

Why Doesn't She Leave?!?



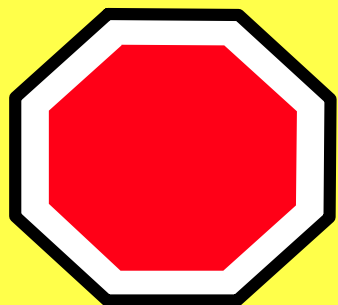
An Interactive Guide to the Perspective and Safety Needs of Battered Women

When Domestic Violence and Child Protection Merge:
Best Practice Series for CPSWs

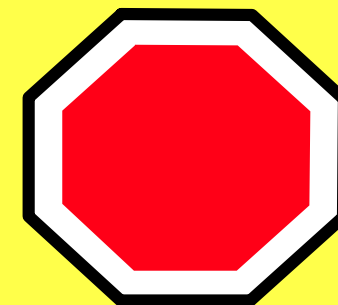
Part 6 of 7

Credits

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- Research and outline for Safety Planning by Aaron Roemer, Domestic Violence Specialist (DVS).
- Editing and presentation layout by Kathy Jones, DVS.
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IMPORTANT!



If DCYF cannot offer the victim of domestic violence better alternatives than the abuser, the victim will return to her batterer.

(Peter Jaffe, PhD, Professor; University of Western Ontario)

“Better alternatives” MUST include provisions for **ALL** the victim’s safety concerns, not just physical safety.

Should I Stay or Should I Go?



LEAVING \neq REDUCING THREAT OF VIOLENCE
towards adult victims or children



STAYING \neq ACCEPTANCE of or **PARTICIPATION** in
the violence in the home

- Victim must **assess, analyze** and **strategize** around risks for every decision
- Seemingly simple questions become very complex
- Understanding **real risks to real people** is absolutely necessary to effective safety planning

Assessing Risks



Batterer-Generated



Life-Generated



The Juggling Act

- Victim must decide:
 - Most urgent safety needs
 - Most influential authority regarding safety concerns
 - Her family?
 - Child protection?
 - Faith community?
 - Judge?
 - Herself?
 - Pecking order of both can change with circumstances



Sophie's Choice

Who determines which needs are most important?

If the ***VICTIM*** decides:

- Determination is based on factors such as:
 - Real/perceived threats by batterer
 - Resources available to meet various safety needs
 - Roadblocks preventing safety needs from being met

If ***OTHERS*** decide:

- Determination often based on factors such as:
 - Helper's personal values
 - Lack of knowledge
 - Extent of violence
 - "Real" resources
 - "Real" roadblocks
 - "One size fits all" rules

Types of Abuse = Safety Needs

Child Abuse = Need for Child Safety

Economic Abuse = Need for Economic Security

Emotional Abuse = Need for Emotional Well-Being

Isolation = Need for Personal Connection

Legal Abuse = Need for Legal Protection

Medical Abuse = Need for Medical Care

Monitoring/Stalking = Need for Privacy

Physical Abuse = Need for Physical Safety

Psychological Abuse = Need for Psychological Well-Being

Sexual Abuse = Need for Sexual Boundaries

Spiritual Abuse = Need for Spiritual Support

Risk Assessment Interactive Quest (IQ)

- Using the vignette provided, use the following screens to determine possible **HINDERANCES** or **HELPS** to YOU, the victim, leaving the batterer.
- Imagine yourself in the same situation.
 - What would you do differently?
 - What would you do the same?
 - What do you imagine the outcome to be?

