

Safe and Together Summary + Resources

The Safe & Together model has been developed over many years of research and experience to help child and family practitioners become more domestic-abuse informed. It is designed to support children and family services and their surrounding systems to improve outcomes for families impacted by domestic abuse and improve competency across the workforce. Safe & Together is a child-centred model that provides a framework for partnering with survivors and intervening with perpetrators to improve the safety and wellbeing of children.

The Model operates on the following principles:

- Keeping child [Safe and Together](#)™ with non-offending parent
- Partnering with non-offending parent as default position
- Documenting clearly the perpetrator's pattern of behaviour and its effect upon the child then intervening with perpetrators to reduce the harm their behaviour causes the child

The five critical components of the Safe and Together model are:

- A perpetrators' pattern of coercive control
- Actions taken by a perpetrator to harm the child/children
- The full spectrum of a non-offending parent's efforts to promote the safety and wellbeing of children
- The adverse impact of the perpetrator's behaviours on the children
- Understanding the role of substance abuse, mental health, socio-economic and cultural issues in domestic violence cases

As we know, domestic abuse perpetrators hurt children in myriad ways, e.g. through their choice to expose children to their violence against another parent, through direct physical maltreatment, or by using a child as a weapon against the other parent, domestic abuse perpetrators create safety and risk concerns for children. Perpetrators can harm children by interfering with another parent's substance abuse recovery or sabotaging a child's mental health treatment. At the extreme of the spectrum, perpetrators' patterns of coercive control are frequently present in cases that end in a critical incident or child death. While some children appear to be resilient and show no symptoms, many children who are exposed to a parent's abusive behavior display externalising and internalising behaviors including aggression, anxiety, depression, PTSD, educational and social problems and long term adjustment issues.

The Safe and Together model provides a concrete framework for advancing practice, improving coordination and collaboration with community partners and reviewing and updating policy.

Skills such as interviewing, case planning, assessing, safety planning and documenting are critical to social work practice; the Safe and Together model supports meaningful ways to both better understand domestic violence as it relates to children and improve these skills to support the safety and wellbeing of children.

Hackney along with Respect and the London Borough of Waltham Forest have entered into a partnership to implement the Safe & Together Model across the children and families workforce in both boroughs. The model has been implemented across Waltham Forest and Hackney since September 2019.

Resources

Although a primarily social work approach, any of the Safe and Together tools can be used to inform practice in agencies outside of CFS. They help professionals describe and analyse the effects of perpetrators' behaviour and assist in challenging them to change their behaviour

[Domestic Violence Investigation Relationship Interview Protocol](#)

[Mapping Perpetrator Patterns](#)

[Perpetrator Case Planning Grid](#)

[Understanding My Parenting Strengths](#)

[Routine and Family Functioning Questions for Parents/Carers](#)