the Safe and Together™ model:
Introduction to Child Welfare Case Planning with Domestic Violence Perpetrators

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Goals

• Review how the Safe & Together Model encourages good practice with domestic violence perpetrators

• Explore case planning strategies for child welfare involved domestic violence perpetrators

• Understand the value of a “beyond services” approach to case planning with perpetrators

• Identify basic strategies for assessing change in perpetrators
Agenda

- Brief review the Safe and Together Model
- Domestic Violence Proficient Practice
- Behavior-based expectations
- Beyond services
- Collaborative interventions
- Identifying and evaluating behavior change
- Recommendations

Safe and Together™ Principles

1. Keeping child Safe and Together™ with non-offending parent
   - Safety
   - Healing from trauma
   - Stability and nurturance

2. Partnering with non-offending parent as default position
   - Efficient
   - Effective
   - Child-centered

3. Intervening with perpetrator to reduce risk and harm to child
   - Engagement
   - Accountability
   - Courts

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Safe and Together™

Critical Components

- Perpetrator’s pattern of coercive control
- Role of substance abuse, mental health, culture and other socio-economic factors
- Actions taken by the perpetrator to harm the child
- Full spectrum of the non-offending parent’s efforts to promote the safety and well being of the child
- Adverse impact of the perpetrator’s behavior on the child

When Domestic Violence is the Concern……

The domestic violence perpetrator and his behavior are the foundational source of the risk and safety concerns for children.

* not the adult survivor or her behavior

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Continuum of Domestic Violence Practice (CODVP)

Domestic Violence Destructive  Domestic Violence Incapable  Domestic Violence Blindness  Domestic Violence Pre-Competence  Domestic Violence Competence  Domestic Violence Proficiency

Domestic Violence Informed Child Welfare System

Policy  Practice  Training  Services  Collaboration

Weak Nexus  Strong Nexus

About the Adults  Integrated with children/other CPS issues

“Failure to Protect”  Perpetrator Pattern

Fathers Invisible  High Standards for Fathers

Child v. Adult Survivor  Child Safety & Well Being Tied to Adult Survivor
Invisible Fathers = Poor Work with Families

Highly gendered view of parenting/low standards for fathers

Lack of development of gender responsive culturally specific policies/services/interventions for fathers

Anemic articulation of fathers’ influence in lives of their children/family

No/limited documentation/case planning related to fathers

No/limited assessment of fathers’ role in family

High Standards for Fathers = Better Work with Families

High standards for fathers

Gender responsive, culturally specific policies/services/interventions for fathers

Explicitly including respect and support of female partner as part of definition of good father

Documenting fathers’ role and impact on family/case planning accounts for his influence/includes him

Broadly assessing fathers’ positive and negative role in family

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Multiple pathways to harm

**Perpetrator’s Pattern**
- Coercive control toward adult survivor
- Actions taken to harm children

**Children’s Trauma**
- Victim of physical abuse
- Seeing, hearing or learning about the violence

**Effect on partner’s parenting**
- Depression/PTSD/anxiety/substance abuse
- Loss of authority
- Energy goes to addressing perpetrator instead of children
- Interference with day to day routine and basic care

**Effects on family ecology**
- Loss of income
- Housing instability
- Loss of contact with extended family
- Educational and social disruptions

**Harm to child**
- Behavioral, Emotional, Social, Educational
- Developmental
- Physical Injury

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Using Interviewing Perpetrators in Documentation

- What their hopes are for the children
- Quotes from perpetrator
- What they’re willing to do to change
- Information about parenting/children
Documenting Perpetrators’ Patterns

• Perpetrator behaviors
  o Physical and sexual violence
  o Emotional and psychological abuse
  o Controlling behaviors
  o Intimidation/threats

• Actions the perpetrator has taken to harm the children
  o Direct abuse/neglect
  o Using the children as a weapon
  o Undermining the partner’s parenting

• Adverse impact of the perpetrator’s behaviors on the children

Examples of Documentation Recommendations

★ Do not lump batterer and survivor together. Avoid phrases like
  – “Couple engages in violence”
  – “Parents have a history of domestic violence”
  – “Parents both deny the violence.”

★ Precise & descriptive
  – Avoid euphemisms or vague terms like “argued” if what you mean is “hit”
  – Describe the pattern: “father has engaged in an escalating pattern of physical violence and intimidation that involved multiple incidents of physical assault, threats to kill the mother and her children.”

★ Affirm the perpetrator’s role in harming the children through his actions
  – “These behaviors have isolated the mother from her support system, the children from relatives and led to them moving school systems and residences twice in the past year (as a result of evictions).”

★ Avoid blaming the victim for the perpetrator’s violent and abusive behavior

★ Language to avoid:
  – “Dysfunctional” family
  – Mother “allows” or “enables” the violence
  – Mother “failed to protect” the children
Case Management and Case Practice with Perpetrators

What challenges have you faced in managing cases with perpetrators?

How do We Get There?

