

What Communities Can Do To Make a Difference

- ◆ **Build communitywide collaborations.** Develop collaborative partnerships among schools, health and mental health centers, courts, social service agencies, and community-based advocacy groups to provide leadership for early intervention and prevention initiatives.
- ◆ **Develop a broader array of culturally competent early intervention programs for children exposed to community, youth, and family violence.** Address bullying and physical and sexual assault, and teach youth social skills that enable them to develop healthy, nonviolent relationships.
- ◆ **Integrate these programs into sites that serve children and young families.** Include day care centers, Head Start programs, schools, Boys & Girls Clubs, neighborhood family resource centers, home visitation programs, health clinics, faith-based institutions, and agencies serving immigrant and migrant populations.
- ◆ **Identify and remove disincentives to participation in intervention programs.** Work with at-risk parents to identify and remove current disincentives and barriers to help-seeking and participation in services for either abused children or parents.
- ◆ **Increase the ability of child protective services, courts, and domestic violence agencies to work collaboratively.** Develop and implement policies that enhance victim safety and offender accountability for cases in which domestic violence and child maltreatment coexist.
- ◆ **Design and expand programs specifically for children exposed to domestic violence.** Develop tools to assess the impact of violence. Tailor solutions to counter the short- and long-term negative impact of this exposure on children and to support parents' safety and stability.
- ◆ **Develop more programs for children and youth during afterschool hours.** Include recreational, athletic, mentoring, and other programs that provide positive alternatives to unsupervised time and opportunities to learn the skills needed to form nonviolent and healthy interpersonal relationships.
- ◆ **Define school policies related to all forms of violence.** Develop school policies or codes of conduct prohibiting sexual harassment, sexual and physical assault, and dating violence.
- ◆ **Design and implement core training for all school personnel.** Include information on the impact of violence on children and how to respond appropriately to disclosures of abuse. Provide training to school social workers, nurses, guidance and other counselors, security guards, coaches, bus drivers, and janitorial and cafeteria staff.
- ◆ **Make the safety and well-being of adult and child victims a priority for fatherhood programs.** Emphasize the use of nonviolent parenting techniques for participants who will have ongoing contact with their children or the mothers.

Chapter 9

Intervention and Prevention for Children and Youth

Violence against women affects millions of children each year and often combines with other forms of violence, such as child abuse and youth violence, to devastate lives, destroy families, and compromise community cohesiveness. A broader array of prevention and early intervention programs targeting boys, girls, and young families should be developed. Schools, health and mental health clinics, childcare homes and centers, Head Start programs, neighborhood family resource centers, home visitation programs, faith-based institutions, and other youth-serving agencies all have important roles to play.

The well-documented intersection between domestic violence and child abuse indicates an urgent need to increase collaboration among child welfare agencies, courts, domestic violence programs, and other service providers. Communities are urged to develop easily accessible interventions, especially those that focus on strengthening or, whenever possible, restoring the bond between the battered parent and her children. Placing nonabusing parents at the center of decisionmaking with respect to their children and empowering these parents to make choices that enhance their own and their children's safety will help restore healthy, nurturing environments in which children can thrive.

Overlap of Violence Against Women, Child Abuse, and Youth Violence

Child abuse and youth violence remain serious social problems in the United States and,

according to some research, have strong connections to domestic violence. Slightly more than one-half of female victims of intimate violence live in households with children under age 12.¹ An increasing number of studies document the concurrent incidence of domestic violence and child abuse within families. Most of this research indicates that 30 to 60 percent of families experiencing child maltreatment also experience domestic violence.² In a national survey of more than 6,000 families, researchers found that 50 percent of the men who frequently assaulted their wives also frequently assaulted their children.³ Studies also suggest the presence of domestic violence in approximately 40 percent of lethal child abuse cases.⁴ In fact, in 1995 the U.S. Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect suggested that domestic violence might be the *single major precursor* to child abuse and neglect fatalities in this country.⁵

An estimated 34 percent of rapes occur in the victim's home where children are likely to see or hear the assault on their mothers or caregivers.⁶ When mothers are sexually assaulted or stalked, their children are also likely to be affected. However, to what degree and with what consequences to children has not been addressed by either researchers or practitioners.

