

The Family-Centered Toolkit for Domestic Violence Programs and Resources for Mental Health Providers

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National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma,
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Great Lakes (HHS Region 5)

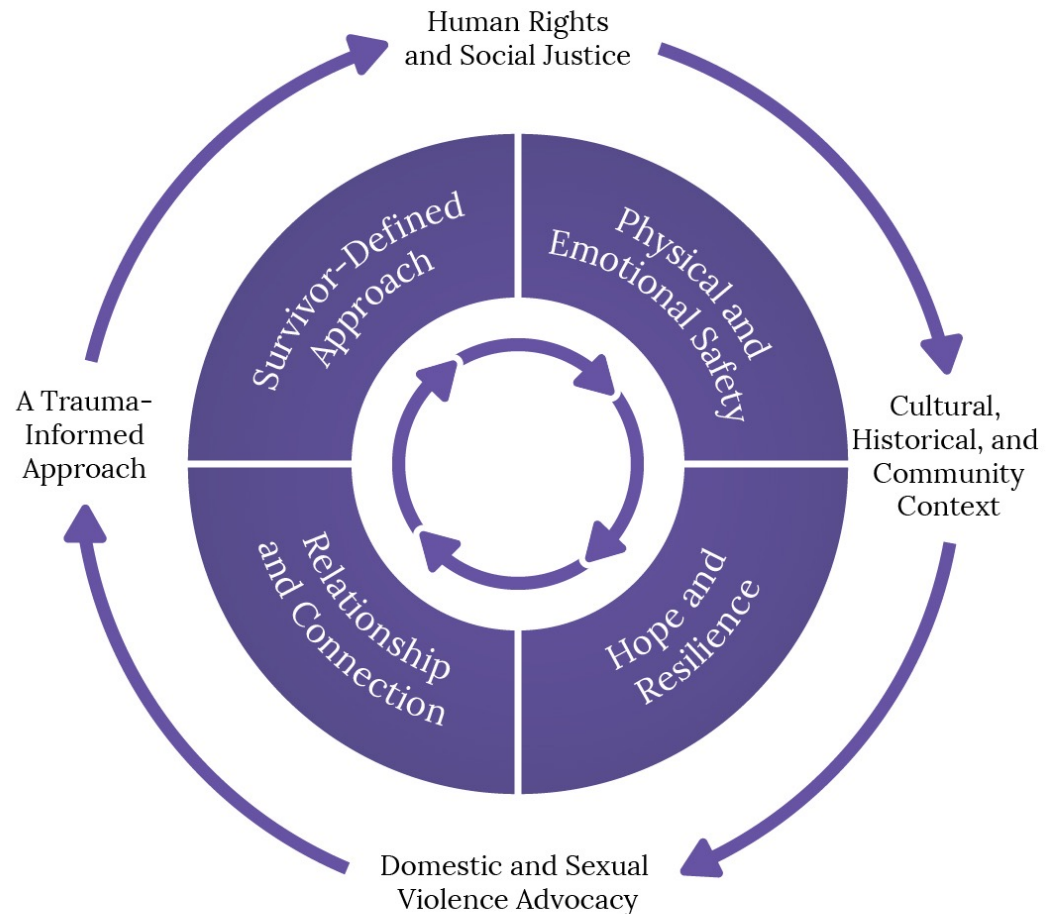
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The National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma, and Mental Health

NCDVTMH is a FVPSA Funded Special Issue Resource Center Dedicated to Addressing the Intersection of Domestic Violence, Trauma, Substance Use and Mental Health

NCDVTMH, 2014



A close-up photograph of a person's hands weaving a vibrant, multi-colored striped textile on a wooden loom. The person is wearing a red long-sleeved shirt with a black cuff featuring colorful geometric patterns. The textile being woven has horizontal stripes in red, yellow, white, and dark green. The loom is made of light-colored wood, and a spool of dark green thread is visible on the right side. The text "An Integrated Approach" is overlaid in white, sans-serif font in the center of the image.

An Integrated Approach

...relishing the thin spiral of possibility...

