

Learning and Working Together!

Integrating Domestic Violence and Child Welfare Services

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Children's safety often depends on their mother's safety. Both child welfare workers and domestic violence advocates know this. Yet, each system's response to the problem of family violence is frequently different. Agency mission and philosophy, access to resources, political pressures and historical patterns of intervention all affect how each system responds.

Child welfare workers remove children from their home when they believe the mother cannot protect the children despite safety planning. Domestic abuse advocates see removal of the children as punishment of the mother and ask why the abuser is not held accountable for making the children unsafe.

Increasingly, professionals from both systems identify reducing family violence and promoting positive, safe, and peaceful relationships among family members as their ultimate goal. Both child welfare workers and domestic abuse advocates must acknowledge and respect the complex and significant relationships that exist for the individuals they serve. While separation of family members to achieve safety may be the only answer in some cases, there are times when family members can be supported in growing healthy relationships. Alternatives to separating children from their mothers and women from their partners should be considered when safety can be assured.



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Learning and Working Together! examines how cross-training, collaboration and accountability for systems and individuals can improve outcomes for families at risk of child abuse and domestic violence. The innovative programs and methods highlighted in this paper are all from the Midwest – Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin. They are followed by links to Midwest and national resources for continued learning and support for collaboration.

We hope this guide offers the busy child welfare or domestic abuse program leader ideas about how to start down a path of examining practice and working across systems. Among the possible starting points suggested are: hold a meeting with your counterparts to better understand how they see the families you are working with; convene a cross-training event; or launch an audit of court procedures and protocols that brings judges, district attorneys, law enforcement and advocates together to examine where processes fail to protect children.

Integrating services for families and reducing parallel, uncoordinated work with families is essential in these times of limited funding for human services. The needs of these individuals, whether they are victims or offenders who require rehabilitation, must take priority over the rules of diverse funding streams. Where the funding rules get in the way, they should be made more flexible.



“Why Collaborate? We have always argued that women are not only battered, that we are much more than the sum of our experiences with violence. That some women are abused and, at the same time, poor and homeless. That poverty may feel far more pressing and potent in women’s lives than domestic violence. And that poverty and domestic violence each make the other problem more difficult to escape.”

(Schechter, 1999)



Among the rules that must be challenged are the federal child welfare financing rules. Federal funds typically can be used for child welfare workers serving abused children who have been removed from their homes. Only in limited ways and with administratively complex waivers of federal rules, can federal dollars be used for cross systems work; cross-training of child welfare, domestic abuse providers and court personnel; and family support to prevent children’s removal from their families. As the Pew Commission on Foster Care recommends, the federal funding formula should be changed to allow more flexible funding to promote more effective work that strengthens families rather than tearing them apart. When multidisciplinary efforts and cross-training are critical pathways to more effective work, states should be permitted to use federal funds for these purposes.

Effective work with families is also dependent on successfully engaging them in working towards improvement of their lives. To successfully engage parents -- both victims and batterers -- child welfare workers must tap into what motivates them. Parents want to keep their children and are willing to work hard to do so. The federal review of Wisconsin’s child welfare system provides strong evidence that our child welfare system largely fails on family engagement. While the federal review and its rules rightly highlight a system problem, the funding rules, again, get in the way of solving the problem. Working with parents to prevent abuse and the removal of their children can be addressed through intensive in-home services, safety planning and batterers’ treatment. However, federal funding rules limit payment for this work even though it is less expensive than institutional or foster care. Moreover, parents who love their children and work to improve their parenting skills are better positioned to protect and care for their children than government.

Successful engagement with batterers can make the difference in whether they fully participate in treatment and change their behaviors. Successful engagement with victims requires acknowledging the economic conditions and full range of emotions that tie the victim to the batterer and influence a decision to stay with or terminate the relationship. The quality of the relationship and the ways in which the victim continues to invest in it, play a critical role in how well the children are protected from the abuse and its effects.

Just as women can be trapped in a relationship that they recognize is not good for them, service providers and courts can continue practices that they know are counterproductive to their goal of strengthening families and children. We hope that the models and methods discussed in this paper will encourage providers and advocates to break out of traditional roles and take some steps toward new ways of ***Learning and Working Together!***

Linda A. Hall
Project Director
Fostering Results - Wisconsin

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The Milwaukee Child Welfare Philanthropy Group is a consortium of foundation leaders and private funders who have been working together for five years to educate themselves about the child welfare system, consider more effective approaches to providing ongoing support to that system, and encourage greater public understanding of both the child welfare system and its responsibilities.