Many children may not be direct victims of abuse but rather are exposed to violence in their homes. Data from a 1995 Gallup Poll of family violence suggest that 1.5 million to 3.3 million children witness or experience parental domestic violence each year.⁷ Another leading family violence researcher estimates that as many as 10 million children are exposed to parental violence each year.⁸

Domestic violence, child abuse, and youth violence often occur within the same families and have serious consequences for the safety of family members, as well as members of the larger community. First, where one form of violence exists, others are often present. Second, the impact on children who witness or experience parental domestic violence may be similar to the consequences of being abused by a parent, and both experiences may significantly contribute to youth violence. The linkages have important implications for intervention and prevention efforts.

Effects of Physical and Sexual Violence on Children and Families

Although most maltreated children do not engage in delinquent behavior, if a child is abused or neglected, the likelihood of arrest increases by 53 percent as a juvenile, by 38 percent as an adult, and by 38 percent for being involved in a violent crime.⁹ A significant risk factor for becoming a child abuser, domestic violence perpetrator, and violent juvenile offender is having been abused and/or witnessing violence at home.¹⁰ Close to 70 percent of girls involved in the juvenile justice system have histories of physical abuse.¹¹ Also, surveys of girls in the juvenile justice system and in shelters indicate rates of sexual abuse and assault of more than 70 percent. These girls often respond by running away from home, which too frequently leads to engaging in prostitution.¹² Girls now constitute 25 percent of juvenile arrests in the United States, an increase of 31 percent over the past decade.¹³

Exposure to parental domestic violence, although not to be considered automatically a form of child abuse, may be associated with a series of childhood problems, primarily behavioral and emotional. Child witnesses of domestic violence on average exhibit more aggressive and antisocial behaviors, fearful and inhibited behaviors, anxiety, depression, trauma-related symptoms, temperament

problems, and lowered social competence than children who do not witness such violence.¹⁴ Research also indicates that exposure to domestic violence can affect cognitive functioning.¹⁵ The harm that individual children experience as a result of exposure to domestic violence varies depending on many factors, including the level of violence in the family, the child's exposure to it, the child's ability to cope, and the protective factors in the child's environment. Problems associated with exposure to domestic violence vary with the age and gender of the child, the length of time since the last exposure to violence, and the child's connections to the nonabusive parent and other significant individuals and social supports in his or her life.¹⁶

The impact of a child's exposure to domestic violence and child abuse can continue through adolescence if safety and other interventions are not provided. Many adolescents who have grown up in violent homes are at risk for recreating the abusive relationships they have observed.¹⁷ They are more likely to attempt suicide, abuse drugs and alcohol, run away from home, and commit other delinquent behavior; engage in teenage prostitution; and commit sexual assault crimes.¹⁸ Research has found that violent adolescents suffered serious physical abuse by a parent and witnessed the use of weapons in their homes significantly more often than nonviolent adolescents. These variables, both independently and combined, have been significantly associated with adolescents' use of violence.¹⁹

Witnessing violence as a child is also associated with adult reports of depression, trauma-related symptoms and low self-esteem among women, and trauma-related symptoms among men.²⁰ Research has found that men who as children witnessed their parents' domestic violence are twice as likely to abuse their own wives than sons of nonviolent parents.²¹ Domestic violence and child abuse put the next generation at greater risk of becoming abusers and violent juveniles, as well as contribute to other antisocial behavior that continues to affect our communities.

Exposure to physical or sexual abuse or domestic violence as a child is not the only risk factor for juvenile violence. Living in a crime-infested community; frequent exposure to drugs, guns, and crime; having parents that use harsh or erratic discipline; and being isolated from the community, family, or school are all circumstances that put children at higher risk.²²

Although little is known about protective factors that mitigate the effects on children who witness domestic violence, research has identified protective factors for child abuse and youth violence. These factors include economic opportunity, mentors and role models who provide a strong sense of moral development, organized community programs for youth and families, involvement in a faith community, a school environment that promotes prevention, and nurturing adult family members who provide consistent, structured supervision.²³ Research suggests that a successful family and youth violence prevention program targets children's shared risk factors of poverty, social isolation, and the witnessing of violence in the home or on the street. Prevention should also focus on strengthening protective factors, reaching parents with young children, providing services over several years, and conducting rigorous longitudinal evaluations of these measures.

