. How do you explain your violence and abuse to your child(ren)?

9. How might you try to reverse the damage you have done to your child(ren)?

Name _____ Date _____

Connecticut's EVOLVE curriculum- June 2000

EXAMPLES OF WAYS COURT SYSTEM CAN HOLD BATTERERS ACCOUNTABLE

Fathers, arrested for DV and ordered out of the home, remain legally responsible for the safety and well being of their children. That being said, the following are ways the court system can help hold batterers accountable:

- Orders him to pay rent/utilities for the children even when he is out of the home
- Orders him into a BIP that strongly addresses his role as a father
- Orders him to stay away from children until the safety issue is resolved
- Orders him to return family car so it can be used for the children's needs
- Orders him to comply with child welfare
- Orders him to stay away from the places the victim and/or children visit often
- Anything related to his continuing responsibility for child well being
- Includes other conditions of release related to his children
- Orders conditions of probation related to responsible fatherhood

EVIDENCED-BASED TREATMENT FOR CHILDREN EXPOSED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Evidenced-based programs such as *The Incredible Years* and therapeutic modalities such as *Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy* and *Parent Child Interaction Therapy* have been shown to be effective in addressing the needs of children exposed to domestic violence.

BATTERER INTERVENTION PROGRAM OR ANGER MANAGEMENT?

STATE CERTIFIED	UNREGULATED
Usually ordered under supervised probation; BIP reports non-compliance which is then reported to courts	Often ordered without supervised probation; non-compliance may not be a violation and may not be viewed seriously
Minimum 26 weeks at 1.5 hours each: <i>More intensive. Allows time to examine underlying issues.</i>	Usually run from 4-12 weeks
Screen carefully Do Lethality Assessment. Unlikely to have “anger offenders” and not know it. Screen for substance abuse and refer for treatment if necessary	May not fully screen for DV; Do not do Lethality Assessment. May have DV offenders in program and not know it May not screen for substance abuse
Doesn’t allow excuses, minimizations, denials, or blaming victim	Teaches an understanding of reasons and triggers.
Give tools to understand underlying need for Control	Give tools to control rage and teaches coping strategies
Curriculum follows <i>State Rules and Standards: Strict Guidelines</i>	No approved curriculum or best practices; several popular programs
More focus on worldviews that support battering behaviors, more confrontation <i>Hold batterer accountable for behavior.</i> <u>GOAL: VICTIM SAFETY</u>	More cognitive focus or clinical focus; less confrontation; often process-based <u>GOAL: To prevent , diffuse, or redirect anger</u>
Required to contact all available victims and involve them through education in process; their rights; resources	Only contact victim if there is direct serious threat on his/her life
Report threats to victim by contacting her/he, calling police, accessing DV resources and supports	Reports <i>only</i> what they deem serious threats, usually to police or psychiatric emergency evaluation
Addresses anger management problems in a bigger context-often as tool to control victim	Does not address DV/offender need to maintain power over victim

HOW CAN I TELL IF HE NEEDS A BIP OR AN ANGER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM?

BIP	ANGER MANAGEMENT
Batterer looks for or sets up provocation to use as an excuse for “losing it” or “getting pushed over the edge” and is often able to delay the acting out of the anger; thus controlled and premeditated	Batterer responds impulsively to provocation and therefore needs to manage his response
“Loss of temper” is strategic and often unrelated to trigger,	Loss of temper is immediate response to trigger, or provocation
Batterer often has plan for outcome of assault May threaten before hand and then carry it out as promised.	No strategy; no plan
“Loss of temper” is only, or most often directed at partner	“Loss of temper” is directed at anyone, both close to and unfamiliar to offender
Victims are often those whom the batterer has control over or is seeking control ; always an intimate partner or ex-partner	‘Victims may be anybody who is in close proximity or who has triggered their anger Ex: Road Rage

TIPS FOR WORKERS WORKING WITH DADS: HELPFUL THINGS TO SAY TO MEN WHO HAVE BEEN VIOLENT WITH THEIR PARTNERS

Below you will find some suggestions for talking to fathers who have a history of domestic violence after you have talked to the mother. Talking to men in this situation can reduce or increase risk of violence. The suggestions are based on the following assumptions:

- You should speak to the father alone. If the mother is present, it can escalate things or lead to retaliation. She may feel safe when you are present, but he may take it out on her later.
- Check your feelings. You may be tempted to push the father to admit what he's done or want to confront him if he denies his abusive conduct. Experience shows that's not a good place to start.
- Build a relationship with him. If he can feel a sense of respect and interest, it will pay off by supporting his capacity to hear what you have to say.
- At least at the beginning, focus on getting him to reflect on the impact of his behavior on children, and on connecting with strengths that may help him in the change process.
- Figure out your approach first. Are you moving toward having him engage in services that address domestic violence *and* some form of safe visitation with his children? Or do you think that his risk level and/or the children's level of trauma are too high to move toward visitation? You may want to speak to your supervisor or seek consultation about this issue.

These are some things you can say. They are meant to "get under his skin", to help him reflect about the impact of his behavior and motivate him to get help. He may not react at the time you say these things. Keep in mind that these remarks work best if you have a good relationship:

- Many men don't realize it, but knowing that your dad has hurt your mom can scar children.
- You can change that.
- When you hurt your partner, you hurt your children. It doesn't matter what triggered you. You may have felt justified at the moment.
- (After he's been violent.) What you do now will be very important to them... If you don't change, they will feel you turned your back on them. It's not just about your partner.
- They will carry this forever: They always know. You can change things for the better.
- It's not about being a bad person. It's about changing behaviors that are harmful.
- You are very important to your children. Boys will get their sense of manhood and fatherhood from you. Girls will develop a sense of what to expect from men. Both of them will get a sense of how to resolve conflict from your example. You matter a great deal. If you can change your behavior, it will make a big difference to them.
- You are an example for them in all that you do. I know you love your children (say this only if true). Please go to this program (local batterer intervention program).
- If you do not show respect for their mother, you hurt them and weaken your family. (Talk about how to show respect even when you disagree.) If you disrespect her or undermine her discipline, you destroy the kids' capacity to respect adults.
- Earning respect is core. You don't get respect just because you're a man. If you can give a good example by holding your temper, being patient and listening, it helps.

