

BISCOMI 9th Annual Conference

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Presentation Slides

BATTERER PROFILE

Consistently true:

- **Controlling**
- **Entitled/ Self-Centered**
- **Believes he is the victim**
- **Manipulative/ Good public image**

BATTERER PROFILE

Consistently true:

- **Skillfully dishonest**
- **Disrespectful, Superior, Depersonalizing**
- **Good early in relationship**
- **Externalizes responsibility**

BATTERER PROFILE

Consistently true:

- **Punishes, retaliates**
- **Batters serially**
- **Danger increases post separation**

Batterers parenting style

- **Authoritarian**
- **Underinvolved**
- **Undermining Mother's authority**
- **Undermining Mother's parenting**

Batterers parenting style

- **Limited sense of age-appropriateness**
- **Use of children as weapons**
- **Good under observation**

Batterers parenting style

- **Tend to see children as personal possessions**
- **Rarely improve post-separation**
- **High risk of child abuse**

Batterer's Risk to Abuse Children

- **PHYSICAL ABUSE**
 - **50% of batterers**
 - **7x more likely than a non-batterer**
 - **Correlated with level of physical abuse of partner**
 - **Other indicators; level of control, substance abuse, rigid belief system, abused as a child**

Batterer's Risk to Abuse Children

- **SEXUAL ABUSE**
 - **2-5% of batterers**
 - **6x more likely than a non-batterer**
 - **Correlated with presence of violence towards partner but not with severity**
 - **Other indicators; high entitlement, self-centered, use of children to meet his own needs, manipulative, seeing children as personal possessions, substance abuse**

Batterer's Risk to Abuse Children

- **PSYCHOLOGICAL**

Generally present to some degree. Causes:

- The batterer profile**
- Use of children as weapons**

Common Errors in Custody Evaluations

- **Lack of specialized domestic violence and child abuse training and supervision**
- **Overinterpretation / misinterpretation of psychological testing data; failure to seek “convergent validity” (APA Guidelines)**
- **Strong influence of personal feelings about the alleged batterer**
- **Overinterpretation/misinterpretation of observations of children and statements made by them**

Errors in Custody Evaluations, cont

- **Use of psychological theories that are not applicable to abuse or trauma**
- **Failure to perform thorough investigation, overreliance on clinical assessment**
- **Inadequate understanding of impact of battering on mother's parenting**
- **Conclusions or recommendations not following from the evidence**

Post separation risk to children from batterer

- **Abduction**
- **Homicide**
- **Interference with recovery**
- **Ongoing damage to mother-child relationships**

Post separation risks to children from batterer

- **Physical risk to mother during exchanges**
- **Physical, sexual, or psychological abuse of child**
- **Rigid and authoritarian parenting or neglectful, inconsistent parenting, or both**

Post separation risk to children from batterer

- **Being exposed to violence in father's new relationship**
- **Learning attitudes and behaviors that lead to domestic violence**
- **The batterer being unable to focus on the needs of the children**

Necessary Context for Children's Recovery

- **Sense of safety**
- **Structure, limits, predictability**
- **Strong bond to primary caretaker**
 - **Feel that she can protect them**
 - **Feel respect for her**
 - **Feel supported in being close to her**

Children's Recovery, cont.

- **Not feel responsibility to take care of adults**
- **Good boundaries regarding information**
 - **Feel that parents are healing**
- **If safe, have contact with non-custodial parent**
- **Access to community resources and activities**

Children's Recovery, cont.

- **Strong social relationships, including siblings**
- **Specialized therapy, Psychoeducational groups**
- **Clear social message about responsibility for violence**