

# Family and Domestic Violence

# Child Protection Risk Assessment and Risk Management

WA Family Law Pathways Network

October 24, 2017

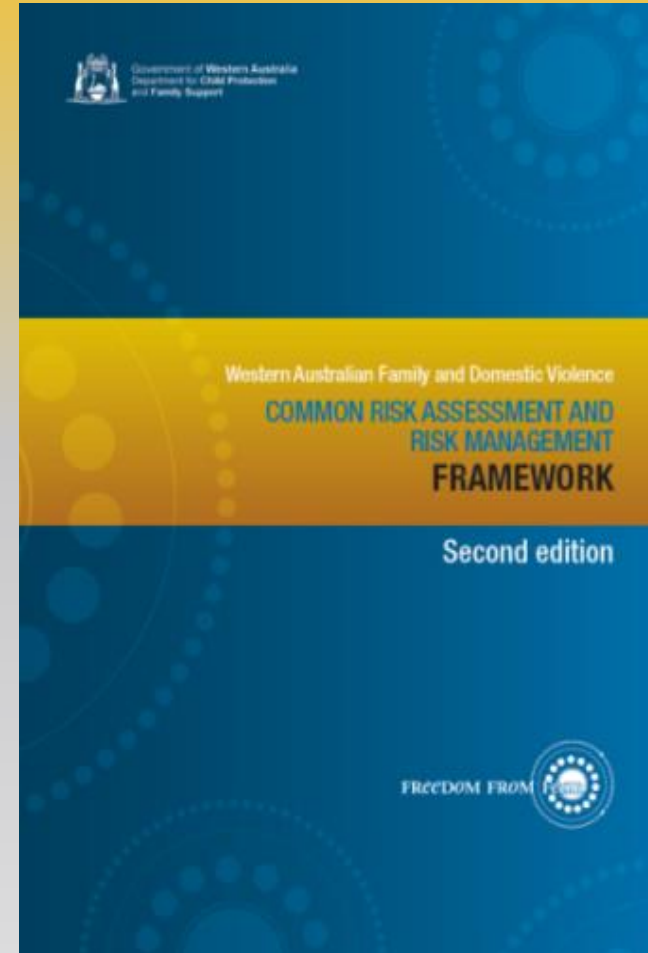


Government of Western Australia  
Department of Communities

# Common Risk Assessment and Risk Management (CRARMF)



- 1<sup>st</sup> Edition 2011
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 2015
  
- The Framework
- Practice Guides
- Resources



<https://www.dcp.wa.gov.au/CrisisAndEmergency/FDV/Pages/CRARMF2.aspx>

# CRARMF



The WA Common Risk Assessment and Risk Management Framework is:

*“A standardised response to identifying, assessing, and responding to family and domestic violence”*

It is intended to provide a common practice framework for screening, risk assessment, risk management and risk monitoring for all service providers in WA (mainstream, statutory and specialist)

