Putting the Pieces Together:

Advancing New Hampshire’s DV/CPS Collaboration through the Greenbook Project

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What is Co-Occurrence?

Co-occurrence is generally referred to as the simultaneous existence of child abuse and/or neglect and domestic violence within a family.

Greenbook Court Guide for Co-Occurrence Cases
Most studies found 30% to 60% overlap, 41% was median.

High rates of overlap found in:

- Child fatality reviews (41% - 43%)
- Abused child studies
- Battered mother studies

NH CPS Rates of Co-Occurrence

2006

- DCYF Central Intake approved 6,912 referrals of suspected child abuse or neglect for face-to-face assessment. By the conclusion of the assessment, 2,120 (31%) were identified as involving co-occurrence.

- 48% of DCYF cases, closed with a finding, were co-occurrence cases.
NH DV Program Rates of Co-Occurrence

2006
- 1,050 children received services from Coalition programs.
- 4,488 children and youth were identified as having been exposed to DV in their homes.
- 305 children were sheltered by Coalition Programs.
Collaboration on Co-Occurrence in NH
DV Program and Child Protection Collaboration

- DCYF Domestic Violence Protocol
- Domestic Violence Specialist Program (DVS Program)
- Memorandum of Understanding
- Statewide DCYF/Coalition meetings
- Training
Addresses all phases of CPS involvement with families from initial referral to case planning

Universal screening, ongoing assessment

Provides models for interviewing and safety planning

Research-based training tool for both new and experienced staff

“This work is going to save lives.”

-DCYF supervisor
Domestic Violence Specialist Program

In 1999, New Hampshire received its first Rural Domestic Violence Grant

A collaboration between:
NH Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF)
and
NH Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (Coalition)
Statewide DCYF/Coalition Meetings

- Take place quarterly per MOU
- Discussion of essential issues
- Sharing of different perspectives
- Build mutual respect and trust
- Reinforce common ground
DHHS Statewide Training Partnership
New CPSW training
CPS Intake training
Mandatory all-staff trainings at district offices:
  Effects of DV on children,
  Dynamics of batterers as parents, &
  Focused case reviews with outside consultants.

“Training at the local offices has changed the way we work with families.”
-DCYF CPS Administrator
New Hampshire

- Women’s Information Service
- Turning Points Network
- Rape & DV Crisis Center
- Monadnock Center for Violence Prevention
- YWCA Crisis Service
- Bridges
- Response to Sexual and Domestic Violence
- Support Center at Burch House
- Starting Point
- Voices Against Violence
- New Beginnings
- A Safe Place

New Hampshire
Domestic Violence Specialists

An advocate (DVS), employed by the local DV Program, is available for each DCYF District Office statewide, providing:

- Increased access to DV services
- Consultation with CPS
- Training
- Resource for other HHS divisions
- Co-occurrence expertise
Challenges of Collaboration
# Historical Perspectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domestic Violence</th>
<th>Child Welfare</th>
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<tr>
<td>Focus on safety of</td>
<td>Focus on safety of</td>
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<tr>
<td>battered woman</td>
<td>child</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advocacy-based</td>
<td>Legislation-based</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private, non-profit</td>
<td>Government agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>Mandates</td>
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Tensions in the Work

- Information sharing – confidentiality
- Mandated services for victims
- Batterer accountability
- Effects of DV on children
- When does CPS need to intervene?
- Power imbalance of partners
The Greenbook Project
Effective Interventions in Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment Cases: Guidelines for Policy and Practice

Principles and recommendations to encourage collaboration between domestic violence network providers, courts, and child welfare agencies to promote safety, well-being, and stability for abused parents and their children.
Three Pieces of the Puzzle

- Child Protective Services
- Domestic Violence Service Providers
- The Judicial System
Guiding Principles of Greenbook

- Enhance safety, stability and well being for all victims
- Keep victimized parents and their children together
- Perpetrator accountability for the violence
Greenbook Sites

- San Francisco, CA
- Santa Clara CO, CA
- El Paso CO, CO
- St. Louis CO, MO
- Grafton CO, NH
- Lane CO, OR
What is the NH Greenbook Project?

- A 5-year project in Grafton County designed to enhance collaboration between DCYF, Grafton County Family and District Courts, and the domestic violence crisis centers serving the county to increase safety and service to battered women* and abused/neglected children.

