

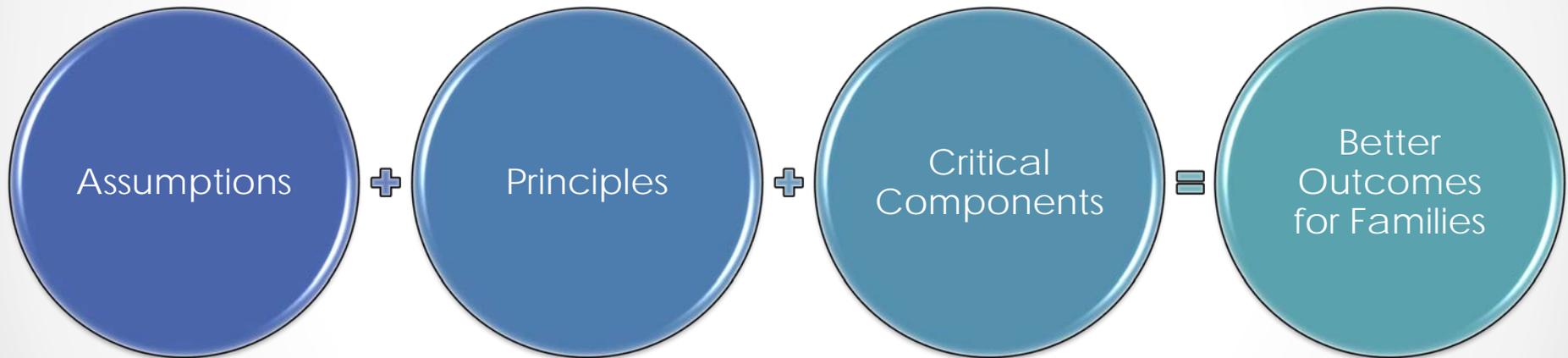
the *Safe and Together*[™] model:

Shifting the paradigm: the intersection of domestic violence, child maltreatment and child safety and wellbeing

Model Court Day: Summit on Child Abuse & Neglect
August 13, 2013
Salem OR

David Mandel
& ASSOCIATES, LLC

*Safe and Together*TM model: Improving Competencies and Cross System Collaboration