# 5 key components of the CRARMF



## The Western Australian Family and Domestic Common Risk Assessment and Risk Management Framework

Common definition and understanding

Commitment to perpetrator accountability

Response continuum

Shared set of principles

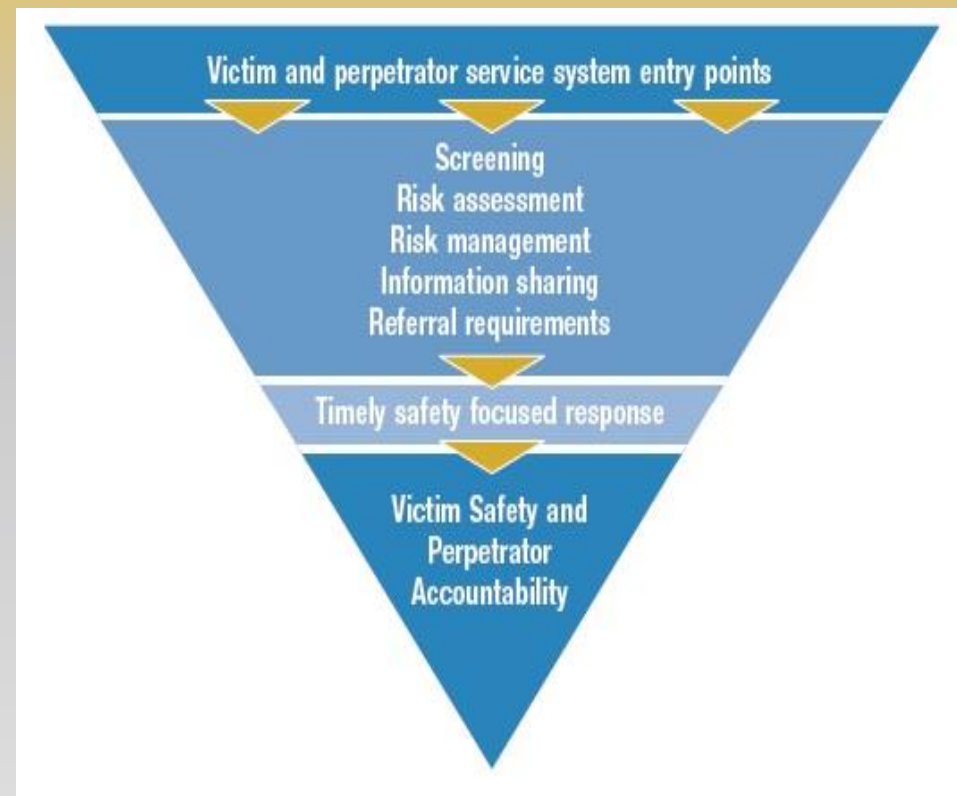
Common minimum standards and practice requirements

# CRARMF



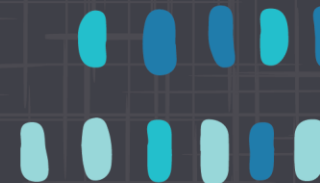
## Framework supports:

1. Eliminating service gaps
2. Client and safety focused responses
3. Inter-agency collaboration and integrated responses to high risk cases
4. Establishment of common language and common understandings to improve communication



**Victim and perpetrator journey through an integrated service system**

# Common Risk Assessment Tool



- Evidence based risk factors
- Provides guidance to assess high risk
- Provides a common language and standard across agencies
- Common screening tool available for service providers not responsible for responding to FDV.
- Page 89 of the CARMF
- Personal safety plan template – adult victims Page 107 of the CRARMF

## Practice Tool 2 Common risk assessment tool

### Family and Domestic Violence Risk Assessment Tool

Service providers that have a role in responding to family and domestic violence are required to conduct a risk assessment considering the adult victim's assessment of the risk, evidenced based key risk factors and the service provider's professional judgement<sup>1</sup>.

#### 1 Summary

Victim details:	Perpetrator details:
Name: _____	Name: _____
D.O.B _____	D.O.B _____
Phone: _____	Phone: _____
Address: _____	Address: _____
Emergency contact: _____	
Nature of relationship between perpetrator / victim: _____	
Name and D.O.B of children: _____	
<b>Completed by:</b>	
Name: _____	Date completed: _____
Agency: _____	Phone: _____

#### Initial assessment

Level of FDV risk  At HIGH RISK of serious harm  At RISK of harm

Levels of risk are defined in Section 5 Assessment / Analysis.