Expand Prevention Efforts

Violence prevention simply means stopping children's experience with and exposure to violence before it happens. It requires the following actions:

- ◆ Reaching at-risk families early and helping new parents develop the skills to become capable and nurturing caregivers.
- ◆ Providing support and respite care for families under stress.
- ◆ Implementing antibullying programs and dating violence prevention programs to reinforce social norms that support healthy relationships and nonviolent conflict resolution.
- ◆ Keeping violent images away from children.

- ◆ Ensuring that communities have the resources and capacity to support these efforts.

Prevention efforts related to violence against women and child abuse are relatively new. Child abuse prevention programs have included public education aimed at changing the social norms that minimize or provide excuses for child abuse and mobilizing individuals to take actions that protect children. More recent prevention efforts have provided support to new parents through community-based family support programs.

Parenting programs can offer new parents, particularly teen parents, the confidence, support, and resources needed to promote their children's healthy development and provide a vital link for parents to their community. These programs, particularly when expanded to address violence against women issues, are important for families that face multiple stressors, such as poverty, social isolation, depression, high levels of marital conflict, and deficient housing. Parent- and family-based programs that have had long-term positive effects combine training in parenting skills with other educational and therapeutic components.²⁴

Parents, teachers, and other adults must take seriously the prevalence and severity of violence among teens, including harassment, bullying, and assault, as well as violence and sexual coercion in teen dating and intimate relationships. Creating a violence-free school climate is an important step in preventing harassment and violence based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and disability.²⁵ A schoolwide approach can build an environment in which teachers and children feel respected and valued and where physical and verbal violence against women and girls are not tolerated.

Enhance Early Intervention Efforts

Effective early intervention requires improving our current response system to provide both formal and informal supports to parents and children.

Interventions should be seamless, flexible, and collaborative across professional disciplines; long term; age appropriate; and linguistically and culturally competent. Sites for these early intervention initiatives can include schools, childcare programs, health clinics serving teens, afterschool programs, community-based and grassroots groups, and juvenile courts. Policies and procedures must be developed to ensure the safety of children in these settings and the appropriate response to disclosures of violence and abuse.

Successful early childhood violence intervention programs have common characteristics. First, they attempt to ameliorate a variety of factors associated with youth violence. Second, they focus on families with young children. Third, they are long-term efforts—more than a few months, often as long as several years.²⁶ Appropriately designed early intervention can prevent young children from becoming perpetrators as they grow up, thereby reducing child abuse, domestic violence, and youth violence in following generations.

Many adults who work with children and youth do not receive training and education on the signs of teen dating violence or on the impact of physical and sexual violence against women on their children. School psychologists, counselors, teachers, social workers, nurses, and child protection workers can be trained to respond to disclosures of physical and sexual assaults, teen dating violence, and exposure to domestic violence and provide appropriate referrals to services, protections, and supports.

Studies of pregnant teens show consistently higher rates of victimization in intimate relationships.²⁷ Also, girls who have a history of abuse, including sexual abuse, incest, and physical abuse, are at greater risk of becoming pregnant. Pregnancy can occur directly from a sexual assault or indirectly when the girl engages in risky behavior as a result of abuse.²⁸ Practitioners who serve pregnant teens or teens who have been victimized should use various approaches to support the teens' educational and vocational achievement and the health of their infants.²⁹

The movement to develop interventions for children who witness domestic violence is in its infancy. Although many communities do not have services for child witnesses, a few communities offer services for child residents of battered women's shelters. However, most children whose mothers are battered never reside in emergency shelters.³⁰ Other than shelter-based services, few other specific interventions exist except in the context of child protective services.³¹ Research shows that the younger the child, the more effective the intervention.³²

There is a growing interest in enabling more fathers to share responsibility for the well-being of their children, specifically those fathers who live outside the home. This reflects society's interest in enabling more fathers to share responsibility for the well-being of their children. Fatherhood programs may reinforce the importance of safety for both children and the children's mothers through their contact with fathers, particularly young fathers. By integrating an understanding of the issues related to violence against women into fatherhood program curriculums and services (including procedures to hold program participants accountable for any violent and abusive behavior against either their children or their children's mother), responsible fatherhood programs can become important allies in community efforts to end violence against women and children.

Similarly, as batterer intervention programs teach abusive men to take responsibility for their violence and its effects, they can also challenge fathers to understand the harm their violence does to their children and use their attachment to their children as an incentive to change abusive behavior.

