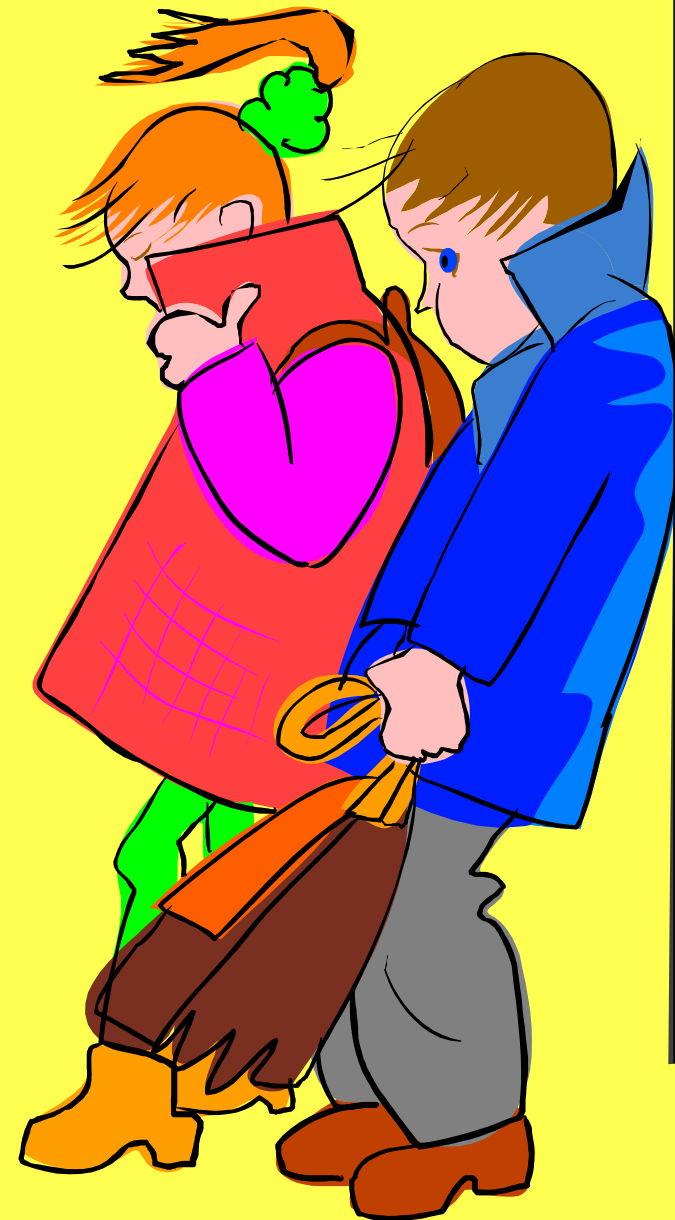


Children Living Domestic Violence

Understanding the Harm Done
to Children Who Witness
Coercive Control



Credits

- The development of this training was made possible by the Grafton County Greenbook Project, funded by the Office on Violence Against Women, US Department of Justice grant #2004-WE-AX-KO35.
- Research and outline by Aaron Roemer, Domestic Violence Specialist (DVS).
- Editing and presentation layout by Kathy Jones, DVS.
- Special thanks to Ruth Houte, Michelle Rosenthal, and the DCYF Training Coordinators for their guidance in developing this training series.