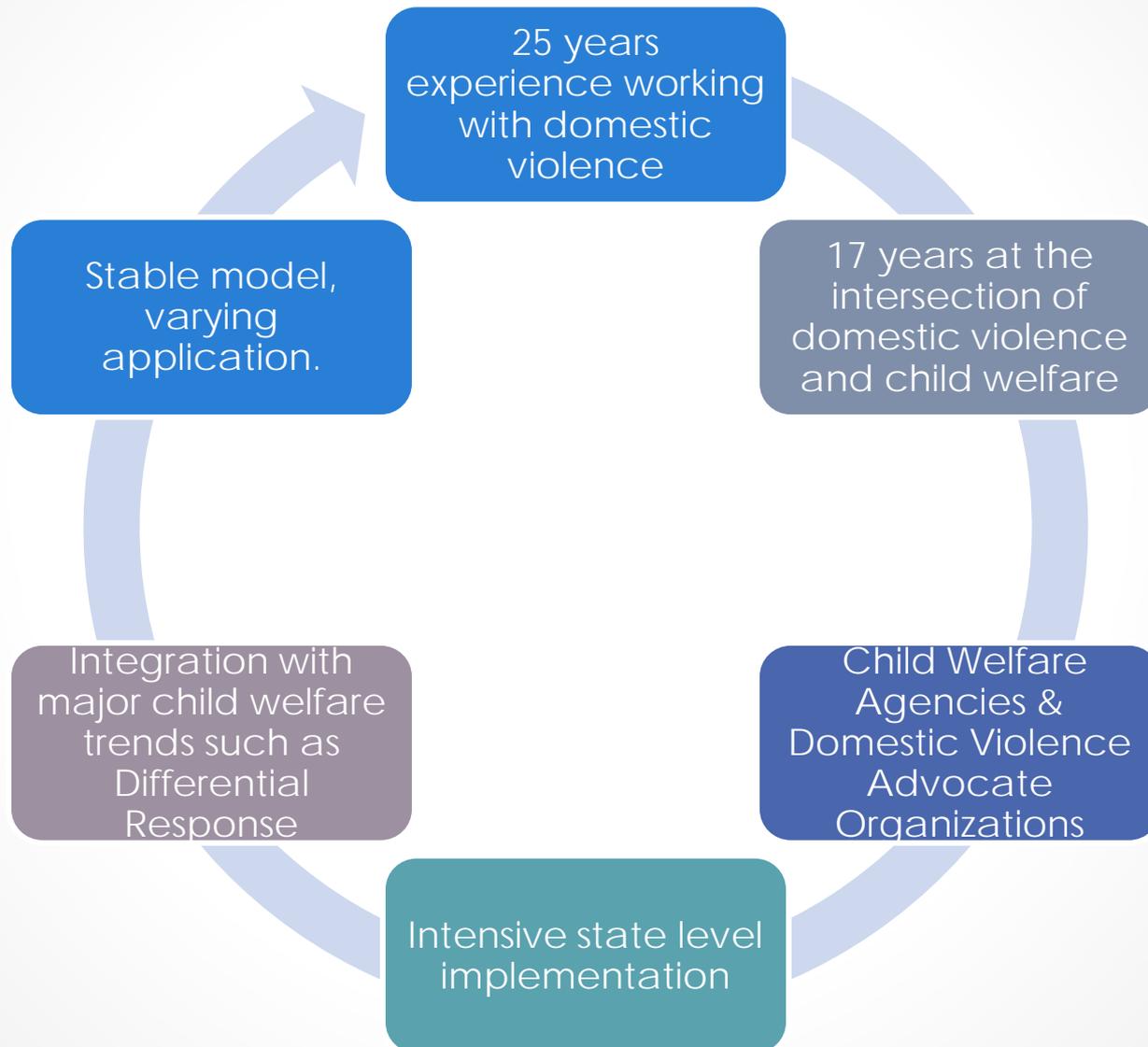


What it is?

Safe and Together Model is Child Centered



Field Tested Promising Best Practice National Model



Stable Model, Varying Application

Child welfare subject matter experts and co-located advocates (Florida)

Intensive training for Alternative Response workers/Certified Trainers (Ohio)

Joint training of domestic violence advocates and child welfare workers (Colorado & Oregon)

Dedicated child welfare domestic violence consultants (Connecticut)

Intensive child welfare supervisor and attorney training (Jackson County MO)

Statewide supervisor training (Louisiana)

Training and technical assistance to support coordinated community response (Nebraska & Jackson County, Missouri)

What else it is?

Strengths based

Multi-disciplinary

Behaviorally focused

Assumes fathers matter

Integrates safety and trauma

Leads to case plans with measurable goals

Promotes systems change and cross systems dialog

What it isn't

It isn't service-driven

It's not a no-removal model



Where **domestic violence** is the issue, **domestic violence perpetrators and their behaviors**, not adult survivors, are the foundational source of the **risk** and **safety** concerns for children.

Actions Taken by the Batterer to Harm the Children

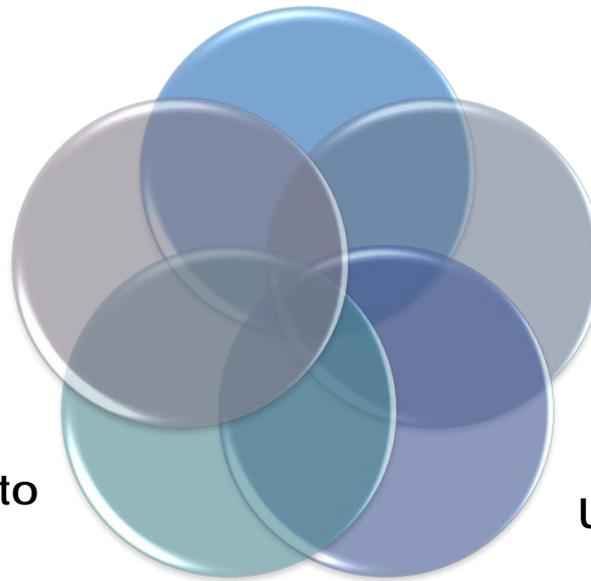
Choosing to expose them to their abusive behavior

Physical/sexual/emotional abuse or neglect perpetrated directly against the children

