

# QAILS Webinar

Presented by Bec Shearman, Operations Manager of the Domestic Violence Action Centre





# Forms of DV



What are the different forms of domestic and family violence?



# Forms of DV



Physical abuse;

Verbal abuse;

Social abuse;

Economic abuse;

Sexual abuse;

Psychological abuse;

Reproductive Control;

Technological abuse;

Property Damage;

Threats;

Stalking & surveillance;

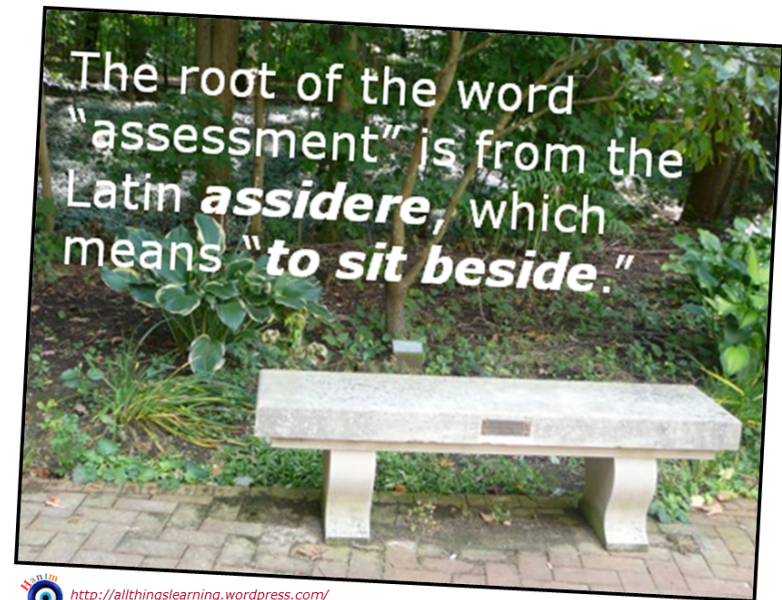
Cultural/Spiritual abuse;

Anything else?



# DV Risk Assessment

- Not just a **tool**
- Need a “**DV lens**”
- There is an **underpinning** knowledge base and professional framework
- Death Reviews have consistently shown that **generalist** service providers could benefit from an enhanced understanding of DV risk indicators
- The **safety of children** is tied to the safety of their mothers





# Predictors of Risk

What are the top 5 risk indicators of serious injury or death from this list?

- Pregnancy;
- Access to weapons;
- Threats or attempts to kill/victim believes that death is a genuine possibility;
- Strangulation or choking;
- Recent or imminent separation;
- Escalating violence;
- Stalking & surveillance;
- Abuse of children and/or animals;
- Extreme sexual jealousy/sexual violence;
- History (criminal activity or interpersonal violence);
- Controlling behaviour (financially/socially/physicality);
- Social & cultural factors (substance misuse/mental health/loss of employment).





# Risk Assessment



- **Safety is the key priority – what does this mean in practice?**

- Risk assessment and safety planning are inter-related yet discrete processes

- **Key Topics** – what would we need to know about the following?

- Immediate Safety;
- the violence;
- the offender;
- the victim;
- the children;
- threats/weapons;
- current legal status;
- anything else?



# Context is important



- RA attends to **context** (meaning/patterns) of behaviour instead of isolated incidents
- Victim is seen as the most **important source of information**
- **Recognises** victims' fears, trauma, and coping strategies
- Actions the system takes may put the victim at **greater risk**
- **Victim advocacy, and safety planning** are very important through every step of the process



# Risk Assessment



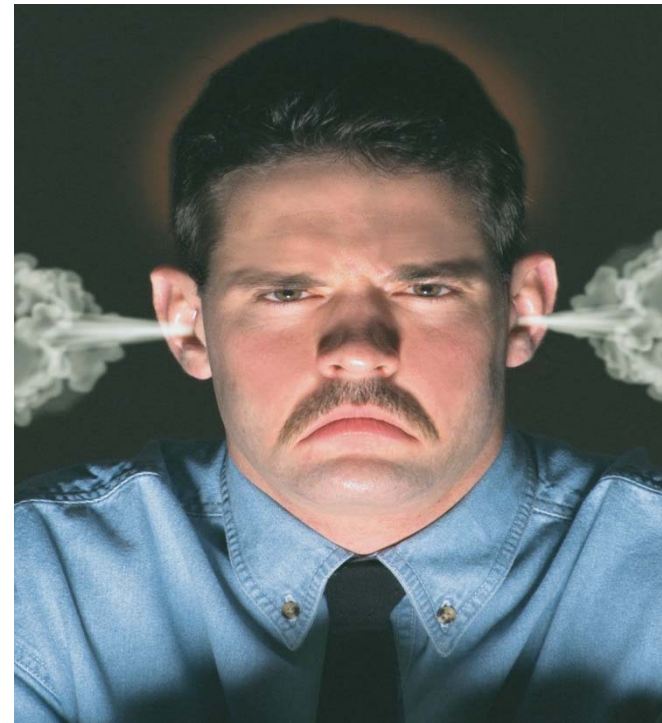
Risk Assessment is complex, dynamic and ongoing:  
Victim-centred intervention includes an analysis of the **complex package** of physical, legal, economic, familial, social, and emotional risks faced by the victim, **and by those the victim feels bound to protect.**

- What are the consequences and implications for any course of action?
- How constricted has the victim's life become?