For the past year the Child Welfare Philanthropy Group has been working in partnership with the Wisconsin Association of Family and Children's Agencies (WAFCA) on the Wisconsin portion of Fostering Results, a national nonpartisan project to raise awareness of issues facing children in foster care. Fostering Results is supported by a grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts to the Children and Family Research Center at the School of Social Work, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The opinions expressed in this policy brief, which is underwritten by Fostering Results, are those of the Wisconsin Association of Family and Children's Agencies and do not necessarily reflect the views of either Fostering Results or the Pew Charitable Trusts.

This guide could not have been completed without the help of experts working in their various fields who were willing to take the time to provide information and insight on not only their programs, but also the issues of domestic violence and child maltreatment. We would like to thank Guy Thompson and Shelly Wood from the Michigan Family Independence Agency for providing us with valuable information on the highly successful Michigan Families First program. Christine Rehagen and Donald Austin from Lutheran Social Services of Michigan gave us an understanding of the program and connected us with resources. Sharon Lewandowski from the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services provided critical information and ideas on Wisconsin resources and issues. Danielle Basil Long, the JOI Project Director, and Beth Schnoor from Harbor House Domestic Abuse Programs both were wonderful resources for their respective initiatives and programs.

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*In 2001,
nationally, 85% of
intimate partner
victimizations
were against
women.*

(Rennison, 2003)



Cross-Training and Collaboration



*Most studies show that **30% to 60%** of families experiencing domestic violence or child maltreatment are experiencing both forms of violence.*

(Edleson, 1997)



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Continuous Learning

Domestic violence advocates and child protection workers know that both violence against women and children often occur in the same families. Unfortunately, many communities and service providers treat these forms of family violence as separate issues. There are a great number of efforts going on around the country to bring child welfare and domestic violence services together. Providing safety to the mother is often the best way to enhance the safety of the children. The ***Families First program in Michigan***, a family preservation program that provides intensive, short-term crisis intervention, offers a number of important starting points for this effort.

Families First/Domestic Violence Philosophy

- The FAMILY is the focal point of services.
- Children have a right to violence free families.
- The family is the fundamental resource for the nurturing of children.
- Domestic violence has devastating effects on victims, their children and the entire society.
- Empowerment of survivors combined with social change is needed to provide a violence free home for the family.
- Survivors need access to safety, and information about domestic violence, available options including legal rights and services and community resources.
- Survivors must be treated with dignity and respect, and provided with support and advocacy.
- Our first and greatest investment is to the care and treatment of children in their own homes.
- Parents should be supported in their efforts to care for their children.
- It is in the best interest of the child to support the non-offending parent.
- Families are diverse and have a right to be respected in their distinct cultural, racial, ethnic, economic and religious positions.
- Children can be reared well in different kinds of families and one family form should not be discriminated against in favor of another.
- The bond between the non-offending parent and the children needs to be developed and strengthened.

Source: Finding Common Ground, (Rev. 8/04)

In 1993, Families First and the Domestic Violence Prevention and Treatment Board (Domestic Violence Board) started a collaboration after a study found 37 percent of families involved with Families First self-reported domestic violence as a major problem (Findlater & Kelly 1999). In many communities, domestic violence services and Families First workers often were separately working with the same families.

Families First, the Domestic Violence Board, and several other state and national partners, worked with the Family Violence Prevention Fund to develop a training curriculum specifically for family preservation workers on domestic violence. This is now part of the mandatory core training for all Families First and family preservation workers in Michigan.

In the three-day domestic violence training, workers are given the tools to effectively respond to families experiencing domestic violence. They learn how to identify and understand the dynamics of domestic violence, develop safety plans for the victim and the children, access community resources and understand the law. The training also focuses on working with batterers when they are still in the home or involved with the family.

The knowledge and skills that workers gain from the training is used as a regular part of casework protocol. When Families First workers are referred to a family they start by conducting a routine inquiry with each family member, beginning with the suspected victim. Once domestic violence is identified, the workers strive to make sure that all interactions, and work with the family, avoid re-victimizing the non-offending parent or the children. Addressing the issue of domestic violence in cases where children are at risk of removal, or when they will be returning home, increases safety and chances for permanent reunification.



