

Safe and Together™ Model Practice Tool

Mapping Perpetrators' Patterns – Short (MPP-S)

The following Practice Tool can help you better understand how domestic violence perpetrators are impacting child and family functioning and how to develop meaningful plans to intervene with the perpetrator to improve child and family functioning. Pick a specific case and use the tool to map the perpetrator's pattern onto various aspects of assessment, practice, decision-making and collaboration.

STEP 1: IDENTIFY THE PERPETRATOR'S PATTERN OF COERCIVE CONTROL AND ACTIONS TAKEN TO HARM THE CHILDREN (1ST & 2ND CRITICAL COMPONENTS)¹

List the behaviors the perpetrator has engaged in to degrade child and family functioning. In this step you are outlining the perpetrator's behavior and statements (actions), not its impact on child and family functioning.

¹ *Types of behavior:* Include violence, threats, intimidation, and financial, emotional and sexual abuse, undermining the other person's parenting, using children as weapons against the other person. Physical and emotional abuse and neglect of children are part of this pattern as well. Include violent behavior and threatening behavior to others outside the family in this list including gang involvement, behaviors towards interveners (police, CPS workers), other violent criminal behavior, sanctioned violence as part of work/career e.g. martial arts, military service, law enforcement.

Scope of information: Consider the following related to scope of information: Full range of behaviors during presenting incident: Before, during and after; Pattern in current relationship; Behaviors in prior relationships; Other relevant behavior, e.g. violence in other settings; Indirect and direct actions towards children includes both abuse and neglect.

Sources of information: Consider the following related to sources of information: Child welfare records; Criminal background check; Interviews with Adult Survivor, Child Survivor, Perpetrator; Collateral contacts: Family, Friends, Providers, Adult Probation/Court.

STEP 2: MAP THE PERPETRATOR'S PATTERN ONTO THE CHILD AND FAMILY FUNCTIONING² (4TH CRITICAL COMPONENT)

Complete the following sentences:

The perpetrator's behavior pattern caused the following trauma related effects on the children:

The perpetrator's behavior pattern disrupted the family's ecology in the following ways:

The perpetrator's behavior pattern affected the other parent's parenting in the following ways:

How else did the perpetrator's behavior pattern impact child and family functioning?

STEP 3: MAPPING THE PERPETRATOR PATTERN ONTO ADULT SURVIVORS STRENGTHS (3RD CRITICAL COMPONENT)

*List as many behaviors as is known in this case in response to each sentence.*³

² Things to consider: Multiple pathways to harm including trauma, effects of the family ecology and effects on partner's parenting. Give examples of the connection between perpetrator behavior patterns and harm to the child and family functioning. Physical safety: Physical abuse of children: Has the perpetrator physically injured the children by physically abusing these children? Other children? Violence or threats of violence towards partner that create child trauma concerns, e.g. driving dangerously leading children to being afraid of being in the car with the perpetrator. Neglect that creates safety issues: Has the perpetrator's behavior led to the children being placed in unsafe situations e.g. left alone for long periods of time without supervision. Interference with basic needs being met: Interference with partner's parenting: Has the perpetrator's coercive control interfered with the other parent's ability to discipline, guide and/or care for the children? Has this lead to aggressive behavior? Erratic discipline? Impact of overall coercive control on immediate and overall functioning and stability of household, e.g. safe, stable housing or educational disruptions, interference with food, medical care. Connecting children's emotional, behavioral and other issues to the perpetrator's behavior: Did the perpetrator's behavior pattern cause, exacerbate or interfere with the treatment of any of the following: Trauma related symptoms and issues such as aggression, depression and/or developmental delays.

³ Contextualizing adult survivor decision-making: We cannot understand the adult survivor's decision-making, particularly her protective efforts and safety planning without understanding the perpetrator's behavior. Statements can be made to her like: "I'm assuming you've been taking steps to make things better/keep yourself and your children safe in the face of your partner's behavior. I want to learn more about these efforts." Building a meaningful and effective partnership with an adult domestic violence survivor is built on an understanding of the perpetrator's pattern. Building a partnership with the adult survivor requires the ability to identify the perpetrator's behavior, not her behavior and choices nor the relationship as the source of the child welfare concern. This foundation allows you to address child safety and risk without blaming the adult survivor and is more likely to lead to collaboration: "Given that we've seen no change in his pattern, we remain concerned for you and your children." "It's not fair but given that he remains dangerous and we've tried everything in our power to address his behavior with him, we want to work with you to develop a plan that keeps you and your children safe."

