

Parenting Plans after Family Court Findings of Domestic Violence: Promoting Safety, Accountability and Healing for Victims, Perpetrators, and Children

Introduction

Most parents work out their own parenting plans after separation. Some parents benefit from supportive friends, family members, counsellors, and mediators who do not pour fuel on any conflicts. If they go near the courthouse, judges encourage them to settle their differences as intimate partners and move on to be co-parents forever. Parents are encouraged to find a path forward that reduces conflict for their children and moves them towards flexible co-parenting or shared parenting plans. It is estimated that less than 20% of parents seek justice from the family court and less than 5% end up in any prolonged litigation.

The minority of parents who end up in court represent a significant challenge for judges and court-related professionals and agencies. It is important to note that in family court, it does not take two to tango. One unhappy parent can drive years of litigation. These parents have been described in the social science and legal literature for over 40 years as “high-conflict” cases.¹ “High-conflict” has become an overall catch-all phrase that is recognized as a very heterogenous group of litigants which involve complex issues such as allegations of domestic violence, child abuse, parental mental health, addictions, criminality, and alienation.

Parenting plans in the aftermath of domestic violence is the focus of this brief. The long-standing support for the presumptions of shared parenting and rewarding the friendliest parent are on a collision course with our understanding of domestic violence. Parents with a history of domestic violence may need different resolutions that involve supervised or no contact with children, even for a limited period, depending on safety concerns for children and the non-offending parent. Compounding these dilemmas for family courts is the increasing movement promoting parental alienation as a serious

concern. Although this paper does not minimize the seriousness of genuine alienation, it has become a common allegation in cases of domestic violence.² A critical need in these cases is a proper assessment and investigation into all claims to ensure that appropriate parenting arrangements are matched to each family system. This theme is central in this paper.

What is domestic violence?

Domestic violence (or intimate partner violence (IPV)) refers to violence and abuse that occurs in the context of an intimate relationship. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) defines domestic violence as “physical violence, sexual violence, stalking, or psychological harm by a current or former partner or spouse”.³ This relationship can refer to a dating relationship, cohabitation, or marriage and includes same sex relationships. Although domestic violence may be an isolated incident, the research in this field concerns itself with repeated abuse and patterns of abuse that may endanger victims and create the most significant physical and psychological consequences (e.g., see AFCC Guidelines for Examining Intimate Partner Violence⁴). Abuse may be comprised of more than individual acts and often refers to one person’s attempt to control and dominate their partner through a variety of means in the relationship, often referred to as coercive control.⁵

Coercive control describes a pattern of behaviours to assert control over a person by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance, and escape, and regulating their everyday behaviour.⁶ Coercive control is now being recognized in law such as the amendments made to the Divorce Act⁷ that include various forms of family violence such as a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour or behaviour that causes a family member to fear for their safety or the safety of another person. This pattern of behaviour is summarized in the chart below which is widely accepted in research and practice as a helpful framework to approach these issues.⁸ Some perpetrators who coercively control their partners may not use any sort of physical violence, making it harder to identify.⁹ Coercive control is a critical term to consider in the context of domestic violence. This violence has historically been viewed as the perpetration of physically aggressive acts by one intimate partner against another.¹⁰ These acts of violence must be examined in the context

of the overall relationship, in which non-physically violent acts might serve as the foundation for fear and control.



Adapted from Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs, Duluth, Minnesota.

Domestic violence is a serious societal concern. As the CDC has noted from survey data, domestic violence is a public health concern that may involve as many as “1 in 4 women and nearly 1 in 10 men have experienced contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner during their lifetime and reported some form of IPV-related impact.”¹¹ These numbers translate to “over 43 million

women and 38 million men experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner in their lifetime.”¹² The consequences may be serious since “about 41% of female IPV survivors and 14% of male IPV survivors experience some form of physical injury related to IPV”.¹³ The CDC emphasizes how “IPV can also extend beyond physical injury and result in death” as “data from U.S. crime reports suggest that 16% (about 1 in 6) of homicide victims are killed by an intimate partner.”¹⁴ Furthermore, “the reports also found that nearly half of female homicide victims in the U.S. are killed by a current or former male intimate partner.”¹⁵ Finally they highlight the many other negative health outcomes associated with IPV” including “a range of conditions affecting the heart, digestive, reproductive, muscle and bones, and nervous systems, many of which are chronic in nature”.¹⁶ Survivors of this abuse “can experience mental health problems such as depression and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD).”¹⁷

Why is domestic violence relevant for parenting plans?