____________________ = Child Safety?
Behavior Based Case Practice

• When domestic violence is the concern, what’s the risk to the children? → The perpetrator’s behavior

• What needs to change in order to reduce the risk to the children? → The perpetrator’s behavior

Behavioral Expectations for Perpetrators

- Ending the abuse
- High parenting standards
- Providing a safe environment for children
- Providing for needs of children
- Identifying the impact they’ve had on children
Case Planning with Perpetrators

- Look at the document: Case Planning with Perpetrators in Child Welfare Cases where Domestic Violence is Present
  - Can be used on safety plans, service agreements, case plans, treatment plans, or any signed document with a perpetrator
  - Can be used to guide conversations with perpetrators about expectations and behaviors
  - Can be used to measure change

- This document is a guide; the perpetrator’s actual behaviors should also be a guide.
- For example if you know a perpetrator interferes with his partner taking the children to therapy, their plan would read: Mr. … will not interfere in any manner with the children getting to therapy, including but not limited to by withholding transportation from any family member.

Practice Tip

A perpetrator’s ability to attend a program does not ensure that children will be safer
What are we Measuring when it comes to Services?

- If the case plan was for the client to attend a service, then success is measured by completion.

- If the case plan was for a client to make behavioral change, then success is measured by evidence of change that supports child safety and well-being.

Batterer Intervention Treatment Issues

- Counseling should focus on stopping the abuse
  - *Behavior change is the priority*

  Anger management, couples counseling and individual counseling are problematic with domestic violence perpetrators.

- Communication between provider and CPS is critical to avoid the batterer manipulating either party:
  - *Share with program what you know about the batterer’s pattern of coercive control and actions to harm the children.*
  - *Share what your goals for the batterer are.*

- Substance treatment is best done at the same time (if possible).
Making Referrals for Perpetrators

- Give specific examples of their behaviors
- Give specific examples of how the client has harmed children
- Describe the goals for the client
- Describe what you know about the client’s motivators towards change
- Describe expectations for collaboration between DCF and the provider

Collaboration as an Intervention

- Who else is working with the perpetrator?
- What information do other systems need to work with the perpetrator?
- Who has jurisdiction over the perpetrator?
- Who else is referring the perpetrator to services?
- Who’s monitoring and following up with the perpetrator?
Interventions with Perpetrators

- Interviewing with Purpose
- Documenting behaviors
- Family conferences/team meetings
- Referrals to BIP with details about behaviors
- Juvenile/Dependency court proceedings

Discussing concerns and plans with:

- Providers
- Law enforcement
- Criminal court personnel (including prosecutors)
- Probation officers

Flowchart:

1. Calling criminal court or probation
2. Working with law enforcement
3. Have a family conference with the perpetrator’s resources related to behavior change
4. Interview the perpetrator about the impact of their behaviors on children
5. Informing batterer intervention providers about batterer behaviors
6. Talk to substance abuse and mental health providers
Evaluating Change

- Is his behavior different?
  - Specifically related to his pattern of coercive control
- Is he able to focus on the needs of his children versus his own needs?
- Is able to support the children’s relationship with their mother?
- Does he identify his abusive behavior as being wrong?
- Can he describe the impact of his abusive behavior on his children?

Case Plan
Recommendations

For the perpetrator:

- Batterer Intervention (rather than anger management, individual therapy or couples’ counseling);
- Substance Abuse or Mental Health Treatment (when necessary);
- Behavior-specific goals (to end violent behaviors and provide safety and for basic needs of children)
Case Plan Recommendations

For the survivor:

• Continue efforts to provide for the safety and well-being of children;

• Identify available resources (domestic violence advocates, shelter, therapy for self or children);

• Continue to inform child welfare of perpetrator’s behaviors

Case Plan Recommendations

To avoid:

• Case plans that ask both partners to end the perpetrator’s behaviors (Example: Mom and Dad should not engage in further DV);

• Case plans that overburden survivors with services simply because perpetrator is not working with CPS;

• Case plans that do not take into account batterer-generated risks

Making victims responsible for perpetrators’ behaviors is both dangerous and counterproductive to child welfare’s goals
Registration Now Open
2014 2nd National Safe and Together Model Symposium
October 23 & 24, 2014
Seattle, Washington
Seattle Marriott Waterfront

Building on successful 1st National Safe and Together Symposium, our 2014 event will have the following enhanced features:

• Full day pre-Symposium workshops- October 22, 2014
• Presentations by Safe and Together sites and partners (call for papers will be made at the beginning of 2014)
• A wider focus including workshops on fathers, domestic violence informed child welfare systems, implementation fidelity and other topics

For more information, join our email list and keep checking back at http://www.endingviolence.com

Safe and Together Model Resources & Educational Events

• Open Events
  o 2nd National Symposium in Seattle WA October 2014

• Resources
  o Website: www.endingviolence.com
  o Safe and Together videos:
    • https://www.youtube.com/user/SafeandTogetherModel
  o Safe and Together model : safe-and-together.endingviolence.com/blog/
  o Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/DavidMandelAndAssociates
  o Twitter: https://twitter.com/SafeandTogether

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