How Families First in Michigan Works

The majority of referrals to Families First come from Child Protective Services (CPS) when there is imminent risk of removal of a child. Families moving towards reunification, or those struggling with a child's mental illness or developmental disability, are also eligible for the program. Domestic violence shelters also refer families to the program.

Workers must contact the family within 24 hours of a referral and are expected to spend at least 5 to 20 hours of direct service with the family each week for 4 to 6 weeks. They are accessible to the family 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Workers have a caseload of no more than two families.

Comparison of Families First and Foster Care Services

Families First	Foster Care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 79% (52 of 66) families were contacted by workers within 24 hours of referral. Workers reported spending an average of 41 hours and 17 minutes in face-to-face contact with families over the time the case was open. Two months after referral, no cases remained open. The average length of intervention was 28 days. 100% of the workers reported being available 24 hours a day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On average, 22 days passed until workers made initial contact with the family. Workers reported spending an average of 4 hours in face-to-face contact with families over the first 6 weeks of services. Two months after referral, 88% of the cases remained open. 40% of workers reported being available 24 hours a day.

Source: Blythe and Jayaratne, 1999

This comparison is meant to illustrate the difference in service received from each program. It should be noted that Foster Care case management is not staffed or funded at levels that would support the Families First contact standards.

The state of Michigan currently contracts with 58 private providers to provide Families First services in all 83 counties.



Guiding Principles for Intervention in Domestic Violence Cases

1. To increase the victim's and children's safety
2. To respect the authority and autonomy of the adult victim to direct her own life
3. To hold the perpetrator, not the victim, responsible for his abusive behavior and for stopping his abuse

Family Violence Prevention Fund

Ongoing Training in Action!

Last Fall, a team of Families First workers, from a private contracted agency, saw a sudden increase in the number of cases they were referred where domestic violence was present. They realized they needed a refresher course in safety planning and case staffing.

Their family preservation specialist brought in a family preservation trainer, who was also an expert on domestic violence issues, to attend their weekly case team meeting. During the team meeting he went over specific cases with them, and discussed safety issues and resources. Using the cases as examples, and going with them to meet with the families, he modeled effective safety planning using existing community resources. After the meeting he provided an in-service for the team on safety planning with the adult victim and the children.

Not only did the team get the refresher training they wanted, but they also learned and enhanced other skills to help them work with families experiencing domestic violence.

Key to Success

Training does not end after the initial three-day training. Families First has been successful in integrating domestic violence awareness in their everyday work by establishing a culture of communication and ongoing learning.

When workers begin working with families, they receive close support from their team members and supervisors. Weekly case team meetings give them an opportunity to collaborate and problem-solve. Workers also have the option of coming back to training after they've been out in the field. Often, they benefit from going through the training a second time after gaining experience working with families.

Workers and teams also have access to more tailored training that is specific to their cases and communities. Each provider is assigned a family preservation specialist from the state agency and a family preservation trainer. The family preservation trainer is also an expert on domestic violence issues and is contracted from a private agency. Both are available as resources to respond to specific cases and questions, and to provide in-service trainings around topics customized for them.

Enhanced Safety

Before Families First began their collaboration with the Domestic Violence Board, workers were already aware of domestic violence in their families. They were often concerned about their safety and the safety of their clients (Findlater & Kelly). Continuous training on domestic violence, knowledge of resources, and ongoing communication and collaboration with domestic violence partners in their communities has led to a better understanding of families' situations and better family support.

Assessment is more thorough and safety planning goes beyond the usual safety planning that would have been done previously. Families First staff work with victims to reconnect them to their social network of families and friends, who are made aware of the safety plans. These efforts lead to women and children being safer after Families First is no longer in the picture. By directly addressing the underlying issue of domestic violence in families they serve, Families First workers have also made a difference in helping women and children find resources, learn about options, and move towards safety.

Find Out More!

Domestic Violence: A National Curriculum for Family Preservation Practitioners

This document, published by the Family Violence Prevention Fund, is currently out of print. To obtain a copy please contact the WAFCA office at (608) 257-5939 or e-mail sgust@wafca.org.



Additional Resources

Guidelines for Responding To the Co-occurrence of Child Maltreatment and Domestic Violence (Minnesota Department of Human Services)

http://www.thegreenbook.info/documents/minn_guide.pdf

These guidelines provide direction to child protection staff when responding to situations in which child maltreatment and domestic violence are both present. The guidelines include information and questions on screening for domestic violence, safety assessment, guidelines for interviewing families, a lethality assessment, and a safety plan tool.