Coordinate Response to Child Maltreatment and Domestic Violence

As indicated above, both child maltreatment and domestic violence often occur in the same family.³³ Some battered women abuse and/or neglect their

children or have additional problems, such as alcohol or drug addictions, that affect their ability to care for their children. In these cases, the risks to children must be carefully assessed, and appropriate protection and services should be provided to both the children and their mothers. In other situations, a battered mother may refuse help or, after help is offered, decide to stay in a relationship that poses serious risks to both her and her children. Again, after a careful risk assessment, children may need to be removed from the family, although domestic violence services should continue to be offered to both the mothers and the children.

Battered women seeking to protect their children from physical assaults or threats of a batterer and other harms that might result from leaving or reporting a batterer need independent advocacy and support services to develop strategies that will reduce or eliminate the particular risks they and their children face. Safety planning services should be available for women who are leaving, returning to, or staying in these relationships. Only then can child protective service agencies and the courts determine whether these plans will protect children adequately.³⁴

In many communities and states, current systems designed to protect children often are laden with disincentives and unintended consequences to battered women who want to access services for their children. For example, a battered woman might take her child to a hospital to get the child treatment for injuries caused by the woman's batterer. The hospital worker is required by law to report that abuse to child protective services; therefore, this woman, who voluntarily sought services for her child, now involuntarily enters the child protective services system. Although the larger child welfare system can offer the woman alternatives to her current situation, she may fear losing her child. She might also face charges based on her failure to protect the child, as well as increased danger from her abuser for seeking help and calling attention to his violence. How can we ensure that this woman's help-seeking serves her and her children?

Despite the fact that a high percentage of families within the child protective services caseload experience domestic violence, neither child protective service agencies nor the courts have traditionally recognized or responded to the needs of victims and their families. In addition to facing a complex set of policy and practice dilemmas with these cases, they have had few, if any, resources. As a result, too many battered mothers are left to fend for themselves against the perpetrator when their children are first removed from their custody and, in some instances, permanently removed from their parental care and control. Other mothers attempting to reestablish or retain custody receive little or no services for help in dealing with alcohol or drug abuse or other problems that place their children at risk for maltreatment or neglect.

Recently, child protection agencies, battered women's service providers, and courts have begun to recognize the often problematic nature of traditional responses. The development of collaborative new policies and programs is under way.³⁵ Battered women and their children will be served best by interventions that are more plentiful, more helpful, more varied, and offered earlier than those currently available. The range of options developed must be informed by strategies battered women use to protect their children and should focus on enhancing the safety and agency of the battered parent as a key to enhancing the safety and well-being of her children.

Effective services and supports in many cases negate the need for coercive actions on the part of government institutions unless such action is needed to protect the children. Outlined below are specific actions that youth service providers; community-based sexual assault and domestic violence programs; medical, nursing, social work, and other professional training programs; national and state health professional associations; teachers; school administrators; law enforcement and criminal justice professionals; health and mental health practitioners; batterer intervention programs; local leaders; parent-teacher associations; and student groups can take to end violence against women.

Build an Expanded Network of Intervention and Prevention Responses

1. Develop and expand early intervention and prevention programs for parents.

- ◆ Expand the availability of programs that support parents (particularly young parents) in building healthy relationships with each other and their children; resolving conflicts respectfully and nonviolently; accessing social, legal, health, and mental health services and economic supports as necessary; and ensuring the ongoing safety and well-being of their children.
- ◆ Ensure that such programs attach no stigma to program participation, are linguistically and culturally competent, and offer immediate protection and support to children or parents in danger.
- ◆ Develop programs at sites that serve young families, such as health clinics, day care centers, Head Start program locations, schools, community centers, home visitation programs, Boys & Girls Clubs, and agencies serving immigrant and migrant populations.

2. Expand and enhance quality, affordable, and accessible programs for children and youth, including those after school, on weekends, and on school vacations.

- ◆ Fully involve child development and child welfare experts, sexual assault and domestic violence advocates, parents, and researchers in the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs.
- ◆ Ensure that such programs attach no stigma to program participation, are linguistically and culturally competent, are developmentally and age appropriate, and offer immediate protection and support to children or parents in danger.
- ◆ Provide opportunities for children and youth to learn and practice nonviolent conflict resolution, explore and form healthy attitudes toward relationships, and develop positive, appropriate interpersonal relationships.
- ◆ Help program participants talk about the issues of relationship violence, sexual assault, stalking, and bullying; train youth to appropriately

support and constructively confront their peers on issues related to violence.