Child Safety

HINDRANCE

- Internal
- Familial
- Cultural
- Institutional



HELP

- Internal
- Familial
- Cultural
- Institutional

Economic Security

HINDRANCE

- Internal
- Familial
- Cultural
- Institutional



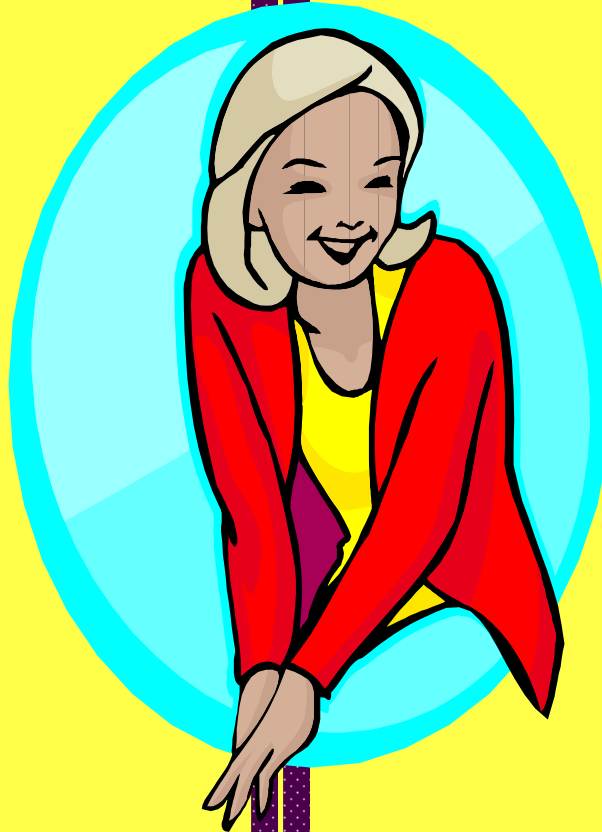
HELP

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Emotional Well-Being

HINDRANCE

- Internal
- Familial
- Cultural
- Institutional



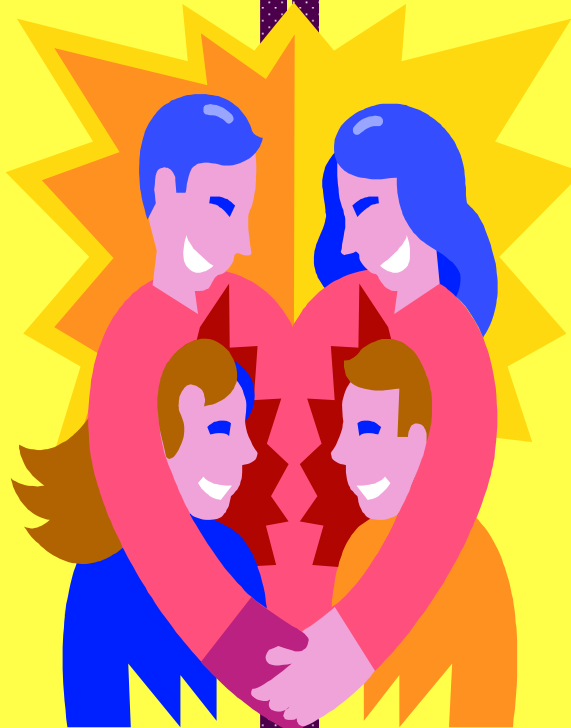
HELP

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Personal Connection

HINDRANCE

- Internal
- Familial
- Cultural
- Institutional



HELP

- Internal
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- Cultural
- Institutional

Legal Protection

HINDRANCE

- Internal
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- Cultural
- Institutional

HELP

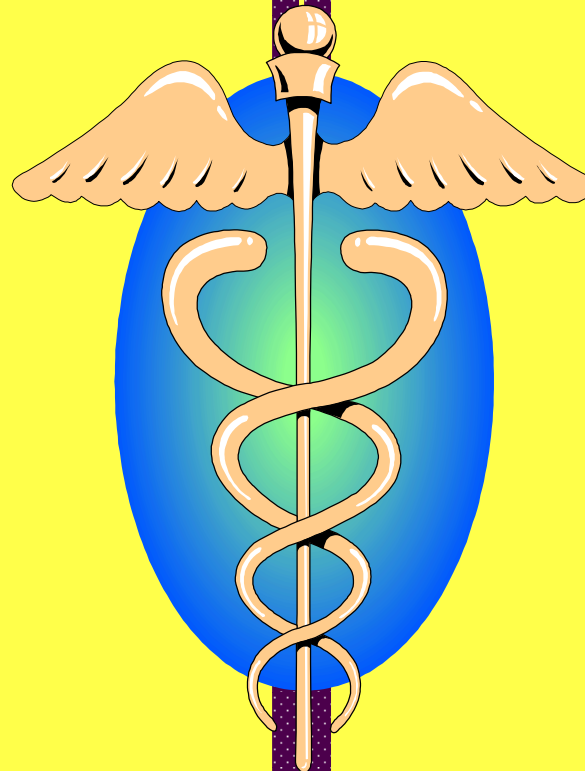
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Medical Care