#### Critical or imminent safety concerns

Please list any immediate concerns

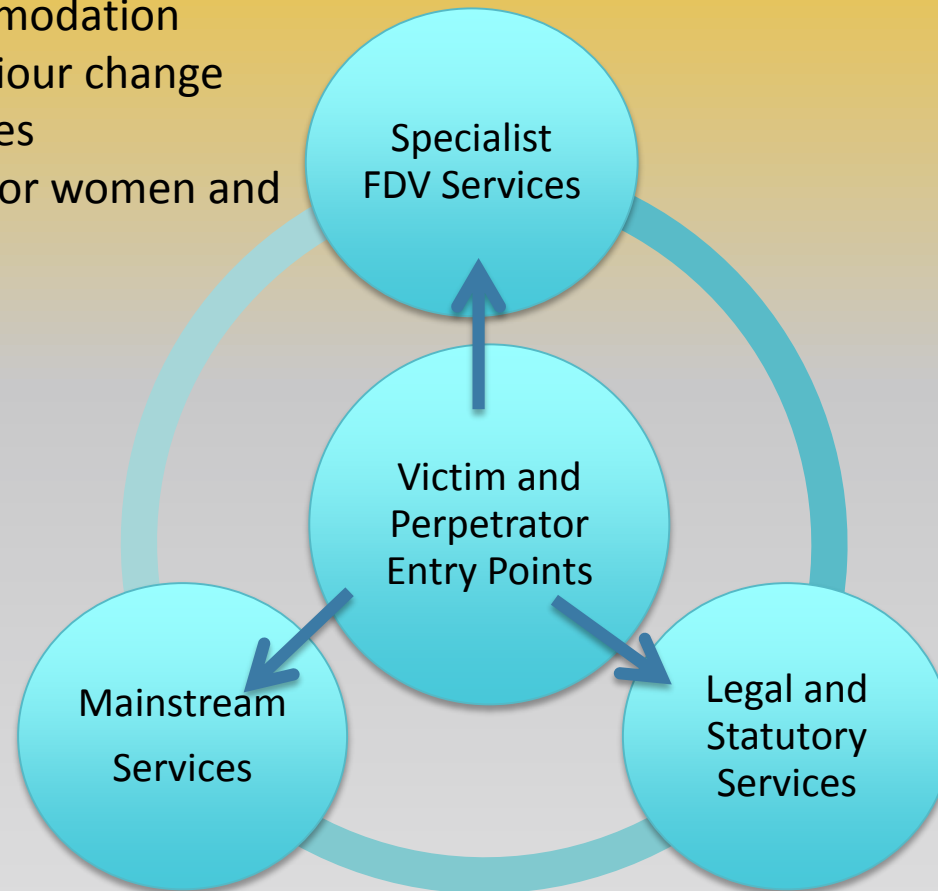
<sup>1</sup> This risk assessment tool is based on comprehensive research including multiple examinations of the predictive accuracy of risk factors, victim perception and professional judgement in assessing risk of repeat assault or potential lethality in family and domestic violence cases (Campbell 2003; 2004; 2005). See *Fact sheet 5 Key risk factors* for further information and references.

# Key Entry Points to the FDV Service System



## Specialist FDV Services

- Crisis Accommodation
- Men's behaviour change
- 24 hr helplines
- Counselling for women and children
- Outreach



## Legal and Statutory Services

- Police
- Child Protection
- Courts
- Family Law Service
- Legal Services
- Corrective Services

## Mainstream Services

- Health
- Education
- AODS
- Mental health
- Housing
- GP's



# Family & Domestic Violence Response Teams (FDVRTs)



*Aim to improve safety for victims and children by providing timely responses following a call out to a family violence incident by WA Police*

- Safety of victim is prioritised
- Focus on perpetrator accountability
- Managing perpetrator risk
- Collaboration with other services
- Joint risk assessment
- Targeting client needs
- Supported and streamlined referral pathways
- Co-ordinated and/or joint responses
- MACM's – Multi-Agency Case Management



# Multi-agency case management (MACM)



High Risk Cases should be responded to with a MACM

Share risk relevant information to support comprehensive risk assessment

Support multi-agency safety planning to:

- improve victim safety; and
- manage risks posed by the perpetrator.

# Children and Community Services Act 2004 – amendment



## ***Family and domestic violence***

- The definition of ‘relevant information’ has been broadened to also enable the exchange of information relevant to the safety of a person who has been subjected or exposed to one or more ‘acts of family and domestic violence’ as defined in the *Restraining Orders Act 1997*. This applies to both:
  - the exchange of information with the Department (under s.23); and
  - relevant information exchanged between prescribed authorities, or between a prescribed authority and a non-government provider or non-government school under new section 28B of the Act.

# Emotional abuse



The Legislation – Section 28 of the Children and Community Services Act 2004

28. When a child is in need of protection

(1) In this section —

*emotional abuse* includes —

- (a) psychological abuse; and
- (b) being exposed to an act of family and domestic violence;

# Family and domestic violence and child protection policy



Exposing a child to an act of family and domestic violence is a form of emotional abuse. The person responsible for the abuse is the perpetrator of the abuse.

The Department is responsible for identifying and responding to cases where a child has suffered significant harm or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of exposure to family and domestic violence.

Emotional harm or likelihood of harm may be caused by a single act of family and domestic violence or the cumulative impact of exposure over a period of time.

