TOP TEN WAYS TO ASSIST VICTIM CLIENTS WITH CPS RELATIONSHIP

1. Request and review a copy of your client’s safety plan or service plan and/or a copy of affidavit (public record) filed in legal case

2. Learn CPS terminology: safety plan, service plan, Investigator v. CVS worker v. FBSS worker, family team meeting, family group conference, RTB, UTD, and RO investigative findings, CASA, ad litem, Administrative Review of Investigative Finding (ARIF)

3. Obtain release from client and communicate with CPS worker through email; attempt to create meaningful working relationship with worker while at the same time maintaining trusting relationship with client

4. Identify whether your client needs and is entitled to a court appointed attorney; know exactly how to help your client request a court appointed attorney from judge assigned to case

5. Design victim services specifically for DV/CPS population, i.e. Healthy Relationships Class

6. Speak candidly to your client about CPS position regarding risk of remaining in abusive relationship and remedies available to CPS should they believe there is an ongoing risk to children; encourage client to embrace a less adversarial approach with CPS worker, if appropriate

7. Develop relationship with attorney in your community who handles CPS legal cases to provide free consultation to clients dealing with CPS

8. Assist client in addressing each element of a safety plan or service plan created by CPS; advocate for client when safety plan or service plan is unworkable or unsafe for client; advocate in email format if possible

9. Educate local CPS workers, especially supervisors, about the dangers of requiring couples counseling when DV is issue in case; offer alternative of BIPP for abuser and victim services (especially some kind of class designed for victims) for client with the option of couples counseling at a later date if abuser makes progress in BIPP

10. TRAIN! TRAIN! TRAIN! Design trainings for CPS workers, CPS contract providers (therapists, substance abuse providers, parenting educators, psychologists providing psychological evaluations), attorneys handling CPS cases, and JUDGES hearing these cases; invite TCFV to your community to assist in these trainings!