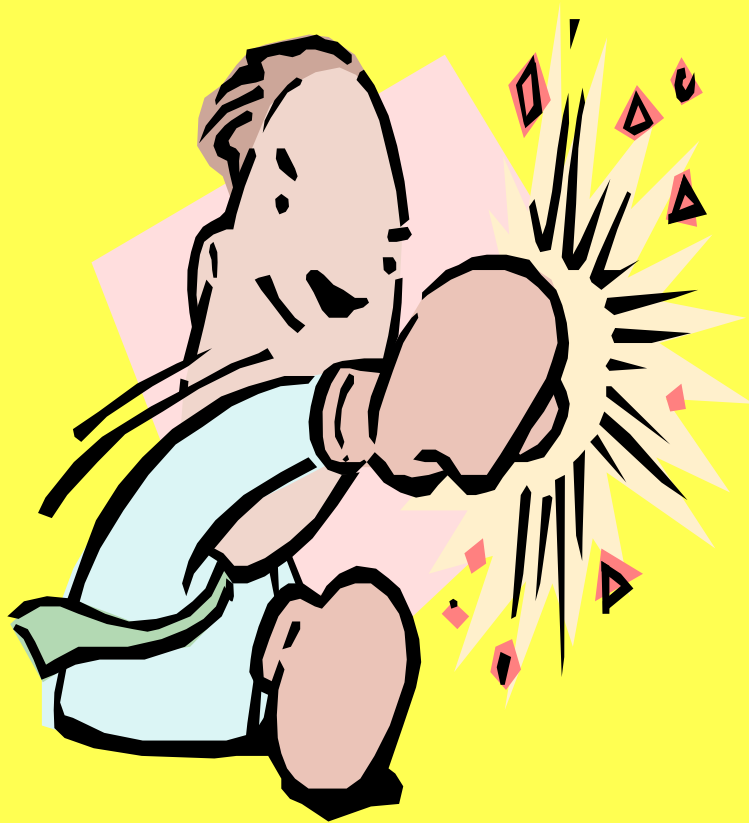
WE KNOW...

...people who engage in abusive behaviors have parenting deficits.

NOW WHAT?

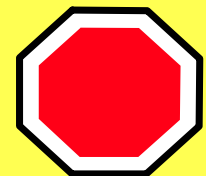
- Is there an impact on the children?
- How do we gauge the impact?
- How do we help heal the damage?

The Impact

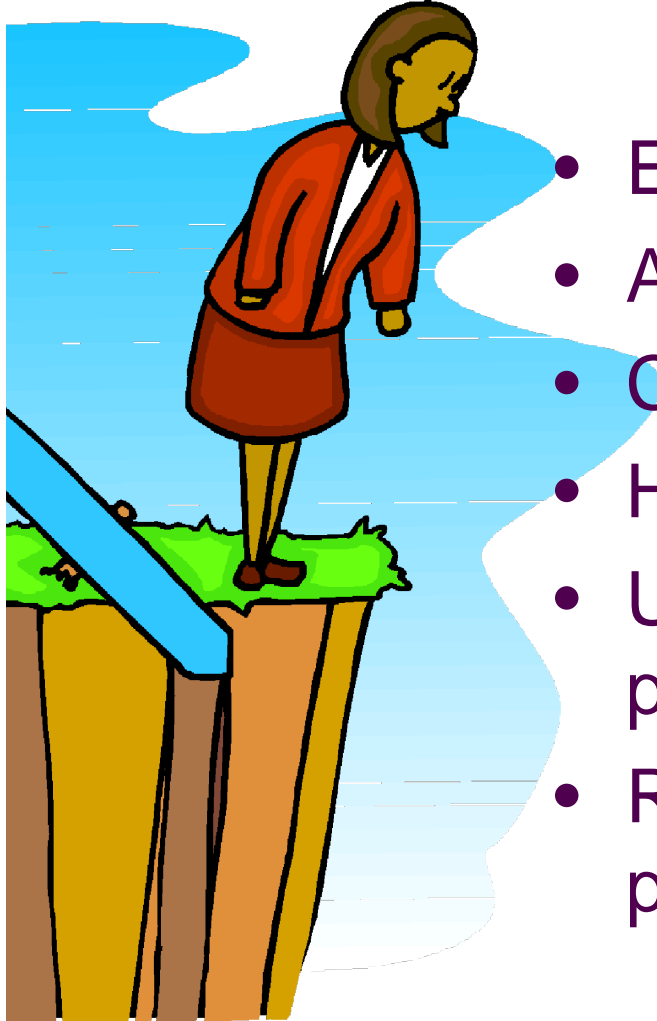


- All families have many changing, dynamic, interconnected relationships
- All families have “rank”
- Each individual has unique view of each relationship
- Children have active roles in all family dynamics

THEREFORE...



