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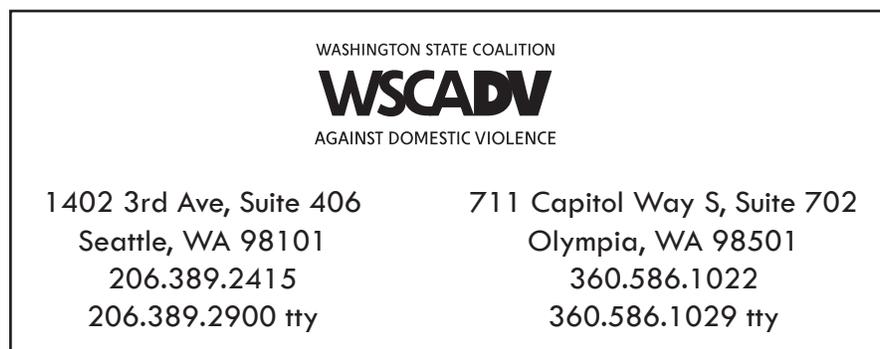
**Batterer Accountability:
Responding to Child Maltreatment
and Domestic Violence**

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For the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence

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Introduction

The Washington State Coordinated Response Protocol Project is a collaboration between representatives from the Department of Social and Health Services, WSCADV, various state courts and other organizations to address how social services agencies, law enforcement, and the courts respond to child maltreatment and domestic violence. The model protocol sets forth a statewide initiative vision: “To create community wide response systems that lead to increased safety of children, support for adult victims of domestic violence and accountability for perpetrators of domestic violence.”¹ A key element of this vision is that batterer accountability must be a part of community response to child maltreatment that occurs in concert with adult intimate partner violence. The protocol lists five guiding principles, one of which states, “Perpetrators of domestic violence must be held solely responsible for the violence while receiving interventions that address their abusive behaviors.” The model protocol goes on to suggest that each regional or county protocol workgroup create a shared mission statement that affirms domestic violence is not child maltreatment per se (consistent with state law), calls for thorough assessment of domestic violence “to determine the level of risk posed to the child by the domestic violence occurring,” and clarifies that “the perpetrator of domestic violence shall be held accountable for the domestic violence, and any subsequent risk posed by such behavior.”

The protocol represents an important shift away from blaming the domestic violence victim for “exposing” herself and her children to violence. Instead, it assigns responsibility for violence to the abuser. But how, in practice, should that look? The model protocol does not explore specific strategies for abuser accountability in Child Protective Services (CPS) cases. Thus protocol workgroups may find themselves struggling to flesh out this idea. Bringing batterer accountability into the conversation does not necessarily require more resources or new legislation. Child welfare caseworkers have a good deal of discretion in their construction of case plans and can take substantial steps to increase domestic violence perpetrator accountability.

Having a vision of domestic violence abuser accountability in the context of child welfare interventions in our communities is an important part of collaborating with CPS and advocating for battered women involved with CPS. It is also a critical aspect of system advocacy for children, because the ramifications of not attending to abuser accountability are potentially damaging to children. When abusers drop out of the picture in the course of CPS interventions, then domestic violence victims become the focus of CPS; they may be blamed for “not protecting” the children from the abuser or “exposing” them to the domestic violence. Ultimately children may be taken from the home (and from their non-abusive parent) and placed in foster care. Out-of-home placement can be traumatic and carries its own risks of physical and sexual abuse for children.² It also undermines one of the key resilience factors for children exposed to domestic violence: allowing the child to maintain his or her relationship with the parent who is not the perpetrator of the domestic violence, thereby giving that parent the opportunity to repair any damage done to the child as well as rebuild or repair the parent-child relationship.