# Family and domestic violence and child protection policy



## Duty interaction and intake

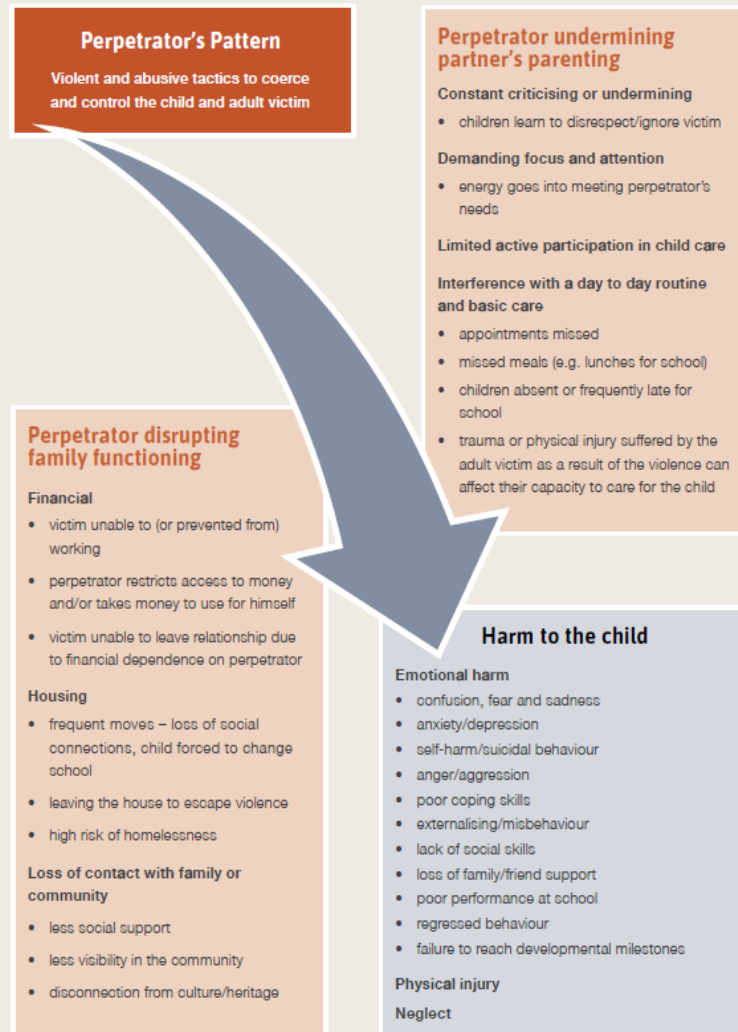
In all cases where a concern for a child is identified, child protection workers must assume that FDV is a factor in the case, and seek information at the earliest opportunity to confirm or refute this assumption.

# Pathways to harm



Figure 2: Pathways to Harm

© David Mandel, Safe and Together



- Safe and Together model – David Mandel offers a useful way to conceptualise and capture the variety of ways that perpetrators of FDV can directly and indirectly harm children as a result of their abusive behaviour.

# Pathways to harm



## *Violent and abusive tactics to coerce and control the child and adult victim*

- **Perpetrator disrupting family functioning**
  - Financial
  - Housing
  - Loss of contact with family or community
- **Perpetrator undermining partner's parenting**
  - Constant criticising or undermining
  - Demanding focus and attention
  - Limited active participation in child care
  - Interference with day to day routine and basic care



# Pathways to harm



- **Harm to the child**

- Emotional harm

- Confusion, fear and sadness
    - Anxiety, depression
    - Self-harm, suicidal behaviour
    - Anger/aggression
    - Poor coping skills
    - Lack of social skills
    - Loss of family/friend support
    - Poor performance at school
    - Regressed behaviour
    - Failure to reach developmental milestones

- Physical Injury

- Neglect

# How have we increased harm?



- Compliance with the cultural expectations and responsibilities of gender.
  - Women
    - Responsible for the health and wellbeing of the family
  - Men
    - Responsible for discipline, providing and protecting

# How have we increased harm?



- What has been our default position?
  - Pressured mothers to be ‘protective’
  - No perpetrator accountability
  - A focus on the status of the relationship
    - Separation increases risk
- Putting pressure to end the relationship
  - He leaves
  - Child and Mum leaves (to refuge)
  - Child is removed
- Is this a Judgement or Assessment?
  - Who is the Primary Aggressor?