HINDRANCE

- Internal
- Familial
- Cultural
- Institutional



HELP

- Internal
- Familial
- Cultural
- Institutional

Physical Safety

HINDRANCE

- Internal
- Familial
- Cultural
- Institutional



HELP

- Internal
- Familial
- Cultural
- Institutional

Privacy

HINDRANCE

- Internal
- Familial
- Cultural
- Institutional



HELP

- Internal
- Familial
- Cultural
- Institutional

Psychological Well-Being

HINDRANCE

- Internal
- Familial
- Cultural
- Institutional



HELP

- Internal
- Familial
- Cultural
- Institutional

Sexual Boundaries

HINDRANCE

- Internal
- Familial
- Cultural
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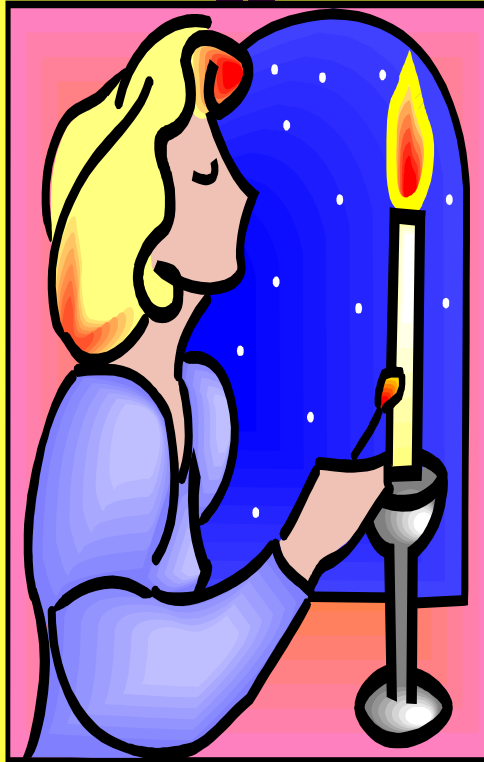
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Spiritual Support

HINDRANCE

- Internal
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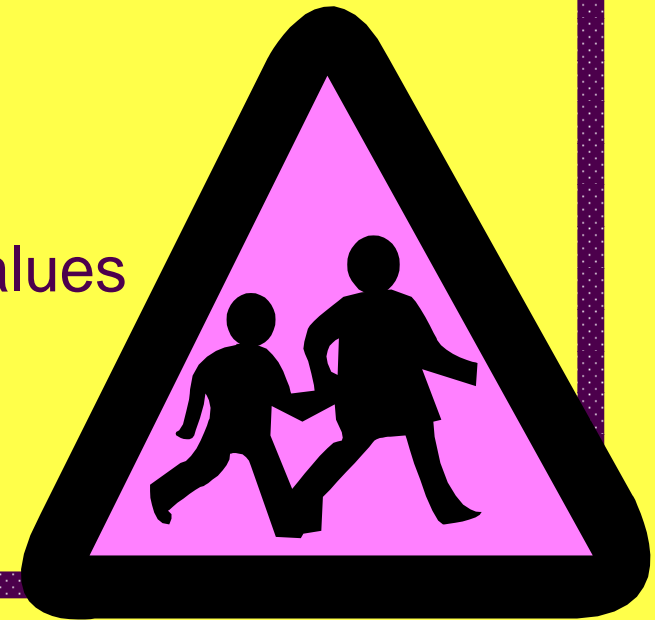


HELP

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Sources of Safety

- NO SINGLE SOURCE!
- Victim is not a Nike® commercial (“Just Do It!”)
 - ◻ Safety is a **process**, not an event
- Must be in concert with:
 - Internal values
 - Familial/personal supports and values
 - Community traditions and values
 - Institutional mandates and values



The Empowerment Model

- The victim is the expert on her own life
 - Capable of making her own decisions
 - Capable of using her own strengths
- Emphasizes:
 - Respect for client
 - Active listening and validation
 - Informed decision-making/goal setting
 - Self-sufficiency, self-discovery, self-worth



Empowered Safety Planning

Goal: reduce or eliminate risk of ongoing violence towards the victim and children

- Partner with the adult victim
- On-going and fluid process
- Use victim's perspective and knowledge
- Positively impacts the safety of the victim, her children, family members, pets, etc.





Building Safety Plans

- Gather information
- Determine client's goals
- Identify available and relevant options
- Continuously assess risks and barriers
- Create safety strategies to reduce risk



Safety Strategy Stumbling Blocks

- Restraining orders (RO)
 -  **Getting RO ≠ Safety**
 -  **Dropping RO ≠ Danger**
- Non-compliance or Lying
 - Disclosure or cooperation may create risk for some victims
 - Careful listening to victim's limitations is crucial

Final Thoughts

- Respect the victim's experience
- Begin with previously successful strategies
- Be clear on victim/CPSW responsibilities
- Understand the victim's perspective will change
- It's OK to disagree with the victim's risk assessment, or acknowledge you don't have all the answers



“A Safety Plan works until it doesn't.”

(David Mandel, Non-Violence Alliance)

Join us next time for...



Beyond Chaos to Catastrophe

Understanding the Co-Occurrence of Substance Abuse
and Mental Illness in Families Living Domestic Violence

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