Developed by F. Mederos for the Fatherhood Initiative at the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families, September 2008

TIPS FOR DADS: TEN WAYS TO BE A BETTER DAD

- 1. Respect Your Children's Mother.** One of the best things you can do for your children is to respect and support their mother, whether you are together or apart. A father and mother who respect each other and let their children know it provide a secure environment for them. When children see their parents respecting each other, they are more likely to feel that they are also accepted and respected.
- 2. Spend Time with Your Children.** How a father spends his time tells his children what is important to him. If you always seem too busy for your children, they will feel neglected no matter what you say. Treasuring children often means sacrificing other things. Kids grow up so quickly. Missed opportunities are lost forever.
- 3. Earn the Right to Be Heard.** Some fathers speak to their kids only when they have done something wrong. That is why so many children cringe when their mother says, "Your father wants to talk with you." Begin talking with your kids when they are young so that difficult subjects will be easier to handle later. Listen to their ideas and problems.
- 4. Discipline with Love.** All children need guidance and discipline, not as punishment, but to set reasonable limits. Remind your children of the consequences of their actions and provide meaningful rewards for good behavior. Fathers who discipline in a calm and fair way show love for their children. Hitting and screaming are hurtful and scary.
- 5. Be a Role Model.** Fathers are role models to their kids whether they realize it or not. You can't turn it off. A girl who spends time with a loving father grows up knowing she deserves to be treated with respect by boys, and what to look for in a man. Dads teach sons what is important in life by demonstrating honesty, humility, and responsibility.
- 6. Be a Teacher.** Too many fathers think teaching is something others do, but a father who teaches his children about right and wrong, and encourages them to do their best, will help his children make good choices. Involved fathers use everyday examples to help their children learn the basic lessons of life.
- 7. Eat Together as a Family.** Sharing a meal together can be an important and healthy part of family life. It provides some structure in a busy day, and it gives kids the chance to talk about what they are doing and want to do. It is also a good time for fathers to listen and give advice. Even better, it is a time for families to be together each day.
- 8. Read to Your Children.** In a world where television often takes over Kids' the lives, it is important for you to make the effort to read to them. Begin reading to your children when they are very young. When they are older, encourage them to read on their own. Nurturing the habit of reading is one of the best ways to ensure a lifetime of growth.
- 9. Show Affection.** Children need the security that comes from knowing they are wanted, accepted, and loved by their family. Fathers need to feel both comfortable and willing to hug kids. Showing affection everyday lets your kids know you love them.
- 10. Realize That a Father's Job Is Never Done.** Even after kids are grown and ready to leave home, they still look to their fathers for wisdom and advice. Whether it is continued schooling, a new job, or a wedding, fathers continue to play an essential part in the lives of their children as they grow up and build their own families.

National Fatherhood Initiative. (n.d.). *10 ways to be a better dad* [On-line]. Available: <http://www.fatherhood.org/tenways.htm> . Adapted by F. Mederos from: Rosenberg, J. & Wilcox., W.B. (2006). The Importance Of Fathers In The Healthy Development Of Children. US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau, Office on Child Abuse and Neglect.

Engaging Families Affected by Domestic Violence

Welcome!

Please click on the colored link below to download the handout for today:

[February 24, 2014 webinar handout](#)



N.C. DSS CHILD WELFARE SERVICES
STATEWIDE TRAINING
PARTNERSHIP



UNC
School of Social Work
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

Goals of this Webinar



Enhance your ability to . . .

- Identify and engage batterers
- Craft family service agreements that support behavior change

Ultimate Goal

Help you keep children and all family members safe from domestic violence.

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Agenda

- Brief orientation and introductions
- Understanding domestic violence
- Best practices for engagement
- Crafting effective Family Service Agreements



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Panelists

Claudia Kearney

Crystalle Williams



Moderator

Mellicent Blythe

Tech Support

Phillip Armfield

John McMahon

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Understanding Domestic Violence

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Domestic Violence

The establishment of control and fear in an intimate relationship through violence and other forms of abuse including but not limited to:


- physical abuse
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse
- economic oppression
- isolation
- threats
- intimidation
- maltreatment of the children to control the non-offending parent/adult victim

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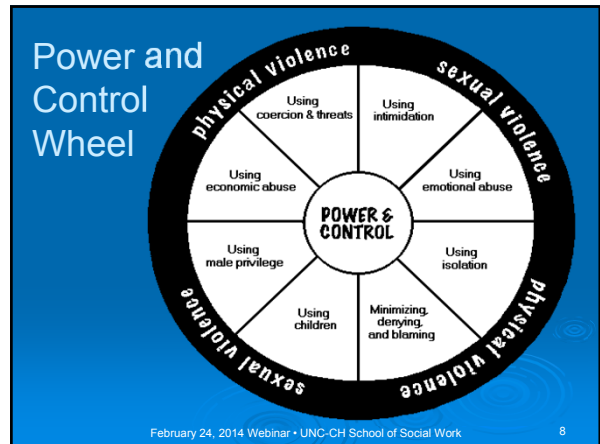
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Three Basic Components

1. Behavior
2. Pattern (vs. incident)
3. Relationship



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Behavioral Profiles: Identifying Batterers

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Battering Profile

1. Battering is a behavioral profile.
2. History of behavioral patterns tell us all we need to know.
3. No need for a psychological evaluation to tell us someone is a batterer.



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What Is "Dangerousness"?



Demonstrated capacity to continue inflicting severe violence.

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Assessing Dangerousness

- Primary Task
- Police arrest reports; disturbance calls
- Criminal, mental health records
- Victim affidavits
- CPS reports/ screen-outs
- Information from:
 - Probation, parole, Batterers Intervention Program
 - Partners, children, family
 - Abuser

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Indicators from Non-Family Collaterals

- Use of and access to weapons, martial arts
- History of:
 - Violent crimes, violations, stalking
 - Motor vehicle violations or arrests involving alcohol or drugs
 - Severe violence w/ partners, children
- Continued violence after Batters Intervention Program
- History of suicide attempts, ideations, threats

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Best Practices for Engagement

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Self Awareness

- Examine your feelings
- Be aware of your biases
- Filter and reflect



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Family Dynamics



- Understanding the **culture** of domestic violence.
- Respecting the structure of the family

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Motivation for Change



- Fatherhood and motherhood
- Focus on co-parenting
- Goals and dreams

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Abuser Treatment Programs

- Anger management, MH, SA services are **NOT** appropriate
- Certified by Council for Women/ DV Commission
- Re-educates abusers
- Helps them develop non-violent ways of interacting in relationship
- Focus on:
 - Victim safety
 - Identifying and changing belief systems

