
***Child Welfare
Best Practices for
Families
Experiencing DV
Toolkit***

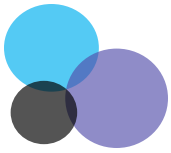
ODHS
Child Safety
Program
2022

ORCAH
CPS
Permanency
Certification
SSA/Family Time Coach
MAPS
Supervisors

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INTRODUCTION

Annually, on average one-third of founded ODHS Child Welfare assessments have domestic violence as a family stressor. Abusive partners are often invisible, specifically they are often not contacted, interviewed, engaged, made the subject of safety and case plans, or provided with services. Too often survivors are held accountable for the abusive partners' actions, resulting in significant safety risks to them and the children as evidenced by re-abuse rates and Critical Incident Review Teams (CIRTs).

This Toolkit is designed to enhance the [Child Welfare Best Practices for Families Experiencing Domestic Violence](#) and assist all Child Welfare staff, including the ORCAH, CPS, Permanency, Certification, SSAs, MAPS, and Supervisors, in working with families where domestic violence has been identified by:

1. Shifting focus to holding abusive partners accountable
2. Partnering with survivors to promote the safety and well-being of children, regardless of their age
3. Ensuring fidelity to ODHS CW practice models, the OSM and S&T Model

Additionally, this Toolkit is also intended to increase CW staff's ability to clearly and effectively identify the source of the danger in DV cases, the abusive partner and their parenting choice to use DV; and accurately document the adverse impacts of the abusive partner's pattern of DV on the children in the family, regardless of their age.

Child Welfare Policy, Procedure and Guidance:

- [Child Welfare Best Practices for Families Experiencing Domestic Violence](#)
- [Child Welfare Procedure Manual](#)
- [CW Information Gateway Domestic Violence](#)
- [ODHS – DV and the Six Domains](#)
- [Working Together: Co-Located Advocate and ODHS Office Guide](#)

For any needs related to the Toolkit contact:

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CRITICAL NOTE:



To have the most current version of the content, access it directly through the Toolkit as needed. Avoid saving content to a desktop or shared drive except for case specific use, such as a completed tool.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

No one can whistle a symphony. It takes a whole orchestra to play it.
~ H.E. Luccock

Creation of the *Child Welfare Best Practices for Families Experiencing Domestic Violence Toolkit* was only possible through the hard work of a diverse group of statewide community partners, ODHS program staff and leadership who dedicated their time, energy, and mental bandwidth during the COVID-19 global pandemic to engage, discuss, provide feedback and pilot the contents of the Toolkit.

SPECIAL THANKS TO

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- Nanci Jarrard - Home Free, Volunteers of America
- Self-Sufficiency Programs DV Policy Analyst Team – ODHS

Glossary

Oregon Child Welfare defines Domestic

Violence in [OAR 413-015-0115](#) as:

“A pattern of coercive behavior, which can include physical, sexual, economic, and emotional abuse, that an individual uses against a past or current intimate partner to gain power and control in a relationship.”

HOW TO USE - Click on a [hyperlink](#) and the content will open.

CONTENT DEFINITIONS



EXERCISES - Opportunity to flex skillset



GUIDES - Guidance for improving case work practice



RESOURCES - Community partner information



TOOLS - Fillable form

FREQUENTLY USED ACRONYMS

ACES	Adverse Childhood Experiences	BIP	Batterer's Intervention Program
CPS	Child Protective Services	CW	Child Welfare
DV	Domestic Violence	FAQs	Frequently Asked Questions
MH	Mental Health	MAPS	Mentoring and Promoting Success
OCADSV	Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence	ODHS	Oregon Department of Human Services
ORCAH	Oregon Child Abuse Hotline	OSM	Oregon Safety Model
S&T	Safe and Together	SSA	Social Service Assistant
SUDS	Substance Use Disorders	TDV	Teen Dating Violence

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Communicate for Safety

Interview the survivor first, in their native language, without the abusive partner present. Develop an alternate plan in case the parents/caregivers cannot be interviewed separately. If contact must be made when the abusive partner is present, consider taking a co-worker, a Co-Located Advocate or Law Enforcement. Have information on DV victims support services and other resources available.

SAFETY TIP



Before implementing any strategy or safety plan, always check with the survivor about any safety risks it may create.