Domestic Violence, Batterer Accountability and Child Well-Being

Research on children exposed to domestic violence reveals a broad range of impacts from

witnessing domestic violence, including behavioral, emotional and cognitive functioning problems.³ But in several studies of children in shelters, almost half of the children were doing well, were on target developmentally and were not experiencing depression or behavior problems.⁴ It appears that children are more likely to survive their difficult home situation and thrive when they have a strong bond with the parent who is not the perpetrator of domestic violence, usually their mother. For that reason, interveners must weigh carefully both the cost and the value of removing a child from the home against the cost of exposure to domestic violence. This careful weighing of options is only possible when caseworkers can accurately assess domestic violence and its impact on children.⁵

Caseworkers and advocates also need to remember that whether or not the domestic violence in the home is traumatizing or dangerous to the children, its presence may affect all aspects of the CPS case, whether it is addressed or not. If CPS investigations do not proactively identify and address domestic violence by one parent against the other, CPS interventions may actually increase domestic violence perpetrators' leverage over their victims. For example, CPS workers may misinterpret an abuser's involvement in the case as motivated by love and concern when the motivation is actually to sabotage and control the domestic violence victim. An abuser whose control is threatened may keep the domestic violence victim isolated and prevent the victim from fulfilling aspects of the CPS case plan, such as attending a domestic violence support group or obtaining a restraining order. A domestic violence victim who cannot follow through with the case plan because of abuser sabotage risks losing her children. However, if a caseworker recognizes the impact of the abuser's control strategies on the case and implements safety-planning and batterer-accountability strategies, intervention may actually increase the safety of the domestic violence victim and improve her range of options for living without violence - which are critical to increasing children's safety.

Shifting the Focus Off the Domestic Violence Victim in CPS Investigations and Case Plans

Traditionally, child welfare interventions have focused on the steps battering victims took to address the domestic violence: Were they intent on leaving the abuser? Did they file a protection order? Did they go to support groups for domestic violence victims? Were they looking for alternative housing? And so on.

Sometimes, when the idea of batterer accountability comes up, CPS workers raise the concern that domestic violence abusers are frequently not the biological father of the children, so using removal of the child is not motivating in the case planning process. A study in Connecticut found that 68 percent of the men identified as domestic violence perpetrators in the child welfare caseload were biological fathers of at least one child in the house.⁶ We have no reason to believe the situation is different in Washington. While cases in which the domestic violence perpetrator is not the biological father of the children are vexing and challenging for CPS workers, their frequency may be overestimated. Dwelling on the difficulty of finding points of leverage with the domestic violence abuser in these cases can distract from creating effective protocols for the many cases in which the domestic violence perpetrator is the biological father.

From the CPS worker's point of view, focusing on the domestic violence victim may seem easier

than focusing on the domestic violence perpetrator; victims may be more amenable to change and to conversations about what is going on in the family. They are likely to be less intimidating and easier to talk to than domestic violence perpetrators. Additionally, when the domestic violence perpetrator is also the child abuser, CPS workers may be oriented to focusing on the non-abusing parent, working with her to increase her ability to protect and care for the children. However, as Ellen Pence and Terri Taylor point out in their study of CPS cases involving intimate partner violence, "The more the [CPS] worker looked to the woman to control the man's violence, the more absent the man became from the file and the case. Although he was central in the case, he disappeared from sight and any real intervention plan. It was as if he were not on the CPS radar screen."⁷

By focusing on getting the battered woman to take steps to hold the domestic violence perpetrator accountable, rather than seeking accountability directly from the domestic violence perpetrator, CPS diminishes its (considerable) institutional power by funneling it through the domestic violence victim. When CPS attempts to control the abuser by working through the domestic violence victim, then CPS has only as much power as the domestic violence victim has in the relationship - which may not be much.

Sometimes the steps CPS wants the domestic violence victim to take may not be clearly associated with increased safety or well-being of the children. For example, CPS workers may require the domestic violence victim to attend a domestic violence support group. However, this does not necessarily increase the safety of the children. In fact, if the woman must rely on the domestic violence abuser for childcare, it may increase their risk.