- a) **Domestic violence does not necessarily end with separation of the parties.** Domestic violence may escalate after separation or take new forms such as increasing emotional abuse or financial abuse.¹⁸ Repeated abuse and patterns of abuse may endanger victims and create significant physical and psychological consequences. Children’s exposure to abuse increases often significantly after separation – either because they are in the care of a problematic parent without a safe parent present, or because the perpetrator’s animosity toward the adult victim now is focused on the children.¹⁹ Even when threats of violence are over, there may be an ongoing impact of the historical abuse on a victim and children.²⁰
- b) **Perpetrators of domestic violence are more likely to be deficient, if not abusive, as parents.** Individuals exhibiting abuse and/or coercive control of their intimate partners may engage in similar behaviour with their children.²¹ Children whose mothers had been assaulted by their male partners are more likely to be directly abused.²² Where there is a pattern of abuse, erratic role reversals, swings from permissive to rigid and authoritarian parenting may also be present.²³
- c) **Individuals who have a pattern of abuse of their intimate partners are poor role models for children.** Exposure to domestic violence is

itself a form of emotional and psychological abuse for children.²⁴ Beyond this exposure, there are concerns about the nature of perpetrators as role models. It is harmful for children being exposed to one parent threatening or assaulting the other and using threats of violence or acts of coercive control.²⁵ Perpetrators of domestic violence often denigrate the other parent and try to align the children with that attitude.²⁶ The potential for the abusive parent to be violent in subsequent intimate partner relationships may mean that children's exposure to poor modeling may continue.

- d) **Abusive ex-partners are likely to undermine the victim's parenting role.** Abusive ex- partners are likely to undermine the other parent by asserting blame for the dissolution of the family and telling negative stories, sabotage family plans, and undermine parental authority by explicitly instructing the children not to listen or respect the other parent.²⁷ This facet of the abuser's parenting needs to be considered when deciding what contact the perpetrator should have with the children, what interventions are needed to address these problems, and the prognosis for change with treatment.
- e) **Domestic violence impacts the primary parent.** Domestic violence affects all victims. There is a recognition that women face a disproportionate level of violence and consequences.²⁸ The impacts may be short-term and long-term.²⁹ There are significant gender differences on the physical and emotional impacts of domestic violence. Significantly more female victims live in fear, miss work due to the violence, and suffer physical injuries.³⁰ Women are significantly more likely than men to report negative emotional impacts such as the following descriptors: upset, hurt, angry, annoyed, lower self-esteem, sleep problems, shock, more cautious, depression/anxiety, fearful, isolated, ashamed, afraid for children, suicidal thoughts.³¹ Women expressed significantly more fear and escalation in violence and feared for their lives.³² Women's level of fear for their safety is seven-fold the rate expressed by male victims.³³ Domestic violence creates circumstances for a victim that make them fearful for their lives, undermine their sense of security, and stability and engender trauma symptoms reflected in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). These circumstances can give rise to a number of debilitating mental health disorders such as anxiety, depression, and PTSD and interfere with daily functioning as a parent in family and work environments.³⁴ The

result of mental health problems may be other mental health problems related to maladaptive coping responses such as alcohol and drug abuse to manage their anxiety, depression, and PTSD symptoms.³⁵ These mental health disorders also impact women as victims in family court because their symptoms may be used against them as evidence that they are unfit or inadequate parents, as well as undermining their self-confidence and focus to handle the expectations of the justice system as a witness or advocate for themselves.

- f) **Abusive ex-spouses may use family court litigation as a new forum to continue their coercive controlling behavior and to harass their former partner.** Litigation exacts a high emotional and financial price, especially for abuse victims already overwhelmed with the aftermath of a violent relationship. The litigation may become a problem as opposed to a path to resolution.³⁶ Raising concerns about domestic violence without support or understanding may result in an escalation of risk. Judges without education on domestic violence may see victims as unfriendly parents who are inflaming already difficult court hearings.³⁷
- g) **Domestic violence can end in homicide.** Domestic homicides are usually preceded by multiple risk factors that may be known by friends, family, police, lawyers, and the court.³⁸ The most common risk factors include a history of domestic violence, a recent or pending separation, access to weapons, stalking, strangulation, and controlling behaviours.³⁹ Children are killed in the context of domestic violence in approximately 10% of the cases.⁴⁰ Fatality review committees across the U.S. point to the fact that many of these homicides and homicides-suicides appear predicable and preventable with hindsight.⁴¹ These cases point to the importance of risk assessment, safety planning, and risk management strategies by the court and court-related services.