Carol Shields



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The Family-Centered Toolkit for Domestic Violence Programs



Intention

- To help programs envision and implement a more integrated approach, supporting caregiver-child relationships and services to families:
 - Culturally responsive
 - Trauma-informed
 - Developmentally sensitive
- To offer accessible guidance (knowledge, best practices, resources, and strategies for building organizational capacity)



Our “why”: Coercive Control and Parenting

- Children (and survivors’ concern for their welfare) are often used as tactics of control
- Deliberate acts to undermine parenting regularly occur and are particularly traumatic for survivors
- Reproductive control is a common tactic
- Threats related to child protective services, child custody, or deportation to threaten parental status
- Outing a partner’s gender identity or sexual orientation
- Leveraging societal stigma to control their partners



Use of Mental Health and Substance Use Concerns as a Tactic of Control

- Undermine sanity, sobriety, credibility, and parenting
- Coerced overdose, coerced use, coerced illegal activities, coerced sex
- Control meds and treatment; sabotage recovery
- Use against survivor to prevent access to support, resources, protection, and custody
- Abusive partners often convince authorities the survivor “was out of control”
- These tactics work; systems unknowingly and unintentionally put survivor safety at greater risk



What is Your “Why”?

What barriers or challenges have you found in developing and sustaining a family-centered approach to program services?

NCDVTMH, 2021



Are You Willing?

Changing the ways organizations support families experiencing domestic violence takes a willingness to undergo self-assessment and constructive critique...

And leadership to modify existing services; adding new approaches.



Consider an Experience

While completing the intake documents, Sue (a new client) shares with you her history of physical and emotional abuse that her daughter Janie age 7, witnessed. Janie has unsupervised visitation with her father (Sue's abusive partner) two weekends each month. Sue also shares that Janie tells Sue that she's "*scared*" of her father but hasn't shared anything specific.



What's in the Toolkit that Helps?



Trauma-Informed and Family-Centered

Trauma-informed

- Considering individual, collective, and historical trauma; the various sources of trauma, the impacts, trauma responses, coping strategies, and healing

Family-Centered

- A range of practices that embrace the whole family as defined by each individual and family for themselves
- Think about and take actions to support caregiver-child and other family relationships.



And ...Culturally Responsive

- Understand the centrality of culture in people's lives and incorporate this understanding into service design and delivery
- Providers promote accessibility, equity and mutual respect as a cornerstone of the work and infuse these values into relationships, environments and practices



Challenging Some Core Beliefs

- Can people who experienced and survived domestic violence be good parents?
- Can survivors who use substances be good caregivers for their children?
- Do we have biases that prevent us from offering effective, survivor driven work?
- Can survivors who have mental health concerns be good caregivers for their children?



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Toolkit Content

1. Introduction
2. Readiness and Getting Started
3. Organizational Commitment and Infrastructure
4. Creating a Welcoming, Family-Friendly Environment
5. Child, Teen, and Family-Centered Practices, Programming, and Services
6. Incorporating Knowledge about Attachment, Child Development, Trauma, and Healing, into Family-Centered Services

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7. Responding to Children's and Teen's Behavioral Challenges and Mental Health Concerns
8. Inclusive Services for Children, Teens, and Families
9. Supporting Parents and Caregivers Affected by Domestic Violence
10. Supporting Parents with Mental Health Needs and their Children in Domestic Violence Settings
11. Supporting Parents who Use Substances and their Children in Domestic Violence Settings
12. Activities for Families (Individual and Family Activities)
13. Evaluating Program Services and Outcomes
14. Appendix: References and Handouts



Each Content Areas Has:

- Guidance and resource links
- Critical conversation prompts designed to further discussion, knowledge, and practice
- Followed by:
 - **What can a direct service staff person do?**
 - **What can a supervisor do?**
- Scenarios to help integrate learning and practice:
 - **Things to consider**
 - **What you can do**



Comprehensive Approach

- Best practices for offering family services
- Topic specific exploration
- Guidance for building family-centered services
- Staff development; new staff orientation, ongoing reflection
- Activities to introduce to caregivers and their children
- Resources

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What is Your Readiness for Real Talk?