Requiring domestic violence victims to file a protection order may increase risks to both the victims and their children because domestic violence perpetrators frequently intensify their power and control tactics as their control is threatened.⁸ What's more, some courts may be reluctant to grant a permanent restraining order when the victim has a child in common with the abuser. Courts frequently minimize the abuser's power and control behaviors and punish the adult domestic violence victim for making what the court sees as poor parenting decisions. Finally, as advocates and domestic violence victims know, filing a protection order is no guarantee that the children will be protected from the domestic violence abuser, as many judges see no connection between the abuse of an intimate partner and the capacity for appropriate parenting.

When caseworkers and the courts accurately understand the pattern of power and control that typifies domestic violence and the social context in which it takes place, focusing solely on the domestic violence victim no longer makes sense. As advocates, we know very well that abusers do not simply stay away when their partners ask them to leave or break up with them. Focusing on a domestic violence victim's relationship with an abuser as an irresponsible parenting decision that she can change her mind about - instead of focusing on the domestic violence abuser's problem with violence, power and control - leads to confusion about what steps are needed to solve the problem.

Pushing the domestic violence victim to leave the abuser also assumes that she can find safe, affordable, long-term housing, or asks her to sacrifice her permanent housing for a short emergency shelter stay. Advocates know that obtaining long-term housing is very difficult, particularly for low-income battered women. Most domestic violence takes place after separation,

and violence frequently escalates in frequency and severity with separation - again posing increased dangers to both the domestic violence victim and her children.⁹ When women are pressured by child protection workers to leave their abuser, they may end up both leaving stable housing and facing increased violence, neither of which is good for the children.

Finally, if the domestic violence victim does leave the domestic violence perpetrator, interventions focused on the victim fail to confront the fact that the perpetrator might have access to other children (how many of us have seen multiple women in our programs with the same abuser?). When abusers relocate to homes with different children, the danger to children has simply been redistributed, not ended. Thus, when CPS does not monitor an offender, a domestic violence victim who keeps the perpetrator out of her home and away from her children becomes the measure of a “successful” outcome in a case. The exposure of other children to the dangerous behavior of the domestic violence abuser is overlooked in the case outcome.¹⁰

Advocacy with CPS and Protocol Project Teams

So where does this leave us in our discussions with collaborators on protocol projects as well as in our advocacy for individual women involved with CPS?

We can insist that safety planning with domestic violence victims become an integral part of every intervention.

The model protocol reflects best practices in its assertion that “the safety of abused children is often linked to the safety of their non offending parent. By helping adult victims of domestic violence secure protection, the safety, permanence and well-being of the children also is enhanced.”¹¹

This suggests that efforts at batterer accountability must be evaluated and accompanied by careful attention to the safety of the domestic violence victim. Thus, we and our collaborators must ask ourselves questions about any policy or process we may propose: How will this affect the safety of the domestic violence victim and the children? How can we ensure or increase the domestic violence victim’s and the children’s safety in relation to this step? With this understanding, we can move forward in thinking about what abuser accountability might look like in CPS case plans, and how we as advocates can be collaborators in that process.

We can encourage CPS workers to make direct contact with domestic violence perpetrators and explore with them their use of violence and control tactics.

As battered women’s advocates, we need to support the creation of protocols and processes that put CPS workers in direct contact with abusers, making responsible use of their institutional power to advance abuser accountability. This assumes that caseworkers have good tools for identifying and assessing domestic violence, and that they know how to engage in conversations with both victims and abusers regarding the use of violence in the home and its effect on children.

We can urge our collaborators to conceive of the “family” as the parent-child relationship most amenable to positive change.

Legislation and guidance to child welfare agencies, such as the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, tend to treat the parents or entire family as a unit. Either the (whole) family is safe for the child, or it is not. Thus, family reunification and family preservation efforts may treat the domestic violence abuser and domestic violence victim as a unit. But we can encourage a conceptual shift to thinking of the non-abusing parent and child as the family unit to be preserved or reunified, with safety planning for the domestic violence victim and accountability for the domestic violence perpetrator, who may not be a safe part of the family.

We can push for accurate identification of the problem and who is causing it.