- ◆ Develop specialized mentoring initiatives for children and youth who have experienced or witnessed sexual and physical violence, and integrate promising components into existing mentoring programs.
- ◆ Involve youth and parents in creating and disseminating written and multimedia materials on safety and healthy relationships.
- ◆ Develop programs at sites that serve children and youth, such as schools, health clinics, day care centers, Head Start program locations, community centers, home visitation programs, Boys & Girls Clubs, and agencies serving immigrant and migrant populations. Encourage schools to be used as sites for such programs even during nonschool hours. Use religious, spiritual, or faith-based activities targeting youth for such programming. Encourage parental participation in programs whenever appropriate.
- ◆ Develop policies and mechanisms to carefully screen staff and volunteers working with children and youth, including potential mentors, for evidence of prior acts of abuse or sexual assault.

3. Prepare all professionals working with children, youth, and families to respond appropriately to children's disclosures of abuse against themselves or a parent, and refer them to intervention and prevention services.

- ◆ Target professionals working at all sites that serve children, youth, and young families, including schools, health clinics, day care centers, Head Start program locations, neighborhood family resource centers, home visitation programs, faith-based institutions, Boys & Girls Clubs, and agencies serving immigrant and migrant populations.
- ◆ Provide training on different forms of violence and their impact on children and adults, securing immediate protection and referrals for family members at risk of harm and working collaboratively with other professionals.

- ◆ Develop and provide training on the impact of violence on children—including violence against women—to all health care providers working with children and youth. Include the protective factors and interventions that help ameliorate the impact of that violence.
- ◆ Develop and enhance linguistically and culturally competent screening and assessment tools, and implement policies and procedures to support their consistent and effective use throughout health care settings serving children and youth.

4. Design and expand programs specifically for children exposed to domestic violence and other traumatic situations.

- ◆ Increase the availability and accessibility of affordable intervention services for children who have been abused or have witnessed domestic violence.
- ◆ Develop and ensure the consistent use of tools to assess individually the impact of violence on the children involved. Tailor services to counter the short- and long-term negative impact of exposure to domestic violence.
- ◆ Develop parallel services for the children’s abused parents that support their safety and stability.

5. Establish more programs that identify, respond to, and prevent violence against teen mothers.

- ◆ Train staff working with teen parents in schools, health and social service agencies, and community-based organizations to routinely screen and assess for physical and sexual abuse.
- ◆ Provide training to teen mothers and fathers that supports the development of nonviolent relationships and parenting skills and provides information on community resources to support them as parents.
- ◆ Provide a full range of affordable social and mental health services to keep teen parents in school and reduce the isolation of teen mothers and their children.
- ◆ Include information on sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking, and coercion in safe-sex

education programs at all family planning and sexually transmitted disease clinics, including programs that teach abstinence.

- ◆ Target violence prevention messages to male teens as part of teen pregnancy prevention initiatives.
- ◆ Include information on the benefits of delaying sexual intimacy for male and female teens.

6. Increase the availability of safe visitation centers and exchange sites for children and mothers at ongoing risk of sexual or domestic violence or stalking.

- ◆ Form a communitywide collaborative to design, implement, and evaluate safe and accessible visitation options that maximize safety for abused children and adults.
- ◆ Publicize the availability of safe visitation centers and exchange sites through community-based sexual assault and domestic violence programs, parent organizations, the courts, and other community groups.

7. Identify and address disincentives for abused parents and parents of abused children to participate in intervention and prevention services.

- ◆ Work with at-risk parents to identify current disincentives and barriers to help-seeking and program participation.
- ◆ Identify ways to more actively support participation in services for abused children and parents. Consider separating such services from child protective services system involvement unless there is imminent risk of harm. Consider providing earlier intervention services to avoid the necessity of child protective services.
- ◆ Coordinate civil and criminal court information on cases involving domestic violence, child support, custody, and visitation.

8. Work with fatherhood programs to fully integrate a commitment to the safety and well-being of all family members into educational, counseling, and advocacy services.

- ◆ Emphasize the use of nonviolent parenting techniques for participants who will have ongoing contact with either their children or their children’s mothers.