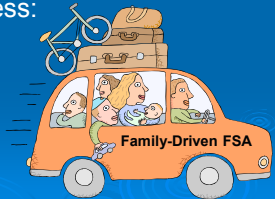
www.Councilforwomen.nc.gov

Crafting Effective FSAs

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Family Service Agreements

- Must be behaviorally-specific, family-driven & **NOT** cookie-cutter
- Should include formal & informal services; should assess:
 - Capacity
 - Willingness
 - Confidence
- Safety plan is part of larger service plan



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Family Service Agreements

- **Behaviors of Concern** = What behavior caused the child to be maltreated? What happened?
- **Objective** = Behavior we want to see; circumstances that will end services and close case
- **Activities** = How to get there
 - Services
 - Tasks

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Example Behaviors of Concern

- Has exhibited a pattern of violence, power, control, and intimidation towards Ms. S and the children (*ensure documentation details specific behaviors*)
- Has undermined Ms. S's parenting; turned the children against Ms. S
- Doesn't fully understand how the children have been affected by abuse; doesn't understand the children's experiences and consequences of witnessing abuse
- No safety plan yet
- Doesn't understand how to use legal/court system to keep safe; doesn't understand restraining orders
- Has not talked to the children about the abuse

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Elements of a FSA

1. Halting physical and psychological abuse & intimidation - partners, CPS
2. Confidentiality waivers between all involved - vital to measure compliance
3. Attending a BIP (known as ATP)
4. Individual therapy/counseling with focus on changing behavior, taking responsibility, being accountable, knowledge of DV

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FSA Elements *continued*

5. Attending substance abuse treatment
6. Participation in parenting education
7. Psychological testing (if appropriate)
8. Demonstrating capacity to cooperate in joint custody agreements
9. Learning about effects of witnessing violence on children and taking steps to remedy effects and heal relationships with children

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FSA Elements *continued*

- 10. Random alcohol/ drug screening
- 11. Permission to obtain criminal, MH, medical records
- 12. Supervised visitation
- 13. Compliance with all court orders (including child support)
- 14. Identifies support network to encourage non-violence

Objective & Activities for Protective Parent: Example 1

Objective Develop, practice, and follow a detailed safety plan to keep self and children safe

Activities

- Do internet searches to find a safety plan she will use
- Choose a safety plan, review with SW
- Practice it with the children
- Notify SW if unable to execute the safety plan

Protective Parent Objective & Activities: Example 2

Objective Know about legal & court interventions and be able to use systems to advocate safely for herself and children.

Activities

- Meet with court advocate by [DATE]
- View video "Documenting the Abuse"; write down all ideas
- Find safe place to keep documentation
- Meet with SW to discuss progress
- Go to courthouse, find where restraining orders are filed, and observe....
- On www.womenslaw.org learn about restraining orders; identify "pros" and "cons"

Community Collaboration

Community Collaboration

- Vital to the reduction of domestic violence and child maltreatment
- Major component of Multiple Response System
- The responsibility of everyone in community



Who Is Missing?

- | | |
|---|--|
| Law Enforcement | Substance Abuse |
| Courts / DA / Attorneys / Judges | Schools / DPI |
| Corrections / Probation / Jail / Prison | Juvenile Justice |
| Victim Services | DSS / CPS / Work First / Daycare / Child Support |
| Abuser Treatment | Medical Providers |
| Mental Health | Community |

All these surround / support the FAMILY

How do your community partners hold batterers accountable?



Service Planning Resources

- Accountability and Connection with Abusive Men - www.thegreenbook.info/documents/Accountability.pdf
- www.theraveproject.com
- www.survivortosurvivor.net
- www.womenslaw.org
- www.fatherhood.org

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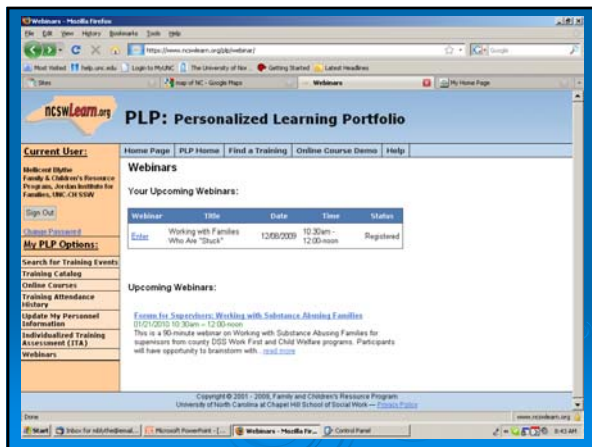
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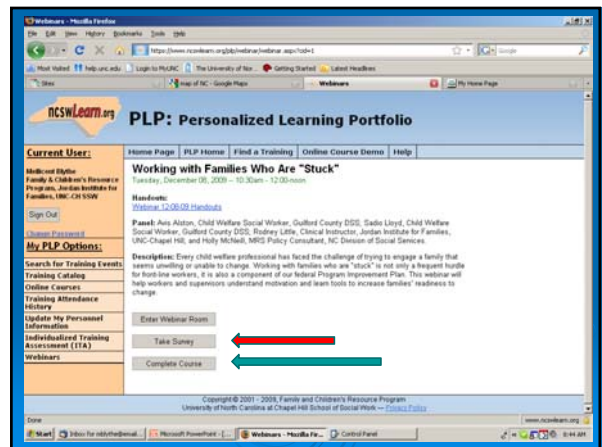
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 - ✓ Click "Complete Course" button

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Webinar	Title	Date	Time	Status
Enter	Working with Families Who Are "Stuck"	12/09/2013	10:30am - 12:00noon	Registered



Working with Families Who Are "Stuck"
Tuesday, December 09, 2013 - 10:30am - 12:00noon

Panel: Ann Atoton, Child Welfare Social Worker, Guilford County DSS; Betsy Little, Clinical Instructor, Jordan Institute for Families, UNC-Chapel Hill; and Holly McNeil, MRS Policy Consultant, NC Division of Social Services.

Description: Every child welfare professional has faced the challenge of trying to engage a family that seems unwell or unable to change. Working with families who are "stuck" is not only a frequent hurdle for front-line workers, it is also a component of our federal Program Improvement Plan. This webinar will help workers and supervisors understand motivation and learn tools to increase families' readiness to change.