Child Welfare Practices for Cases with Domestic Violence (Oregon Department of Human Services)

<http://dhsforms.hr.state.or.us/Forms/Served/CE9200.pdf>

The Oregon Department of Human Services has developed a set of guidelines for CPS workers responding to families with domestic violence. This resource includes practice applications such as screening for domestic violence, the assessment process, developing safety plans, and maintaining confidentiality. It also includes sample screening and assessment questions.

Child Protection in Families Experiencing Domestic Violence (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)

<http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov/profess/tools/usermanual.cfm>

This document is a part of the *Child Abuse and Neglect User Manual Series* produced by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It includes guidelines for building collaborative responses, assessment and safety plans, and information on developing a memorandum of understanding. There is also an extensive resource directory for agencies and websites addressing the issues of domestic violence and child maltreatment.

Collaborating for Woman and Child Safety (Minnesota Rural Project for Women and Child Safety)

<http://www.mincava.umn.edu/rural/documents/cwcs/cwcs.html>

This is a training curriculum for multidisciplinary teams to enhance practice and policy when domestic violence and child maltreatment co-occur. The curriculum includes background reading and resources for trainers, training suggestions and handouts on violence and abuse in families, social systems responses, improving capacities within agencies, and best practices.

Building Relationships

“Relationship building requires regular contact in a setting that promotes interaction and recognizes the connections that agency staffs establish as people.... When we recognize and respect each other as individuals, our similarities are more apparent and our differences are less significant. We recognize that time spent forming these interpersonal connections ultimately serves clients by promoting creative collaboration built on trust. This will always be more effective than collaboration directed solely by agency policy.”

(Source: MOU: Harbor House and DCYF)



Outagamie County, WI, Division of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) and the local domestic violence program, Harbor House Domestic Abuse Programs, had a good working relationship but saw the development of a ***Community Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)*** as an opportunity to address some of the roadblocks to providing appropriate and consistent services to women and children experiencing domestic violence.

An MOU brings together service providers, which often work with the same families, to help create or improve partnerships. The final product of an MOU is not only a written document that clarifies responsibilities and relationships between organizations, but also promotes a better response for families.

A workgroup of representatives and supervisors from both agencies developed the MOU together. Through conversations and staff surveys, the workgroup identified misperceptions and misunderstandings between staff that were affecting a coordinated response to families. Ongoing cross-training became a priority to increase each staffs' understanding and awareness of each others work, and the policies and protocols of their agencies. Harbor House undertook the task of training each unit of DCYF on domestic violence. DCYF trained the domestic violence advocates and Harbor House staff on child protective services.

The MOU also resulted in the creation of interagency liaisons. Workers and advocates now know exactly who to call when questions come up or when they need assistance on case coordination conferences. The MOU specifically addresses reporting of child abuse or neglect by Harbor House staff to CPS and the referral process when DCYF staff suspect domestic violence. It also outlines initial steps to resolve conflict between agencies.

The MOU document provides written guidelines to help maintain and build their partnership. The result has been increased trust between staff and a more solid, formal working relationship, which has led to greater safety for battered women and their children.

Find Out More!

For more information on establishing your own MOU, contact: Sharon Lewandowski, Domestic Abuse Program Coordinator, Department of Health and Family Services, Phone: (608) 266-0700, E-mail: LEWANSM@dhfs.state.wi.us

Additional Resource

Domestic Violence Enhanced Response Team MOU, Colorado Springs, CO
<http://www.dvert.org/overview/memounder.asp>

Working Together to Improve Practice and Outcomes



Safety and Accountability Audits

In the absence of coordinated services, family violence will continue and families will remain unsafe. Providers and communities need to work together to improve coordination and collaboration, provide safety for women and children experiencing violence, and to hold batterers accountable.

One strategy to improve coordination and collaboration is a **Safety and Accountability Audit**. Audits have been used by a number of communities around the country as a tool to improve the response to victims of domestic violence and their children. The focus of an audit is not on individuals but on institutional responses, policies and protocols. This approach was developed by Ellen Pence of Praxis International in Duluth, Minnesota as a method to examine how a specific policy or practice addresses the safety of battered women and their children (Pence & McMahon, 2003)

The audit starts by deciding on the question to be asked. For example, *"How do battered women who are not violent to children lose their children to foster care?"* (Pence & McMahon)

An interagency team is formed to conduct the audit and do the work. The team includes representatives from the agencies that directly affect change, and domestic violence advocates.