Cave and Johnan, 2014

Activities

Activities for Teams and Families

- With Teams
 - Big picture visioning
 - Creating and refining services to be family centered
 - Using scenarios
- For Sharing With Families
 - Engaging in co-regulation
 - Navigating challenging behaviors

Opportunities for Staff Reflection

- Checking in about willingness
- Checking in about comfort
- Checking in on areas for growth and learning
- Checking in on action to take
 - Direct service staff
 - Supervisors



Strategies

- Prepare staff
- Create environment for family-centered work (physical and sensory environment, confidentiality)
- Partner with domestic violence programs
- Use approach that holds the survivor-caregiver's needs in mind and the child's needs at the same time
- Hold what we know about development and attachment as we are respecting family's cultural ways of being and community connection



Strategies

- Respond to children's needs within the context of their parenting
- Respond to behavior
- Be trauma-informed in action with youth and caregivers
- Commit to supporting survivors who parent and have mental health and or substance use concerns
- Ask survivors for feedback and incorporate what you learn



Responding to Sue and Janie



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Section 5: Child, Teen, and Family Centered Practices Programming, and Services

- Intake process
- Safety planning across ages and developmental stages
- Survivor led; survivor defined
- Understanding and working within different expectations of confidentiality
- Making referrals and establishing partnerships



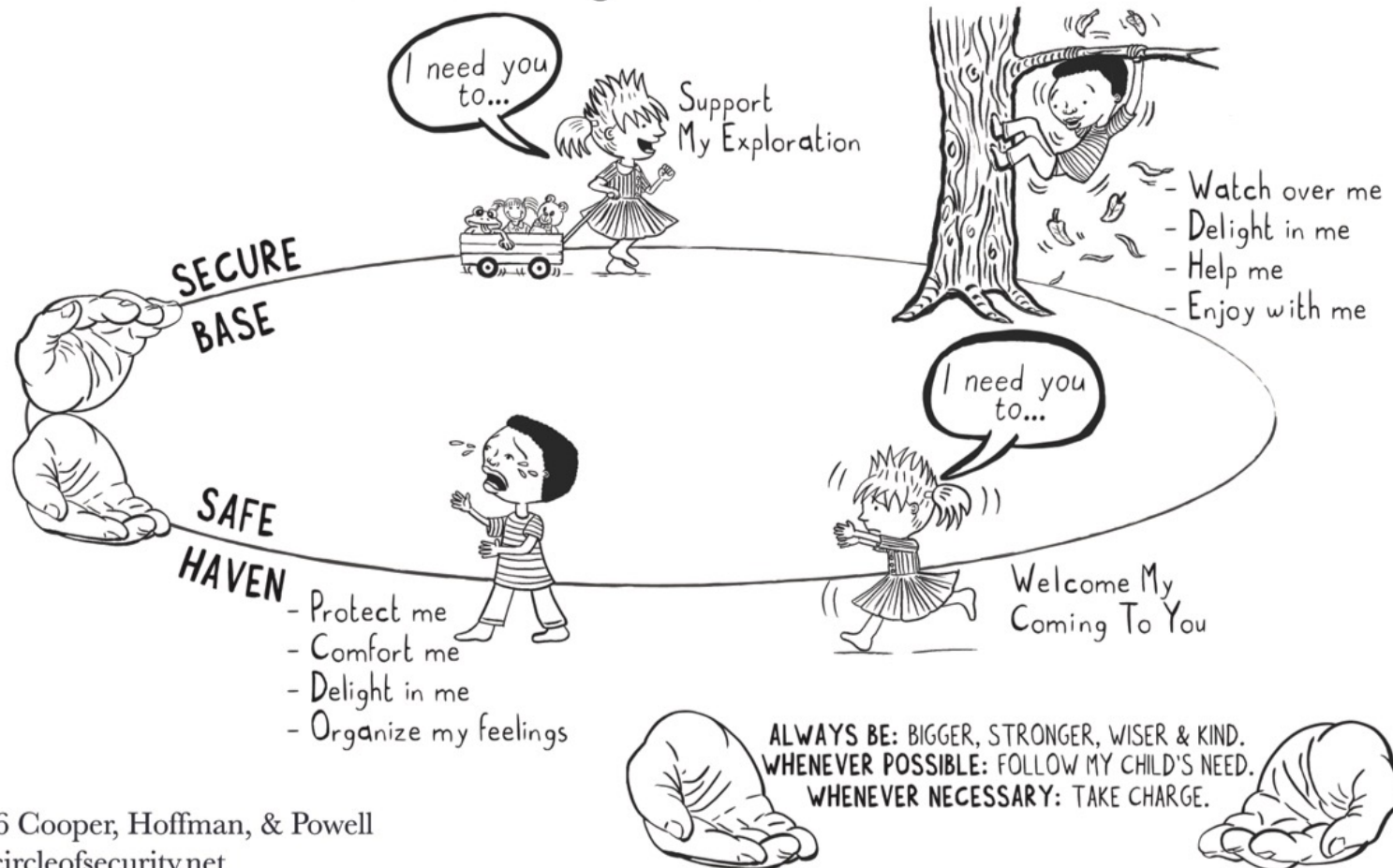
Section 6: Incorporating Knowledge about Attachment, Child Development, Trauma, and Healing into Family-Centered Services