*The Greenbook Project recognizes that national statistics indicate women represent 95% of domestic violence victims. The project addresses all adult victims of domestic violence and their abused and neglected children.
Grafton County Greenbook
Structure

- Executive Committee: 3 partners and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)
- Teams: Court, CPS, DV
- Cross-system workgroup
- Advisory Council
Cross-System Collaboration

- What it takes:
  - Commitment to fully participate in process
  - Time and patience
  - Listening with an open mind
  - Risk-taking
  - Taking information back to larger organization
  - Look at success and failure openly
  - Recognition that more work remains
Work Groups

- Purpose = to address cross-system issues
- Members:
  - Crisis Centers serving Grafton County
  - DCYF district offices serving Grafton County
  - Grafton County District and Family Courts
  - Court Appointed Special Advocates of NH
Cross-System Discussions

- Facilitated discussions on:
  - Mandated services for victims
  - Information sharing across systems
  - Effects of DV on children
  - When does CPS need to intervene?
  - Batterer accountability

“I can’t believe how many light bulbs went on in my head today; great meeting!” - CPS supervisor
Accomplishments

- Trust & relationship-building
- Cross-system & system-specific training
- Understanding of systems & roles
- Changes in perceptions & practices of systems & individuals
- Enhanced multi-system collaboration
- Systems became proactive
- New or enhanced protocols for CPS, Courts, DV programs, & CASA
Specific Impact on NH CPS/DV Collaboration

- Enhanced training for CPS & development of new curricula
- Standardized referral process & conflict resolution procedure developed for DVS Program
- On-site case reviews, w/ consultation focused on batterer accountability
- Training for CPS attorneys
- Training for DVSs on consultation within CPS
How Did Practice Change in New Hampshire?
Case Scenario

- Family composition: Mother (33y/o), Father (37y/o), Son (12m/o)
- Report made by neighbor
- Mother asked neighbor to photograph bruises on her arms & face, from husband’s ongoing abuse.
- Mother did not say husband abused child, but was holding child on one occasion when father threw a paperweight at her. Child was not struck by it.
- Neighbor reported due to concern of harm to child because of the domestic violence.
**Initial CPS Response**
How does CPS screen for DV and how effective is CPS in linking DV to child abuse/neglect?

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<th>Pre-Greenbook</th>
<th>Post-Greenbook</th>
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| - Central Intake may screen out, as there is no discernible injury to child reported: reporter is given info re: police, crisis center. | - CPS Intake trained in DV screening techniques.  
  - Effects on the child  
  - Non-offending parent’s protective efforts  
  - Escalation of the violence  
  - Lethality of the batterer |
| - CPS establishes that DV described constitutes potential abuse/neglect & substantial risk & accepts referral. |
CPS Assessment/Investigation

Initial assessment confirms no injury to child; mother maintains father has not struck child

Pre-Greenbook

- If accepted, CPS worker may contact DVS/crisis center.
- On initial contact, CPSW gives info re crisis center to mother.
- No formal link between crisis center & CPS.
- No assurance of contact between mother and crisis center.

Post-Greenbook

- CPS worker assigned, on site Domestic Violence Specialist (DVS) apprised & consults.
- CPSW/DVS involved in all case decisions.
- During initial contact, CPSW secures from mother safe time for DVS to contact her.
- Mother linked to DVS/crisis center.
### CPS Assessment/Investigation

**Mother describes ongoing abuse - fearful husband will kill her if she tries to leave or get help**

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<td>- CPSW advises that mother must contact police &amp; seek restraining order. Otherwise, CPS may need to petition that mother is failing to protect child.</td>
<td>- Risk assessment indicates father is very high risk to mother &amp; child.</td>
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<td>- Crisis center may or may not be involved; no cross communication.</td>
<td>- Mother presents to father that CPS is compelling her &amp; child to crisis center shelter.</td>
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<td>- CPS/DVS/crisis center work with mother on safety plan.</td>
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**CPS/Batterer Accountability**

Father states: he’d never hurt child; mother has MH issues & is unfaithful; he had anger mgt.; wants male CPSW off of case

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<td>Mother’s counseling Hx, father’s allegations may divert CPSW interventions, reduce CPS sense of risk</td>
<td>Previous cross training &amp; current consults between CPSW &amp; DVS clarify father’s control dynamics; focus remains on father’s abusive behavior &amp; safety plan for mother &amp; child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor may change CPSWs to encourage father’s cooperation</td>
<td>Father’s behaviors specifically documented</td>
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<td>No change in CPSW</td>
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**CPS/Court Intervention**

