



### Best Interest

“The attorney appointed as a GAL or a CLR shall diligently take steps that s/he deems necessary to represent and protect the best interests of the child...”

What is safety?  
resiliency?  
thriving ?

“...in serving the best interests of children,  
we serve the best interests of all humanity.”  
-- Carol Bellamy, Esq.



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### Video/Rachel



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### CRS § 18-6-8003

(1) “Domestic violence” means an act or threatened act of violence upon a person with whom the actor is or has been involved in an intimate relationship.

“Domestic violence” also includes any other crime against a person, or against property, including an animal, or any municipal ordinance violation against a person, or against property, including an animal, when used as a method of coercion, control, punishment, intimidation, or revenge directed against a person with whom the actor is or has been involved in an intimate relationship.

(2) “Intimate relationship” means a relationship between spouses, former spouses, past or present unmarried couples, or persons who are both the parents of the same child regardless of whether the persons have been married or have lived together at any time.



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### Power and Control



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### Power and Control



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### Beyond Behavior – Getting to Context

#### What you see...

1. Read through partner's text messages without partner's knowledge
2. Locked their partner out of the house
3. Bit their partner
4. Created a secret email account
5. Instructed child not to tell grandma about the 'fights' between mom and dad
6. Put money in a secret bank account
7. Hid the partner's keys
8. Spent rent money on alcohol



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### Think: Intent? Impact?

#### Offender

- Entitlement
- Controlling partner



#### Adult Victim

- Partnership
- Equal input




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### Impact on Children

- Perpetrator might:
  - Behave abusively towards others in home
  - Parent in negative ways
  - Directly abuse or neglect
- Children might:
  - Directly observe the abuse of their parent
  - Overhear arguments and fights
  - Observe injuries, property damage, or emotional distress after abusive incidents




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### Resilience: What Kids Need

- The #1 factor determining children's resiliency & healing is an attached relationship to a caring adult
- Other factors:
  - Child's strengths/resources
  - Sense of self-efficacy
  - Beliefs/values - spiritual or religious
  - Social support/resources for the family




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### Guiding Principal

“When there is a co-occurrence of domestic violence and child maltreatment, the safety of children and youth is enhanced through

- promoting adult victim safety & empowerment,
- holding the perpetrator accountable, and
- engaging in community collaboration(s).”

(DV Practice Guide for Child Protective Services)



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### Framework: Safe and Together Model

**1** Keeping child Safe and Together™ with non-offending parent  
Safety    Healing from trauma    Stability and nurturance

**2** Partnering with non-offending parent as default position  
Efficient    Effective    Child-centered

**3** Intervening with perpetrator to reduce risk and harm to child  
Engagement    Accountability    Courts



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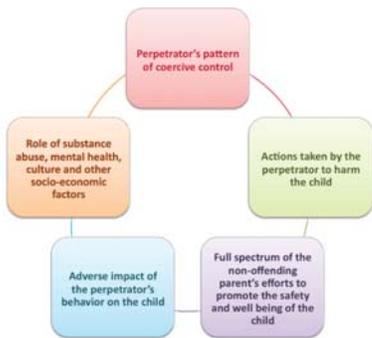
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### Safe and Together Model: Critical Components



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Promoting adult victim safety & empowerment

Minimizing or Denying

Remaining with Perpetrator

Taking Blame

Alcohol or Drugs

Decision Avoidance

Following Rules




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Promoting adult victim safety & empowerment:  
Language to Avoid in Adult Victim's FSP

- Parent will
  - prevent child from witnessing/being exposed to DV
  - ensure that the perpetrator has not further contact with the children
  - make appropriate choices when selecting a partner
  - maintain healthy relationship with his/her partner
  - enroll/participate in couples/family counselling with her/his partner
- Parent will not
  - engage/have role in any DV incident
  - violate the order of protection against her/his partner




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Hold Perpetrator Accountable

“There is emerging evidence to suggest that, when fathers’ violence is unaddressed, intervention with children’s mothers is less effective.

For example ... Eckenrode et al. (2000) found that, although most families assigned to home visiting benefited with lower rates of subsequent child maltreatment, treatment impact was nullified when mothers experienced ongoing domestic violence.”