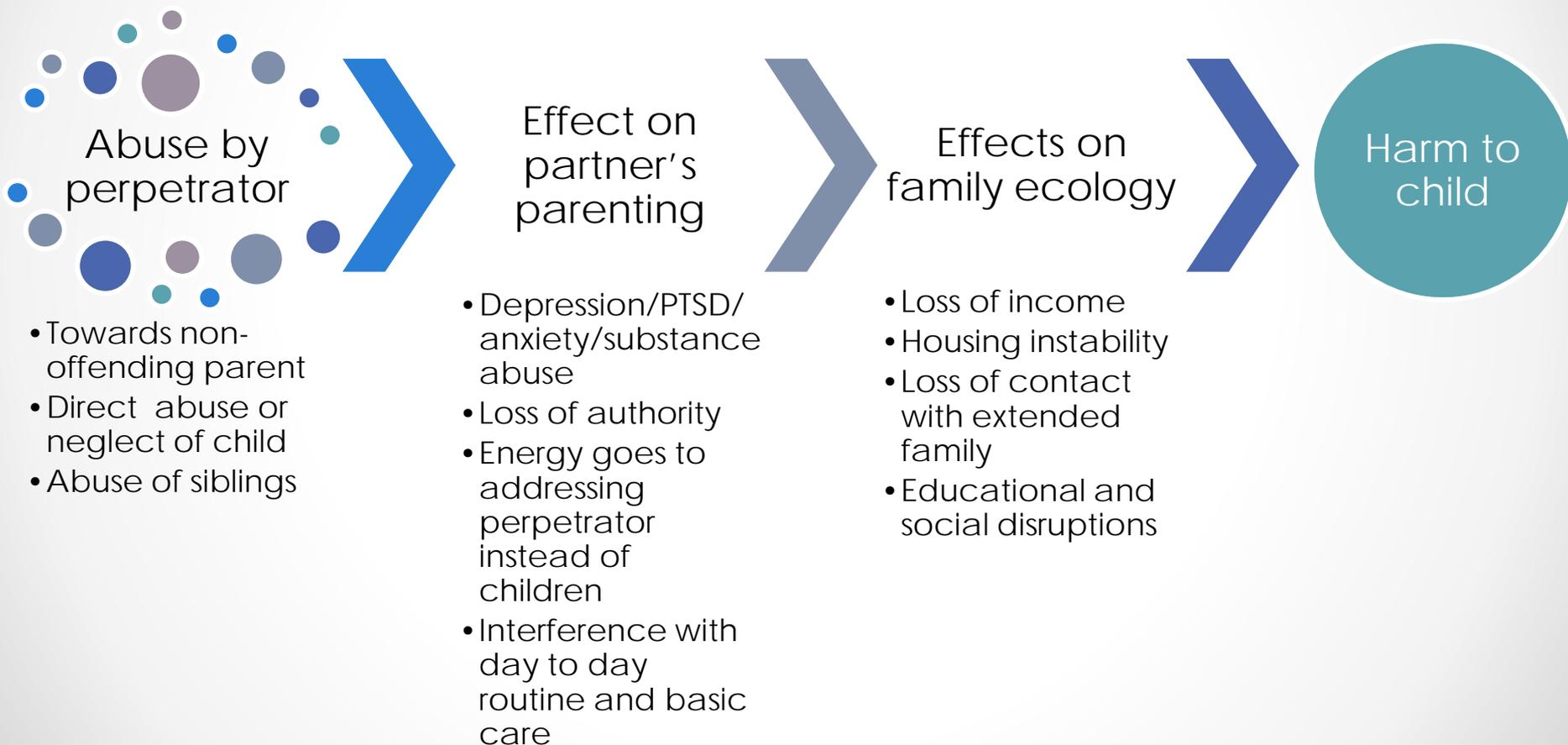
Accidentally causing physical harm to children as a result of the violence towards non-offending parent

Using children as a weapon against the children's other parent

Undermining the other person's parenting efforts



Pathways to harm





Safe and Together™ Model Assumptions: Policy

- Child Welfare, Family Courts and others need DV competencies
 - Distinct from but complements cross system collaboration
 - Child welfare, family can benefit from good relationships with, the presence of and the expertise of domestic violence advocates
- The interest of child serving systems are in 95% alignment with the interests of battered women.
- Double standards around gender can benefit domestic violence perpetrators



Safe and Together™ Model Assumptions: Practice

- Batterers can harm children
- Child safety and risk assessment flows first and foremost from an understanding of the perpetrator's tactics
 - **NOT** from focusing on where people are living or the status of the relationship
- Better assessment trumps empathy as tool
- Principles and critical components of Safe and Together provide a framework for case practice and cross system collaboration