Conducting an Audit

- Interagency team of highly skilled practitioners and seasoned advocates form to conduct the Audit
- Audit Coordinator is selected and given the resources to coordinate the team's efforts
- Team clarifies its audit question, and maps out the various points of institutional contact with the cases
- Team members are given assignments and tasks to observe and interview the practitioners carrying out each intervention step
- Audit Coordinator gathers a sample of case files for the team to examine
- Coordinator gathers all of the key rules, regulations, protocols, forms, and directives associated with each step of the process
- Team reviews data from interviews, observations, and text in order to discover: 1) how practitioners are organized and coordinated to think and act on these cases, and 2) where the coordinating routines compromise the goals of safety and accountability
- Team produces recommendations for altering the routines and practices that produce problematic outcomes

Source: Praxis International Safety and Accountability Audits
www.praxisinternational.org



Audits Continued...

The team, with the help of a coordinator, starts by mapping the steps the audit will take. They can also map the system or agencies involved to make sure everyone on the audit team fully understands how the system works for victims of domestic violence. Mapping also helps identify points in the system, or highlights agency responses, where changes need to be made.

After mapping, the team conducts interviews with workers and practitioners and may spend time observing them doing their jobs. By interviewing and observing, team members develop a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each position, and begin to see how much workers are guided by policies and protocols. The next step is for the team to look at the case files, forms, and reports workers use when responding to victims. These steps give the team a chance to see how organizational guidelines either enhance or limit victim safety and offender accountability.

The result of the audit is a set of specific recommendations or an "agenda for change" that will guide the community in its efforts to provide safety to women and children and accountability to batterers.



Find Out More!

Domestic Violence Safety and Accountability Audit Instruction Manual

Information on ordering can be found at:

http://www.praxisinternational.org/Safety/Home_safetyaudits.html

Safety and Accountability Audit Report: Domestic Violence Case Information Sharing Between Law Enforcement and Prosecution

<http://www.opdv.state.ny.us/coordination/safetyaudit.html>

This site gives a brief overview of the Safety and Accountability Audit process and then links to an audit conducted in New York State to address domestic violence case information sharing between law enforcement and prosecution. The audit document describes the general process of doing an audit and also provides specifics on how New York conducted its audit.



Holding Batterers Accountable

The ***Judicial Oversight Demonstration Initiative (JOI) in Milwaukee*** brings together system and community partners to improve victim safety and hold batterers accountable.

One of its most successful endeavors has been the Court Processing Committee. The committee is co-chaired by the presiding domestic violence judge and a JOI staff person. It meets monthly and involves representatives from the:

- District Attorney's Office,
- Department of Corrections/ Probation,
- State Public Defender's Office,
- Non-profit victim services providers,
- Batterer intervention providers,
- Milwaukee Police Department,
- Milwaukee County Law Enforcement and Executive Association, and
- domestic violence judges.

Each committee partner is on the agenda every month to give an update and to discuss any problems or issues they want addressed by the committee. Committee meetings provide the members a forum to communicate, build relationships, problem solve, and hold each other accountable.

Similar to the Safety and Accountability Audit process, the committee works together to identify specific issues or pieces of the system that need change. They have focused on the formal policies and protocols of court processing, as well as the informal ways the various partners work together that affect victim safety and batterer accountability.



The Initiative

In 1999, Milwaukee County was selected to participate in a five-year Judicial Oversight Demonstration Initiative (JOI). The goal of the project is to improve victim safety and increase accountability for batterers by building a strong, coordinated community response to domestic violence, through a focused judicial and criminal justice response.



Find Out More!

Milwaukee JOI Fact Sheet:

http://www.vera.org/publication_pdf/jodi_milwaukee_fact_sheet.pdf

Enhancing Responses to Domestic Violence: Promising Practices from the Judicial Oversight Demonstration Initiative (Brochure)

http://www.vera.org/publication_pdf/251_494.pdf

Evaluation of the Judicial Oversight Demonstration Initiative: Implementation Strategies and Lessons

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/vawprog/lessons.pdf>

This Urban Institute evaluation includes Milwaukee and the two other demonstration sites, Dorchester, MA and Washtenaw County, MI.