- ◆ Develop responses for program participants who engage in abusive behavior against either their children or their children's mothers to ensure victim safety and perpetrator accountability.
- ◆ Integrate linguistically and culturally competent information on nonviolent parenting techniques and responsible fatherhood into program curriculums.
- ◆ Build collaborative relationships among batterer intervention programs, fatherhood programs, community-based domestic violence programs, and other children and youth programs, including programs for children exposed to domestic violence.

Enhance School System Response

9. Develop policies, applicable to all employees and students, that define a school's response to violence and policies or codes of conduct prohibiting sexual harassment, assault, and dating violence.

- ◆ Ensure that policies are consistent with existing laws. Provide training for teachers, administrators, and other school personnel on policies and their implementation.
- ◆ Widely disseminate information on these policies throughout the school system, including distribution to school administrators, teachers, and other personnel; students; and parents.

10. Design and implement core training for all school personnel on effective prevention strategies, the impact of violence against women and other forms of violence, and how to respond appropriately to disclosures of abuse.

- ◆ Provide this training throughout the school system, and include principals, school superintendents, school boards, teachers, school social workers, guidance counselors, school nurses, school resource officers, administrative and office personnel, security personnel, coaches, bus drivers, and janitorial and cafeteria staff.

11. Implement intervention and prevention programs that address bullying and physical and sexual assault, and teach youth social skills that enable students to develop healthy, nonviolent relationships.

- ◆ Provide age-appropriate information on the prevalence of acquaintance rape and other forms of community and family violence, including the warning signs that may signal risks to a student's safety, situations and circumstances that foster nonconsensual sexual conduct, the kinds of behaviors that constitute stalking, and appropriate response strategies.
- ◆ Provide information to students about how to ask for help from parents (or when necessary, teachers and other adults) and how to respond appropriately to physical, emotional, or sexual violence among their peers.
- ◆ Include information on the role of bystanders, including age-appropriate strategies students can use to assist victims of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or bullying and safely challenge perpetrator behavior, as well as how to report incidents.
- ◆ Destigmatize mental health services, and offer a wide variety of services with parental notification and consent, such as support groups, peer mediation and counseling, 12-step models, and individual counseling.

12. Develop a comprehensive school safety plan that incorporates strategies to prevent violence against women and girls and includes personal safety planning for staff and students.

- ◆ Include students and parents, mental health providers, police and juvenile justice authorities, and local sexual assault and domestic violence advocacy groups in the development and implementation of the safety plan.
- ◆ Widely disseminate information on the plan to students, parents, all school personnel, and community leaders.
- ◆ Develop a school plan to address students who sexually assault and/or batter that responsibly balances the requirement to educate all students with the need to ensure that school is a safe place.

Build Communitywide Collaborations

13. Create and provide ongoing support to collaborative partnerships among schools, mental health centers, and the courts to provide families with education, services, and protection for children exposed to violence and adolescents who are victims or perpetrators of or at risk for family and dating violence.

- ◆ Develop opportunities for coordination between youth violence prevention programs and programs addressing violence against women.

14. Fully engage residents in the development and implementation of prevention campaigns that include specific strategies, activities, materials, and messages responsive to the needs of the community.

- ◆ Involve young parents, community leaders, formal and informal supports,³⁶ and other community members in the planning, development, and implementation of prevention strategies to establish credibility, inspire community ownership and commitment, and facilitate broad community participation.
- ◆ Incorporate information provided by survivors of sexual assault, dating and domestic violence, or stalking into program development and implementation.
- ◆ Provide practical tools for men and boys to prepare them to be responsible bystanders committed to intervening appropriately and safely in incidents of sexual and physical assault involving children and youth. In appeals to men and boys, acknowledge that they themselves may have been victims of child sexual assault.
- ◆ Develop strategies to hold the media accountable for playing both positive and negative roles in children's exposure to violence. Involve local news media in community efforts to stop violence within families and the community.

Coordinate Child Protection Agencies, Courts, and Domestic Violence Program Response

15. When investigating allegations of child maltreatment at child protection agencies, screen for domestic violence, and respond appropriately when domestic violence is disclosed.