Buttons: Enter Webinar Room (red arrow), Take Survey, Complete Course (green arrow)

Follow-up Document from the Webinar

Engaging Families Affected by Domestic Violence

Webinar delivered February 24, 2014
Follow-up document date: March 14, 2014

Presenters

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Handouts. Be sure to consult the handouts for this webinar:

https://www.ncswlearn.org/ncsts/webinar/handouts/31_Webinar_Handouts_2_24_14.pdf

Recording. If you missed the webinar or want to view it again, you can access a recording of this event by going to:

<http://fcrp.unc.edu/videos.asp>

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Answers and Resources from the Webinar

I. What Is and Isn't Domestic Violence

If physical or sexual violence is not involved in a relationship, but one partner displays other behavior seen on the Power and Control Wheel (see handouts), including threats, intimidation, isolation, control, etc., is it still considered DV?

Absolutely. That's often what we see in child welfare. Because reports are about child abuse and neglect we tend to pay a lot of attention to the physical manifestations of domestic violence, but the engine running the whole train of DV is the intimidation and other power and control tactics. As a child welfare professional, your goal should be to identify and clearly document how these tactics are affecting/harming the children.

In a training I attended the trainer stated that all criteria shown on the Power and Control Wheel had to be in place to qualify as DV—isolation, physical abuse, etc. Is that true?

No. Domestic violence is occurring when one partner in an intimate relationship uses one or more of the tactics shown on the wheel to try to achieve power and control over the other partner. Different batterers use different tactics—some use all of them, some don't. Some use a lot of physical violence, some rely instead on intimidation and manipulation tactics.

Can you consider it a DV situation if the issue is the grandparent exerting power and control over an adult child?

In a situation of a grandparent having power and control over an adult child, the Division of Social Services would not consider that DV because it is not an intimate relationship. DSS would still need to assess the impact of the grandparent's behavior on the child to determine if the child has been maltreated. Although it does not fit the Division of Social Services definition, it does fit other agency's definition of domestic violence. Some agencies consider it domestic violence if the people involved have a biological or marital relationship.

Can there be DV if the batterer does not live in the home? For example, the parents do not live together and have never lived together, but are dating and have a child together?

Yes, domestic violence is the appropriate term for what you describe. It is important to note, however, that when someone is not a caretaker, child welfare agencies don't have much jurisdiction to hold them accountable. In those cases, our community partners are the only ones who can hold them accountable (law enforcement, courts, probation, parole, etc.).

Is throwing a drink in someone's face an example of intimidation?

Could be. We have to assess the entire history of the relationship in order to establish the pattern.

If a batterer physically abuses their partner, but does not try to control or intimidate them, is it still DV and would a Batterer Intervention Program (BIP) be the best program for them?

Yes and yes. The bottom line: the batterer is trying to control the victim through fear. Again, we have to assess the entire history of the relationship and possibly even past relationships of the batterer to establish the pattern of behavior.

2. Ensuring Safety in DV Cases

What happens when the boyfriend is not a caretaker and does not participate but the mother does not take steps to stop the behaviors? How do we approach that without causing the victim to be the one to blame?

We need to make reasonable efforts to provide safety and supports. Do what you can. Offer the supports and services and information you can. Take the victim parent's ideas and use them to develop a safety plan. At same time, do concurrent planning. Ask the victim parent—if these children aren't safe with you, where would you want them to go? Children have to be safe. If a parent is not attempting or not succeeding in keeping a child safe, and DSS has made reasonable efforts to safety plan with and support the victim parent, and there are no appropriate family members available, sometimes filing a petition is the only way to assure child safety.

What about women battering women? Or men battering men? Or women battering men? Should the approach we use in these circumstances be different somehow?

- Anyone can batter and anyone can be a victim. If the person is displaying a pattern of behaviors and using abusive tactics described in the power and control wheel, then that person is a batterer. It doesn't matter what they look like. What matters is how they behave.
- Statistically, the majority of victims are female and the majority of batterers are men. That being said, domestic violence occurs as often in same-sex relationships. In general, the approach you use should be the same. There can be specific differences in these cases—for example, in same-sex couples the batterer might use the fact that their partner is not “out” as a lever of control. Also, in these relationships, victims have to deal with systemic discrimination, which presents additional barriers. And yes, women can batter men. Again, men who are seeking help often encounter systemic discrimination and are reluctant to seek help. Your advocacy in these situations will be important.

How can we work with families in which both partners initiate violence? Both yell and put holes in walls. They're pretty equal in their ability to inflict physical harm and control the other. So far we're encouraging both to be involved in BIP. I have two couples like this on my caseload currently.

- Sounds like both parents need to be accountable for their own behavior and how that behavior affects the child. That would be your focus. You can't really have two batterers in the same relationship. Victims will often fight back, as most of us may if faced with the same set of circumstances—but that doesn't make them batterers. Both people may be violent, but in domestic violence, one person still has control and power over what is happening. It is important to assess the history of the relationship to determine who holds the power and control, if anyone. Assess their past relationships to see if you can establish a pattern. Sometimes, it's not domestic violence—it is two people who fight all of the time. If there are no power and control issues, then maybe it is not domestic violence, although it can certainly be a child welfare issue. Sometimes, we are unable to assess who is the batterer and who is the victim... we just know that the child is being maltreated.
- BIPs are great for batterers, but you don't want someone who is not a batterer sitting through 26 weeks of a BIP with batterers. Most BIP facilitators will do a screening at intake to assess if someone is a victim; if someone is a victim, the BIP will refer them to victim services.
- Below is a handout that describes characteristics of batterers and victims. Often this will help workers differentiate between the two.

What if the mom is pregnant while court-involved and mom doesn't leave the abuser? What happens when this child is born?