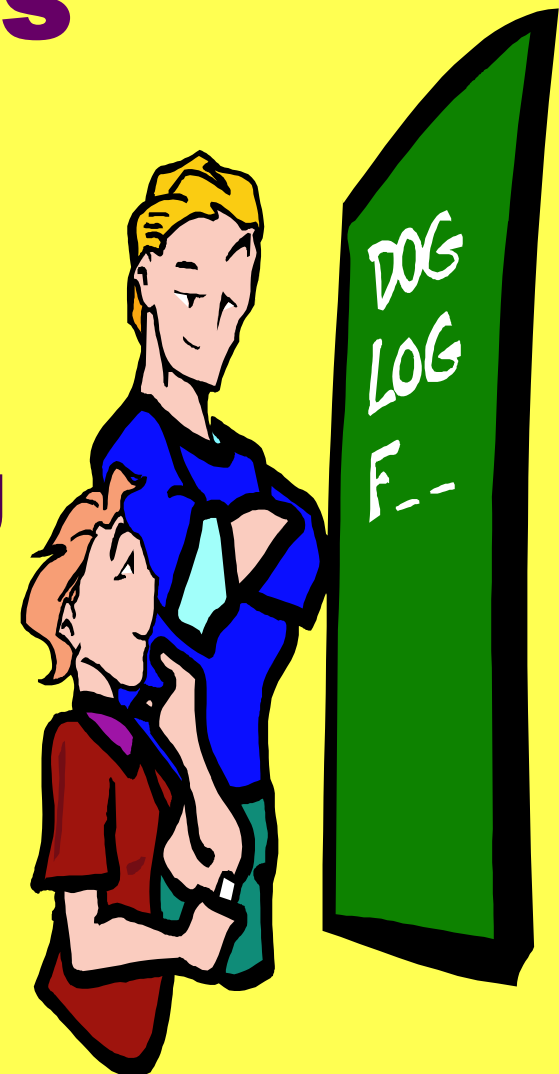
The Risks (to the Children)



- Exposure to threats/acts of violence
- Accidental physical harm
- Child abuse and neglect
- Homicide or abduction
- Undermining victim and healthy parent/child relationships
- Rigid, irresponsible or neglectful parenting

The Lessons

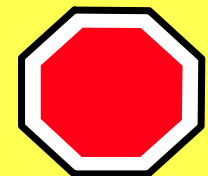
- Violence solves problems
- Intimidation gets results
- The victim is at fault
- Controlling and manipulating others = satisfaction
- Harmful stereotypes
- Love = abuse
- Domestic violence is normal
- Nothing is safe



The Roles



- The Caretaker
- The Confidante
 - For adult victim
 - For abuser
- The Assistant
- The Perfect Child
- The Referee
- The Scapegoat