GUIDES



- [Helping CHILDREN Talk About Their Safety Guide](#)
- [Helping SURVIVORS Talk About Their Safety Guide](#)
- [Initial Contact Guide](#)
- [Safer Technology Guide](#)

RESOURCES



- [Call to Safety 1-888-235-5333](#) – formerly Portland Women's Crisis Line
- [Co-Located Advocates FAQs](#)
- [Confidentiality Mandates for Advocates](#)
- [Love Is Respect](#) for teen survivors
- [National DV Hotline 1-800-799-7233](#)
- [OCADSV Find Help](#)

Identifying DV

Without an identified pattern of coercive control, there may not be DV as defined by ODHS CW. There may be family violence that can pose a safety threat to the child or young person, but it is not DV as defined by Oregon CW. When there is an abusive partner using DV and CW does not identify it accurately, the ability to assess and assure child safety is limited.

SAFETY TIP



DV is a pattern of behavior that typically gets more dangerous over time. It is critical to ask about DV in every case, even when it is not part of the initial report to ORCAH or the assigned 307.

GUIDES



- [Healthy Relationships Universal Education Guide](#)
- [Identifying Heightened Danger Guide](#)
- [Indicators of Coercive Control Guide](#)
- [Predominant Aggressor Guide](#)

TOOLS



Undergoing updates – returning soon!

RESOURCES



- [Indicators of Coercive Control LGBTQ](#)
- [Non-Fatal Strangulation Best Practices pocket Guide](#)
- [Training Institute on Strangulation Prevention](#)

Safe & Together Model

ODHS CW uses the S&T Model as a framework for identifying the abusive partner and a pattern of DV. Implementation of the S&T Core Principles in case practice is supported by focusing on identifying the Five Critical Components¹ in all areas of CW practice, including the ORCAH, CPS, Permanency & Certification, SSA, and Supervision.

GUIDES



- [3 Core Principles](#)
- [DV Competency Continuum](#)
- [Five Critical Components](#)

TOOLS



- [Critical Components Case Review Tool](#)

EXERCISES



- [DV Competency Exercise](#)

RESOURCES



- [Is This a Free Pass for Survivors?](#) – S&T article
- [Safe & Together Institute](#)
- [When Do We Remove Children?](#) – S&T article

¹ Safe and Together Institute
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Abusive Partners Pattern of DV

The abusive partner's pattern of DV is the context for everything we learn about the family.

Viewing all the family conditions and circumstances through the lens of the pattern of DV focuses CW practice on the source of the danger - the abusive partner - and is essential for assessing and planning for child safety. Understanding the pattern of DV helps CW better understand the actions and behaviors of the survivor and the child or young people.

CRITICAL NOTE



Perpetrating DV is rooted in an abusive belief system, specifically the abusive partner believes it is their right to use DV against the survivor to exert power and control. It is not because of the abusive partner's inability to manage their anger or emotions.

GUIDES



- [Abusive Partner Interview Guide](#)
- [Coercive Tactics Used on Staff Guide](#)
- [DV & COVID-19 – Working with Abusive Partners Guide](#)
- [Effective Responses to Coercive Tactics](#) – S&T
- [Engagement Questions for Abusive Partners](#)

TOOLS



Undergoing updates – returning soon!

RESOURCES



- [2021 BIP Directory](#)
- [Assessing Levels of Risk for DV Tip Sheet](#)
- [Assessing Risk to Children Lundy Bancroft article](#)
- [Choose to Change Booklet](#) and [Choose to Change Brochure](#)
- [Helpful Things to Say to Abusive Partners Tip Sheet](#)
- [Tips for Fathers Who Choose Coercive Control](#)
- [BIP Completion Certificates Are Dangerous](#) – S&T article

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Impacts on Children

The multiple pathways to harm are all the ways the abusive partner's pattern of DV can harm the child, regardless of their age. First, identify the actions to harm taken by the abusive partner, both directly and indirectly, based on the identified pattern of DV. Next, document in detail the impact of those actions and behaviors on the child's functioning.

CRITICAL NOTE



It is important to remember that perpetrating DV is a parenting choice made by the abusive partner.

GUIDES



- [Actions to Harm and Adverse Impact Examples](#)
- [Custody – Coercive Control – COVID-19 Guide](#)
- [Developmental Impacts to Young People Guide](#)
- [Engagement Questions for Young People](#)
- [Multiple Pathways to Harm Diagram](#) - S&T
- [Writing Strong Behavior Statements](#) – S&T

TOOLS



Undergoing updates – returning soon!

