# Conducting Essential Safety Planning on Domestic Violence Calls

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# Why Safety Planning?

- 2/3 of intimate partner homicides (67- 80%) involve physical abuse of the woman by the man prior to the murder, no matter which partner is killed
- Slightly more than half of the femicide victims had either been threatened with a weapon or there were guns in their homes
- Forced sex significantly increased a woman's risk of intimate partner homicide
- Over 75% of femicide perpetrators were violently jealous of their partners " If I cant have you, no one will."
- If a women intended to leave her abusive partner, telling him in person increased her risk of being killed by five (5) times

*Dr. Jacquelyn Campbell - Assessment of Dangerousness in the Field of Intimate Partner Violence: What Practitioners Need to Know.*

# Opportunities for Risk Assessment

- In 65% of the cases of femicide (or attempted femicide studies), either the victim or the perpetrator had been seen by a criminal justice or health care professional before the event
- The majority ( 55%) of victim of actual or attempted femicides had called the police before they were killed
- Only 4% of the victims had been to a shelter and 6% had been in drug or alcohol treatment
- 58% of the abusive perpetrators had been arrested before they killed their partners and 22% had been seen in the mental health care system

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**Risk assessment and safety planning provides a method of identifying problems, options and resources, for evaluating these options, and for developing a plan of action.**

- Prepares and reduces the risk of physical harm if a victim is planning to leave the relationship
- Helps brainstorm available options
- Creates a response plan in case of an emergency or escalation in violence
- Reduces the impact of the violence, even if victim remains in the home
- Evolving process as the situation changes

# On Scene Risk Assessment

**Assessing Threats**

- Does the victim believe the threat?
- Was it made in the presence of other people?
- Is it detailed and specific?
- Is the threat consistent with his past behavior?
- Does the abuser have the means to carry it out?
- Does the threat extend to others?

# On Scene Risk Assessment

## History of Violence or Use of Force

- Prior history of violence?
- Has the physical violence increased in  frequency and intensity over past year?
- Has their been recent violence toward the children?
- Has the violence involved choking or strangulation?
- Has the violence involved an object (belt; cord)?
- Has the violence involved head banging or head injury?
- Has the abuser been violent during pregnancy?
- Does the abuser have a history of violence towards others?
- Has the abuser ever abused pets?

# On Scene Risk Assessment

**Weapons**

- Are there weapons in the household? Where are they kept?
- Has the abuser's past violence involved the display, use, or threat of use of firearms?

**Stalking**

- Does the abuser engage in "checking up" behaviors?
- Does the abuser enlist others in monitoring the victim's behavior?
- Has the abuser ever threatened the victim's friends, family, coworkers?
- Has the abuser made unwanted attempts to communicate with the victim (mail, third party)?

# On Scene Risk Assessment

**Centrality (Enmeshment)**

one partner feels / believes
they are “incomplete” without the other

- Do the parties live together or share possessions?
- Is victim financially dependent on the abuser?
- Is the abuser possessive?
- Is there constant jealousy of the victim?
- Does the abuser make unfounded accusations of infidelity?
- How much does the abuser’s sense of self depend on the relationship?
- Is the abuser socially dependent on the relationship?

# On Scene Risk Assessment

**Control**

- Does the abuser control the financial resources?
- Does the abuser try to control the victim's daily activities?
- Is the victim required to account for all his / her movement throughout the day?
- Does the abuser check the odometer?
- Has the abuser attempted to isolate the victim?
- Does the abuser believe he is entitled to control the relationship?

# On Scene Risk Assessment

**Other Concerns**

- Does the abuser drink alcohol or use drugs?
- Has there been a recent escalation in the abuser's pattern of drinking / drug use?
- Does the abuser's childhood include domestic violence? Physical and / or sexual abuse?
- How does the abuser describe "things that went wrong" in his past?
- Can the abuser accept responsibility for his / her own actions?

# Safety Planning for First Responders

- Don’t assume the victim identifies their problem as domestic violence
- Express concern for victim’s safety
- Discuss risk factors identified earlier
- If she minimizes her risks, mention her children's safety
- Share the dynamics of domestic violence relationships (power and control, separation violence, dangerousness)
- Help the victim locate a safe place to go (family, friends, hotel)
- Help her engage her support systems
- Assist victim in gathering her important personal papers, phone numbers, keys, emergency money, medications, cell phone and charger prior to leaving
- Encourage victim not to return home for personal possessions without a police stand by

# Safety Planning for First Responders

- Provide victim with shelter hotline number **(800-799-7739)** and / or crisis line number **(800-631-1314)** for immediate safety planning, crisis intervention, and / or transportation needs
- Provide information and explain Orders of Protection
- Assist with obtaining an Emergency Order of Protection, when appropriate
- Document threats, history of violence, victim injuries, substance abuse, safety concerns, and other risk factors in police report and release questionnaire
- Never promise that an abuser is going to “stay in jail” once arrested
- Provide victim with information on victim services, prosecution, counseling, or community agencies that can assist her (all are listed in the Victims’ Rights pamphlets)
- Encourage victim to get the guns out of the home, seize the firearm/s when appropriate (A.R.S. 13-3601.C)