How does exposure to domestic violence affect children?

Children are harmed by ongoing exposure to domestic violence.⁴² The term “exposure” includes hearing a violent event, visually witnessing the event, intervening, being used as a part of a violent event (e.g., being used as a shield against abusive actions), and experiencing the aftermath of a violent event.⁴³ In the extreme, children may be killed in the context of domestic homicide or survive, but be left with the most horrific form of trauma at the scene of the homicide.⁴⁴ Exposure to domestic violence is itself a form of

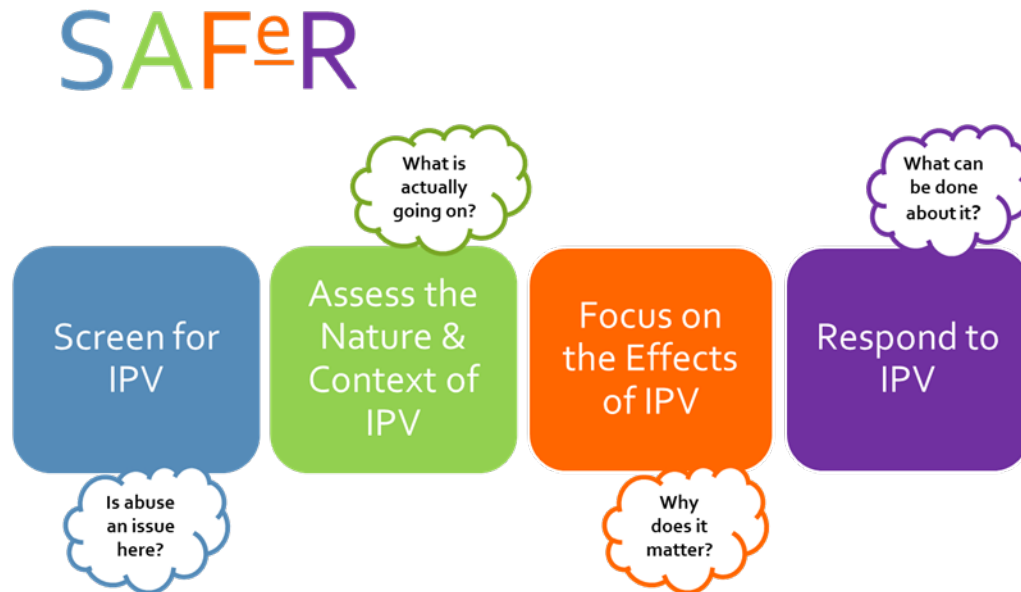
emotional and psychological abuse for children.⁴⁵ Children exposed to domestic violence are more likely than other children to be aggressive and have behavioural problems and exhibit higher rates of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder symptomatology.⁴⁶ These problem areas may vary, depending on multiple factors including the severity of the violence and the length of exposure to violence. The symptoms are often categorized into overarching patterns of difficulties. These patterns may be described clinically as internalizing difficulties (e.g., depression, anxiety) or externalizing difficulties (e.g., oppositional behaviour, conduct problems).⁴⁷ In some cases, children exhibit both internalizing and externalizing problems.

Research evidence suggests that the impact of domestic violence exposure is cumulative and that longer exposure, co-occurring adversity, and multiple losses from dislocation result in greater harm for children. Since coercive control involves a subtle, yet ongoing pattern of abuse, the associated harms are especially concerning.⁴⁸ Coercive control has been less identified as an aspect of domestic violence, meaning that less is known about its impacts on children.⁴⁹ Some research has found that this form of violence has been less visible but can have negative impacts on children, including limiting their social interaction with peers, preventing engagement in extra-curricular activities, and restricting access to their mother.⁵⁰

What are the key steps in the process from screening for domestic violence to developing a parenting plan?