RESOURCES



- [10 Tip Sheets for Parents – Supporting Children Surviving DV](#)
- [ACES](#)
- [Beyond the Physical Incident Model Dr. Emma Katz](#)
- [Children Youth Teens – Futures Without Violence](#)
- [DV and Children FAQs](#) – National Child Traumatic Stress Network
- [What Do Kids Need](#) – Futures Without Violence
- [What's OK at Home](#)

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Survivors Efforts to Protect – The Full Spectrum

The full spectrum of the survivor's efforts to protect are all the ways the survivor has promoted the child's safety and well-being despite the abusive partner's DV. A survivor that is being physically, emotionally and/or sexually abused, kept up at night, etc., *AND still maintains any resemblance of normal home life for a*

child, is demonstrating strengths that should be documented and built on in partnership with the survivor to increase child safety and well-being.

CRITICAL NOTE



A survivor may deny or minimize the DV as a protective strategy to keep themselves and their children safe.

GUIDES



- [Engagement Questions for Survivors](#)
- [Partnering with Survivors Guide](#)
- [Six Protective Factors](#)

TOOLS



- [Parenting Strengths Inventory Worker Tool](#)
- [Understanding MY Parenting Strengths Survivor Tool](#)

RESOURCES



- [10 Partnering Principles – Engaging Survivors of DV](#)
- [Honoring Resistance](#)
- [Navigating Safety – SSP DV Toolkit](#)
- [Protective Strategies Sherry Hamby article](#)
- [VAWnet](#)



Intersections and Intersectionality

Considering intersections and intersectionality, specifically the role of SUDS, MH, cultural scripts and other socio-economic factors, leads CW to better assess and plan for child safety. When considering these factors, we need to be especially careful to check our biases.

CRITICAL NOTE



Implicit bias is a belief or attitude that affects our understanding, decisions, and actions. It exists without our conscious awareness. Implicit bias is pervasive. Everyone possesses them, even those committed to impartiality, such as CW staff.

GUIDES



- [Abusive Partners of Color – Culture and DV Guide](#)
- [Active Efforts Quick Guide](#)
- [DV-SUDS-MH Questions to Consider Guide](#)
- [Implicit Bias and Cultural Humility Guide](#)
- [Intersections of DV-SUDS-MH Chart](#)
- [Survivors of Color – Culture and DV Guide](#)

RESOURCES



- [Bridges Oregon](#) – Advocacy for Deaf and Hard of Hearing survivors
- [How Safe Are Americans with Disabilities Factsheet](#)
- [Key Equity Terms & Concepts – Glossary for Shared Understanding](#)
- [National DV Technical Assistance Providers](#)
- [Nine Tribes DVSA Program Brochure](#)
- [The NW Network](#) – Bi, Trans, Lesbian and Gay Survivors of Abuse
- [Violence Against Native Women & Men](#) – Research
- [Working with Bi-Gay-Trans Male Survivors of DV](#)

Monitoring Child Safety Ongoing

Reassessment and routine follow-up are critical to monitoring child safety ongoing and working with families affected by DV.

CW safety planning should focus on the abusive partner and their behavior, specifically their parenting choice to use DV. Risks for survivors and children can change rapidly, especially when CW intervenes. An abusive person can become more dangerous if control over their partner, the survivor, is threatened.

SAFETY TIP



The risk that an abusive partner will seriously harm or kill the survivor increases when the survivor tries to leave or end the relationship.

GUIDES



- [Establishing C4R for DV Guide](#)
- [Identifying Heightened Danger Guide](#)
- [In-Home Safety Plan Example](#)
- [Placement Considerations Guide](#)
- [Safety Planning Guide](#)

RESOURCES



- [12 Reasons Why Couples Counseling is Not Recommended When DV is Present](#) – Allies in Change
- [Accountability & Connection with Abusive Men](#)
- [Anger Management vs BIP](#)
- [Choose to Change Booklet](#)
- [Choose to Change Brochure](#)
- [Circles of Safety in Safety Planning](#)
- [Oregon BIP State Standards](#)
- [Oregon Department of Justice DV](#) – Family Law Resources
- [Oregon Law Center](#) – Legal Resources

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Trafficking and DV

Intimate partner trafficking occurs when an abusive partner “**compels their partner to engage in commercial sex, forced labor or involuntary servitude** ([NNEDV](#)).” The pattern of behaviors that both abusive partners and traffickers use to exert power and control over a survivor are deeply intertwined. Trafficking can be a tactic of the abusive partner’s pattern of DV.