The Effects



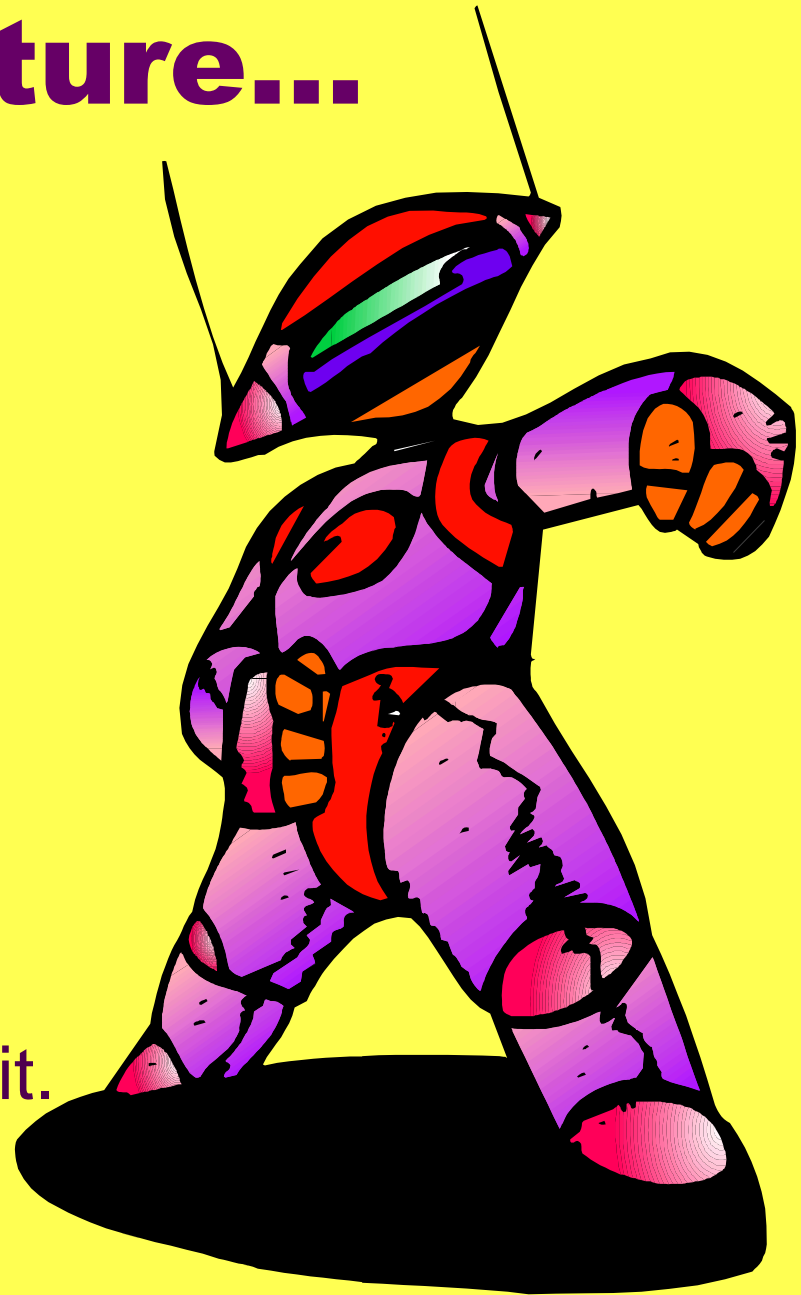
- Academic
- Behavioral
- Cognitive
- Developmental
- Emotional
- Physical
- Social



The Future...

- Male children:
increased rates of DV
against adult partners
- Female children:
increased chance of
victimization as adults;
less likely to seek help

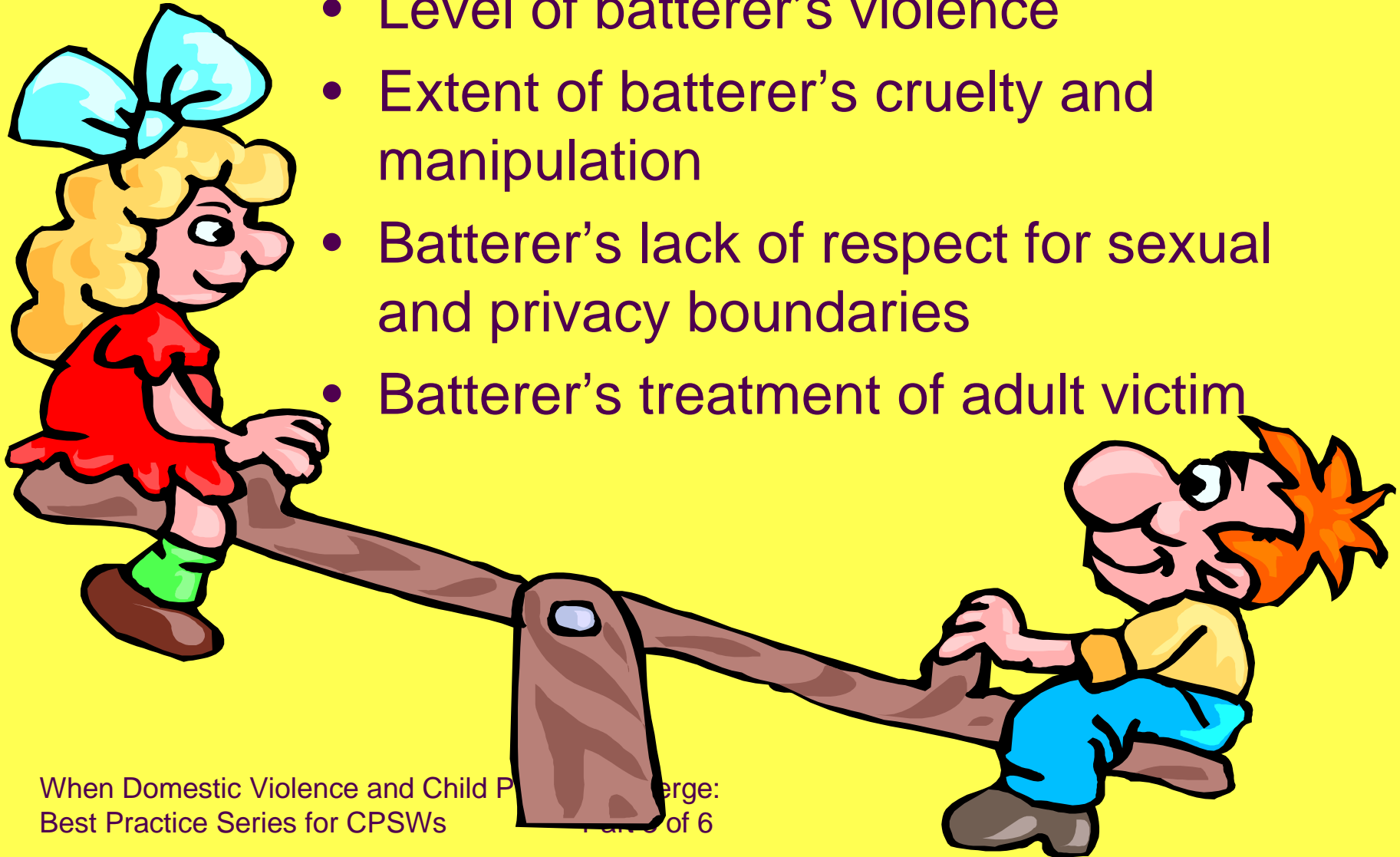
...Unless we help change it.