There are excellent guides for parents and court-related professionals on parenting arrangements that may be most suitable for different families depending on children's ages and unique circumstances.⁵¹ Co-parenting may not be possible in high conflict cases; in fact, this outcome can be very problematic as it may lead to endless litigation. In cases of domestic violence, shared parenting will most likely be inappropriate (if not dangerous). Interventions for parents and children need to be founded on an assessment of the unique circumstances for the family. This assessment process is essential in family violence cases. A helpful framework for such an assessment was developed by the Battered Women's Justice Project in Minnesota.⁵² The framework, "SAFeR", involves four key stages in the assessment process. These stages, represented in the figure below, with their corresponding questions, are: 1. Screening – is IPV an issue in the case? 2. Assessing the nature and

context of the IPV – what is actually going on? 3. Examining the effects of IPV – why does the IPV matter? and 4. Responding to the IPV – what can be done about it?



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The SAFeR framework recognizes that addressing family violence is more than a question of presence or absence of abuse. The Safer framework is articulated in detail with worksheets available on-line from the Battered Women's Justice Project.⁵³ The four stages begin with screening to know if family violence is even an issue, without making any finding or judgement. The second stage is a closer examination of the allegations being raised and the context in which these allegations are being made. This examination includes an analysis of potential coercive control and patterns of conduct over time that looks at the intent, the meaning of the behaviour to a potential victim, and the effect of the behaviour on the victim and their children. In stage three, exploring the effect of the family violence involves assessing the impact of the violence on victim wellbeing, parenting, children's safety and wellbeing, and best interests of the children. Stage four involves putting the first three stages together in tailoring interventions appropriate for the family system. In other words, what parenting plan can be designed within the legislative parameters, court interventions, and community resources that can promote safety, accountability, and healing from the family violence.

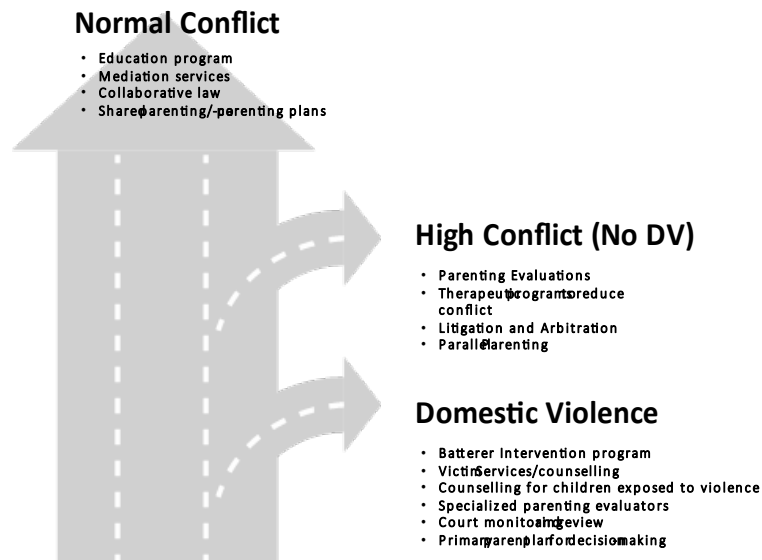
Moving from an assessment to intervention planning requires triage by the court to slow down the tendency to find the one size fits all solution to parenting disputes. The one size fits all model pressures parents to settle their differences and adopt a shared parenting plan. A good analogy for the experience of domestic violence victims in the family justice system is comparing the court as a busy freeway going through a major urban centre at rush hour when everyone is going in the same direction at top speed. Getting to an off-ramp can be difficult. The figure below tries to capture this reality by the freeway traffic leading everyone to co-parenting. Domestic violence cases need an off-ramp to avoid being carried along with the traffic.

A history of domestic violence usually is a contraindication for co-parenting. Whereas most families benefit from educational programs and mediation, in cases where there are domestic violence concerns, there is a need for specialized intervention, including supervised parenting, interventions for perpetrators, and support services for victims and children. Dispute resolution processes that require victims and perpetrators to be together in mediation or settlement conferences have the potential to endanger victims or intimidate them into accepting parenting arrangements, such as co-parenting, which may pose a risk to their safety or the safety of their children.