CRITICAL NOTE



The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) is child abuse and should be reported to ORCAH.

GUIDES



Under development – Coming soon!

RESOURCES



- [Human Trafficking and DV Fact Sheet](#) - HTLC
- [Industry Specific Trafficking Prevention and Survivor Support Toolkits](#)
- [Intersections of DV and Human Trafficking](#) - NNEDV
- [National Human Trafficking Hotline 1-888-373-7788](#) - Help or support adult survivors of trafficking
- [Polaris Project](#)
- [Trafficking Power and Control Wheel](#)

Teen Dating Violence

Broadly defined as a pattern of abuse or threat of abuse against teenaged dating partners, Teen Dating Violence (TDV) occurs across diverse groups and cultures. It is the role of CW to assist the teen survivor in becoming safe; supporting the parents of both the identified teen survivor and the teen abusive partner in accessing appropriate and culturally responsive services for their children; and assessing child safety if there is an allegation of child maltreatment due to the TDV.

CRITICAL NOTE



Implicit bias is a belief or attitude that affects our understanding, decisions, and actions. It exists without our conscious awareness. Implicit bias is pervasive. Everyone possesses them, even those committed to impartiality, such as CW staff.

GUIDES



Under development – Coming soon!

RESOURCES



- [Help Your Child – Tip Sheet for Parents of TDV Survivors](#)
- [Love Is Respect](#) – for TDV survivors
- [Talk About It Tips for Adults Talking to Youth about Consent](#)
- [That's Not Cool](#)
- [The Relationship Spectrum](#)

ORCAH

ORCAH should practice universal screening for DV in all reports of child abuse - not just those in which DV is the presenting issue.

Screen for issues of power & control, isolation, intimidation, threats of homicide or suicide, stalking, weapons, and violence increasing in frequency or severity. Reports of DV will lead to a CPS assessment when screening criteria is met. Refer to assignment criteria.

SAFETY TIP



The details of a survivor's personal safety plan should only be documented in a screening report if it pertains to the report of alleged child maltreatment. Document the details in the confidential section of the screening report, where the reporting party's information is documented.

GUIDES



- [Identifying Heightened Danger Guide](#)
- Indicators of Coercive Control
- [Screening for DV Guide](#)

TOOLS



- [ORCAH DV Screening Questions Tool](#)

RESOURCES



- [211](#)
- [Call to Safety 1-888-235-5333](#) – formerly Portland Women's Crisis Line
- [National DV Hotline 1-800-799-7233](#)
- [OCADSV Find Help](#)

CPS

The OSM requires a comprehensive CPS

assessment. In conducting a comprehensive assessment, the CPS worker must assess for DV, whether it is part of the initial report or not, and further identify the impact of DV on other family functioning. Accurate and detailed

documentation of the DV and its impact on child safety is critical for holding abusive partner's

accountable for their parenting choice to use DV.

SAFETY TIP



The physical & emotional health and safety of CW staff is key and non-negotiable. Consulting and planning for your personal safety is critical and should be a priority for every assessment, especially for cases involving DV.

GUIDES



- [Documentation of DV Guide](#)
- [ODHS – DV and the 6 Domains](#)
- [S&T COVID-19 Practice Tips Guide](#)
- [Threat of Harm and DV Guide](#)

TOOLS



- [CPS DV Checklist](#)

RESOURCES



- [CW Information Gateway DV](#)
- [DV and the CW Professional – Tips for Documentation](#)
- [Effective Interventions in DV and Child Maltreatment - Guidelines for Policy and Practice](#)

Permanency

Understanding the abusive partner’s pattern of coercive control and how it impacts their protective capacities is critical to the ongoing work with a family. This guides the permanency worker to develop measurable expected outcomes clearly focused on child safety. The focus is on making changes, not completing services.

SAFETY TIP



The physical & emotional health and safety of CW staff is key and non-negotiable. Consulting and planning for your personal safety is critical and should be a priority for every contact with a family, especially families who are affected by DV and an abusive partner has been identified.