- Pregnant women and their unborn children are at an elevated risk when in a domestic violence relationship. Homicide by an intimate partner is the number one cause of death for pregnant women. Many women report that the violence either started or got worse while pregnant. For this reason, we have to safety plan with her and make real attempts to engage, build trust, and partner with her. Talk with her about her fears and barriers. Does she have the resources to leave the relationship? What does she think will make her safest? Will he let her go?
- It is also vital that the agency works to engage the abuser in the process. Her leaving him will not necessarily stop the abuse. In fact, it may make it worse. Seeing that it is already in court, is he at all concerned with the consequences of his actions? If he refuses to participate in services or safety planning, ask the court to order him to a BIP. If a BIP is not available, seek a provider with knowledge about domestic violence or do some one-on-one work with him using some of the tools provided in the webinar handouts.
- Some agencies will remove the child “automatically” in a situation like this. North Carolina policy does not talk about “automatic removals.” Child removal is a big decision that should not be taken lightly, as it is our last resort. As in all cases, you will assess protective factors and risk factors when considering removal of a child, either voluntarily placed with kin or involuntarily placed in foster care, or when considering to substantiate or find in need of services. Are there family members that are willing to be supportive, move in, etc.? Is the mother capable, willing, and/or confident that she can keep the baby safe? If it is decided to remove a newborn, how will the agency ensure that the mother will be able to bond with the baby?
- All of these questions should help guide agencies to the best decisions.
- This document may also be helpful: *Fifty Obstacles to Leaving: a.k.a. Why Do They Stay?*
<http://www.vcpionline.org/pdfs/50%20Reasons%20Why%20Victims%20Stay.pdf>

3. Collaborating with Others to Assess and Respond to DV

What if a probation officer will not give any information regarding the parent on probation because of stated concerns about confidentiality?

- [N.C.G.S. § 7B-302 \(e\)](#) allows the sharing of information in a CPS case if it is for the purpose of protecting a child. This applies to the CPS Assessments and CPS In-Home phases of the case. If the case is in court, the agency could ask for an explicit court order authorizing the sharing of information. The first thing I would try, though, is asking the batterer to sign a consent to release information. This should be a part of your Family Services Agreement and should be discussed with your DSS attorney.
- If the person still will not provide the information and you believe the information is necessary to protecting the child, another option is to file an obstruction/ interference petition with the court. That process is described in Section 1408 of the Family Services Manual, Family and Investigative Assessments, pg. 29-30. Here is the link to the policy:
<http://info.dhhs.state.nc.us/olm/manuals/dss/csm-60/man/pdf%20docs/CS1408.pdf>.

Obstruction is defined as follows:

“This obstruction of, or interference with, a CPS Assessment means refusing to disclose the whereabouts of the juvenile, refusing to allow the director to have personal access to the juvenile, refusing to allow the director to observe or interview the juvenile in private, refusing to

allow the director access to confidential information and records upon request pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 7B-302, refusing to allow the director to arrange for an evaluation of the juvenile by a physician or other expert, or other conduct that makes it impossible for the director to carry out the duty to make a thorough assessment of the safety and risk of the children.”

- Consider developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the probation office to outline how your two agencies will work together. Refer to the Child Welfare Domestic Violence Policy, page 18. <http://info.dhhs.state.nc.us/olm/manuals/dss/csm-60/man/pdf%20docs/CS1409.pdf>

How can child welfare professionals access victim parents' affidavits?

An affidavit is a written declaration upon oath made before an authorized official for use as evidence in court. Victims often give affidavits as part of obtaining a restraining order; these should be part of public record.

4. Batterer Intervention Programs

What are the qualifications for the certified council programs? How do they differ from anger management?

- There are important differences between batterer intervention programs (in NC they are officially called “abuser treatment programs”) and anger management programs. Please refer to page 8 of the webinar handouts for a clear and concise summary of the differences. This handout is copyrighted by Bea Cote’ of Impact. Please direct all questions about this document to: b.cote@Impactdv.org.
- The NC Council for Women oversees our batterer intervention programs. Here is a link to their website, which describes program requirements and has an interactive map to locate a BIP in your area. <http://www.nccfwdvc.com/programs.aspx?pid=ab>
- Here is the link to the handbook for Batterers Intervention Programs in NC. Pages 9-11 discuss the difference between BIP and Anger Management: <http://www.councilforwomen.nc.gov/documents/publications/BattererInterventionHandbook.pdf>

In our county, parents are consistently ordered by the court to participate in mental health services and anger management to address DV instead of the appropriate empowerment/abuser treatment programs. What should we do about this?

- It sounds like your court partners are in need of domestic violence education, and they need to further understand the difference between Batterer Intervention Programs and anger management programs. Consider a meeting with your DSS attorney and court partners—judges, defense lawyers, prosecutors, etc. so that this matter can be discussed. Nothing will change until it is addressed. Consider partnering with your local BIP and DV agency to help with the DV education/ trainings of your court partners. It is important for your BIP to have a relationship with the court and attorneys, in that they provide education about the program and its benefits. Give the handout described above, “Batterer Intervention Program or Anger Management?” by Bea Cote’ of Impact. This handout was developed as a tool to help educate our partners and will help them learn the difference between the programs. It could be a great place to start your meeting.
- Often when the court orders anger management, mental health, and substance abuse services to address a batterer’s violence, it is because there is a misunderstanding as to what domestic violence is and what causes someone to be abusive to an intimate partner. If the judge believes that this behavior is happening because someone is angry, mentally ill, or on drugs and alcohol, then it makes sense that she/he would order those services. However, when a judge truly

understands what domestic violence is and what it looks like, in that these are intentional crimes and that batterers **choose** to behave abusively, the judge realizes that the abusive behavior is about a pattern of power, coercive control, fear, and intimidation and should, in turn, order Batterer Intervention Services. When mental illness and substance abuse overlap with abusive behavior, it may be appropriate for the person to participate in those services in addition to—**not in place of**—a BIP.

- Judges, just like DSS workers, can get into a rut of putting people in cookie-cutter services because “that’s how we do it,” and they get comfortable referring to services that they know—another reason for the batterer intervention program to make itself known to court officials through advertisement.
- DSS workers should be very clear when describing behavioral patterns, observations, and safety concerns in their documentation, petitions, court summaries, program referrals, etc. In your court summary, recommend that the person attend a BIP and explain why you think that program is best for this person in order to achieve actual behavioral change.
- It is helpful when the DSS worker is familiar with the local BIP’s 26-week program and its learning objectives so you can talk about it with clients and to the court. The more you know about it, the more you can advocate for it. Knowing the program will also allow you to have discussions with batterers about what they are learning in class, which is another way for you to hold them accountable.

What do we do if the batterer is court-ordered to receive anger management? Is there a way to change that to BIP or can BIP take the place of anger management?

