Mission
To create, nurture and sustain a global network of domestic violence-informed child welfare professionals, communities and systems.
**Safe & Together™ Model**

**Better Outcomes for Families & Systems**

- Domestic Violence Informed Child Welfare System
  - Improved Competencies
  - Improved Cross System Collaboration

**Practice Tools**
- Mapping
- Pivoting
- Case Planning Guide
- Supervisor Matrix
- Pathways and Planning

**Better Outcomes for Families: Safety, Well Being & Permanency**
- Better Assessment
- Better Partnerships
- Better Case Plans

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**Intersections**

**Objectives**

- Explore prevalence of the intersection of domestic violence, mental health and substance abuse
- Describe how mental health and substance abuse issues intersect with the perpetrator’s behaviors and tactics
- Explore how these intersections impact children
- Introduce key practice considerations
- Introduce an assessment tool

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**Safe & Together Principles**

1. **Keeping child Safe and Together™ with non-offending parent**
   - Safety | Healing from Trauma | Stability & 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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**Safe & Together Critical Components**

- Perpetrator’s pattern of coercive control
- Adverse impact of perpetrator’s behavior on child
- Full spectrum of non-offending parent’s efforts to promote child safety & wellbeing
- Role of substance abuse, mental health, culture & other socio-economic factors
- Actions taken by perpetrator to harm child
A Perpetrator Pattern Approach

Changes The Work

- Looks at the perpetrator’s behavior, not the relationship or the survivor’s behavior, as the source of the domestic abuse child risk and safety concerns
- Beyond current relationship: 360 degrees assessment of perpetrator pattern
- Strong nexus between domestic violence perpetrator’s behaviors and child safety and wellbeing
- Highlights the choice(s) to be violent, abusive and controlling as parenting choices

Intersections

PREVALENCE IN CHILD WELFARE

- **41%** of **FAMILIES** had concerns of adult SUBSTANCE ABUSE
- **43%** of **FAMILIES** had concerns of DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
- **46%** of **FAMILIES** had concerns of adult MENTAL ILLNESS

OF CASES WITH EXISTING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CONCERNS:

- **65%** had intersecting MENTAL ILLNESS CONCERNS
- **60%** had intersecting SUBSTANCE ABUSE CONCERNS

(Ohio case review, 2016)

Intersections

PERPETRATORS & SURVIVORS

**Perpetrators:**

- 19% of perpetrators in BIP programs suffer from DEPRESSION and 19% suffer from ANXIETY
- One study found about HALF the men in BIPs have SUBSTANCE ABUSE ISSUES
- Perpetrators with substance abuse problems were found to be MORE VIOLENT. Perpetrators found to use substances only about half of the time they were violent.

**Adult & Child Survivors:**

- Women domestic violence survivors have HIGHER RATES of MENTAL HEALTH and SUBSTANCE ABUSE issues than non-survivors
- Child survivors have HIGHER RATES of MENTAL HEALTH, SUBSTANCE ABUSE and BEHAVIOURAL and COGNITIVE PROBLEMS

Siloed Thinking & Practice

- Decreased opportunities for: perpetrator accountability & intervention, supporting treatment & safety of adults and children, systems to work efficiently and effectively
- Children remain in placement longer, cases remain open longer, case plans less effective, unnecessary removals, increased harm to children

**Substance Abuse**

**Domestic Violence**

**Mental Health**
Intersections

Recognizing the interconnections of complex needs, challenges, & conditions with the DV perpetrator’s behaviors

Overall Family Functioning & Child Wellbeing

Substance Abuse

Domestic Violence

Mental Health

#STAP

Multiple Pathways to Harm

Perpetrator's Pattern
- Coercive control toward adult survivor
- Actions taken to harm children

Children's Trauma & Safety
- Victim of physical abuse
- Seeing, hearing or learning about the violence

Effect on Partner's Parenting
- Depression, PTSD, anxiety, substance abuse
- Loss of authority
- Energy goes to addressing perpetrator instead of children
- Interference with day to day routine and basic care

Effects on Family Ecology
- Loss of income
- Housing instability
- Loss of contact with extended family
- Educational and social disruptions

Harm to Child
- Behavioral, Emotional, Social, Educational
- Developmental
- Physical Injury

Key Practice Considerations

- Assess each family and individual. Do not take a “cookie cutter” approach to the issue of intersections
- Assumptions can make assessments and case plans less accurate and effective.
- Consider each parent separately: Do not lump together perpetrator and survivor when you talk about mental health and substance abuse issues
- Seek to understand the relationship between the perpetrator’s behavior pattern and
  - the adult (and child) survivor’s mental health and/or substance abuse issues
- Be prepared for complexity: Cases involving domestic violence and other issues are inherently more complex.
- Expect more challenges related to partnering with the survivor
- Expect more intervention challenges with the perpetrator