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

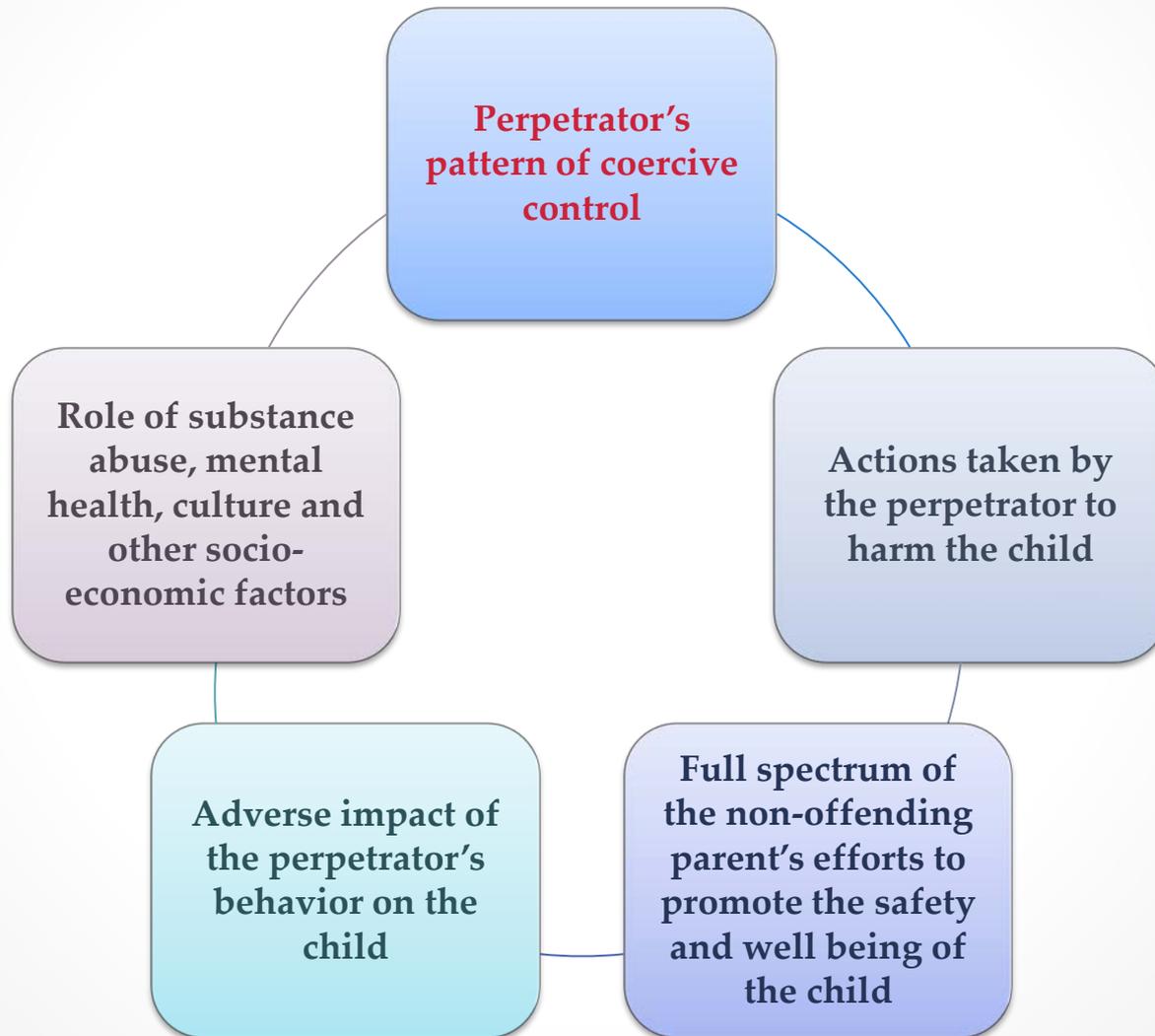
Intervening with perpetrator to reduce risk and harm to child

Engagement

Accountability

Courts

Safe and Together™ Critical Components



Safe and
Together Model

“Domestic
Violence
Informed” Child
Welfare System

Cultural Competency Continuum

- Developed by Terry Cross et al. (1989) to address the treatment of severely emotionally disturbed minority children
 - Culturally Destructive
 - Cultural Incapacity
 - Cultural Blindness
 - Cultural Pre-competence
 - Cultural Competence
 - Cultural Proficiency