# Determining the primary aggressor



Is all violence abuse?

Power

Who has a significant advantage over the other?

Entitlement

Who has the greater sense of entitlement?

- Shoulds
- Privileged beliefs

Responsibility

Who is abdicating responsibility of the wellbeing of the other?

Within the context of a pattern systemic power and control  
Behaviours become controlling when they instil fear

# How are we increasing safety?



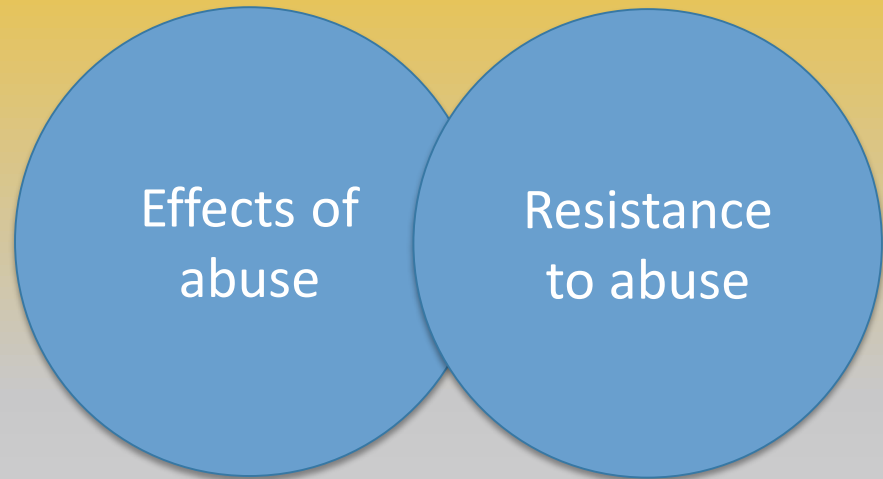
- **Inter-agency collaboration**
  - Promoting an integrated response with external agencies (CRARMF)
- **Partnering with the adult victim**
  - Honouring acts of resistance to abuse
  - Adult victim's assessment of risk to safety
  - Using personal safety plans (including child)
- **Keeping adult victim and child safe and together**
  - Avoiding demonising the perpetrator
  - Talk about the perpetrator as if he has a future with the family
  - Keep the focus on the perpetrator's behaviours
- **A commitment to perpetrator accountability**
  - Naming perpetrator's abusive behaviours using accountable language
  - Placing full responsibility on the perpetrator
  - Engaging the perpetrator and inviting behaviour change

# Honouring acts of resistance to abuse



## Single storied

History of violence and oppression and its effects



## Double storied

History of violence and oppression and its effects  
History of prudent, creative and determined resistance

Partnering with adult victims – honouring resistance  
and personal safety plans

Resistance to Abuse Checklist

# Honouring acts of resistance to abuse



## Key benefits

- **Better client engagement**
- **Development of identity**
  - skills/strengths/decision making
  - More connected to preferred ways of being treated
  - Symptom of health and health-inducing (mental wellness)
- **Clearer picture of the violence**
  - Perpetrators counter-actions to resistance
    - Addresses justifications, ‘out of control’ notions, minimising (alcohol)
    - ‘To conceal resistance is to conceal violence’ (Wade 1997)
- **Contests accounts of pathology and passivity (victim blaming)**