# Safety Planning for Advocates and Crisis Responders

**Identify and Evaluate RISKS with Development of Plans for a Variety of Situations:**

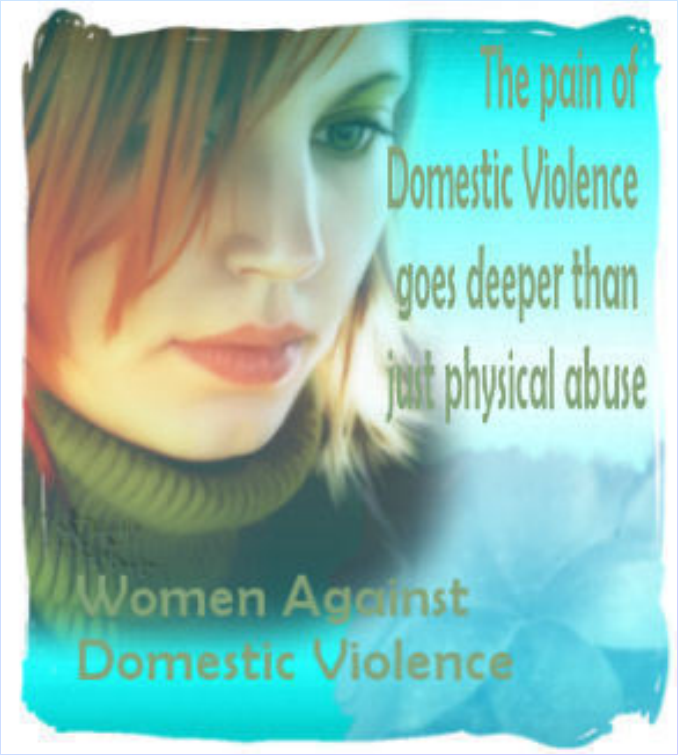
- During a crisis, such as a physical assault
- Remaining in an abusive relationship
- Preparation and or separation from the abuser
- Continued contact with a partner from whom one has temporarily separated, and is attempting to re-negotiate the terms of the relationship
- Living independently after separation, divorce, or termination of a relationship

# Safety Plan

- A safety plan is an individualized plan that is developed to reduce the risks domestic violence victims and their children face.
- The plans include strategies to reduce the physical violence and other harm caused by the batterer, as well as, strategies to maintain basic human needs such as income, housing, health care, food, child care, and education for the children.

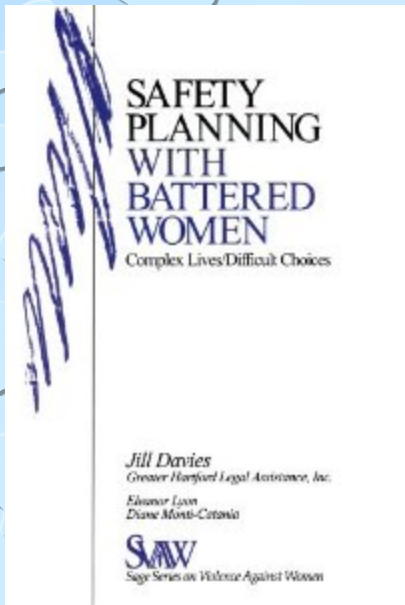
# Safety Plan

- Many interventions tend to focus on only one aspect of a safety plan, responding to the risk of physical abuse or attack.



# Safety Plan

- "To be effective, safety plans must be comprehensive, meeting basic human needs and providing a life plan, not just strategies to respond to physical violence."




- Safety Planning - Jill Davies, Greater Hartford Legal Assistance
- Safety Planning with Battered Women: Complex Lives/ Difficult Choices – Jill Davies, Eleanor J. Lyon, Diane Monti-Catania - authors

# Safety Planning WITH Women

- Understand a battered woman's perspective
  - Listen – start with her concerns, her questions, what she wants to tell you
  - Validate – show respect for her life, differences, and perspective
  - Understand that her perspective will change

# Safety Planning WITH Women

- Understand a battered woman's past and current safety plans
  - What has she tried?
  - How did it work?
  - Would she try it again? If not, why not?
  - What was her partner's reaction?

# Safety Planning WITH Women

- Identify staying, leaving, and protection (from physical injury) strategies
  - Identify the time frame for a woman's current plan
  - What personal and public resources has she identified?
  - How does she think her partner will react to her strategies?