- Attachment relationships, basics on child development
- How trauma and adversity may impact Janie's development
- Ideas to support Sue's and Janie's healing from the traumatic effects of experiencing domestic violence
- Supporting Sue to lead activities that support Janie's healing
- Consider prevention approaches



Circle of Security®

Parent Attending To The Child's Needs



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Image source: www.circleofsecurityinternational.com/circle-of-security-model/what-is-the-circle-of-security Video with overview: <https://youtu.be/1wpz8m0BFM8>



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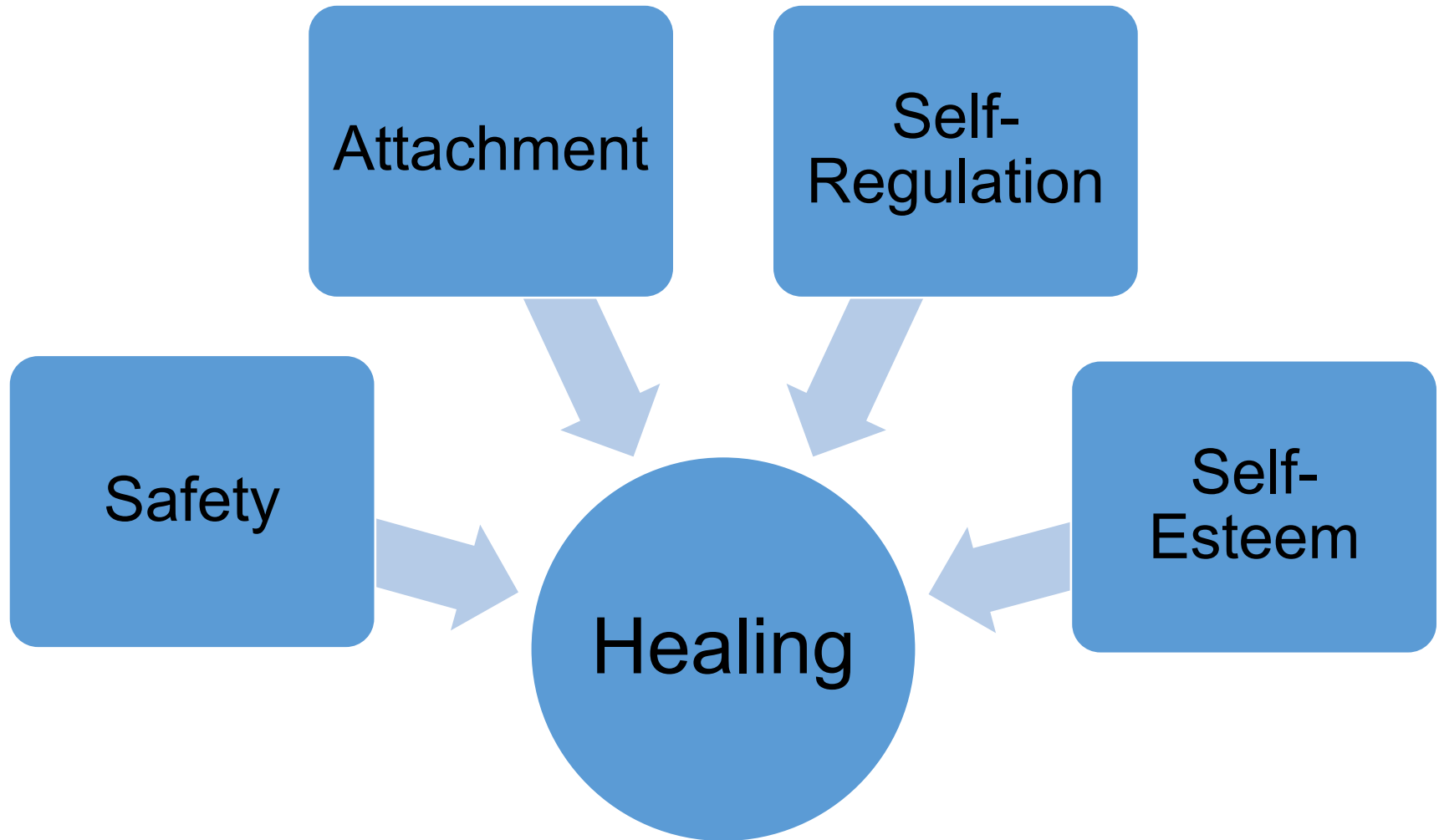
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Section 7: Responding to Youth's Behavioral Challenges and Mental Health Concerns