WHAT CAN WE DO?

Reduce Batterer's Impact

- Level of batterer's violence
- Extent of batterer's cruelty and manipulation
- Batterer's lack of respect for sexual and privacy boundaries
- Batterer's treatment of adult victim

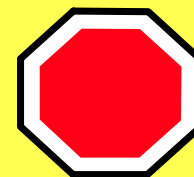


Increase Child's Resiliency



Factors to resiliency:

- Severity of abuse
- Length of exposure to abuse
- Age when abuse occurs
- Developmental level of child when abuse occurs
- Connections to caring adults
- Safe community havens
- Child's internal coping capacity*



*Building Children's Coping Capacity



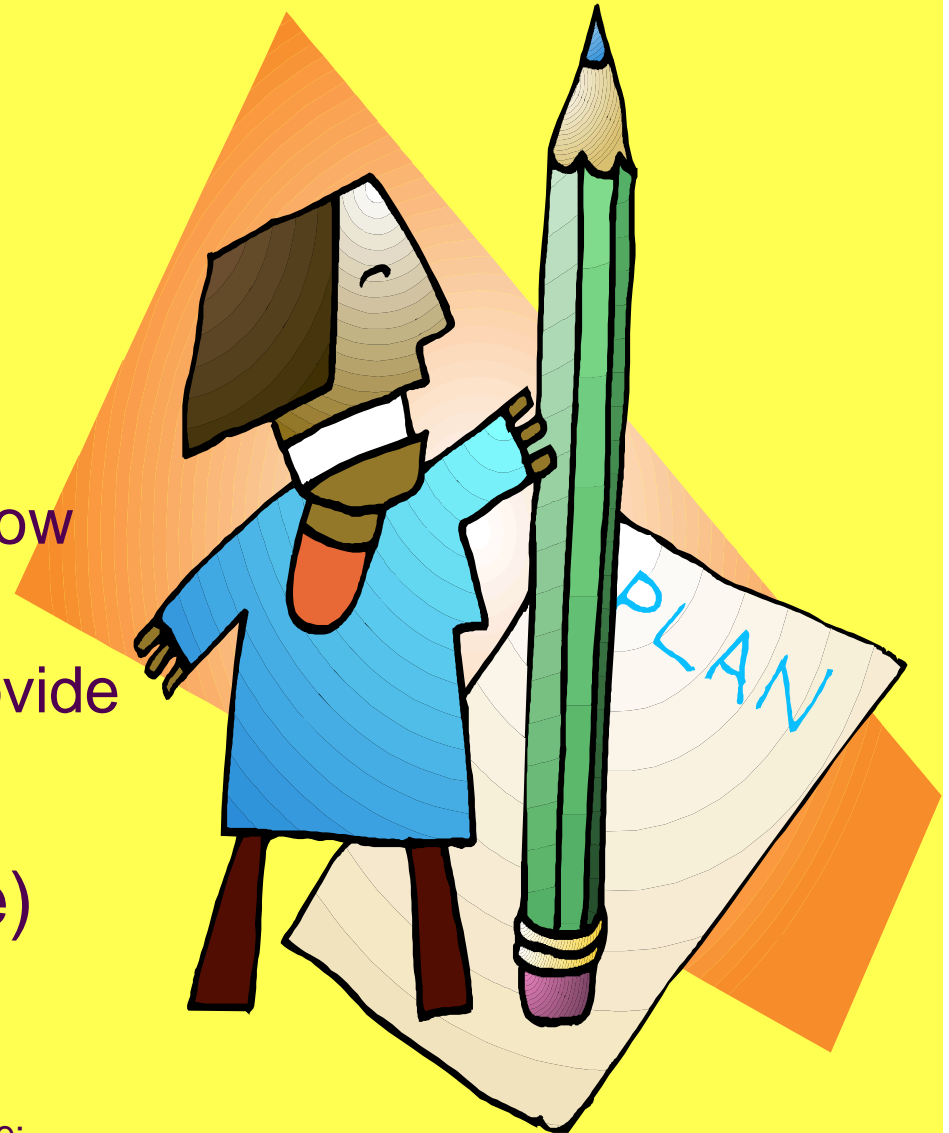