The adult survivor did _____ to promote safety of the children in response to the perpetrator's coercive control and actions to harm the children.⁴

The adult survivor did _____ to promote healing from trauma of the children in response to the perpetrator's coercive control and actions to harm the children.

The adult survivor did _____ to promote stability and nurturance of the children in the face of perpetrator's coercive control and actions to harm the children.

What else did the adult survivor do to promote child and family functioning in the context of the perpetrator's behavior pattern?

STEP 4: MAPPING THE PERPETRATOR PATTERN ONTO SOCIO-ECONOMIC, SUBSTANCE ABUSE, MENTAL HEALTH OR OTHER COMPLICATING FACTORS (5TH CRITICAL COMPONENT)

List the issues in child and family functioning that the perpetrator's pattern of behavior may have caused, e.g. a homeless family had stable housing before he started his coercive control.

List the issues in child and family functioning that perpetrator's pattern of behavior may have exacerbated, e.g. a child's behavior issues have gotten worse because of his coercive control.

⁴ Some examples may include: has consistent rules, routines and discipline, nurtures the children; the children and the survivor have a clear attachment; survivor provides financially for the children, ensures the children's needs (food, education, shelter, clothing, medical treatment) are taken care of, provides fun for the children, supports the children's social development, provides love for the children. Other examples may include: having a support network; maintaining family or social relationships; using formal resources like therapists, advocates or law enforcement for support; actions taken by the survivor to protect herself from abuse; acting as a positive role model for the children; maintaining employment; obtaining state assistance; working with housing or other systems to provide stability for the family; knowing what is safest for her family.

List the issues in child and family functioning where the perpetrator has interfered with efforts of other family members to receive treatment or services, e.g. interfering with the other parent's efforts to get sober.

In what ways has the family's socio-economic status or cultural context increased the perpetrator's power over the family and/or made family members more vulnerable to his coercive control?⁵

STEP 5: IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Based on Steps 1-4, answer the following questions using a scaling system where 1="not at all" and 5="perfectly"

1. How comprehensively was the perpetrator pattern assessed? If your answer is less than 5, what is one thing that could be done to improve the assessment of his pattern of behavior?
2. How comprehensively was the perpetrator pattern documented clearly and in one place? If your answer is less than 5, what is one thing that could be done to improve the documentation of his pattern of behavior?
3. How comprehensive were the efforts to intervene with him to improve child and family functioning? If your answer is less than 5, what is one thing that could be done to improve the intervention efforts with the perpetrator?
4. How well did efforts to partner with the survivor take into account the perpetrator's pattern of behavior and her efforts to respond to it? If your answer is less than 5, what is one thing that could be done to improve partnering with the adult survivor?
5. How well managed were any safety risks created by disclosures by the adult and child survivor? If your answer is less than 5, what is one thing that could be done to improve the management of any disclosure-related safety risks?
6. How clearly and comprehensively did the information about the perpetrator's pattern of behavior inform cross-system collaboration? If your answer is less than 5, what is one thing that could be done to improve the use of his pattern of behavior to improve cross-system collaboration?

⁵ Some examples of this might be that she has a criminal history that makes her afraid to call the police; a history of substance abuse that has increased her isolation from potential supports; she's undocumented; she's part of tight-knit immigrant community which means it's easy for him to monitor her.



Safe and Together™ Model Practice Tool

Mapping Survivors' Protective Capacities

The following Practice Tool can help you better partner with domestic violence survivors around the safety and wellbeing of the children.

STEP 1: IDENTIFY THE PERPETRATOR'S PATTERN OF COERCIVE CONTROL AND ACTIONS TAKEN TO HARM THE CHILDREN (1ST & 2ND CRITICAL COMPONENTS)¹

List the behaviors the perpetrator has engaged in to degrade child and family functioning.²

STEP 2: BASED ON A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF THE PERPETRATOR'S BEHAVIOR PATTERN, IDENTIFY THE PROTECTIVE FACTORS OF THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVOR. (3RD CRITICAL COMPONENT)

List everything that is known about the survivor's actions to keep the children physically and emotionally safe.³

¹ The first two critical components provide the context for assessing her protective capacity. The perpetrator pattern, along with the socio-economic factors, form the context for an accurate assessment of protective capacity.