- Best practices for exploring concerns and challenges related to Sue's and Janie's experiences of domestic violence
- Identifying mental health concerns and referrals
- Trauma-informed approaches, supports, and treatment if Sue is interested
- Responding to needs and concerns on a range of issues according to Sue's priorities



Supporting Healing with SASS



Applying SASS in Reflective Practice

Healing

Safety

Attachment

Self-Regulation

Self-Esteem

Think of a family you've served...

1. What were some of the family's strengths and values?
2. How did you and your program support this family's SASS?
3. What were some missed opportunities and ideas for the future?

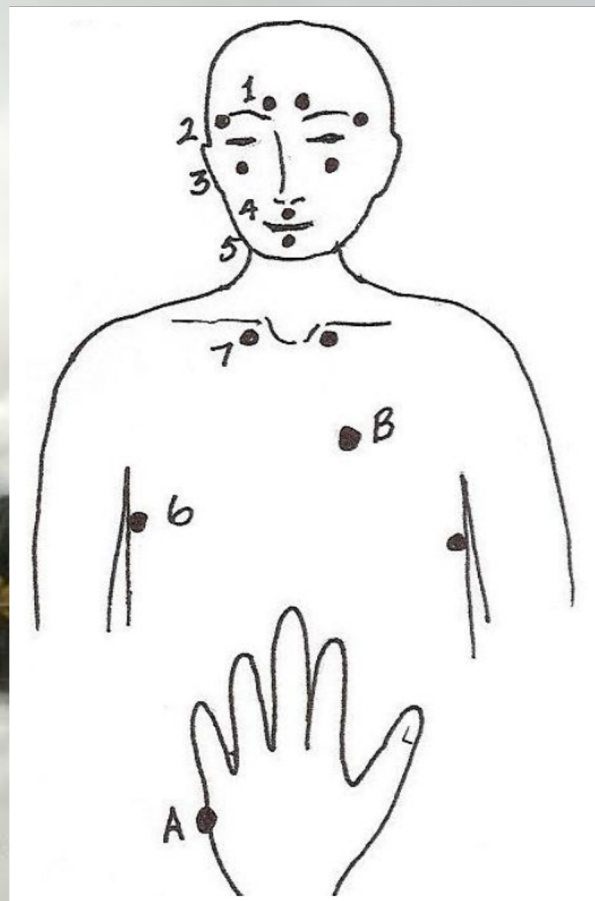
Activities to Promote SASS



The Family-Centered Toolkit contains resources for use across developmental phases, focusing on core areas:

1. Co-regulating and soothing
2. Moving and playing together
3. Creative and expressive arts

Co-Regulating and Soothing: Emotional Freedom Techniques (Tapping)