- ◆ Assess and consider the impact of the parents' abuse, as well as issues such as substance abuse, homelessness, and unemployment, on the children and on the parents' ability to care for them.
- ◆ Assist the battered parents in making safety and self-sufficiency plans for themselves and their children.
- ◆ Incorporate the needs and suggestions of the nonoffending parent in case plans as appropriate, and provide comprehensive advocacy services.
- ◆ Provide services designed to allow the children to remain at home with the nonoffending parent whenever it is safe to do so. Coordinate with police and courts to ensure their safety, including prosecuting the batterer, helping to find alternative housing, and ensuring the confidentiality of address.
- ◆ Develop a separate case plan for the abusive parent or adult to hold that person accountable for his violence and its effects, and work with police and courts to enforce that accountability.
- ◆ Encourage "reasonable efforts," which can effectively provide family preservation services (keeping a nonabusing parent with her children) such as housing, economic assistance, and job training to abused mothers.
- ◆ Recommend good cause exceptions to the Adoption and Safe Families Act³⁷ timelines when it would likely result in the nonabusing parent and children remaining safely together, with child safety and permanency being primary concerns.

- ◆ Consider eliminating “failure to protect” as a reason for removing children, unless support has been provided to the mother in her efforts to protect or she has made no effort.

16. When overlapping domestic violence and child maltreatment cases come before the court, implement a coordinated court and community response that creates safety for abused or neglected children and their abused parents, enhances the stability and well-being of the children, and holds the perpetrator of the violence accountable.

- ◆ Provide battered parents with comprehensive advocacy to assist them in negotiating the child protection and dependency court systems and securing the necessary services.
- ◆ Provide case advocates to children in these cases, and ensure that advocates receive ongoing training on domestic violence issues and children’s legal rights.
- ◆ Develop separate service plans for each parent or adult, and hold parties accountable for compliance with their individual plan.
- ◆ Name the abusive party (family or nonfamily member) in the petition, and document in the petition any domestic violence that has caused harm to the child.
- ◆ Ensure that any petitions alleging “failure to protect” on the part of the battered parent identify the perpetrator from whom she failed to protect, and document the parent’s efforts to protect as well as her failures to protect.

17. Promote policies that enhance the ability of child protective services, the criminal and civil justice system, and domestic violence agencies to work together to improve safety and accountability in cases where domestic violence and child maltreatment coexist.

- ◆ Expand domestic violence councils or create new task forces at the state and community levels to begin the dialog on how these three systems can agree on common goals and work toward them together, including how best to provide advocacy for battered women in each of the three systems.

- ◆ Develop policies and protocols and/or memorandums of agreement to outline the means of coordination and collaboration.
- ◆ Design and institute cross training for personnel within the three systems, including all counsel representing victims, perpetrators, and children.
- ◆ Collaboratively develop information-sharing protocols that preserve the confidentiality and privileged communication critical to providing advocacy services and that properly balance the need for information on the alleged child maltreatment and the need of a battered parent to keep information confidential as part of safety planning efforts.
- ◆ Develop specialized expertise within the three systems that enhances workers’ ability to respond adequately to cases that require additional time or expertise.
- ◆ Include batterer intervention programs in cross training and multidisciplinary case planning to provide monitoring and social service interventions for abusive men, as well as appropriate followup on arrests and prosecutions.
- ◆ Increase the juvenile or family court’s ability to communicate and coordinate with other civil and criminal courts about concurrent cases involving family members.
- ◆ Screen all proposed caretakers and child advocates for child maltreatment, criminal history, domestic violence, and substance abuse.

Resources

Alliance for Children and Families

Communications Department
 11700 West Lake Park Drive
 Milwaukee, WI 53224
 Phone: 414-359-1040 or 1-800-221-3726
 Fax: 414-359-1074
 Web site: www.alliance1.org

Membership in the Alliance for Children and Families includes nonprofit child- and family-serving organizations across the country. The Alliance aims to strengthen members’ capacity to serve and advocate for children, families, and

communities by providing public policy and advocacy efforts, research and resource development, library services, media information, and community programs.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of America

230 North 13th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107
Phone: 215-567-7000
Fax: 215-567-0394
Web site: www.bbbsa.org

Big Brothers Big Sisters of America is the nation's largest and oldest youth mentoring program. Volunteers provide one-on-one mentoring to children who primarily are from single-parent households in more than 500 communities throughout the United States.