# Profiling Abusers & Confronting Myths

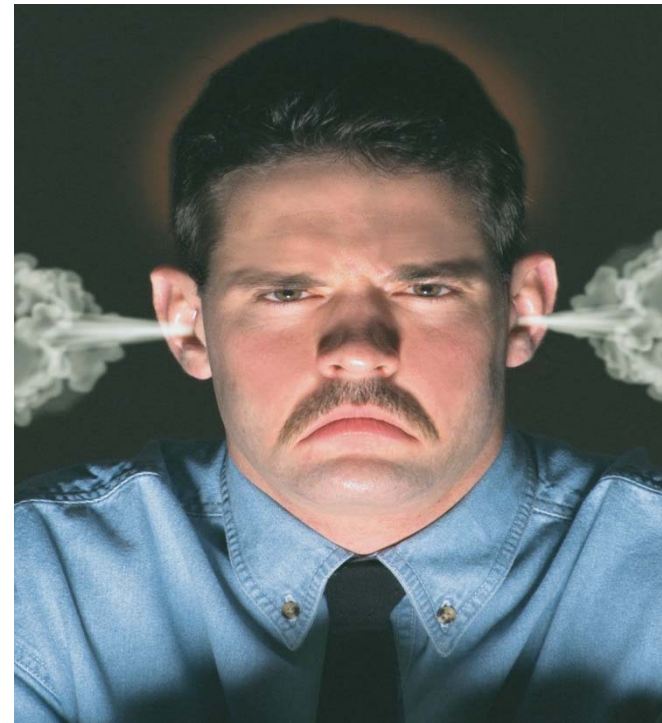
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anger?’





# Profiling Abusers & Confronting Myths

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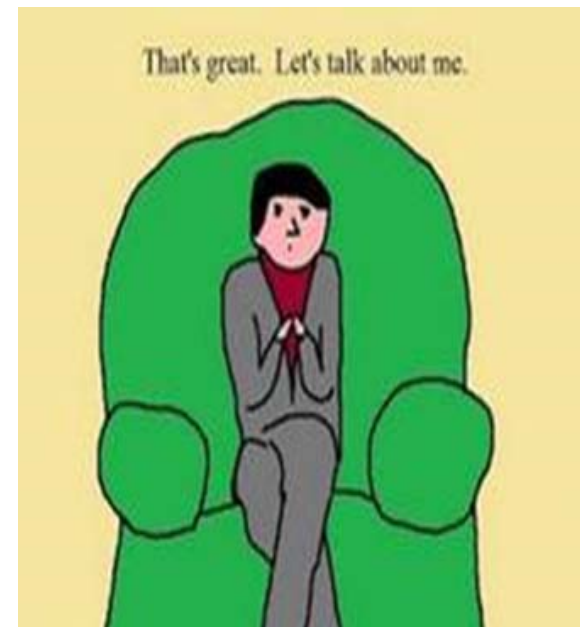
‘Abusers have a **skill deficit**: poor interpersonal skills or poor **judgement?**’





# Profiling Abusers & Confronting Myths

‘Abusers have **low self esteem?**’





# Profiling Abusers & Confronting Myths

‘Most abusers have mental health or drug & alcohol problems?’





# Profiling Abusers & Confronting Myths



‘Guys who **express remorse** are more likely to change?’



**Brown's Dad Says Singer Is 'Remorseful, Reflecting'**

Feb 13, 2009 6:24 PM CST





# Profiling Abusers & Confronting Myths

‘If the violence has **only occurred once** there isn’t a **pattern**’.





# Profiling Abusers & Confronting Myths

Just because a person has abused his partner doesn't mean he is a **bad parent**.

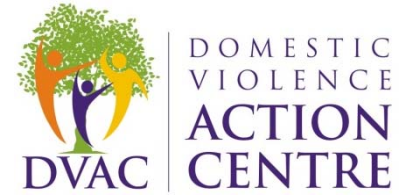
I would try and be nice and not get into trouble. I tried to be very good so that the he would not scream at her and do bad things to her. I tried to avoid him by not talking back and coming home early to stay out of his way. It worked most of the time, but when I made a mistake, then he would scream at my mommy and say everything was her fault. He would call her useless and that she is not worth anything. He would yell at mom, then he would blame me and my younger sister saying, "It's all your fault that we are fighting."

**8-YEAR-OLD GIRL**





# Profiling Abusers & Confronting Myths



## Take Home Messages:

- Violence is a choice:
  - Not provoked; Not self defence
- Abusive behaviour is not an anger problem:
  - Loss of control is selective; Every abuser draws the lines somewhere.
- Abuse is not “sick” or “irrational” behaviour:
  - Underlying logic is purposeful. Doesn’t follow naturally from bad parenting,
- Abuse is not caused by alcohol/drugs:
  - Plenty of substance abusers aren’t abusive
- Partner abuse is inherently harmful to the children:
  - Children flourish in safe, predictable, nurturing environments with regular routines and sensitive responses.



# Contact us



You can find our service online at [www.dvac.org.au](http://www.dvac.org.au)

You can also connect with us on Facebook by looking up Domestic Violence Action Centre and selecting “Like”



Or you can call us on 07 3816 3000 during business hours.