Refining the System

In Milwaukee, an issue that was brought to the Court Processing Committee was that the domestic violence judges were frustrated by the lack of information being received from probation agents after batterers were ordered into treatment. Judges were often asked by victims to modify No Contact Orders with little information on the batterer's progress or engagement in a batterer's treatment program. The probation department could only pass on the information they were receiving from programs, and judges and probation agents only knew if the batterer had attended the program.

Why it Works

Several components have made the Court Processing Committee successful as a change agent. The committee's structure, and its regular meetings, have played a large role in its success. JOI staff engaged the domestic violence judges and gave them leadership roles. Committee meetings are structured as a forum for ongoing communication and relationship building. Each member has a role, a time to provide updates, raise issues or problems, and is expected to arrive prepared to problem solve. Smaller workgroups are formed for more intensive work.

The result has been more effective domestic violence case processing in Milwaukee.

To be able to make more informed decisions, they needed more information. They wanted to know if the offender was engaged in the program, paying attention and whether they had they learned anything.

After discussing these issues in the Court Processing Committee a workgroup of judges, the probation department, batterers' treatment programs and JOI staff formed. In addition to regular committee meetings, the workgroup met continuously for eighteen months to focus specifically on information sharing issues.

Batterers' treatment programs were concerned about liability and hesitant to make statements that indicated victims and children would be safe. Through the workgroup they reviewed examples from other communities and worked together to develop the Client Status Report. The Report requires the batterers' treatment programs to rate offenders based on their engagement in the program, the level of responsibility taken for their actions, and how they worked in the group setting. Completing homework assignments, participating in discussions, respecting other group members and victim blaming are all considered when the reports are completed.

Reports are submitted to the probation department for the probation review hearings. Now probation agents are able to give a more complete picture of the batterer's behavior during treatment. Judges now have the information they need to help them make more informed decisions and increase offender accountability.

The group continues to meet and refine the Client Status Report to better suit the needs of all involved.



Learning to Improve Safety

Separation or divorce does not prevent or stop abuse to children or their mothers. The risk is often greater for victims of domestic violence and their children after separation from an abusive situation (Saunders, 1998). Families need a safe place to exchange and visit with their children.

The State of Wisconsin is currently involved in an effort to address the issue of domestic violence and sexual assault in the context of **Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange**. The Office of Justice Assistance and the Children's Trust Fund, in partnership with other state and private agencies, are in the process of defining best practice policies and protocols for supervised visitation and safe exchange centers. This initiative will also target existing programs to better integrate awareness of these safety issues into their programs. A national leader in this area is the Duluth Family Visitation Center.

The majority of families that use the Duluth Family Visitation Center are referred by child protection or the courts. Some families use the Visitation Center for the exchange of children while others are ordered into supervised visitation after allegations of abuse against the children, when there is concern they might leave with the children, or because courts want visits to be monitored. All staff are trained on domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking.

Supervised visitation is a controlled environment. Batterers can often appear to be good parents for the time that they are visiting with, or picking up their children. When the staff are trained on these issues they can identify behaviors that appear non-threatening, but are actually harmful. Many children want to maintain relationships with both parents but need a safe place to do it.

During the intake process staff members spend time talking to both parents separately. They explain the rules of the Center and arrange visitation times. They also use this time to get a history of the violence, and its impact on the non-offending parent and the children. These discussions help staff develop a more complete understanding of the risk involved for the woman, children, and the staff. During visits or exchanges, staff members make notes of any critical incidents or significant events but do not make recommendations regarding custody or visitation to the courts.



"We have been involved in cases where batterers at supervised visitation centers have passed messages to children through notes written in the margins of books, where a batterer/incest perpetrator took advantage of a momentary lapse in the supervisor's attention.....where various verbal messages were passed to the mother through the child, and various other risks both to children and to their mothers"

(Bancroft & Silverman, 2002)

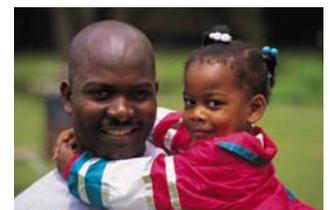
Find Out More!