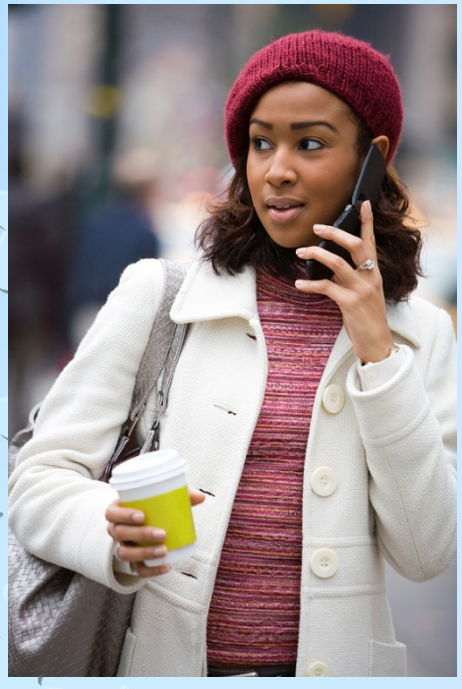
# Elements of Safety Plans

- Battered women's safety plans may have short-term and / or long-term timeframes.
- Battered women's safety plans will change.

# Technology & Safety Planning

- GPS Tracking - Real Time
- TrapCall - unblock and reveal the actual caller ID when a call has been blocked
- SpoofCard – “Call someone from your phone and the person's Caller ID displays the number that you intend them to see.”
- Cell Phone Features
  - AT & T FamilyMap
  - T-Mobile FamilyWhere
  - Apple Find My Friends

# Technology Safety Planning WITH Women



- **Check your cell phone settings.**
  - If you are using a cell phone provided by the abusive person, consider turning it off when not in use.
  - Many phones let you “lock” the keys so a phone won’t automatically answer or call if it is bumped.
  - iCloud backs up your messages (iMessage, SMS, and MMS). “iCloud automatically backs it up daily over Wi-Fi when your device is connected to a power source. You don’t have to do a thing.”

# Technology Safety Planning WITH Women

- **Use a pay as you go or new cell phone .**
  - When making or receiving private calls or arranging escape plans, try not to use a shared or family cell phone because cell phone billing records and phone logs might reveal your plans to an abuser.

# Technology Safety Planning WITH Women

- **Use a safer computer.**
  - If anyone abusive has access to your computer, he/she might be monitoring your computer activities. Try to use a safer computer when you look for help, a new place to live, etc. It may be safest to use a computer at a public library, community center, or Internet café.
- **Create a new email account.**
  - If you suspect that anyone abusive can access your email, consider creating an additional email account on a safer computer. Do not create or check this new email from a computer your abuser could access, in case it is monitored.

# Technology Safety Planning WITH Women

- **Change passwords & pin numbers.**
  - Some abusers use victim's email and other accounts to impersonate and cause harm. If anyone abusive knows or could guess your passwords, change them quickly and frequently. Think about any password protected accounts - online banking, voicemail, etc.

# References & Resources

- National Network to End Domestic Violence – Safety Net Project
- Safety Net Technology Project and NNEDV: Technology, Advocacy and Victim Safety! – Arizona Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence Training
- National Center for Victims of Crime – Stalking Resource Center

# Personal Information Redaction & Confidentiality

- Personal Information Redaction forms may be used by persons made eligible by applicable statutes – A.R.S. §§11-483, 11-484, 16-153 and 28-454 - to request restriction on public access to home address and phone numbers in records maintained by the County Recorder, Assessor, Treasurer and the Arizona Motor Vehicle Division.

- Arizona Supreme Court – Self Service Center: http://www.azcourts.gov/selfservicecenter/

# Personal Information Redaction & Confidentiality

- Arizona Secretary of State – Address Confidentiality Program
- The Address Confidentiality Program allows persons who have been subjected to domestic violence offenses, sexual offenses or stalking to keep their residence addresses confidential and not accessible to the general public. Program participants will receive a substitute address that becomes the participant's lawful address of record.
- http://www.azsos.gov/Info/acp/

# Promising Practices
# First Responder Resources

- Police – Community Partnerships
  - "Police-Community Partnerships to Address Domestic Violence" – Dept. of Justice, COPS, & PERF Publication
- MAG Protocol Evaluation Project
  - Interactive Web Map of Victim Services - www.FindDVservices.com
- Phoenix Police Department
  - Risk Assessment Questionnaire – Coercive Control

# Promising Practices
# First Responder Resources

- A.R.S. §§ 13-3601.J
- When a peace officer responds to a call alleging that domestic violence has been or may be committed, the officer shall inform in writing any alleged or potential victim of the procedures and resources available for the protection of the victim including:
- 1. An order of protection pursuant to section 13-3602, an injunction pursuant to section 25-315 and an injunction against harassment pursuant to section 12-1809.
- 2. The emergency telephone number for the local police agency.
- 3. Telephone numbers for emergency services in the local community.

# Additional Resources

- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-SAFE (7233)
- National Family Justice Center Alliance
  - Training Institute on Strangulation Prevention: www.strangulationtraininginstitute.com
  - iPhone App: "Document It!"
- CONTACS Shelter Hotline: 602-263-8900 or 800-799-7739 in Maricopa County
- Crisis Response Network
  - Maricopa & Pinal Counties: 602-222-9444 or 800-631-1314
  - Pima County: 520-622-6000 or 800-796-6762
- Fire Department & Police Department Crisis Responders
- Arizona 211 – Community Information & Referral

# For More Information

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