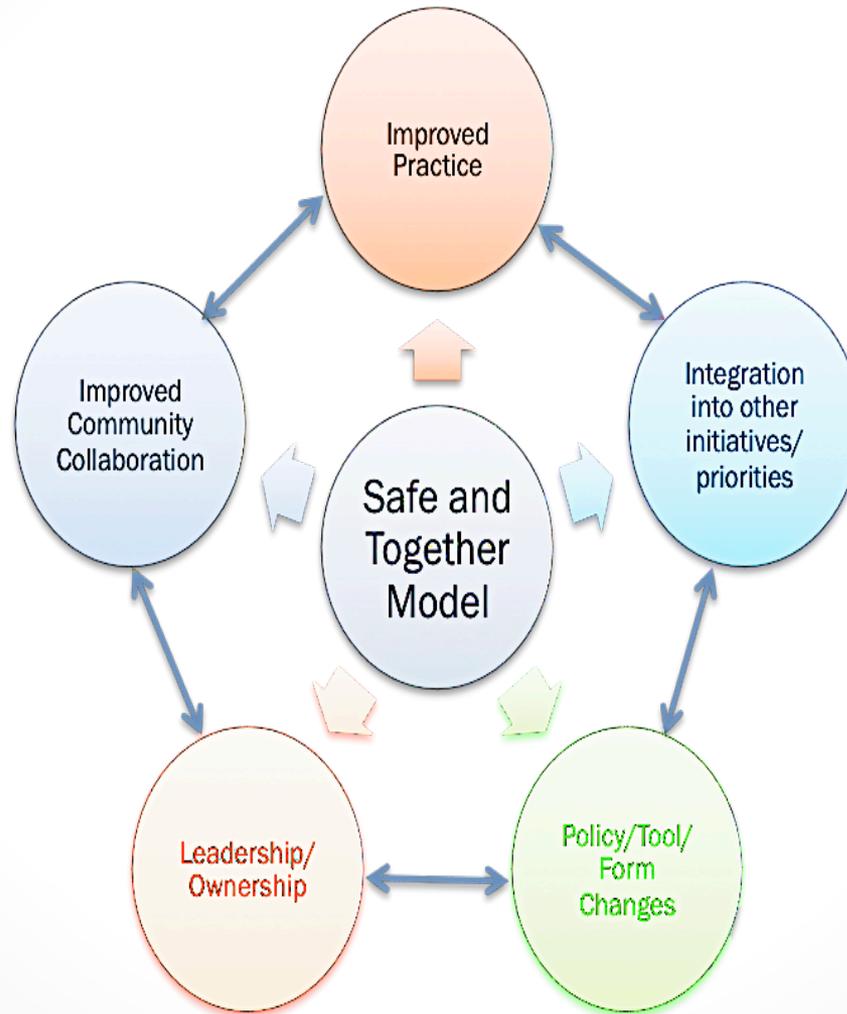
Trauma Informed Care

- Cross' model has been applied to trauma (Hodas, 2006)
 - Trauma Destructive
 - Trauma Incapable
 - Trauma Blindness
 - Trauma Pre-competence
 - Trauma Competence
 - Trauma Proficiency

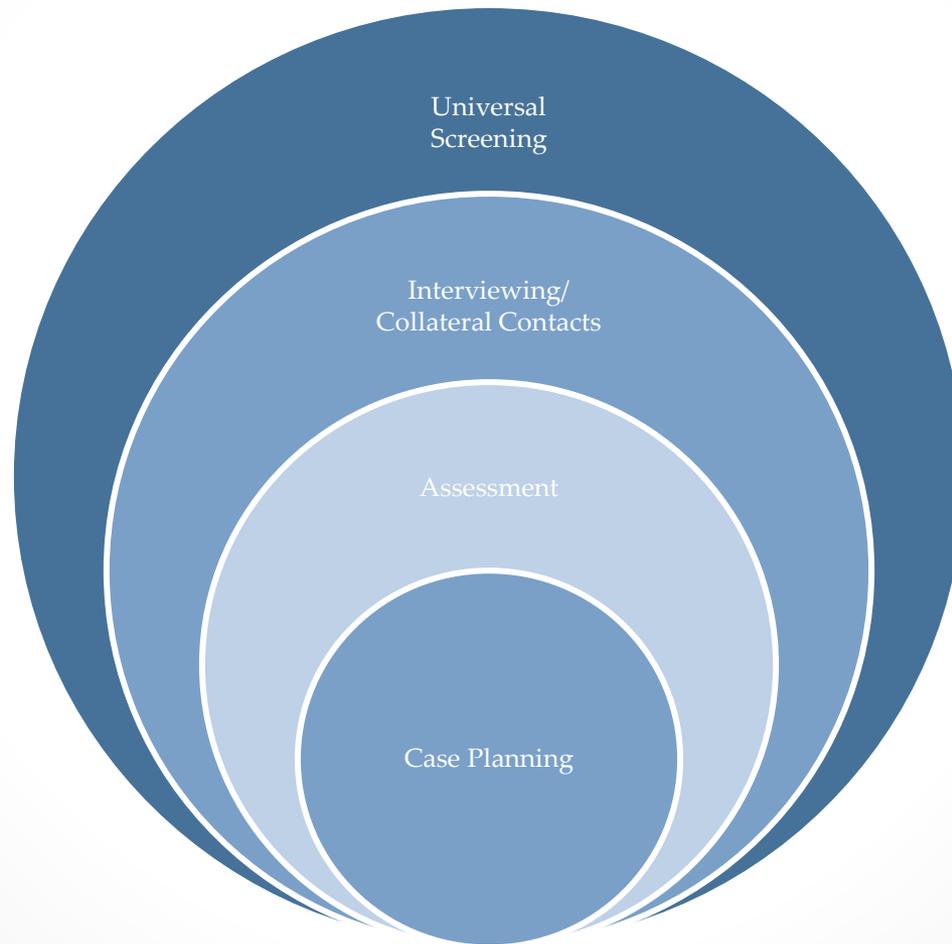
Domestic Violence Informed Child Welfare System