- See the answers to the question above.
- DSS can’t change a court order or even adjust it on our own. DSS can ask the judge to change the court order based upon an assessment that the BIP is the best service to hold the person accountable and to change abusive behavior. Maybe you can get your BIP facilitators to talk to your judges about their programs and how they are different from anger management.

What do we do if we don't have a batterer intervention program (BIP) in our area?

- If you don’t have one in your area, one-on-one therapy can work, but the therapist must know about domestic violence. They must understand that the central issue is not a marital or relationship or mental health issue or substance abuse issue. It is about power and control. The therapist must understand this and be willing to hold the batterer accountable during sessions. Child welfare agencies will also want therapists and batterers to sign confidentiality waivers so the therapist can report to you if the batterer makes a threat or discloses abusive behavior during therapy.
- I would also encourage you to contact the NC Council for Women and ask them for guidance about what it would take to get a BIP in your area. They may be able to provide assistance.
www.councilforwomen.nc.gov

How do you work with abusers who go through abuser treatment programs but continue to batter, and the victim continues to go back? In our agency we look at the safety for the children and keep the children out of the home.

- Safety of the children is always our first priority. In domestic violence cases, a secondary focus of safety of the adult victim is also required, so you want to be sure that you are actively safety planning with her and providing her with DV information and education.

- We are obligated to make reasonable efforts to motivate and support the batterer to change, and to educate, motivate, and support the protective parent. Before making the decision to remove a child, be sure you have made reasonable efforts to engage, support, and safety plan with the victim, and be sure that the child is truly at risk. If the child is not safe and the victim is unable to protect, despite being given opportunities with services and supports to help them do so, court intervention is often our only option.
- Even if you have to remove a child, you will still work with both parents towards reunification, which will only happen with behavioral change. Safety planning and appropriate services are still important components needed to achieve behavioral change when children are placed in foster care.
- *Fifty Obstacles to Leaving: a.k.a Why Do They Stay?*
<http://www.vcpionline.org/pdfs/50%20Reasons%20Why%20Victims%20Stay.pdf>

In our agency we don't like the parent victims telling the kids what's happened, when the children do not already know. Why do you say the opposite—that telling the kids is a good thing?

- While we don't want parents turning to their children for emotional support or sharing inappropriate details, we know that children are aware of DV even if it happens outside of their direct observation. Secrecy is one of the factors that allows the power and control of the batterer to continue, and that contributes to children's fear and distrust. It is important that parents acknowledge what is happening and talk with children in a developmentally appropriate way about efforts to keep them safe. At a minimum, the National Child Traumatic Stress Network says that it "is always okay to ask children what they know and what they think."
- Most kids do know on some level what is happening in their families. They may not understand it, but they often know that something is wrong. Protective parents can help children process their children's experiences safely and they can safety plan with their children as appropriate, and they may need guidance from the DSS worker in doing that.
- NC's DV policy says that children are not responsible for their own safety; however, they may be empowered by being involved in the safety planning process. It is important to tell the child that if the plan doesn't work, it is not the child's fault.
- Children don't need to know everything, but they do need to know that someone is trying to keep them safe. One of the most devastating things that happen in families where there is DV is that the destruction of the mother/ child bond, which affects overall outcomes for children. We can help parents mend those bonds as part of our case planning process.
- Below are some handouts that you can do with parents during your home visits to help them think through how to have healthy conversations with their children.
- Please visit the following link, pages 5-8 for more detailed information on this topic. This is a very good resource from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network:
http://www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/cvs/ofv/grantees/promising_practices/dvchildfactsheet.pdf

Could you discuss evidence of the impact of DV on the children?

There is a lot of research-based information on the effects of DV on children, so we will refer you directly to the following resources to get you started:

- The National Child Traumatic Stress Network is a great resource for research and tools related to the short and long-term effects of trauma on children. www.nctsnet.org
- *Domestic Violence and Children: Questions and Answers for Domestic Violence Project Advocates*, pages 2-4. (Though this is geared towards advocates, the information is beneficial to child welfare workers too).
http://www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/cvs/ofv/grantees/promising_practices/dvchildfactsheet.pdf
- *Child Welfare Domestic Violence Policy and the Resources for Enhanced Practice* (at the end of the policy): <http://info.dhhs.state.nc.us/olm/manuals/dss/csm-60/man/pdf%20docs/CS1409.pdf>
- https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/domestic_violence/impact.cfm
- http://www.stopvaw.org/effects_of_domestic_violence_on_children
- www.survivortosurvivor.org (Under “getting help for the abuse,” is a video link entitled “Children.”)

5. Resources

Where can I find the video "Documenting the Abuse?"

You can find it here: <http://www.survivortosurvivor.org/>. There is a video link entitled “Documenting the Abuse.” This is a North Carolina-based resource that has lots to offer victim parents and child welfare practitioners.

Are there DV materials available in Spanish?

The Power and Control Wheel is available in Spanish here: <http://www.theduluthmodel.org/pdf/Poder-y-Control.pdf>.

- *The National Domestic Violence Hotline in Espanol*: <http://espanol.thehotline.org/>
- *International Domestic Violence Information* in over 110 languages:
<http://www.hotpeachpages.net> (you can search by language, country, etc.)
- *Latina organization with bilingual hotline and resources*: <http://www.casadeesperanza.org/>
- *National Latino Alliance to End Domestic Violence*: <http://www.dvalianza.org/>

Other DV Resources:

- *Fathering After Violence: Working with Abusive Fathers in Supervised Visitation*:
http://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/userfiles/file/Children_and_Families/fathering_after_violence.pdf
- The National Domestic Violence Hotline: <http://www.thehotline.com>
- *Fifty Obstacles to Leaving: a.k.a Why Do They Stay?*
<http://www.vcpionline.org/pdfs/50%20Reasons%20Why%20Victims%20Stay.pdf>

Batterer Demeanor and Characteristics

- **Not squarely focused on fear or safety**
- **Usually blames partner for every incident & everything else in relationship**
- **“Trashes” the partner; accuses partner of numerous related & unrelated acts of wrongdoing**
- **Seems eager to pursue legal avenues & “seek justice”**
- **Doesn’t describe a typical pattern (cycle of violence) when asked to describe abuse history**
- **Is not controlled by partner, describes life of freedom from control**
- **Wants revenge to punish the “batterer”**
- **Has a rigid, hierarchical belief system**
- **Does not express pity or desire to help the “batterer”**