Increased by:

- Intellectual and interpersonal skills development
- Positive attention
- Self-esteem and self-sufficiency
- Attractive personality/appearance
- Individual talents
- Religious affiliations
- Socio-economic advantage
- Opportunities for good schooling

Developing Children's Resiliency

Part 1: Safety Planning

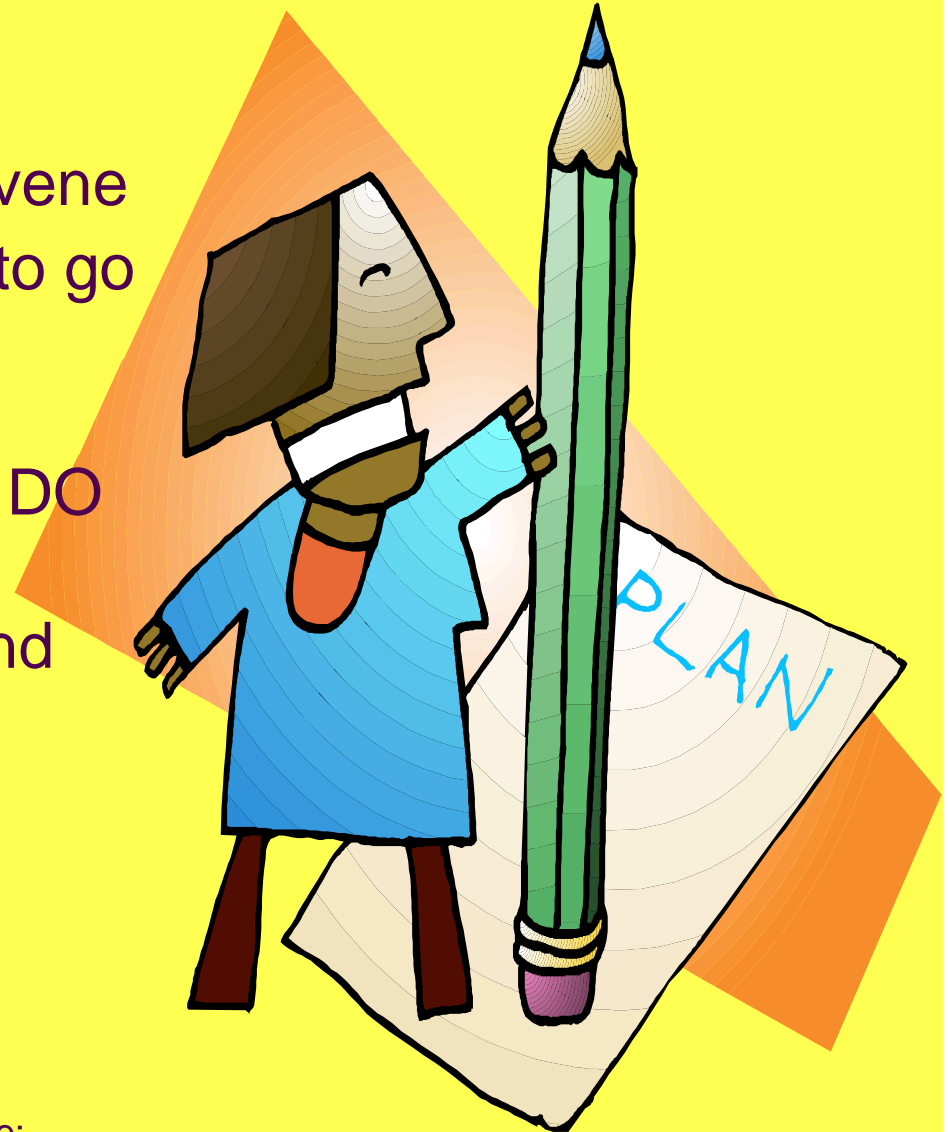
- Partner with the victim and/or DVS:
 - Address individual safety concerns
 - Can victim reasonably follow through with plan?
 - Can victim reasonably provide the child safety?
- Partner with the (capable) child*