High conflict cases involving couples without a history of violence also require specialized intervention. Although the physical safety concerns are diminished, children's exposure to ongoing conflict is clearly harmful. Parallel parenting may be an option in high conflict cases without domestic violence issues or in a limited number of domestic violence cases where the abuse is minor, historical, and does not represent a pattern of behaviour.⁵⁴ Parallel parenting recognizes that each parent can meet their children's needs by themselves. Parents function relatively exclusively from each other, but do no harm to the child. Each parent is a beneficial influence for the child, but any expectation of collaboration between the parents is futile and potentially harmful for the children.⁵⁵ Parallel parenting arrangements usually include specific guidelines to minimize contact and communication between the parents.⁵⁶ Some high conflict couples can, with appropriate therapeutic intervention and the passage of time, be helped to achieve more amicable parenting arrangements.⁵⁷ Thus, for some families, parallel parenting may be a transition phase to bridge the

troubled waters of a high conflict separation, and for other families, parallel parenting may be all that is possible on a long-term basis.⁵⁸

Differentiated Interventions in Domestic Violence Cases



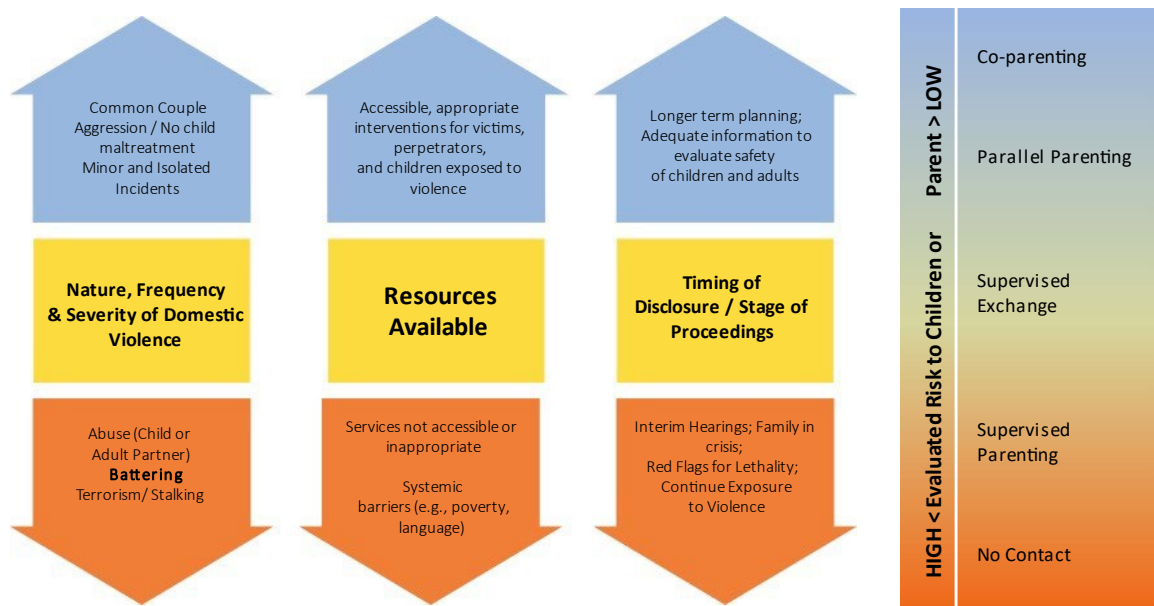
Jaffe, P.G. & Crooks, C.V. (2004). Visitation and custody in cases of domestic violence. In J. Williams & O.J. Williams (Eds.), *Parenting by Men Who Batter*. Los Altos, CA: Packard Foundation.

What are the considerations in moving from findings of domestic violence to a matched parenting plan?

There is no formula for developing a parenting plan in cases involving domestic violence. There are multiple variables for judges to consider in the context of the evidence and credible information that has been presented.⁵⁹ Judges' decisions are only as good as the information they have been provided and the resources they have available to implement parenting plans. The diagram below captures the major factors in decision-making in domestic violence cases. The first variable is the nature, frequency, and severity of the domestic violence and whether incidents are minor, isolated, and historical. If significant risks are present and there is a pattern of abuse and coercive control, more limited and supervised parenting time may be required. A second variable is availability of resources. A judge is dependent on court and community resources to assist families to ensure safety planning and risk management. Without services in place there is no safety, accountability for change, and an opportunity to heal from the domestic violence. A third variable is the timing and disclosure of domestic violence. Judges may err on the side of caution at initial hearings at a point

of crisis when there are credible allegations raised. An immediate next step is having adequate information that is needed for a proper assessment of risks to victims and their children. These three variables lead to the court making a range of parenting decisions from the ideal standard of co-parenting to more limited or supervised parenting time. No contact is an option that the court has to consider in more extreme domestic violence circumstances that represent potential lethality and ongoing risk and trauma for a victim and their children.

