

Supporting Adult Victims of Domestic Violence: Mitigating Risks to Children

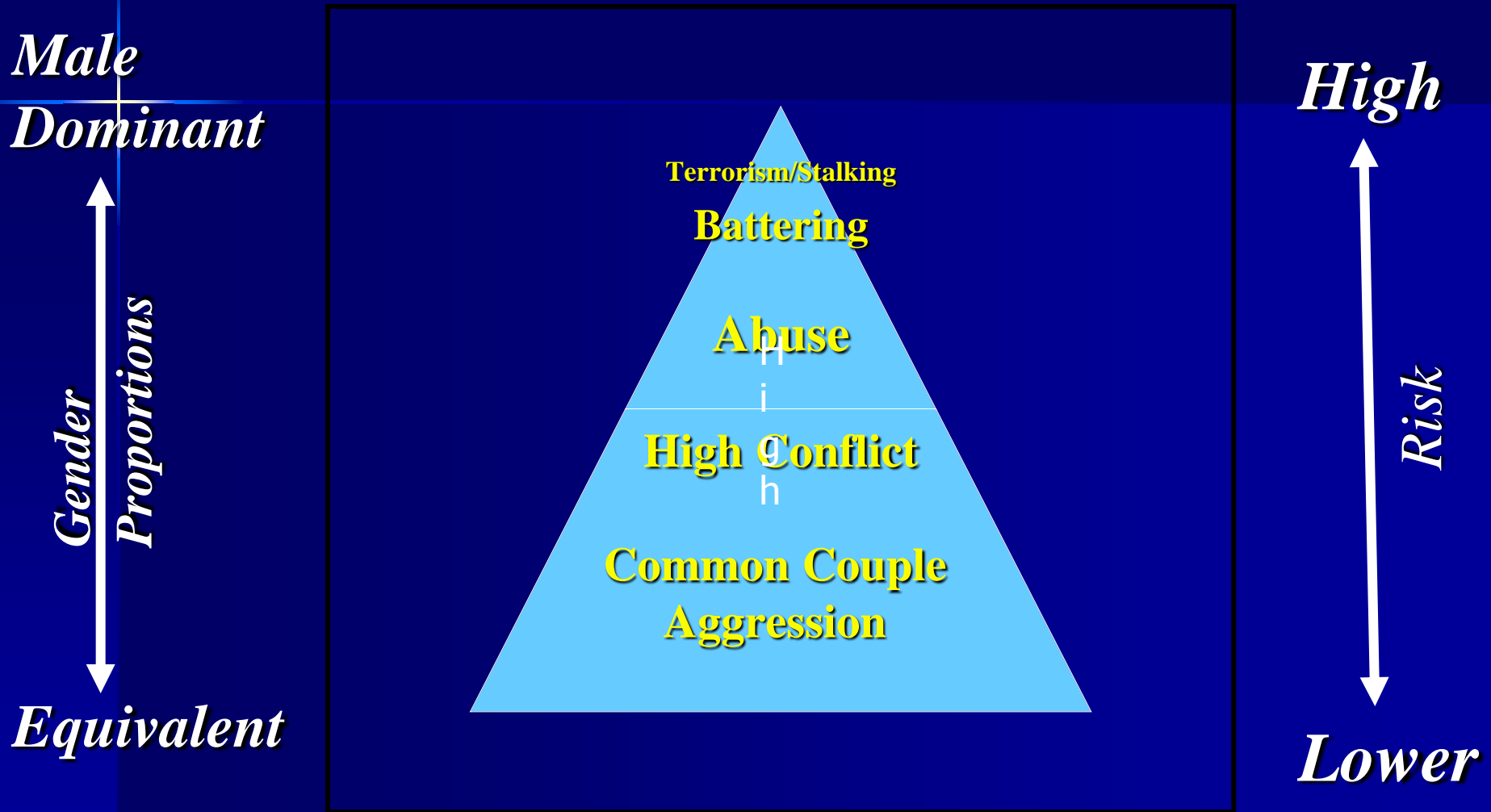
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Continuum of Aggression & Abuse



(Johnson et al., 2002; LaViolette, 2005; Martin et al., 2006)

What we know:

- Within a DV context, risks to a mother are inextricably linked to the risks to her children
- Safety for adult victims protects children

Understanding

- Physical proximity
- Actively involved
- Children intervening
- Use of children
- Point of “contact” and means of abuse of mother after separation



We know it – do we get it?

Barriers and Dilemmas: What gets in the way?

- Multi-layered and complex problems experienced by families
- “either-or” thinking

- Beliefs about “victims” and “mothers” and our reactions to their presentation

- Near invisibility of men
- Balancing a focus on individual with DV context
 - “highly resilient child can be living in a lethal family situation”*

Promising approaches:

- Achieve safety for children through safety of their mother
- Use thorough risk assessment to inform measured and differentiated responses
- Respect her autonomy

- Address co-existing risks to child, including the risk of abuse or neglect by a mother
- Help women access resources
- Engage men and hold them accountable for their abusive behaviour
- Promote parent-child contact that benefits the child
- Meaningful education on woman abuse