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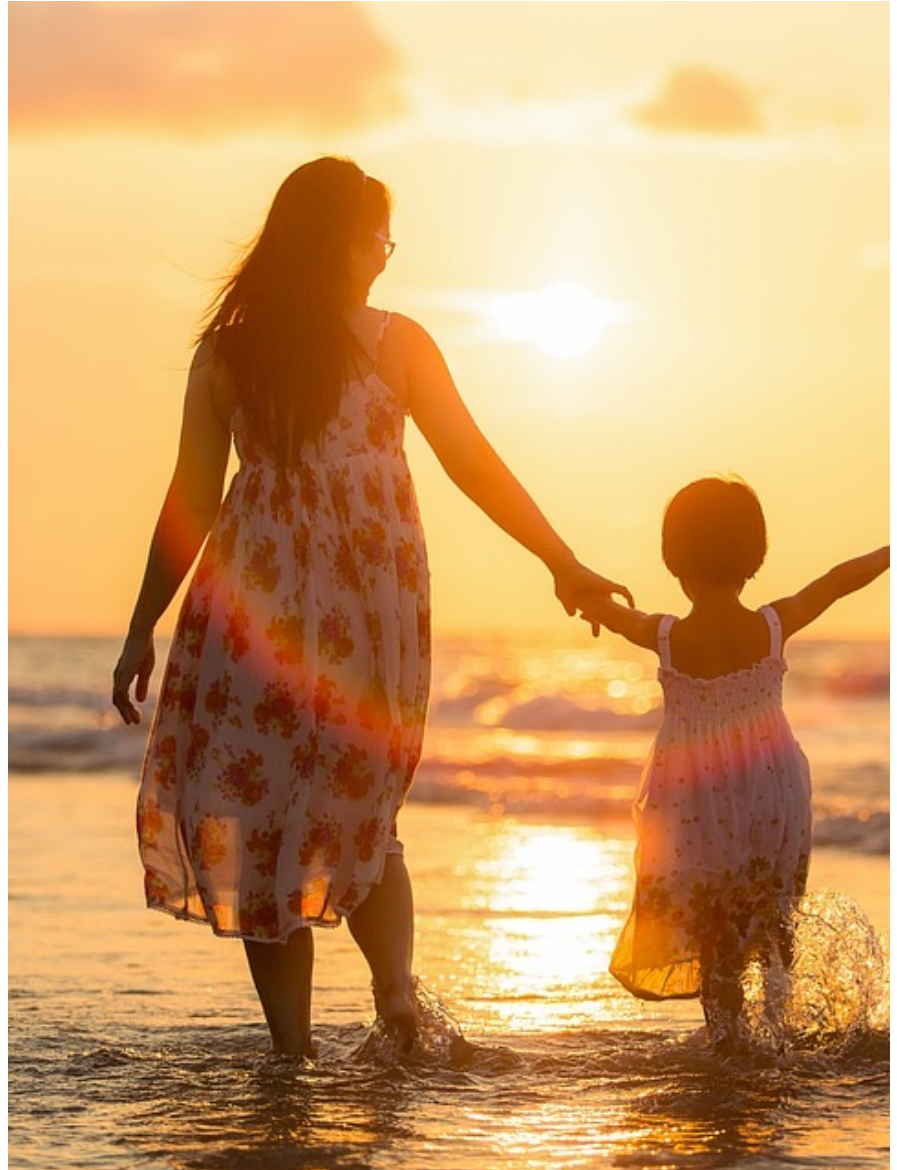
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Based on Chinese medicine; G. Craig (EFT) as cited by Capacitar: Healing Trauma, Empowering Wellness (2011)

**What are some
ways you support
families moving and
playing together?**

**How do you
encourage
creative and
expressive
arts?**



Where Do We Go From Here?