- Applying Safe and Together Model to analysis of child welfare systems to create “Domestic Violence Competency Continuum” (Mandel, 2013)
 - Domestic Violence Destructive
 - Domestic Violence Incapable
 - Domestic Violence Blindness
 - Domestic Violence Pre-competence
 - Domestic Violence Competence
 - Domestic Violence Proficiency

Applying the Safe and Together Model to create a **Domestic Violence Informed** child welfare system



Case Practice



Assessing Child welfare Skills Required to Partner with Survivors

- Ability to introduce child welfare's concerns in a non-blaming way.
- Assessing/listening for her strengths as it relates to day to day safety and well being efforts
- Validating her strengths
- Collaboratively developing a safety plan
- Developing a case plan that supports her needs/doesn't set her up to fail/helps her
- Working collaboratively with victim services
- Presenting survivors strengths to supervisor and/or team (who may be less than sympathetic)
- Making appropriate referrals to substance abuse , mental health and in-home service providers
- Developing a petition that focuses on the domestic violence perpetrator as the source of the safety concerns

Strengths Based Approach to Non-offending Parent

Full spectrum of the survivor's efforts to promote the safety and well being of the children

Goes beyond "yardstick" of LE, Injunction, Leave

Avoids double standard around mothers and fathers



Assess survivor's strengths as they relate to the children

Prior traditional and non-traditional safety planning

Day to day care of the children

Positive impact on children

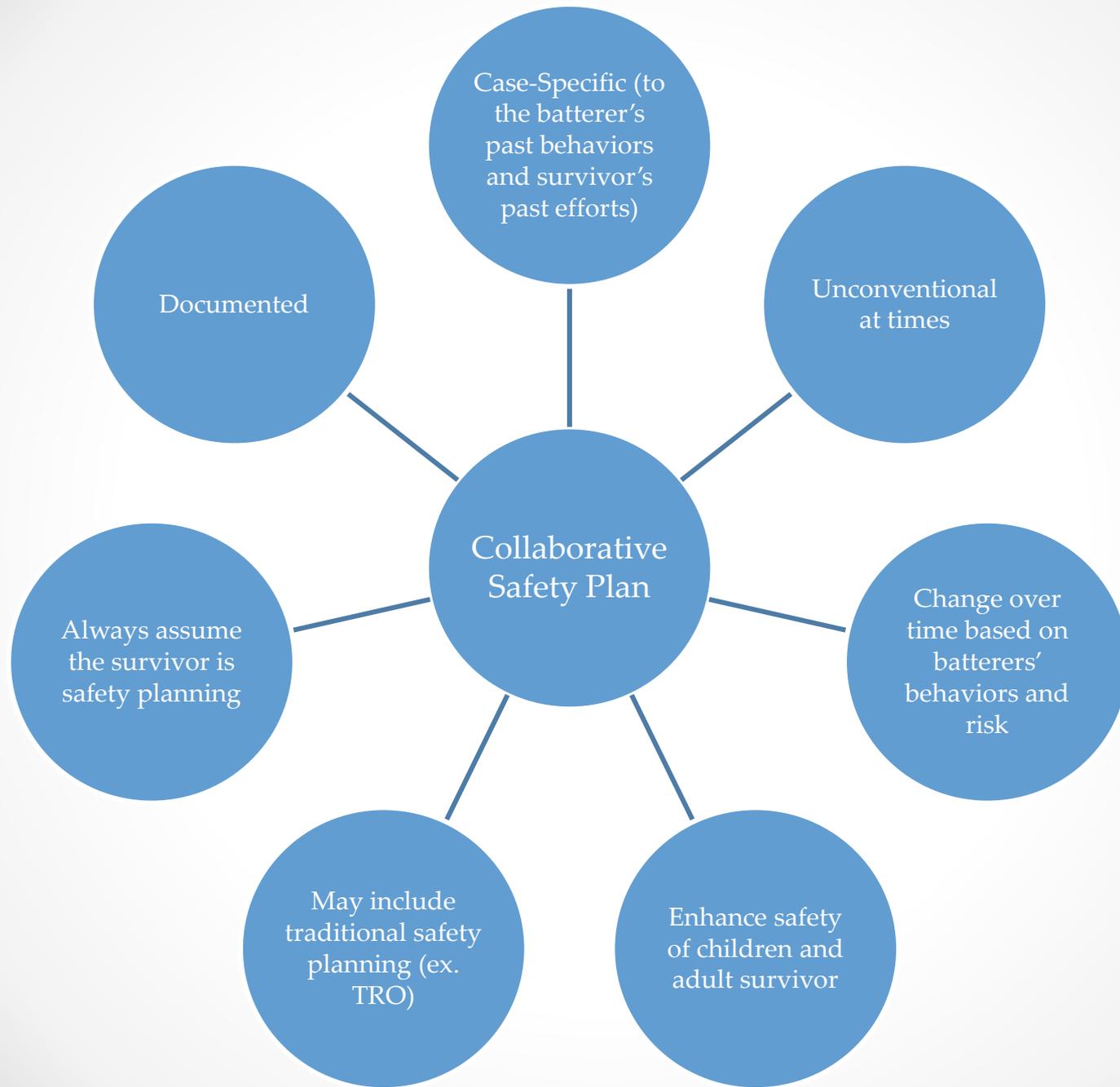


Develop case plan based on the strengths

Validating her strengths builds partnership

Does not mandate unnecessary services





Example of case planning practice associated with partnering with the non-offending parent

▶ Don't

- "Ms. Smith agrees not to engage in further domestic violence."
- "Ms. Smith will not violate the restraining order against Mr. Smith"
- "Ms. Smith will ensure that Mr. Smith will have no further contact with the child. "

▶ Do

- If Mr. Smith begins to escalate his threats or intimidation, Ms. Smith will report concerns to the Department.
- Ms. Smith will continue to work with her domestic violence advocate to modify her safety plan as necessary.