When exposure to domestic violence and the potential danger to the children arising from domestic violence is the primary concern in a CPS case, we can encourage our CPS collaborators to be sure that the domestic violence abuser is identified as the primary problem, not the domestic violence victim. When exposure to domestic violence is one of several concerns (for example, the caseworker may recognize domestic violence but may also have concerns about the domestic violence victim's parenting behavior or substance abuse), we can encourage our collaborators to accurately identify the domestic violence perpetrator's violence and its relationship to other areas of concern. (For example, does the woman discipline the children harshly because she is afraid of what the abuser will do if they misbehave? Are the children sent outside unsupervised because she is hoping they will not see or hear violence occurring in the home?)

Allegations of child abuse or neglect must be classified as "founded" (child abuse or neglect did exist) or "unfounded" (no child abuse or neglect was verified) by CPS workers. When the domestic violence victim parents appropriately and she is not the perpetrator of the child maltreatment in the home, we can encourage caseworkers to classify allegations of abuse by the domestic violence victim "unfounded" while at the same time determining that allegations of abuse by the domestic violence perpetrator are "founded." This accurate fixing of responsibility can be helpful to the domestic violence victim in the long run. If the domestic violence victim does seek a protection order, dissolution order or parenting plan, an accurate identification of the locus of the problem will support her efforts to protect her children in these civil court processes.

We can push for CPS to use its power and resources to address the domestic violence.

CPS is required by the Adoption and Safe Families Act to make "reasonable efforts" to "prevent or eliminate the need for removing the child from the child's home" before placing a child in foster care. One way for caseworkers to fulfill this requirement is rarely used in Washington: Child welfare workers have the ability to petition the court for a protection order on behalf of the children to remove a domestic violence abuser from the home. In section 26.44.063 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), the legislature clarified, "It is the intent of the legislature to minimize trauma to a child involved in an allegation of sexual or physical abuse. The legislature declares that removing the child from the home often has the effect of further traumatizing the child. It is, therefore, the legislature's intent that the alleged offender, rather than the child, shall be removed from the home and that this should be done at the earliest possible point of intervention."¹² As the legislature noted, removal of the domestic violence abuser is by far preferable to removing the children to foster care. This supports and preserves the important parent-child bond between the domestic violence victim and the child, and sends a strong message to the domestic violence perpetrator about the unacceptability of the abusive behavior. It may also increase the domestic

violence victim's chances of obtaining a good parenting/custody arrangement if she does file for dissolution. The court may be reluctant to award unsupervised visitation or primary custody to a domestic violence abuser if the victim can show that child welfare experts determined that the perpetrator was so inappropriate as a parent that they sought to ensure that person did not reside with the children.

We can support the creation of collaborations that increase batterer accountability.

As Leigh Goodmark points out in her article on batterer accountability, "Lack of communication among various systems impedes batterer accountability."¹³ As advocates, we can encourage community collaborators to create protocols and processes to overcome lack of communication.

For instance, we can facilitate and encourage collaboration between CPS caseworkers and probation/parole officers to ensure that batterers who have violated their probation or parole are held accountable, and that multiple agency representatives argue for revocation of probation or parole when appropriate.

WSCADV's Fatality Review has repeatedly found that lack of institutional response to abuser violation of case plans, court orders, conditions of parole or probation, etc., emboldens abusers and weakens domestic violence victims' position in relation to their abusers, thus increasing, not decreasing, danger. When institutions impose conditions of any sort on abusers, they must also plan to hold abusers accountable for adhering to those conditions and be willing to impose meaningful consequences when they don't.

When children are placed out of home, we can point out the children's and domestic violence victim's right to have CPS assistance to address domestic violence.