Victim Demeanor and Characteristics

- **Blames self for much of the abuse**
- **May even describe herself as the offender**
- **Fearful body language indicates fearfulness (eyes down, low voice, tears, hesitation, etc)**
- **Describes a classic pattern (cycle of violence) when questioned about abuse history**
- **May appear angry or resentful**
- **Fears physical retaliation for applying for 50B or pursuing any legal action**
- **Has been abused in past**
- **Describes a life of control by batterer**
- **Can describe in precise detail exactly what happened in abuse episodes**
- **Expresses pity for the batterer**
- **Describes many attempts to help batterer**
- **Describes that batterer as “sick”**

J.A. Owens, 1997

Emotional Needs of Children Experiencing Domestic Violence in Their Families

Child's Emotion: Fear

- Fear of those they love in their own home, where they should feel most safe

Child needs to:

- Be able to talk to someone they trust about their feelings
- Learn ways to keep themselves safe and to know they have a plan for what to do when there is violence
- Have a feeling of control in the situation (“I will go over to my neighbors when it happens”)

Child's Emotion: Anger

- Anger at the abuser, or at the survivor for not leaving the situation.

Child needs to:

- Know that it is *normal* and *okay* to feel angry about this
- Be able to talk about the feelings with someone they trust
- Express their anger in non-destructive ways

Child's Emotion: Mixture of anger and love

- Feeling torn between feelings of anger and love toward the abuser.
Feeling guilty for both feelings

Child needs to:

- Learn that it's okay to feel both anger and love toward someone
- Know it is okay to love their parent even when they hate the behavior they see
- Know they are not bad if they love the abuser

Child's Emotion: Confusion about being able to love *both* parents

- Feeling they need take sides (e.g. “if I love Mom, I can't love Dad” and vice versa)

Child needs to:

- To know that it is okay to love both parents at the same time
-

Child's Emotion: Loss

- Loss of a healthy, safe family
- Loss of one parent if they leave (or the constant threat of this)
- Loss of comfort in the home.

Child needs to:

- Talk about feelings with someone they trust
 - Develop a support system of extended family or friends outside the home
-

Child's Emotion: Guilt/Responsibility

- Guilt for causing the violence, or not stopping it somehow
- Responsible for preventing the violence, and taking care of Mom and the family.

Child needs to:

- Understand that the violence is not their fault, and that it is an adult problem for the adults to work out.
-

Child's Emotion: Feeling life is unpredictable (never knowing when a crisis will erupt)

- Feeling vulnerable on a daily basis, with no power or control about what will happen

Child needs to:

- Find areas in their lives where they can have control and make plans and decisions
- Create a safety plan with someone they trust
- Create some structure and stability wherever possible (creating daily routines that provide a sense of control)

Helping the Non-Offending Parent/Adult Victim Understand the Effects of Domestic Violence on the Children

Experiential Exercise

Imagine you are a child in this family

Lots of times, when you and your family are having family dinner at home, your father tells your mother that he can't stand the way she chews. She is a slob. She is so gross. He can't stand to look at her. He tells her to go and stand by the stove and eat. She doesn't say anything she leaves the table with her plate. He throws her glass of sweet tea across the room in her direction calling her a stupid cow.

“How did you feel about your father?”

“How did you feel about your mother?”

“Who did you blame?”

“What did you want to do?”

Let's think of your child/ children. When they have experienced domestic violence in their home:

How do they feel?

What do they learn?

How do they act?

Ask the non-offending parent/adult victim to consider the effects of domestic violence on the children and answer/complete the following:

How do your children feel about the violence?

What have your children learned from the violence?

How do your children act as a result of the violence?

What can I do to help?

What would others say when asked how the children are affected?
(Grandparents, neighbors, school personnel, coaches, etc)

Helping Children When There is Domestic Violence in the Home

- Talk about it with them when they are ready
- Listen to them
- Talk about their feelings
- Show understanding
- Let them know it's not their fault
- Let them talk, if they want to
- Let them know you love them
- Let them know you will try to keep them safe/act in a way that is safe
- Let them know the violence is not okay
- Acknowledge it's hard/scary for them
- Accept that they may not be willing or able to talk about it right away
- Always act in a way that is non-threatening and non-violent with your kids
- Take them to counseling if they need it
- Set limits respectfully when your child is acting violent
- Don't expect your child to respond immediately.

When the Protective Parent Hasn't Talked to the Children about the Abuse

An Advocate's Story

I worked with Amy, a little girl who was six-years-old. Her mom never said anything to her about the violence, or why they were staying in the shelter. In our groups, we have the kids draw pictures. Amy drew a picture of a man and a woman in a house. The man had his mouth wide open. She told me that it was Amy and her husband when she grew up. I asked her what her husband was doing. Why did he have his mouth wide open? She said, "He's yelling." I asked, "Why is he yelling?" Amy said because he loves me.

Bill's Story

My father used to beat on my step-mother all the time, right in front of me. No one ever talked about it. No one said anything. I got used to it, I would just sit there and eat snacks, watch TV, like nothing was going on. I never really beat on my wife like he did; I just slap and push her around sometimes.

Children learn:

- **that the domestic violence is normal**
- **violence is an appropriate way to resolve conflicts**
- **violence is a part of family relationships**
- **the perpetrator of violence in intimate relationships goes unpunished**
- **violence is a way to control other people**

Obstacles to Talking to Your Children about Domestic Violence

- **What makes it hard to talk to your kids about domestic violence?**

- **What can you do to overcome these obstacles?**

- **How can I help?**



Helping the Non-Offending Parent/Adult Victim Overcome the Obstacles

“I have tried to talk about it and my child won’t listen.”

- Be patient, don’t push it, talk at the child’s pace, they usually hear you anyway.
- Help the non-offending parent/adult victim create an environment that is safe and nurturing.
- Provide the non-offending parent/adult victim with age appropriate story books that the parent can read and share with the children.

“I feel uncomfortable.”

- Acknowledge that it may be uncomfortable to talk about the violence.
- Help the parent become more comfortable by talking with you.
- Offer to role play and assume the role of the child.
- Demonstrate age appropriate ways for talking to children.

“I’m scared to bring it up.”

- Acknowledge that it is scary to think and talk about the violence he or she has experienced. It is also scary for the children. Once you start talking it will become less scary. I think you feel comfortable talking to me, let’s talk about an incident that was frightening to you and your children.