Parenting Plans After Domestic Violence



Adapted from Jaffe, P. G., Johnston, J. R., Crooks, C. V., & Bala, N. (2008). Custody disputes involving allegations of domestic violence: Toward a differentiated approach to parenting plans. Family Court Review, 46(3), 500-522.

How do we recognize that the domestic violence perpetrator has changed?

Court interventions in complex parenting cases involving domestic violence often require ongoing court monitoring and review hearings. Emerging models of court intervention suggest the need for case management and indicators of progress towards safety and stability of the adult victim and their children. The days of parents appearing before multiple judges over multiple hearings and issues are dwindling as this model reflects an

ineffective approach to these cases, especially in the face of the abuser using the family court to exhaust their partner financially and emotionally.

Domestic violence does not go away by itself. Significant court messages and interventions are required. How does the court or designated professionals like evaluators measure progress? The first step is appropriate counselling for the victim parent and children exposed to domestic violence. Victim and children need the following to recover from violence and trauma:⁶⁰

- A sense of physical and emotional safety.⁶¹
- Structure, limits, and predictability.
- Parenting support.

Any parenting time with the abuser should be safe and clear guidelines established. These elements are crucial steps in recovery and help to rebuild trust with children.

Critical to moving forward with any relationship with the abuser and assessing the risk to children is assessing the abuser's capacity and willingness to change behaviour. Is the abuser ready to acknowledge and take accountability for the harm they have caused? Knowledge about the dynamics of domestic violence should guide and assess the change from multiple independent sources (more than just the self-report of the abuser and their family).

The following issues should be the focus:⁶²

- Full disclosure of the history of the abuse. The abuser must overcome denial and minimization to confront the abusive behaviours in a meaningful way.
- Recognize that the abusive behaviour is unacceptable. The abuser must acknowledge that their abusive behaviour was wrong and not continue to justify their past behaviour (e.g., through blaming the victim).
- Recognize that the abusive behaviour is a choice. The abuser must accept full responsibility, which includes recognition that abusive behaviour is intentional and instrumental.
- Show empathy for the effects of their actions on their partner and children. The abuser must show the ability to identify with the impact of the abuse. The abuser must also show empathy for both

- the adult victim and children exposed to the abuse without shifting the focus to their own emotional needs or grievances.
- Develop respectful behaviours and attitudes. The abuser must identify their pattern of controlling behaviours and attitudes and demonstrate that they have developed respectful behaviours and attitudes.
 - Make amends and be accountable. The abuser must take action to lay aside their own grievances and recognize that abusive behaviour carries consequences with it.

This list reflects important indicators of change. If an abuser cannot acknowledge the impact of their behaviour on the children and make changes to their behaviour, the emotional and physical safety of the children will remain compromised. It may be that the abuser needs to participate in a batterer intervention program to examine their attitudes and behaviours and make meaningful change in their abusive behaviour. Abusers need to prove themselves to be a safe and reliable person to the children. There are also specialized programs like “[Caring Dads](https://www.caringdads.org/)” (<https://www.caringdads.org/>) and “[Fathering After Violence](https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/breaking-the-cycle-fathering-after-violence/)” (<https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/breaking-the-cycle-fathering-after-violence/>), which may be helpful in focusing an abuser on their role as a parent.⁶³

What are the links between allegations of domestic violence and allegations of alienation or alienating behaviours?

Alienation allegations and the threat of removing children from a protective parent is one of the most common responses by abusers to concerns being raised about domestic violence.⁶⁴ Each case before the court is unique and judges must determine the credibility of all allegations. Alienation is a serious issue and courts strongly censure any parent wilfully undermining children’s relationships with the other parent. However, the term alienation is not a diagnosis and there are no reliable measures to distinguish between a protective parent and an alienating parent in which their concerns and children’s reluctance for parenting time may be justified.⁶⁵ There is potential gender bias in the application and effects of parental alienation claims directed at mothers who have alleged abuse by a father.⁶⁶ Alienation allegations deflect attention from scrutiny of the avoided parent’s parenting practices and parent-child relationships in favor of assuming the preferred parents’ blame when children may have poor or troubled

relationships with the other parent. The allegations also may deflect attention from scrutiny of child risk and safety factors in family violence cases in the court presumption to impose shared parental time and responsibility.