- Ms. Smith will discuss with her mother a plan for moving in with her if there are new concerns of violence.
- Ms. Smith will report any violations of Mr. Smith's restraining order to law enforcement and the Department.
- If Mr. Smith is violent, Ms. Smith will implement the agreed upon safety plan for herself and her children. This involves taking the children to stay with her mother until she can contact her DCF worker.

Worker's Skills Related to Perpetrators

- Ability to introduce child welfare's concerns relate to abuse in non-judgmental, respectful manner.
- Ability to keep interview focused on the perpetrator's behavior and its impact on children and the family.
- Ability to explore the perpetrator's own perception of the problem and its impact on himself and others.
- Develop a case plan that focuses measureable behavior change goals related to coercive control and other identified issues
- Ability to address the case plan with the perpetrator
- Understands the resources and services for domestic violence perpetrator (batterer intervention), can articulate dangers related to other interventions e.g. family/couples counseling and the interrelationship of mental health and substance abuse services.
- Can present and document domestic violence as factor starting with a description of the perpetrator's behavior
- Makes effort to coordinate with criminal court and law enforcement when appropriate
- Can develop a petition that focuses on the domestic violence perpetrator as the source of the safety concerns

Case Planning

Interviewing,
Collaterals, Case
Record

Reassess

Safety Threats (Described Behaviorally)	Behavioral Description of what has to change in order for children to be safe/reduce risk	Interventions	Are They Working ?
What are the batterers' specific behaviors (control, violence, threats, verbal, harming the children	Cease violence, cease threats, not interfere with children's needs or mother's access to services or providing for children	CPS → behavioral expectations of perpetrators, hold them accountable, support survivors Other → BIP, DV services, parenting, etc.	Assess perpetrators' compliance, ability to admit behaviors, ability to see harm to children, are kids safer? Is the risk reduced?