GUIDES



- [2021 Expected Outcome Guide](#)
- [Abusive Partner PCA Guide](#)
- [Action Agreements and DV Guide](#)
- [Establishing C4R for DV Guide](#)
- [Expected Outcomes and DV Guide](#)
- [Survivor PCA](#)
- [Visit Planning and DV](#)

TOOLS



- [Permanency DV Checklist](#)

RESOURCES



- [Everyday Magic 16 Ways Adults Can Support Children Exposed to Violence & Trauma](#)
- [How to Be an Ally – Friends and Family of Survivors](#)
- [It Takes a Village, People – Allies for LGBTQ+ Survivors](#)

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Certification

In Certification, it is the role of the certifier to ensure resource families understand and can support children, regardless of their age, who have survived DV, including resource families who will support the child's relationship with the survivor; hold the abusive partner accountable; and support the child's healing from trauma. Additionally, certifiers are responsible for understanding and determining how DV impacts a resource family and/or potential adoptive family through the SAFE home study.

SAFETY TIP



The physical & emotional health and safety of CW staff is key and non-negotiable. Consulting and planning for your personal safety is critical and should be a priority for every contact with a family, especially families who are affected by DV and an abusive partner has been identified.

GUIDES



Under development – coming soon!

RESOURCES



- [Everyday Magic - 16 Ways Adults Can Support Children Exposed to Violence & Trauma](#)
- [How to Be an Ally – Friends and Family of Survivors](#)
- [It Takes a Village, People – Allies for LGBTQ+ Survivors](#)
- [Parenting After Trauma for Resource - Adoptive Parents](#)
- [Resource Families Supporting Children Exposed to DV curriculum](#)

SSA

To effectively supervise an abusive partners family time, it is critical for the SSA or safety service provider (SSP) to be aware of possible coercive tactics that may be used.

Each abusive partner is unique as is their pattern of DV. The SSA or SSP should not assume because the family time is supervised, that the abusive partner will stop using abusive or coercive behaviors.

SAFETY TIP



The physical & emotional health and safety of CW staff is key and non-negotiable. Consulting and planning for your personal safety is critical and should be a priority for every contact with a family, especially families who are affected by DV and an abusive partner has been identified.

GUIDES



- [Coercive Behaviors Used During Supervised Visits](#)
- [Supervising Visits for Abusive Partners](#)

RESOURCES



- [Beyond Observation - Considerations in Supervised Visits](#)
- [Everyday Magic - 16 Ways Adults Can Support Children Exposed to Violence & Trauma](#)
- [Strategies to Improve Supervised Visitation Services in DV Cases](#)

MAPS & Supervisors

MAPS and Supervisors should coach and guide workers to engage abusive partners and focus on their coercive behavior. This includes planning for the physical and emotional safety of workers; pivoting to focus on the abusive partner; reframing victim blaming in documentation; coaching to detailed case documentation that identifies the abusive partner's pattern of coercive control and the survivors protective capacities; and safety & case planning that promotes fidelity to the OSM and S&T model.

SAFETY TIP



The physical & emotional health and safety of CW staff is key and non-negotiable. Consulting and planning for your personal safety is critical and should be a priority for every contact with a family.

GUIDES



- [Documentation of DV Guide](#)
- [DV Considerations Staff Engagement Supervisors Guide](#)
- [Heightened Danger Staffing Guide](#)
- [Pivoting Guide](#)
- [Planning for Worker Safety Guide](#)
- [Reframing Guide](#)

TOOLS



- [Casework Assessment for DV Tool](#)
- [OSM DV Supervision Tool](#)

RESOURCES



- [Worker Safety and DV in CW Systems – S&T Whitepaper](#)

EXERCISES



- [Action Planning Exercise](#)
- [CW & Co-Located Advocate Exercise](#)
- [DV Myths Exercise](#)
- [Reframing Victim Blaming Exercise](#)

Trauma Exposure Response

A Trauma Exposure Response is defined as:

“the transformation that takes place within us as a result of exposure to the suffering of other living beings or the planet.”²

Secondary traumatic stress (STS) refers to the experience of people – usually professionals – who are exposed to others’ traumatic stories as part of their jobs and, as a result, can develop their own traumatic symptoms and reactions.

SAFETY TIP



CW staff are continually exposed to STS because of the vulnerable nature of the clients, the unpredictability of the job, and the relative lack of physical and psychological protection.³

GUIDES



- [Low Impact Debrief Guide](#)
- [Trauma Aware ODHS](#)

RESOURCES



- [The Resilience Alliance Training Manual](#)
- [The Trauma Stewardship Institute](#)
- [Trauma Informed Oregon](#)
- [What Are You Afraid Of? CW Workers and DV](#) – S&T article

² The Trauma Stewardship Institute

³ The Resilience Alliance Training Manual