Alienation may silence women and children and deter them from presenting evidence of domestic violence and of negative parenting. These allegations may discount the perspectives of children and fail to protect children from parental abuse. There is far more of a scientific basis for identifying intimate and family violence as causing a parent-child relationship problem than for identifying "parental alienation" as causing a parent-child relationship problem.⁶⁷ This scientific foundation has been established in guidelines in custody/parenting disputes by organizations such as the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC).⁶⁸

Family law professionals and researchers have been moving away from alienation and are more focused on parent-child contact problems. There are usually multiple factors and dynamics at play in these cases which may include: "1. child factors (age, cognitive capacity, temperament, vulnerability, special needs, and resilience); 2. parent conflict before and after the separation; 3. sibling relationships; 4. favored parent factors (parenting style and capacity, negative beliefs and behaviors, mental health, and personality, including responsiveness and willingness to change); 5. rejected parent factors (parenting style and capacity, negative reactions, beliefs and behaviors, mental health, and personality, including willingness to change); 6. the adversarial process/litigation; 7. third parties such as aligned professionals and extended family; and 8. lack of functional coparenting, and poor or conflictual parental communication."⁶⁹ The solutions to these problems involve comprehensive assessments and a coordinated plan that involves legal and therapeutic interventions that promote the safety of the children, protection of victimized parents, and accountability and treatment for an abusive parent.

What resources are required to help the court design, implement, and monitor an effective parenting plan?

No judge is an island. Judges depend on court staff and court-related professionals to help triage complex cases and ensure critical information is available on a timely basis. Judges' effectiveness is tied to the resources available to support families in crisis. A brilliant decision is not worth the

paper it is written on without the tools to implement and monitor the parenting plan. For domestic violence cases, judges need resources to assist with risk assessment, safety planning, and risk management.⁷⁰ Counselling resources are essential for victims and their children.⁷¹ Access to batterer intervention programs and parenting programs are a foundation for change. Supervised parenting services are required during transition periods to less restrictive parenting or no contact for parents who present an ongoing threat to the safety and freedom of victims. These resources vary widely across the country and are often lacking in rural communities. In many cases, culturally sensitive and informed services are not available. An integrated and coordinated community response is a starting point to identify required service gaps and advocate for change in the family justice system.

Summary

Domestic violence is a serious problem across the U.S.. The criminal justice system has experienced major reforms in recognizing the scope of the problem. The family court system is now struggling to address domestic violence in the context of dominant beliefs promoting shared parenting and friendly parent presumptions. Domestic violence cases require a different analysis and alternative court remedies.

Domestic violence is a matter of life and death in many circumstances. This violence has a profound impact on adult victims and children in terms of their physical and psychological well-being. Parental separation can accentuate the impact and risks of serious harm from domestic violence. Findings of domestic violence raise important considerations about the parenting of the offending and victim parents. A one-size-fits-all focus on co-parenting is not appropriate for these cases. A differentiated assessment and intervention strategy is required for parenting plans in the context of domestic violence. Assessment findings must be matched to appropriate interventions that consider the nature of the violence, the timing of disclosures, and the availability of resources to promote safety, healing, and accountability. Significant caution should be used in dealing with allegations of parental alienation against victim parents and children who may be traumatized by domestic violence and may be justified in resisting or refusing parenting time with the offending parent. Courts and communities must advocate for appropriate resources to be available to be effective in implementing parenting plans in these complex circumstances.

About the Author

Peter Jaffe is clinical psychologist and Professor Emeritus in the Faculty of Education at Western University in London ON Canada. He is the former Academic Director of the Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women & Children. He was the founding Director of the London Family Court Clinic, a children's mental health center specializing in issues, which bring children and families into the justice system. In that center, he has been involved in over 2,000 custody/parenting assessments either directly or in a supervisory capacity over the past 40 years. He has testified in these matters across Canada as well as in six U.S. states. He co-authored 11 books, 40 chapters, and over 90 articles related to violence and abuse involving children, adults, families, and the justice system. Many of these publications deal with domestic violence, the impact of domestic violence on children, and parenting disputes. He has presented workshops across the United States and Canada, as well as Australia, New Zealand, Costa Rica, and the UK to various groups including judges, lawyers, health and mental health professionals, and educators. Since 1999, he has been on faculty for the National Council of Juvenile & Family Court Judges judicial education program entitled "Enhancing Judicial Skills in Domestic Violence Cases", as well as advanced judicial education programs on child custody and supervised visitation. He has presented at 25 state-wide judicial education programs on domestic violence. He is a founding member of Ontario's Chief Coroner's Domestic Violence Death Review Committee and has published extensively on risk assessment and domestic and child homicide prevention.