The Adoption and Safe Families Act specifies that when a child is in foster care, child welfare agencies are required to support the possibility of reunification of the family by providing certain services. Among these services, "assistance to address domestic violence" is specifically listed. The form this assistance takes is not specified, which leaves room for some creativity at the practice level. Ideally the child protection worker, perhaps in collaboration with a domestic violence advocate, will work with the domestic violence victim to figure out what she actually needs to address the domestic violence. Careful discussion may reveal that the key reason a domestic violence victim can't break free of the abuser is lack of access to alternative, safe, long-term housing, or inability to assemble a deposit for a new apartment. In this case, domestic violence support groups are not much help and should not be required.

Batterer's Intervention Programs and Batterer Accountability

Requiring a domestic violence abuser to attend a batterer's intervention program may be an important part of case plans aimed at increasing batterer accountability. However, batterer's intervention programs are frequently ineffective in changing domestic violence perpetrators' behavior, and thus, a referral does not necessarily increase children's safety. As advocates, we have an important role in educating our child welfare collaborators on the effectiveness (or lack of) of batterer's intervention programs generally and the problems and strengths of particular

local programs.

Leigh Goodmark sums up the research on batterer's intervention programs:

It is important to note that the majority of batterers referred to treatment never complete their programs. As many as 50% of the men who contact a program for an intake appointment never appear. Among batterers mandated to participate, one study found that more than half of the men attended fewer than the required twenty sessions, and almost one third attended five or fewer. It is possible that as few as 25% of men referred to programs actually complete them. This failure to complete treatment has serious implications for child protection agencies relying on batterer intervention programs to change batterer behavior, as it is questionable how much change can occur when treatment is not completed. . . . [Further], a recent study of outcomes in batterer intervention programs in four cities found reassault rates [which do not take into account other abusive or controlling behaviors] of 35%, 36%, 30% and 27% after completion of the programs, with the average over the four sites 32%.¹⁴

This means that for every one hundred domestic violence perpetrators referred to batterer's intervention, twenty-five or fewer will actually complete the program. One third of that twenty-five, or at least eight, will reassault their partners after completion. To sum up, we can expect batterer's intervention programs to be effective at preventing physical violence for sixteen out of one hundred batterers referred to them. Emotional abuse and other coercive behaviors may continue, and physical violence is unlikely to end immediately. This data refers to violence after completion, and does not reflect assaults that may have taken place during the course of the intervention program. Because the efficacy of batterer's intervention programs is so unclear, the idea of batterer accountability cannot simply boil down to an order to attend batterer's intervention. And attending or completing a batterer's intervention program cannot be equated with actual changes that increase the safety of domestic violence victims or their children. Caseworkers should not be satisfied with reports of attendance at treatment programs, but should instead maintain open lines of communication with the domestic violence victim and seek other evidence of behavior change and increased safety of the children.

Beyond Batterer's Intervention in CPS Case Plans

In addition to attending batterer's intervention programs, case plans could include the following expectations of abusers:

- Attendance at parenting programs.
- Compliance with all court orders, including protective orders.
- An end to physical, psychological or emotional abuse of their partner. (This requirement should be carefully monitored.)
- Supervised visitation with their children or cooperation with child custody orders (if they exist).
- Support and facilitation of their children's access to therapy or support groups, if they are deemed necessary.

- Education about the effects of witnessing domestic violence on children.¹⁵
- Steps to remedy these effects and heal relationships with their children, when appropriate.¹⁶ (Remediating effects and healing relationships might take the form of verbally taking responsibility for their behavior to their children, in an age-appropriate manner, and/or supporting and facilitating their children's access to therapy or support groups.)
- Removal of weapons from the home.
- Steps to address substance abuse and/or mental health issues.
- Payment of child support.
- Allowing the adult victim and children access to services and supports.
- Sharing of important personal information, including history of past abuse, financial information and court involvement, with the adult victim.¹⁷ (This should be done in the presence of the caseworker, in order to verify that information was fully and accurately conveyed.)

Conditions such as these are effective only when they are closely monitored and carefully documented. In protocol workgroups and individual contacts with our CPS collaborators, we can encourage caseworkers to increase batterer accountability by treating the domestic violence abuser and the domestic violence victim separately when monitoring a case plan. CPS workers can closely monitor the conditions imposed on abusers and carefully document domestic violence abusers' failures to adhere to case plans. Simultaneously, they can document the domestic violence victim's efforts to comply with her part of the case plan.