*Developing Children's Resiliency

Part 1: Safety Planning

- Child SHOULD NEVER intervene
- Identify a safe, secure place to go
 - During, after violence
 - Best way to get there
- Teach child to call '911' (and DO NOT hang up)
- Rehearse child's full name and address together
- Rehearse scenarios and children's responses



Developing Children's Resiliency

Part 2: Batterer Accountability



- Partner with victim, DVS and collateral contacts to:
 - Identify all coercive and controlling behaviors
 - Quantify expectations to measure change in abusive behaviors
- **Supervised contact...why?**

Developing Children's Resiliency

Part 3: Structure, Limits and Predictability



Partner with victim, DVS and collateral contacts to:

- Identify all family needs, and resources to meet needs
- Help victim explain changes
- Facilitate reasonable and safe visits with batterer

Developing Children's Resiliency

Part 4: Foster Strong Parent/Child Relationships

- Parenting classes
- Bonding activities
- Permission to talk
- Empathetic listening
- Build self-esteem
- Conflict resolution
- Role modeling



Join us next time for...

Screening and Documenting Coercive Control



**Preparing for Effective Interventions to Families
Living Domestic Violence**

Statistics

- *An estimated 3.3 to 10 million children a year are at risk for witnessing or being exposed to domestic violence. (National Network to end Domestic Violence)*
- *Approximately 90% of these children are aware of the violence directed at their mother. (Women's Rural Advocacy Programs)*
- *Children may be physically injured during such assaults, either by accident or because they attempt to intervene. One study found has found that all sons over the age of 14 living in violent homes attempted to intervene to protect a mother from abuse; 62 percent were injured as a result. (Planned Parenthood)*
 - *In another related study, 62% of young men between the ages of 11 and 20 serving time for homicide, killed their mother's batterer. (New Jersey Coalition for Battered Women)*
- *Post-separation violence is high and children are likely to witness it. When a batterer kills his former partner, children commonly witness the homicide or its aftermath, or are murdered themselves.*
 - *In one study, 27% of domestic violence homicide victims were children. (Florida Governor's Task Force on Domestic and Sexual Violence)*
- *It is estimated that 40 to 70 percent of men who frequently abused their wives also abuse their children. (American Psychological Association)*
- *In fact, batterers are seven times more likely than non-batterers to frequently hit their children. (Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice, 1993)*
- *One study found that children who grow up in violent homes have a 74% higher likelihood of committing criminal assaults against their partner. (Silent Witness National Witness Initiative).*
- *In another study, eighty-one percent of men who batter had fathers who abused their mothers. (Silent Witness National Witness Initiative)*

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