Center on Children and the Law

American Bar Association
740 15th Street NW
Washington, DC 20005-1022
Phone: 202-662-1720
Fax: 202-662-755
E-mail: ctrchildren@abanet.org
Web site: www.abanet.org/child

The American Bar Association (ABA) Center on Children and the Law focuses on improving children's lives through advances in law, justice, knowledge, practice, and public policy. ABA publications that deal with issues of child abuse and neglect include *ABA Child Law Practice*, *ABA Child CourtWorks*, and *Children's Legal Rights Journal*. The Web site features ABA publications and materials, child welfare law tips, bulletin boards and an e-mail center, and other resources.

Dependency Court Intervention Program for Family Violence

2700 NW. 36th Street, Suite 114
Miami, FL 33142
Phone: 305-638-5619
E-mail: jjgrants@jud11.flcourts.org

The Dependency Court Intervention Program for Family Violence is a pilot project developed to review justice system procedures for women and children who have been abused. The program

offers voluntary free counseling to women and their children in cases in which the court has intervened and removed youth from the home.

Family Violence and Sexual Assault Institute

7120 Herman Jared Drive
Forth Worth, TX 76180
Phone: 817-569-8882
Fax: 817-485-0600
Web site: www.fvsai.org

The Family Violence and Sexual Assault Institute (FVSAI) publishes the *Quarterly International Family Violence and Sexual Assault Bulletin*, a resource for grants, workshops, and prevention and intervention programs. FVSAI also hosts conferences on child abuse and neglect throughout the year.

Family Violence Prevention Fund

383 Rhode Island Street, Suite 304
San Francisco, CA 94103-5133
Phone: 415-252-8900
Fax: 415-252-8991
Web site: www.fvpf.org

The Family Violence Prevention Fund works to end domestic violence and help women and children whose lives are affected by abuse. The Web site offers free online catalogs, articles and information on abuse and violence, press releases and story archives, information on public policy efforts, and other resource materials.

Keep Schools Safe: A Collection of Resources To Help Make Schools Safer

Web site: www.keepschoolssafe.org

A project of the National Association of Attorneys General and the National School Boards Association, this Web site provides information and resources for concerned parents, teachers and school administrators, and law enforcement officers.

National Children's Advocacy Center

106 Lincoln Street
Huntsville, AL 35801
Phone: 256-533-5437
Fax: 256-534-9616
Web site: www.ncac-hsv.org

The National Children's Advocacy Center provides prevention, intervention, and treatment services to physically and sexually abused children and their families and training on intervention and techniques for conducting a successful investigative interview.

National Children's Alliance (formerly the National Network of Children's Advocacy Centers)

1612 K Street NW., Suite 500
Washington, DC 20006
Phone: 202-452-6001 or 1-800-239-9950
Web site: www.nncac.org

The National Children's Alliance (NCA) provides training, technical assistance, and networking opportunities to help communities plan, establish, and improve children's advocacy centers. NCA's approach to combating child abuse is to work with the children and their families in a child-focused environment.

National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information

300 C Street SW.
Washington, DC 20447
Phone: 1-800-FYI-3366
Web site: www.calib.com/nccanch

The National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information (NCCANI) offers resources on the prevention, identification, and treatment of child abuse and neglect and related child welfare issues. NCCANI provides free statistics, databases, fact sheets and other publications, information on funding opportunities, and related resources on child abuse and neglect.

National Council on Child Abuse and Family Violence

1155 Connecticut Avenue NW., Suite 400
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 202-429-6695 or 1-800-222-2000
Web site: www.nccafv.org

The National Council on Child Abuse and Family Violence offers information and resources on issues related to abuse of children, spouses, and the elderly. The Web site includes relevant statistics and lists of warning signs to help readers recognize when someone they know is being abused.

Resource Center on Domestic Violence: Child Protection and Custody

National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
P.O. Box 8970
Reno, NV 89507
Phone: 1-800-527-3223
Fax: 775-784-6160
Web site: www.dvlawsearch.com/res_center

The Resource Center on Domestic Violence: Child Protection and Custody provides access to information and assistance to professionals in the field of domestic violence and child protection and custody. The Web site includes an online video library that contains material on dating and domestic violence, child abuse, and related topics.

Violence Against Women Online Resources

Web site: www.vaw.umn.edu
This Web site provides up-to-date information on interventions to stop violence against women for professionals in the fields of law, criminal justice, advocacy, and social service.

Endnotes

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