Scott, K. L. (2010). Caring Dads Theory Manual




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**Hold Perpetrator Accountable**

- Consistent Messages
  - Respectful invitation to change
  - Transparency
  - Tether interactions to children’s needs
- Risk Assessment: Dynamic Risk Management
  - Will always be both subjective and dynamic (no diagnostic risk assessment tool for re-offense)




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**Accountability: Offender Treatment**

- ✓ *Court oversight,*
- ✓ *Coordinated services,*
- *Case management,*
- *Swift sanctions.*



Domestic Violence Offender Management Board  
Division of Criminal Justice  
Office of Domestic Violence and Sex Offender Management  
700 Kipling Street, Suite 3000  
Denver, CO 80215

Contraindicated:

- Anger Management
- Individual Counseling
- Couples Counseling

Accountability Focus Format




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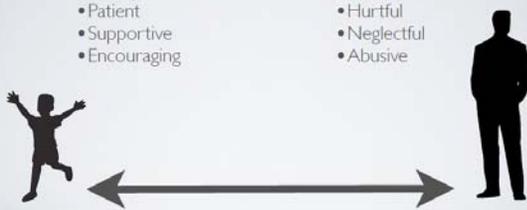
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**CARING DADS**

**Continuum of Parenting**

- Nurturing
- Caring
- Loving
- Patient
- Supportive
- Encouraging

- Self Centered
- Controlling
- Manipulative
- Hurtful
- Neglectful
- Abusive




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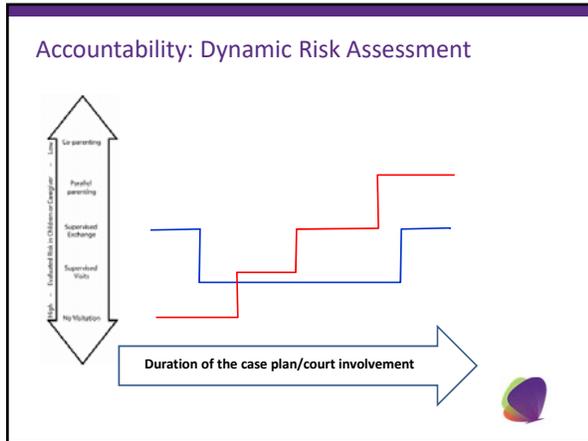
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### Neutrality: Obscuring the Source of Risk?

- Not a question of 'siding' with one parent or another
- Neutrality means beginning without bias

- Responsibility to advocate for child's best interest
  - Supporting primary caregiver
  - Accountability for unsafe behavior
- A 'neutral' position ignoring coercive control puts children at continued risk

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**Resources**

**Domestic Violence Practice Guide for Child Protective Services**

Colorado Department of Human Services

- Partnership
- Resiliency
- Accountability
- Competency
- Trauma-informed
- Intervention
- Coordination
- Empowerment

[https://www.violencefreecolorado.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/DV\\_CPS\\_Practice\\_Guide\\_5.13.13.pdf](https://www.violencefreecolorado.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/DV_CPS_Practice_Guide_5.13.13.pdf)

**Safety - Stability - Well-Being**  
**Checklist to Promote Perpetrator Accountability in Dependency Cases Involving Domestic Violence**

[http://www.ncjfcj.org/sites/default/files/checklist-to-promote-accountability\\_0.pdf](http://www.ncjfcj.org/sites/default/files/checklist-to-promote-accountability_0.pdf)







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**References**

- Scott, K. L. (2010). Caring Dads Theory Manual
- NCJFCJ Checklists: [www.ncjfcj.org](http://www.ncjfcj.org)
- Caring Dads website: [caringdads.org](http://caringdads.org)
- Safe and Together: [endingviolence.com/](http://endingviolence.com/)
- <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdhs/child-fatality-reviews>




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**References, cont.**

- Gondolf, E. W. (2012). *The future of batterer programs: Reassessing evidence-based practice*. UPNE.
- Jaffe, P. G., Crooks, C. V., & Bala, N. (2007). Making appropriate parenting arrangements in family violence cases: Applying the literature to identifying promising practices.
- Mederos, F. (2006). *Accountability and Connection with Abusive Men*
- Tjaden, P. G., & Thoennes, N. (2000). *Extent, nature, and consequences of intimate partner violence: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey* (pp. 1-62). Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice.




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