Advocacy with Individual Women Involved with CPS

In some cases, domestic violence may be only one of several issues, and it may be appropriate for the CPS worker to include action steps in case planning for the domestic violence victim as well as the abuser. (For example, the mother may need substance abuse treatment.) In these cases, it is important to advocate that CPS workers make sure that expectations are balanced between the domestic violence abuser and victim. When we are advocating with an individual domestic violence victim, we can coach her on this idea, and help her think through what she would actually need in order to meet her own parenting goals. We can also encourage the domestic violence victim to ask directly that expectations be balanced between herself and the abuser.

We can help domestic violence victims think through what might be useful to hold the abuser accountable.

Advocacy often includes helping a domestic violence victim clarify what she wants to ask and say in interactions with system players. As advocates, we can help a domestic violence victim involved with CPS by working with her to think through her contacts with CPS workers and family support teams and explore likely outcomes of CPS intervention. We can also help her think through what she finds useful in terms of requirements of the abuser and educate her about her rights.

As advocates, we can help a domestic violence victim clarify her thoughts about what might help

her abuser change (or what she would like to try before she gives up this hope). For instance, should the domestic violence perpetrator receive substance abuse treatment? Is there a relative or other respected person in the domestic violence perpetrator's life - such as a grandfather, mother, or religious leader - who might provide meaningful support and accountability for the perpetrator to change? The domestic violence victim can ask for the identified support person to be included in CPS meetings with the family. Or, with the domestic violence victim's permission, as advocates, we can bring this up with the CPS worker on behalf of the domestic violence victim.

We can provide information to domestic violence victims about the effects of domestic violence on their children and the likelihood that the domestic violence perpetrator will end his abuse.

An important part of advocacy is providing domestic violence victims with accurate information about domestic violence, community resources and systems designed to intervene. Domestic violence victims have complex relationships with their abusers. They often have compassion for their abuser as a damaged person and can see the positive aspects of the domestic violence perpetrator's personality along with the negative. When advocating with domestic violence victims, we must acknowledge that many are hopeful that the domestic violence perpetrator will stop being abusive and the relationship will continue. When this is the case, women are entitled to accurate information about the likelihood that the abuser will change (chances are low, but they are slightly higher if the abuser attends and completes a batterer's intervention program). Providing domestic violence victims with accurate information about the outcomes of batterer's intervention programs and the impacts of domestic violence on children gives victims more information to work with in their decision making processes. As advocates, we can help domestic violence victims assess the impact of abuse on their children and make plans to mitigate that impact and keep their children safe.

Supporting our Child Welfare Collaborators

Our child welfare collaborators share the same important goals and values we do: We all want to see children thriving in safe homes with parents who love them, meet their needs and treat them well. We need to remember this, especially when we encounter ways that our philosophies and methods diverge. We can validate that working with domestic violence abusers is difficult and even scary and workers need proper support, training, consultation and supervision for this part of their work. We can help our CPS collaborators obtain information and consultation to assist them in their work. If we are aware that one batterer's intervention program monitors more consistently, has better communication with victims, and has a better understanding of the issue, we can urge the local CPS to refer only to that program, or we can initiate a joint meeting between CPS and the successful treatment program (if this connection is not already being made through the protocol process).

As advocates, we can help our child welfare collaborators think through what they need in order to work on batterer accountability effectively. They may need more supervisory support to think through these cases. Child protective workers may appreciate support in efforts to address CPS worker safety. They may appreciate support for defining criteria regarding when workers should make contact with abusers in pairs or with police accompaniment. Supporting child

welfare workers in meeting their workplace needs around batterer accountability can strengthen collaborations and lead to better interventions.