For information on the Duluth Family Visitation Center visit:
<http://www.duluth-model.org/>

The Wisconsin Children's Trust Fund will have information on the Wisconsin initiative by Summer, 2005, on their website: <http://wctf.state.wi.us/home/>

Strategies to Improve Supervised Visitation Services in Domestic Violence Cases. Maxwell, M.S., Oehme, K. (October 2001). VAW Online Resources. www.vaw.umn.edu/documents/commissioned/strategies/strategies.html

This article outlines the evolution of supervised visitation services in cases where domestic violence is present. It provides an overview of batterer behavior, and gives strategies and recommendations to improve supervised visitation services



Online Resources



*An Oregon study found that domestic violence was a factor in **41 percent of the families** experiencing critical injuries or deaths of children due to child abuse and neglect .*

(Oregon Children's Services Division, 1993)



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National Resources

U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women (OVW)

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/vawo/>

OVW's website provides information on funding and grant opportunities, state grant activities, federal legislation and regulations, and links to state resources and hotlines. Visitors will also find a number of research and statistical publications addressing domestic violence, sexual assault, batterer intervention programs and other violence against women issues.

Minnesota Center Against Violence and Abuse (MINCAVA)

<http://www.mincava.umn.edu/>

This website provides an extensive library of online resources related to the issue of violence against women. Up-to-date research and published materials on a wide variety of topics related to violence, including child abuse, domestic violence and youth violence can be found here. The site also has information on upcoming training events, training resources, as well as, links to organizations and individuals who are working in the field of ending violence.

VAWnet: National Electronic Clearinghouse on Violence Against Women

<http://www.vawnet.org>

A wealth of information for anyone interested in learning about violence against women, including prevention strategies, specific services, available funding, research and current public policy issues for both domestic violence and sexual assault can be found on this site.

Domestic Violence and Children

The Future of Children. Volume 9, Number 3 (Winter 1999)

http://www.futureofchildren.org/pubs-info2825/pubs-info.htm?doc_id=70473

This entire journal issue is available online with access to each article. A number of articles discuss the effects of domestic violence on children, on child protection and domestic violence, and other systems' responses to children experiencing domestic violence.

Building Bridges between Domestic Violence Organizations and Child Protective Services

Linda Spears. (February 2000) National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
http://www.vawnet.org/NRCSDVPublications/BCSDV/Papers/BCS7_cps.php?s=brf

A resource for those working with both battered women and abused and neglected children, this paper outlines the child protection system for advocates in the domestic violence field and offers basic information on the effects of domestic violence on children. It also provides a framework for collaboration, and gives examples of programs that have integrated domestic violence and child protection to help create safer families.

The Greenbook Initiative

<http://www.thegreenbook.info/>

The Greenbook Initiative is a national project that began in 2001 to implement recommendations and guidelines for improving the primary systems promoting safety for mothers and children experiencing domestic violence and child maltreatment in six sites around the country. The recommendations for improvement and collaboration in communities, as well as, updates and outcomes on the chosen implementation sites can be accessed. In addition, the site includes a reading room and a tools section that provides links to articles and resources concerning domestic violence and child maltreatment.



Family Violence Prevention Fund

<http://endabuse.org/>

The Family Violence Prevention Fund's website provides information and tools for anyone interested in learning about and researching various issues related to domestic violence. Information specifically on children and domestic violence is also available.

Documents that can be downloaded include:

"Advocacy Matters: Helping Mothers and Their Children Involved with the Child Protection System"

<http://endabuse.org/programs/display.php3?DocID=274>

"Confidentiality and Information Sharing Issues for Domestic Violence Advocates Working with Child Protection and Juvenile Court Systems"

<http://endabuse.org/programs/children/files/InfoSharing.pdf>

"Family Team Conferences in Domestic Violence Cases: Guidelines for Practice"

<http://endabuse.org/programs/display.php3?DocID=79#pub1>



Wisconsin Resources

Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence (WCADV)

<http://www.wcadv.org/?go=gethelp/local>

This link goes to an alphabetical county by county listing of domestic abuse services, lead elder abuse agencies and health care domestic abuse projects. Visitors can also access a program directory with more detailed information on the services each agency provides.

Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA)

<http://www.wcasa.org/findhelp/index.html>

This site includes a list of sexual assault programs organized by region throughout the State of Wisconsin. It also includes comprehensive contact and service information for each program.



27,454 incidents of domestic abuse were reported to the Wisconsin Department of Justice in 2001.

(Wisconsin Department of Justice, 2001)

National Domestic Abuse Hotline

1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or 1-800-787-3224 (TTY)



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