RECOGNIZING THE IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN

Dover, Delaware
September 2017

Learning Objectives
At the conclusion of this workshop, participants will be better able to...

• Discuss recent research on children’s experience of domestic violence

• Identify the elements of a SAFeR approach to decision-making around children in domestic violence cases

• Apply a SAFeR method of analyzing domestic violence – as it pertains to children – in daily practice

Evolving Concepts

ACTIVE AGENTS
Children actively experience and resist DV.

PASSIVE OBJECTS
Children often witness or are exposed to DV.

ABSENT
DV is just between the parents.
Zoe, ReMovedFilm (2017)

SAFegR

Screen for IPV
Assess the Nature & Context of IPV
Focus on the Effects of IPV
Respond to IPV

Worksheets

S F R
Direct intervention in IPV

• Includes things like:
  - Pleading with the abuser to stop
  - Calling for help
  - Blocking the abuser's access to the victim
  - Pulling the abuser off the victim

• In what ways did Zoe directly intervene in the IPV?

Direct harm from IPV

• Includes things like:
  - Getting caught in the crossfire
  - Being blamed for the IPV
  - Being ridiculed for crying in the face of IPV
  - Being told "you're next"
  - Getting punished for intervening

• How did Zoe experience this sort of harm in the course of the IPV?
Experiencing Initial Effects of IPV

- Includes things like:
  - Seeing blood, bruises, and other injuries
  - Watching a parent taken away by ambulance
  - Seeing a parent being arrested
  - Having all the furniture broken up
  - Dealing with intense emotions and traumatic effects

- What are some of the initial effects of IPV that Zoe experienced?

Living with the Aftermath of IPV

- Includes things like:
  - Parental anxiety
  - Separation or relocation
  - Severed social ties
  - Breakdown in trust
  - Chaos, uncertainty, disruption to routine

- What did Zoe’s life look like in the aftermath of IPV?
Abuser’s Parenting
• Physical safety
• Emotional support
• Economic support
• Protection from abuse
• Taking responsibility
• Attunement to needs
• Support of other parent

Harm to Physical Safety
• Includes things like:
  • Hitting, punching, slapping, pushing the child
  • Using excessive or coercive discipline
  • Denying food, clothing, necessary medical care
  • Violating child’s physical space/privacy
  • Abducting or threatening to abduct the child
  • Exposing the child to pornography, drugs, criminal activity

• Any indication of any of that in the video clip?

Emotional Harm
• Includes things like:
  • Violating the child's boundaries
  • Interfering with school or homework
  • Exposing the child to violence
  • Disrupting the child's social structures or routines
  • Mocking the child's interests or ambitions
  • Creating a chaotic or unpredictable home life
  • Promoting gender bias or disrespect of women

• Any indication of any of that in the video clip?
Abuser’s Parenting

- Physical safety
- Emotional support
- Economic support
- Protection from abuse
- Taking responsibility
- Attunement to needs
- Support of other parent

Co-Parenting

- Heightened responsibility
- Loss of control
- Experience of co-parenting

Child’s Experience

- Exposure during pregnancy
- Direct intervention
- Direct harm
- Direct/indirect observation
- Witness initial effects
- Experience aftermath

Abuser’s Parenting

- Physical protection of the child
- Emotional support of the child
- Economic support of the child
- Protection from abuse
- Taking responsibility
- Attunement to needs
- Support of other parent

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Zoe, ReMovedFilm (2017)
Institutional Responses

- Screen for IPV
- Assess the Nature & Context of IPV
- Focus on the Effects of IPV
- Respond to IPV

Say Zoe’s dad is arrested and charged with DV....
What institutional responses might be available to address Zoe’s experience of IPV in this case?

Say Zoe’s mom seeks a protection order....
What institutional responses might be available to address Zoe’s experience of IPV in this case?
Say Zoe's parents are involved in a custody action...
What institutional responses might be available to address Zoe's experience of IPV in this case?