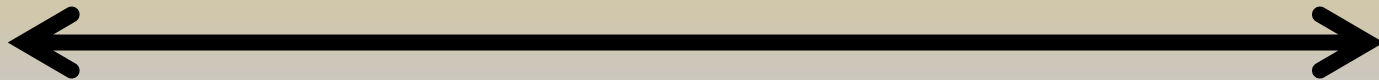
# Perpetrator engagement



Collusion

Invitational

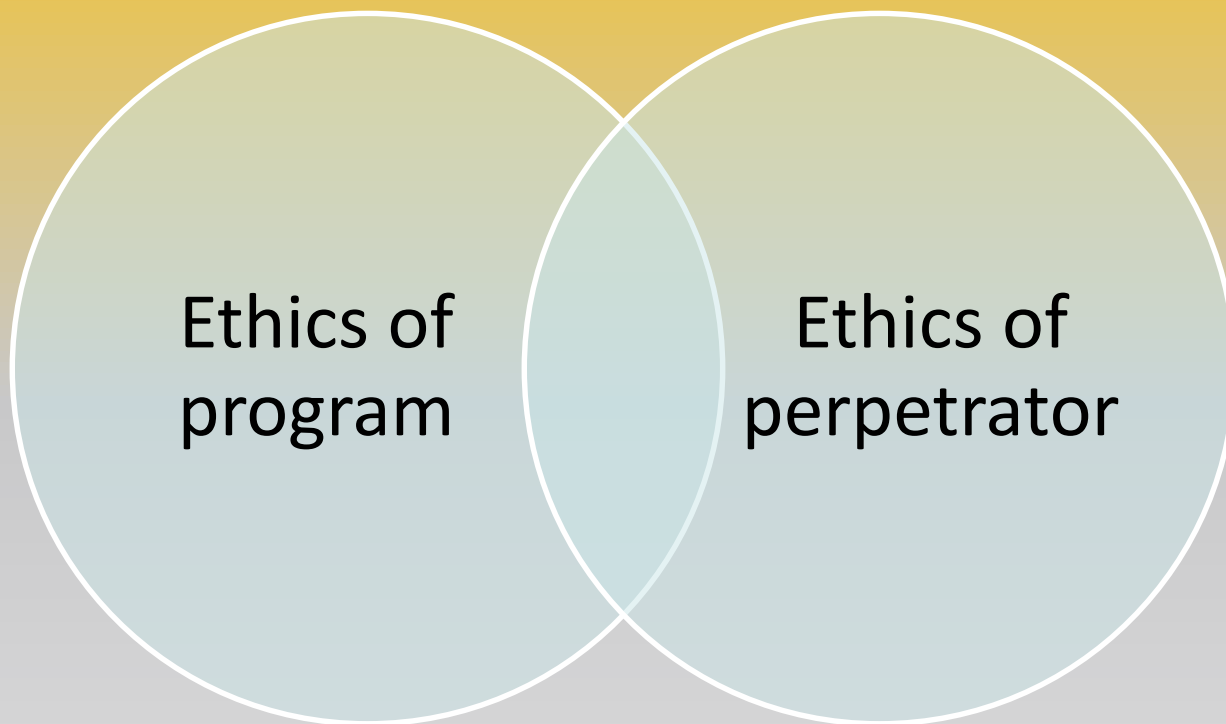
Oppositional



- Avoid collusion
- Avoid an oppositional approach
- Use an Invitational approach

***Invitational practice is concerned with the discovery, naming and actualisation of the man's own ethics and preferences and legitimisation of protest or resistance to injustice.***

# Invitational approach



What is in common?

# Acknowledging protests



How might you respond to these protests?

- Oppositional responses
- Invitational responses

*“I shouldn’t be here, she’s the problem”*

*“You cant take my kids, they are my kids”*

*“You welfare mob are all the same, screwing up people’s lives”*

*“Welfare took me away from my parents”*

# Skills Simulation



- Skills simulation- interview
- Perpetrator engagement exercise
- Groups of 3
  - Worker
  - Perpetrator (provides feedback on the experience)
  - Observer (provides feedback regarding checklist)
- 10 minutes each

# Mapping & Safety Planning



Each table have one below and provide a list;

1. The perpetrators behaviours
2. The trauma related effects on children
3. The effects on the family functioning
4. The effects on the mother's parenting
5. The mother's strengths (in the face of the father's coercive control actions) to promote
  - safety, healing, stability, nurturance, family functioning

# FDV assessment and Signs of Safety



## Harm Statement

- The perpetrators abusive behaviours
- The trauma related effects on children
- The effects on the family functioning
- The effects on the mother's parenting
- Father's abusive attitudes, beliefs and behaviours (**Power and Control wheel**)

## Danger statement

- Department's worries based on the Harm Statement and P&C Wheel

## Strengths

- Mother's strengths in the face of father's coercive actions
- Father's hopes and dreams for his children, his partner and himself
- Father's ethical strivings based on safety