² In this process pay particular attention to what the perpetrator did to disrupt or interfere with the primary caregiver's parenting, protective efforts, and relationship with the children.

³ This involves things the adult survivor did to keep the children physically safe from the perpetrator's physical and emotional violence e.g. what specific actions did she take to safeguard them. These actions may include: removing the children from the room, having a code word with the children, standing between the perpetrator and the children, developing plans with the school or family members to prevent the perpetrator from getting them, having the children stay with another person or many other active protective efforts.

List everything that is known about the survivor's actions to help the children heal from the trauma or the emotional impact of the abuse.⁴

List the things the survivor does to provide stability and nurturance for the children.⁵

List what is unknown about the survivor's full spectrum of efforts to promote the safety and wellbeing of the children.

STEP 3: IDENTIFY SOCIO-ECONOMIC, SUBSTANCE ABUSE, MENTAL HEALTH OR OTHER COMPLICATING FACTORS (5TH CRITICAL COMPONENT)

List examples of any ways systems may have thwarted or impeded the adult survivor's effort to promote the safety and wellbeing of the children.⁶

List examples of factors that might increase her vulnerability to the perpetrator or in general.⁷

⁴ Some examples may include: talking with the children about their experiences and feelings, maintaining stability for the children, getting the children into therapy, getting the children into an activity/sport, defending the children, saying positive things to and about the children.

⁵ Some examples may include: has consistent rules, routines and discipline, nurtures the children, the children and the survivor have a clear attachment, provides financially for the children, ensures the children's needs (food, education, shelter, clothing, medical treatment) are taken care of, provides fun for the children, supports the children's social development, provides love for the children. Other examples may include: having a support network; maintaining family or social relationships; using formal resources like therapists, advocates or law enforcement for support; actions taken by the survivor to protect herself from abuse; acting as a positive role model for the children; maintaining employment; obtaining state assistance; working with housing or other systems to provide stability for the family; knowing what is safest for her family.

⁶ Some examples of this may be: child welfare's using a domestic violence-destructive approach to her case; the police not responding in a timely or appropriate fashion when she calls; courts denying application for civil order of protection or denying coverage of the children in the order.

STEP 4: IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

How comprehensive was the assessment of the adult survivor's protective capacity?

- *Did the assessment capture the effort involved to maintain the children's normal routine, day-to-day tasks and basic needs in the face of the perpetrator's disruptions? Did gender double standards negatively impact the assessment of her protective capacities?*
- *Was the understanding of the perpetrator's pattern used to help understand the full range of the adult survivor's protective capacities?⁸*
- *Was a "reasonable person" standard used to assess her protective efforts? Were her protective efforts reasonable based on the perpetrator's pattern of behavior and the system's response to her situation and her vulnerabilities?*
- *If there were major gaps in the assessment of the survivor's protective capacities, what would be a plan to gather that information?*

How well were the survivor's protective capacities documented in the case record?

Did the worker validate these strengths directly with the adult survivor? What impact did this have on the partnership between child welfare and the adult survivor?

Have these protective capacities been clearly and concisely shared with supervisors, in team meetings, court filings and with providers (as appropriate)?

In the case, what would be the next step in partnering with the adult survivor around the safety and well being of the children?⁹

⁷ Some examples of this might be that she has a criminal history that makes her afraid to call the police; a history of substance abuse that has increased her isolation from potential supports; she's undocumented; she's part of a tight-knit immigrant community which means it's easy for him to monitor her.

⁸ For example, if a perpetrator threatened to kill the survivor if she went to get a court order, then getting a court order would not be looked at as a protective effort contextualized by the perpetrator's behavior. If, however, a perpetrator had threatened to take the children away from the survivor if she tells anyone what he's done, and as a result, she denies the abuse to others while the perpetrator is present, that would be a protective effort contextualized by the perpetrator's behavior.

⁹ An example: I plan to meet with mom and tell her that I see how hard she's working to protect the children and that we consider it a strength that she has been able to keep them safe to this point. In return, as an agency I expect that having this conversation will lead to better conversations about how she can work with us to safeguard the children. Specifically, I will tell mom that despite dad's behavior, she has managed to keep the children in school, physically healthy and respectful.