Supporting the Domestic Violence Victim as Part of Abuser Accountability

Advocates involved in collaboration with child welfare workers, either one-on-one or in the context of protocol groups, can make suggestions about how child welfare workers can support the domestic violence victim in filing a protection order or an order of dissolution. CPS caseworkers can provide support by thoroughly documenting their findings about the domestic violence perpetrator's abuse of both the children and the domestic violence victim, and the need for limited contact and/or supervised visitation. In some cases, it may be helpful to have the CPS worker present at the protective order hearing, if possible. Adhering to the principle that the more information that the domestic violence victim has the better the decision making, we can encourage CPS workers to let the domestic violence victim know what they will or won't convey to the court before the domestic violence victim files for a protection order.

CPS support around the protection order process may help address domestic violence victims' legitimate fears about what will happen to their children if they file for dissolution or a protection order: Abusers frequently threaten to gain custody of the children, or to hurt or flee with the children if the woman leaves. If CPS workers were willing to corroborate in civil court a victim's allegations of domestic violence and its harm to her children by providing documentation of the domestic violence abuser's adherence (or lack thereof) to case plans, they could alleviate some of these concerns.¹⁸

Dependency Court and Termination of Parental Rights: The German Model

In the United States, child welfare agencies rarely seek to terminate one parent's rights when the children can live with the non-abusive parent. Termination of parental rights in this country is a process tightly associated with freeing up a child for adoption. In Germany, one CPS agency in collaboration with battered women's advocates looked at this problem in a different way.¹⁹ This agency posed the following question: If the abuser's violence is the central problem (or the portion of the problem least amenable to change) and the abuser refuses to follow the case plan and stop the pattern of coercion, control and violence such that it continues to negatively impact the children, why not seek to terminate that parent's rights? Under this agency's guidelines, if an abuser does not adhere to the case plan (for example, continues using violence and threats, undermines the victim's efforts to get support for herself or her children, does not enter a batterer's intervention program, etc.), then the child welfare system seeks to terminate some of the abuser's parental rights, for example, the right to make or participate in decisions about the child's healthcare or education. If problems persist, the child welfare system goes back to court to initiate terminating the abuser's right to make or participate in decisions about where the child will reside. If problems continue, the child welfare system ultimately seeks to terminate all the domestic violence abuser's parental rights in dependency court - but not the non-abusing parent's.

The advocates in Germany argue that progressive termination of the domestic violence

perpetrator's parental rights imposes real consequences on the abuser for his behavior without punishing the domestic violence victim. It also strengthens the position of the non-abusing parent vis-à-vis the abuser. The system's intervention actually increases the victim's power, and places the victim in a better position if she wishes to pursue a dissolution; custody outcomes after a divorce are less unpredictable when a court has already formally terminated all or some of the domestic violence perpetrator's parental rights in response to a child welfare case. This alleviates legitimate fears many battered women have about separating from their abuser.

This is a valuable example of the kind of creative responses that can come from collaboration focused on preserving children's relationships with the parent who is not perpetrating the domestic violence. Such collaborations can increase the ability of the child welfare system to support domestic violence victims' ability to keep their children safe, and our shared desire to see all children in safe homes.