## Safety Goals

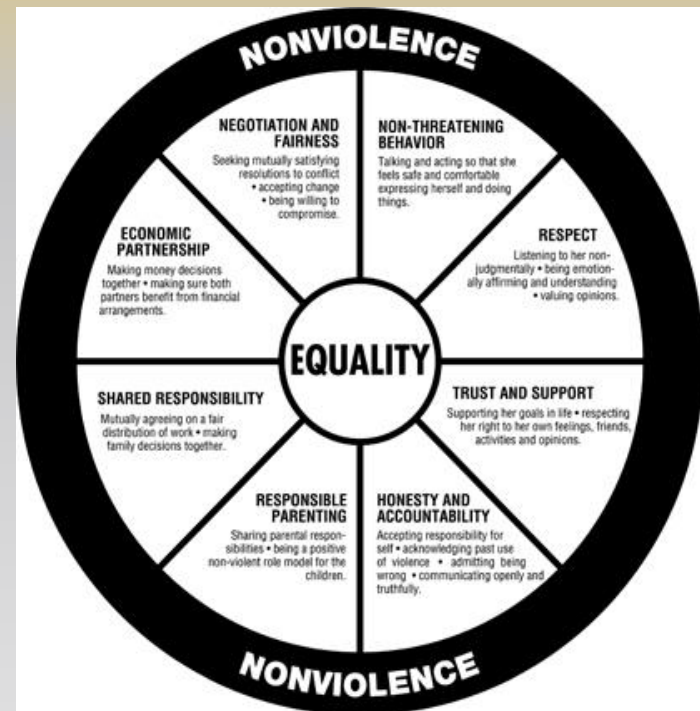
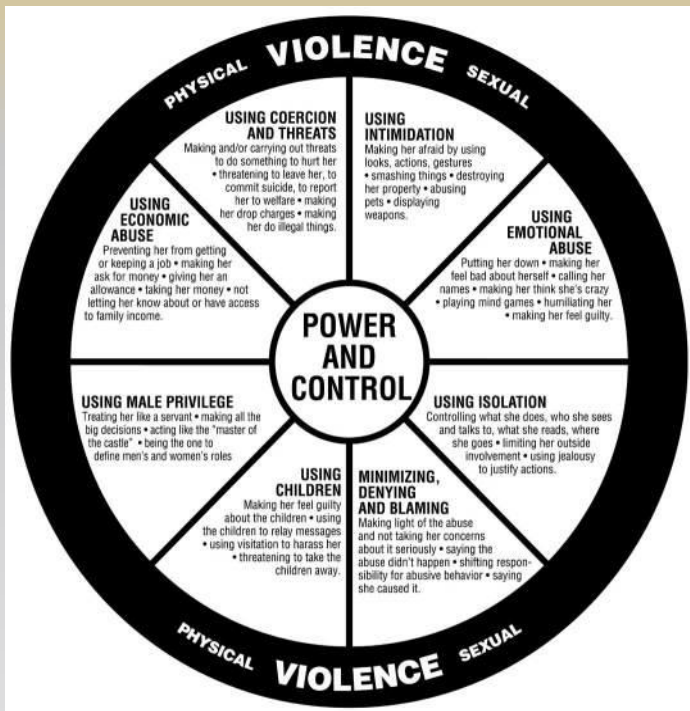
- Mother's use of personal safety plan based on strengths (not responsible for the violence)
- Father's non-abusive/non-violent behaviours
- Father's behaviours based on strengths and ethical strivings
- Father's respectful attitudes, beliefs and behaviours (**Equality Wheel**)

# Safety Planning



## Harm Statement and Danger Statement

## Safety Goals and Safety Planning





# References



- David Mandel and Associates (2013). The Safe and Together Institute. <http://endingviolence.com/>
- Jenkins, A. (2009). *Becoming ethical: A parallel, political journey with men who have abused*. Russell House Publishing.
- Wade, A. (1997). Small acts of living: Everyday resistance to violence and other forms of oppression. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 19(1), 23-39.  
<https://www.responsebasedpractice.com/>
- Humphries, C & Thiara, R (2003). Mental health and domestic violence: 'I call it symptoms of abuse'. *British Journal of Social Work*, 33(2), 209-226
- For a good movie on FDV, watch 'Kalifornia' (Brad Pitt as the perpetrator)  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kalifornia>
- Other FDV resources go to;
  - <https://anrows.org.au/>                      <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/>
  - <http://sfv.org.au/>                      <https://www.whiteribbon.org.au/>