Resources

- **[The Association of Family and Conciliation Courts](https://www.afccnet.org/)** (<https://www.afccnet.org/>) have several guidelines, including guidelines for examining intimate partner violence, as well as related trainings, webinars and other resources.
- **[The Battered Women's Justice Project Resource Center](https://www.bwjp.org/resource-center.html)** (<https://www.bwjp.org/resource-center.html>) has accessible briefs, safety assessment reports, laws and regulations, news articles, policy analyses, promising practices and policies, research, statute guides, tools, webinars, and websites related to domestic violence and family court.
- **[The Canadian Domestic Homicide Prevention Initiative](http://www.cdhpi.ca/)** (<http://www.cdhpi.ca/>) provides resources including briefs on domestic homicide and information related to risk assessment, risk management, and safety planning. Of particular interest may be the **[Domestic Homicide Brief 1 on Domestic Violence Death Review Committees](http://cdhpi.ca/brief-1-domestic-violence-death-review-committees)** (<http://cdhpi.ca/brief-1-domestic-violence-death-review-committees>) and **[Brief 3 on Children and Domestic Homicide](http://cdhpi.ca/children-and-domestic-homicide-understanding-risks)** (<http://cdhpi.ca/children-and-domestic-homicide-understanding-risks>)
- **[The Center for Judicial Excellence](https://centerforjudicialexcellence.org/)** (<https://centerforjudicialexcellence.org/>) provides child homicide data from the United States, as well as a range of other resources including child abuse and domestic violence resources, self-help services, and court information.
- Information and trainings on the **[Danger Assessment Tool](https://www.dangerassessment.org/)** (<https://www.dangerassessment.org/>) helps to determine the risk that an intimate partner poses to a woman.
- **[Futures Without Violence](https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/enhancing-judicial-skills-ejs-in-domestic-violence-cases/)** (<https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/enhancing-judicial-skills-ejs-in-domestic-violence-cases/>) has several resources including webinars, event information, and judicial training for domestic violence.

- **[National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges](https://www.ncjfcj.org/)** (<https://www.ncjfcj.org/>) One of the largest and oldest judicial membership organizations in the US which serves an estimated 30,000 professionals in the juvenile and family justice system including judges, referees, commissioners, court masters and administrators, social and mental health workers, police, and probation officers. The NCJFCJ provides the resources, knowledge, and training to improve the lives of families and children seeking justice.
- **[The National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative](https://ndvfri.org/resources/)** (<https://ndvfri.org/resources/>) includes resources such as domestic violence and homicide-related reports, documents on statutes, training videos, webinars, and newsletters.
- **[The National Judicial Institute on Domestic Violence](https://njidv.org/)** (<https://njidv.org/>) offers judicial training on domestic violence through courses and guides.
- **[The National Network to End Domestic Violence](https://www.techsafety.org/judicial-toolkit)** (<https://www.techsafety.org/judicial-toolkit>) provides a judicial toolkit for judges and judicial officers on technology abuse.
- **[The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/global-study-on-homicide.html)** (<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/global-study-on-homicide.html>), in their booklet five, provides information on the gender-related killing of women and girls.

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¹ Rachel Birnbaum & Nicholas Bala, *High Conflict Parenting Cases and the Role of State-funded Agencies in Ontario*, 40(2) CAN. FAM, L. Q. 136-68 (2021).

² Barbara Jo Fidler & Nicholas Bala, *Concepts, Controversies and Conundrums of “Alienation:” Lessons Learned in a Decade and Reflections on Challenges Ahead*, 58(2) FAM. CT. REV. 576-603 (2020).

³ CTR. DISEASE CONTROL & PREVENTION (hereinafter CDC), *Intimate Partner Violence* (2021), <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/> (last visited May 14, 2022).

⁴ ASS’N FAM. & CONCILIATION CTS. (hereinafter AFCC), *Guidelines for Examining Intimate Partner Violence: A Supplement to the AFCC Model Standards of Practice for Child Custody Evaluation* (2016), <https://www.afccnet.org/Resource-Center/Practice-Guidelines> (last visited May 14, 2022).

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