**Does CPS have grounds for petition? Kind of maltreatment alleged? Who is perpetrator?**

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<td>- Focus is on direct abuse/neglect of child.</td>
<td>- CPS legal team trained on DV/legal considerations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- No CPS petition as father’s behavior has not harmed child.</td>
<td>- Petition alleges neglect of child, as father’s violent behavior places child in danger.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- No ongoing CPS action; mother referred to police, crisis center.</td>
<td>- Atty/CPSW are prepared to present foundation to support the petition.</td>
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<td>- Assessment closed, unable to substantiate.</td>
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# CPS/Court Plan

**Is child removed? What services are ordered?**

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<td>No case, no services ordered</td>
<td>Court is educated about relationship between DV &amp; child abuse/neglect; accepts petition</td>
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<td>Consent with finding of neglect against father, no finding against mother</td>
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<td>Child remains at home with mother</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Through NH Child Prot. Act, father ordered out of home, no contact w/mother, supervised contact w/child</td>
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<td>Father ordered to Batterer Intervention</td>
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<td>All parties monitor father’s behavior</td>
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<td>Mother can access MH or other services as needed</td>
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System-Specific Co-Occurrence Guides
DCYF DV Protocol 2nd edition

- New sections on DVS, batterer accountability, & visitation
- “Special Considerations” including family isolation, “hostility” of victims, potential for outside intervention to increase risk, & inappropriateness of anger management & personal counseling to address battering
- Emphasis on ongoing consultation with DVS/DV advocate
DCYF Protocol, Key Points

- Comprehensive family assessment, including existence, extent, & effects of DV on safety
- Details of safety plans or confidential locations should not be included in documentation
- Avoid joint interviews/meetings, mediation, & family counseling with victim & batterer together
- Options for removal of batterer always should be considered before children are removed
DV Advocates Guide

- Complements existing program standards
- Focuses on advocates’ role in collaboration
- Overview of CPS & court practices related to CPS petitions
- Guidance in providing advocacy throughout CPS involvement
Advocates Guide, Key Points

- Children’s advocacy, including tips for communicating w/ children
- Protective strategies of victimized parents
- Effects of DV on children, as well as on parenting
- Visitation considerations
Court Guide

- Intended to assist judges with challenges of child protection cases that involve DV
- Follows a CP case from ex parte petition to permanency hearing
- Divides co-occurrence cases into two types: those in which DV is basis for petition & those in which DV is occurring, but is not primary issue
Court Guide, Key Points

- Review of related files - consistent orders
- DVS at hearings to support victims
- Separate counsel, case plans, visitation… & no couples counseling, mediation, etc.
- Petitions must identify specific behaviors of batterer
- Focus of case planning is safety for victim & accountability for batterer
- Case plan must identify specific emotional & physical needs of child
- Potential extension of reunification efforts
CASA Guide

- Focuses on the role of CASA in co-occurrence cases
- Recognizes that safety of children is intricately linked with that of victimized parents
- Provides guidance for interviewing family members
- Calls for ongoing training on DV
CASA Guide, Key Points

- Speak w/ family members separately
- Do not recommend mediation, joint family counseling, or joint visitation
- Recommend programs that specialize in the impact of DV on children
- No specific details of safety plans in court reports
- Non-compliance of batterers should not influence recommendations or assessment of compliance & progress of victimized parents
What We Know Now
Lessons Learned

- Each system/partner starts with a different set of assumptions, beliefs, strategies, language & mandates – organizational cultures vary widely.

- Conduct initial needs/readiness assessments.

- Take time for process & visioning – plan to change. It is time consuming, labor intensive, frustrating & the pay off can be worth it.

- It doesn’t always have to be a collaboration – sometimes it’s about cooperation.
Lessons Learned

- Frontline workers & mid-managers need to be brought into the process early
- Bring in consultants to assist the process
- “Embeddedness” is a useful framework to think about whether the work efforts, positions, organizational changes will sustain
- Develop a process for resolving conflict
Lessons Learned

- If it doesn’t work out, that’s not failure – evaluate why & make necessary changes

- Leadership matters

- Good facilitation of meetings is critical – make the meetings meaningful

- If it isn’t tense at times you aren’t getting at the heart of the issue

- Develop training that is creative & interactive, w/ case-based models for cross systems training
Resources

Check out:

The Greenbook Initiative: www.thegreenbook.info
Family Violence Prevention Fund: www.endabuse.org
MINCAVA Electronic Clearinghouse: www.mincava.umn.edu
Special site on Child Witnessing: www.mincava.umn.edu/link
USDOJ VAWO site: www.usdoj.gov/ovw
VAWnet Online Library: www.vawnet.org
Susan Schechter Fellowship: www.schechterfellowship.org
National Council of Juvenile & Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ), including the Resource Center on Domestic Violence: Child Protection and Custody: www.ncjfcj.org
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