“I don’t know what to say.”

- A good starting point is to tell the children that you love them and the violence in the home is not their fault.
- Let the children know that is okay to talk with you about their feelings and safety plan with the children.

“It’s over now, why talk about it.”

- Help the non-offending parent/adult victim to realize that while the relationship may be over, the child may be angry at the victim or the abuser, the child has experienced a loss and the child and may feel guilty or responsible for causing the violence or not stopping it.

Children's Responses and Associated Feelings

How my child might respond when I talk to him or her about domestic violence:	What feeling might he or she be having? List feelings next to each response:

What Children Need To Hear From The Protective Parent

- It's not okay.
- It's not your fault.
- It must be scary for you.
- I will listen to you.
- You can tell me how you feel; it is important.
- I'm sorry you had to see/hear it.
- You do not deserve to have this in your family.
- I will try my best to keep you safe.
- There is nothing you could have done to prevent/change it.
- We can talk about what to do to keep you safe if it happens again.
- I care about you. You are important.

What the Non-Offending Parent/Adult Victim Should Not Say/ Do

- "It's okay."
- "I/ You/ We deserved it;" "It's my/ your fault."
- "Don't tell anyone."
- "It will never happen again."
- Don't minimize what happened/ is happening.
- Don't "bad-mouth" the batterer, especially when he/she is a parent
- Don't make excuses for the batterer's behavior
- Don't blame the children for the behavior of any adult.
- Don't talk about adult issues in child's presence.

Tips for Safety Planning with Children

Help your child to identify warning signs

First, think about what are the warning signs (if any) that you have when your partner is about to become abusive. Here are some examples:

- Mom and Dad are arguing
- Dad is raising his voice
- Dad and/or Mom is drunk/high
- Dad is name calling or threatening
- Dad is slamming doors, stomping around

In talking to your child about his or her father, always stay focused on **behaviors**. You could say something like, "Sometimes your Dad acts in ways that are scary, and when he does, we need to do things to try to stay safe."

- Children are not responsible for their own safety, and are not to be made responsible for planning.
- Safety planning with the children must be age and developmentally appropriate, include and involve the non-offending parent adult/victim.
- Children can be taught how to use a telephone and how to make a collect call.
- Children may need to know how to call 911 and what information they should give.
- Children must be told/taught that they are not to intervene in an adult argument or violent incident.
- Children should know a safe place in their home to go if they feel threatened.
- Children should know and practice (with the non-offending parent/adult victim) an escape route out of the home, where to go and what to do once they leave the home.
- Parents should identify an emergency code word or signal with their children, as well as what to do when they see or hear it, dial 911, leave the house, or get help.
- Children have to know that if the plan does not work it is not their fault.

Safety Planning With Young Children

This page is for parents and children to talk about together, and for children to fill out with their parent's help.

SAFETY PLAN FOR

Who do I trust that can help me be safe when there is violence in our home? (Neighbor, relative)

Name of person: _____

Phone numbers: _____

What plan should I make with that person (Example: That person will call the police when I call and use the code word _____ or will let me come to their house).

Where is a safe place for me to go when my Dad (mom's friend, partner) is acting in scary ways? (Examples: our neighbor's house, a relative's house, to the etc.

(List names of people)

If I can't leave, where is the safest place in the house for me to go? (Example, my bedroom, the basement, the bathroom)

If I can call 911, what should I say?

Safety Planning With Older Children

I will not go into the same room where violence is occurring between the adults (mom and dad) in my home.

I will try to make sure my younger siblings are in a safe place.

We will go to a room that has a phone and/or an exit.

If someone is being hurt and/or I am afraid I know how and will call 911 for help.

I will practice an escape plan and know how to get to a safe place.

These are the places I can go to if I have to leave

I can call 911 and I can call these people and they will help me,

I know that if the plan doesn't work it is not my fault.

Batterer Intervention Program or Anger Management?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>STATE CERTIFIED</u> <p>Usually ordered under supervised probation; BIP reports non-compliance which is then reported to courts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>UNREGRULATED</u> <p>Often ordered without supervised probation; non-compliance may not be a violation and may not be viewed seriously</p>
Minimum 26 weeks at 1.5 hours each: <i>More intensive. Allows time to examine underlying issues.</i>	Usually run from 4-12 weeks
Screen carefully Do Lethality Assessment. Unlikely to have “anger offenders” and not know it. Screen for substance abuse and refer for treatment if necessary	May not fully screen for DV; Do not do Lethality Assessment. May have DV offenders in program and not know it May not screen for substance abuse
Doesn't allow excuses, minimizations, denials, or blaming victim	Teaches an understanding of reasons and triggers.
Give tools to understand underlying need for Control	Give tools to control rage and teaches coping strategies
Curriculum follows <i>State Rules and Standards: Strict Guidelines</i>	No approved curriculum or best practices; several popular programs
More focus on worldviews that support battering behaviors, more confrontation <i>Hold batterer accountable</i> for behavior. <u>GOAL: VICTIM SAFETY</u>	More cognitive focus or clinical focus; less confrontation; often process-based <u>GOAL: To prevent , diffuse, or redirect anger</u>
Required to contact all available victims and involve them through education in process; their rights; resources	Only contact victim if there is direct serious threat on his/her life
Report threats to victim by contacting her/he, calling police, accessing DV resources and supports	Reports <i>only</i> what they deem serious threats, usually to police or psychiatric emergency evaluation
Addresses anger management problems in a bigger context-often as tool to control victim	Does not address DV/offender need to maintain power over victim

How can I tell if he needs a BIP or an Anger Management Program?

Batterer looks for or sets up provocation to use as an excuse for “losing it” or “getting pushed over the edge” and is often able to delay the acting out of the anger; thus controlled and premeditated	Batterer responds impulsively to provocation and therefore needs to manage his response
“Loss of temper” is strategic and often unrelated to trigger,	Loss of temper is immediate response to trigger, or provocation
Batterer often has plan for outcome of assault May threaten before hand and then carry it out as promised.	No strategy; no plan
“Loss of temper” is only, or most often directed at partner	“Loss of temper” is directed at anyone, both close to and unfamiliar to offender
Victims are often those whom the batterer has control over or is seeking control ; always an intimate partner or ex-partner	‘Victims may be anybody who is in close proximity or who has triggered their anger Ex: Road Rage