

Mapping Perpetrators' Patterns – Short (MPP-S)

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

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

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

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

Complete the following sentences:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Father's violence appears to have caused:

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

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

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

STEP 5: IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

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

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

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

6. *How clearly and comprehensively did the information about the perpetrator's pattern of behavior inform cross-system collaboration? If your answer is less than 5, what is one thing that could be done to improve the use of his pattern of behavior to improve cross-system collaboration?*