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1. The Washington State Coordinated Response Protocol Project is available online at www.courts.wa.gov/committee/?fa=committee.showContent&theFile=protocol.
 2. See, for example, "Child Maltreatment in Out of Home Care: What Do We Know Now?" by Gail Tittle, John Poertner, and Philip Garnier, Children and Family Research Center, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Accessed at <http://cfrcwww.social.uiuc.edu/pubs/Pdf.files/knownow.pdf>.
 3. "Children's Witnessing of Adult Domestic Violence" by Jeffrey L. Edleson, *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 1999, Vol. 14 (8), p. 839-870.
 4. "Young Children's Exposure to Adult Domestic Violence: Toward a Developmental Risk and Resilience Framework for Research and Intervention," by Abigail Gewirtz and Jeffrey L. Edleson. Paper #6 in the series *Early Childhood, Domestic Violence, and Poverty: Helping Young Children and their Families*, January 2004, University of Iowa.
 5. Identification and assessment are complex topics in and of themselves. In an effort to keep the focus on batterer accountability, I do not explore these topics in this article. WSCADV is hoping that DSHS moves forward with a number of reforms regarding child welfare, including tools and training for identification and assessment of domestic violence. This article works from the assumption that in some cases, at least, domestic violence has already been identified.
 6. "Children and Batterer Initiative Uses New Tools to Measure Child Protection Practice and Worker Attitudes Towards Batterers," by David Mandel, the Non-Violence Alliance. Accessed at www.endingviolence.com/research/newtools.php.
 7. "Building Safety for Battered Women and Their Children into the Child Protection System: A Summary of Three Consultations," by Ellen Pence and Terri Taylor, Praxis International, 2003, p. 14. Based on a consultation with the McKnight Collaborative. Accessed at www.thegreenbook.info/documents/buildingsafety.pdf.
 8. Lundy Bancroft's book, *The Batterer as Parent* (Sage Publications, 2002), does an excellent job of illustrating how abusers harm their children emotionally in their efforts to sustain power and control, even after separation.

9. The Bureau of Justice Statistics has reported higher incidence of assaults for women separated from their husbands. Authors Bachman and Saltzman note, "Among victims of violence committed by an intimate, the victimization rate of women separated from their husbands was about 3 times higher than that of divorced women and about 25 times higher than that of married women." "Violence against Women: Estimates from the Redesigned Survey," Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report, August 1995, NCJ-154348, by Ronet Bachman and Linda E. Saltzman. Accessed at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/femvied.pdf.
10. Building Safety for Battered Women and Their Children into the Child Protection System," by Pence and Taylor, p. 28.
11. The Washington State Coordinated Response Protocol Project, www.courts.wa.gov/committee/?fa=committee.showContent&theFile=protocol.
12. This section of the RCW is available at <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=26.44.063>.
13. "Achieving Batterer Accountability in the Child Protection System," Leigh Goodmark, Kentucky Law Journal 2004, Vol. 93(3), p. 9.
14. "Achieving Batterer Accountability," Goodmark, p. 12.
15. However, caseworkers should not assume that knowing the negative effects of exposure to domestic violence will necessarily lead to a commitment to change abusive behavior. In summing up his article, "Batterers' Perceptions of the Effect of Their Intimate Partner Violence on Children: Biological and Social Fathers Compared," David Mandel notes, "Analyzing the attitudes and behavioral intentions of a sample of 464 partner-abusive fathers, we found that biological fathers were more likely than social fathers (i.e., married or unmarried stepfathers) to express awareness of and concern about the effects of their abuse on their children. However, biological fathers were no more likely than social fathers to report intentions to stop their violence, seek a divorce, move out of the house or participate in family counseling in order to mitigate the harm of IPV [intimate partner violence] exposure to their children. *Our findings suggest that fathers' statements of concern about the effects of their IPV on children may be a poor indicator of their intentions to refrain from abusive behavior*" [emphasis added]. In other words, while child protection workers may take as a goal educating the domestic violence perpetrator about the harm the domestic violence does to his children, they should exercise caution in drawing conclusions that comprehension of damage done correlates closely with commitment to make changes.
16. "Accountability and Connection with Abusive Men: A New Child Protection Response to Increasing Family Safety," prepared by Fernando Mederos with the Massachusetts Department of Social Services Domestic Violence Unit, distributed by the Family Violence Prevention Fund, p. 77.
17. The last five entries from this list appear in "Achieving Batterer Accountability," Goodmark, p. 4.
18. Advocates should also know that with or without the CPS worker's assistance, a domestic violence victim may request a copy of the CPS case file to support her filings in the dissolution. If the victim makes the request, the file must be redacted by DSHS, and so the process may be too slow to be useful. However, if the judge makes the request, the file will not be redacted and should be available more quickly.
19. The following information about Germany is from the author's personal communication with Ute Roesemann, of *Srauen Beratungs Stelle*, a domestic violence organization in Gladbeck, Germany.