- Reflection
- Planning
- Preparation
- Implementation
- More Reflection





**Tools for Transformation:
Becoming Accessible, Culturally Responsive,
and Trauma-Informed Organizations**

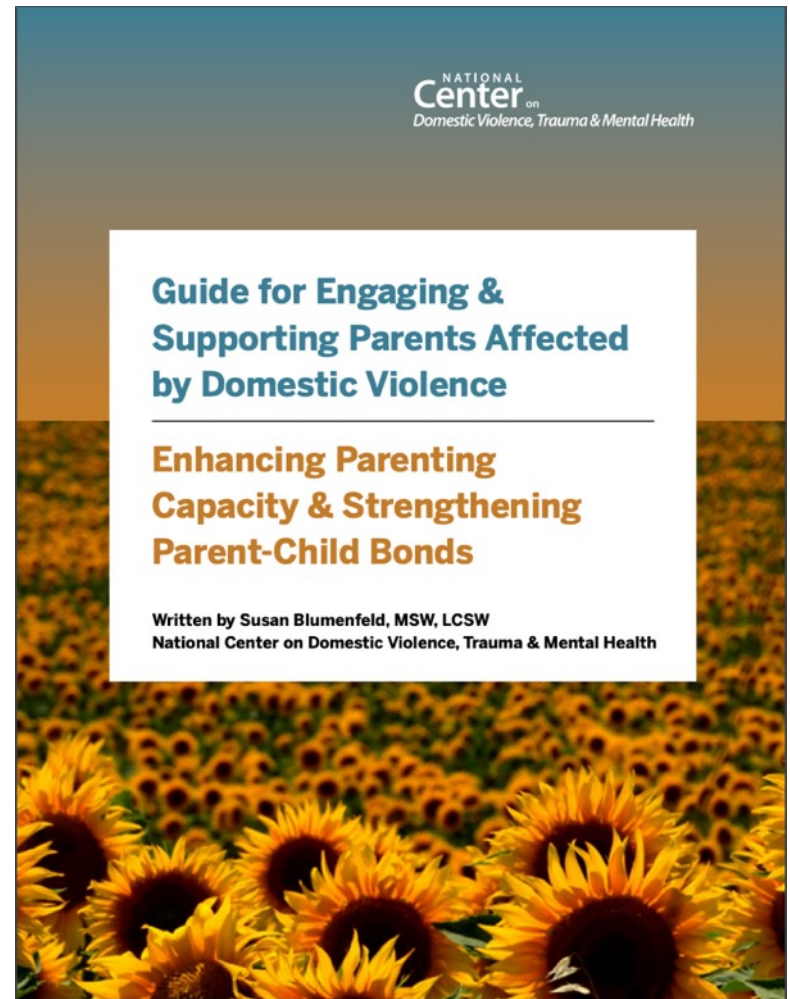
An Organizational Reflection Toolkit

Carole Warshaw, MD, Erin Tinnon, MSW, LSW, and Cathy Cave
April 2018

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**Guide for Engaging &
Supporting Parents Affected
by Domestic Violence**

**Enhancing Parenting
Capacity & Strengthening
Parent-Child Bonds**

Written by Susan Blumenfeld, MSW, LCSW
National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma & Mental Health



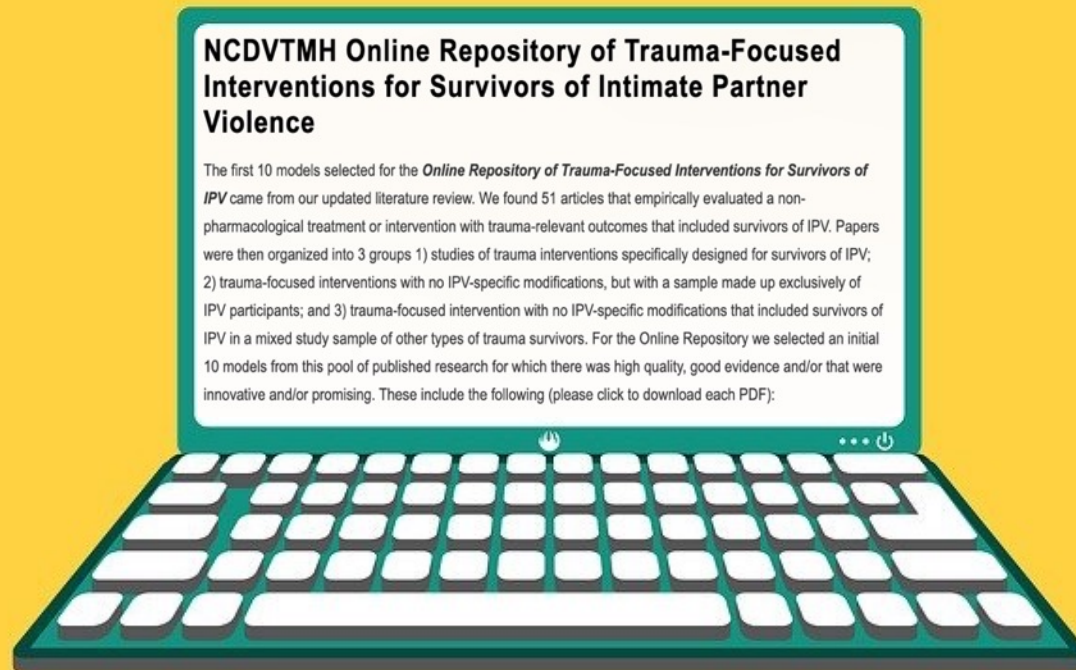
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NCDVTMH's Online Repository of IPV-Specific Trauma Interventions

www.nationalcenterdvtraumamh.org/publications-products/ncdvtmh-online-repository-of-trauma-focused-interventions-for-survivors-of-intimate-partner-violence/



SAVING LIVES: Meeting the Needs of Intimate Partner Violence Survivors Who Use Opioids

RESEARCH AND POLICY BRIEF | MAY 2019

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A Systematic Review of Trauma-Focused Interventions for Domestic Violence Survivors

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National Center on Domestic Violence,
Trauma & Mental Health

Cris M. Sullivan, PhD
Echo A. Rivera, MA
Michigan State University

February 2013

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The National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma, and Mental Health

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