Skills Associated with Working With Child Witnesses of Domestic violence

- Is familiar with ages and stages of development and how perpetrators' behavior may impact children throughout the development cycle.
- Is familiar with age appropriate interviewing techniques, e.g. getting down to eye level of young child
- Asks open ended questions about happened related to the domestic violence
- Is open to a range of children's reactions to the domestic violence.
- Explores specifics of how child was impacted? e.g. "what were you scared would happen?"
- Is familiar with modalities of treatment for children exposed to violence
- Can develop case plan that addresses child's need for safety, stability, emotional nurturance



Evaluating the Response to Perpetrators

- Has the perpetrator been interviewed?
- Can we describe the perpetrator's pattern of coercive control and actions taken to harm the children?
- Can we describe the non-offending parents efforts to protect the children?
- Does the case plan involve specific steps and expectations for the perpetrator?
- Do these specific steps address the perpetrator's pattern of coercive control?
- Is there coordination between criminal court, CPS and/or other systems regarding the perpetrator?
- Is the perpetrator being referred to appropriate resources, e.g. evaluation and treatment?
- Is court/CP agency outlining the changes they expect the perpetrator to make?
- Is the perpetrator being held equally accountable as parent or parental figure for the safety and well-being of their children?

Evaluating the Response Part II

- How are we holding perpetrators responsible for the impact of their behavior on their children?
 - Setting child centered expectations for perpetrator as part of case plans
 - What information about the perpetrator's pattern needs to be given to the children's therapist?
 - How do we talk to children about the perpetrator as part of home visits or on-going assessment?

Examples of Documentation Recommendations

- 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

RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVE TO “FAILURE TO PROTECT” LANGUAGE

- Use language that focuses on the perpetrator’s role in creating harm or risk to the children.
- Example:
 - “Despite the mother’s efforts to protect the children, the perpetrator is creating conditions injurious and harmful to the children.” (CT Collaborative)

Sample of service agreement/ petition specific steps

- No further intimidating behavior towards any member of household. This includes verbal threats, defined or undefined, destruction of property, throwing objects, punching walls, etc.
- The perpetrator will not deny partner access to phone, vehicle or other forms of communication and transportation.
- The perpetrator will support all reasonable efforts to provide his child(ren) with appropriate services including childcare, healthcare (e.g. well-baby visits).
- The perpetrator will not interfere with the other parent's efforts to seek out services for themselves and the children.



Scope and nature of the intervention/ evaluation

- Refer the perpetrator to a batterer intervention program that will specifically evaluate his pattern of coercive control and parenting behavior.
 - Successful evaluations of perpetrator, regardless of the background of the evaluator, should be informed by multiple information sources.
 - The questions that instruct the evaluator to the areas of concern should directly reflect the dynamics of coercive control and change.
- 
- 

Examples of evaluation questions

- What is Mr. Smith's long term pattern of parenting?
- In what ways has Mr. Smith attempted to undermine Ms. Jones' parenting, including through verbal and physical abuse, control over finances, household environment?
- In what ways, if any, has Mr. Smith used the children to try to control Ms. Jones?
- What is Mr. Smith ability to emotionally support Ms. Jones as a person and as a parent? What evidence is there that he has the capacity to do this?
- What is Mr. Smith's ability to understand his children's needs? What is his ability to act appropriate to respond to and/or meet his children's needs? What evidence is there that Mr. Smith can support his children in a healthy relationship with their mother?

EXAMPLES OF EVALUATION QUESTIONS (CONT'D)

- What awareness does Mr. Smith demonstrate of the impact of his violence, abuse and control on the well-being and safety of the children? This includes direct and indirect effects. For example, what does he know about how his verbal and physical abuse of Ms. Jones affects the children even when they may not be present to witness the abuse?
- How has Mr. Smith abusive behavior destabilized the home environment for the children? This can include creating tension between family members, creating instability in the children's daily routine, etc.



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?
- 
- 



Action Planning

- As a community or a court, based on this presentation, what are three things you can do to improve your cross system collaboration in child welfare cases involving domestic violence? Ideas to consider:



David Mandel & Associates LLC

860-319-0966

www.endingviolence.com

Friend us on Facebook at:

<http://www.facebook.com/DavidMandelAndAssociates>

and on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/SafeandTogether>

For more information