



THE PETER JAFFE LECTURES ON
**ENDING DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE**

LES CONFÉRENCES DE PETER JAFFE POUR
**METTRE FIN À LA VIOLENCE
CONJUGALE**



MC
2023

Land Acknowledgement

This artwork was created by Mike Cywink, an Indigenous artist from Whitefish River First Nation. Known by his spirit name, Thunder Day, and belonging to the crane clan, Mike draws on his heritage and connection to his community. The piece features a powerful eagle, symbolizing protection, stability, and safety for its young. The orbs within the design represent the core values and principles of our center, emphasizing its dedication to ending gender-based violence.



THE 2024
PETER JAFFE LECTURES
IS DEDICATED TO

Claire Crooks
Order of Ontario,
Ph.D., C.Psych.

NOVEMBER 27, 1973 – JUNE 28, 2024

The State of the World's Children 2024

The Future of Childhood in a Changing World

“Armed conflict presents one of the world’s greatest risks to the rights, lives and well-being of children around the world”

– Unicef, 2024

International Aid Organizations

Doctors Without Borders

www.doctorswithoutborders.ca

Islamic Relief Canada

www.islamicreliefcanada.org

Save the Children

www.savethechildren.ca

War Child

www.warchild.ca

SOS Children's Villages

www.sos-childrensvillages.org

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Cathy Humphreys

Honorary Professor, Social Work,
Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and
Health Sciences, Co-researcher, MAEVe
(Melbourne Research Alliance to End
Violence Against women and their
children), University of Melbourne



Keeping children visible in domestic violence research, policy and practice: What have we learnt in 30 years?

Cathy Humphreys
The University of Melbourne

Peter Jaffe Lecture, Western University
Ontario

November, 2024

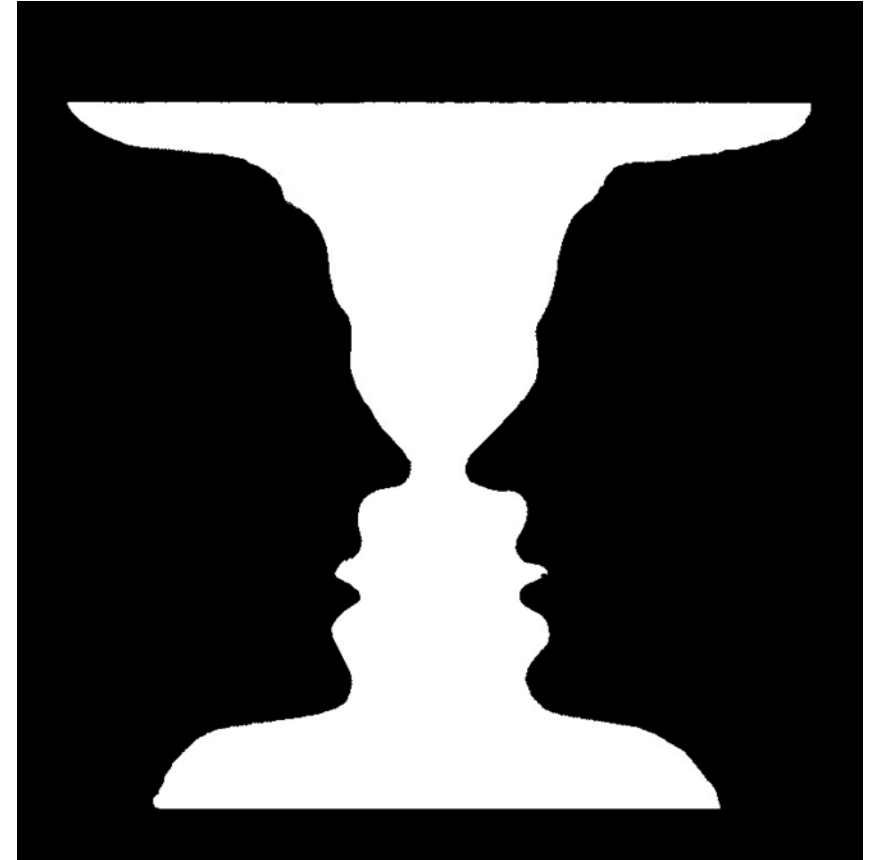
What have we learnt?

- * Which lens is in focus? Glass half full or half empty?
- * A potted history of children and DFV
- * Evidence from researchers, lived experience, practice and policy (The knowledge diamond)
 - Children as individuals with experience and agency What is the evidence?
 - Progress and new knowledge
- * “Children in their own right” - often ignores their significant relationships
- * The Safe & Together Model / Response Based Practice
- * Prevention, Recovery and Healing



Glass half full or half empty?

- A changing landscape for children living with domestic violence, but is it always progress?
- Is this a lecture of hope or despair?
- Domestic violence occurs within a wider social context – the mobilisation of hope or the mobilisation of resentment and self-pity – applied in the social and private contexts

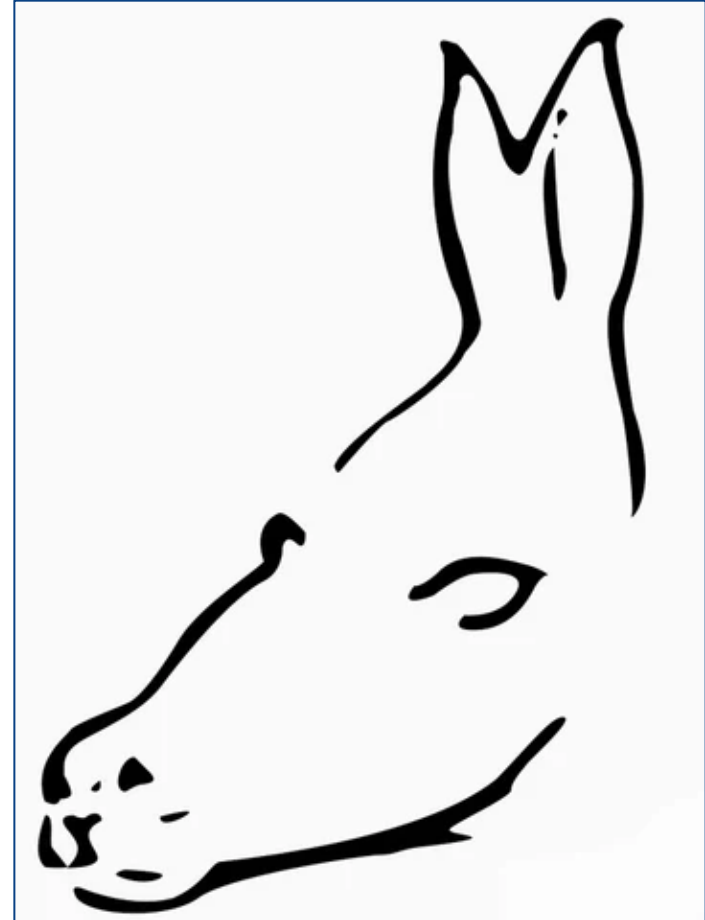


Complex perspectives held simultaneously

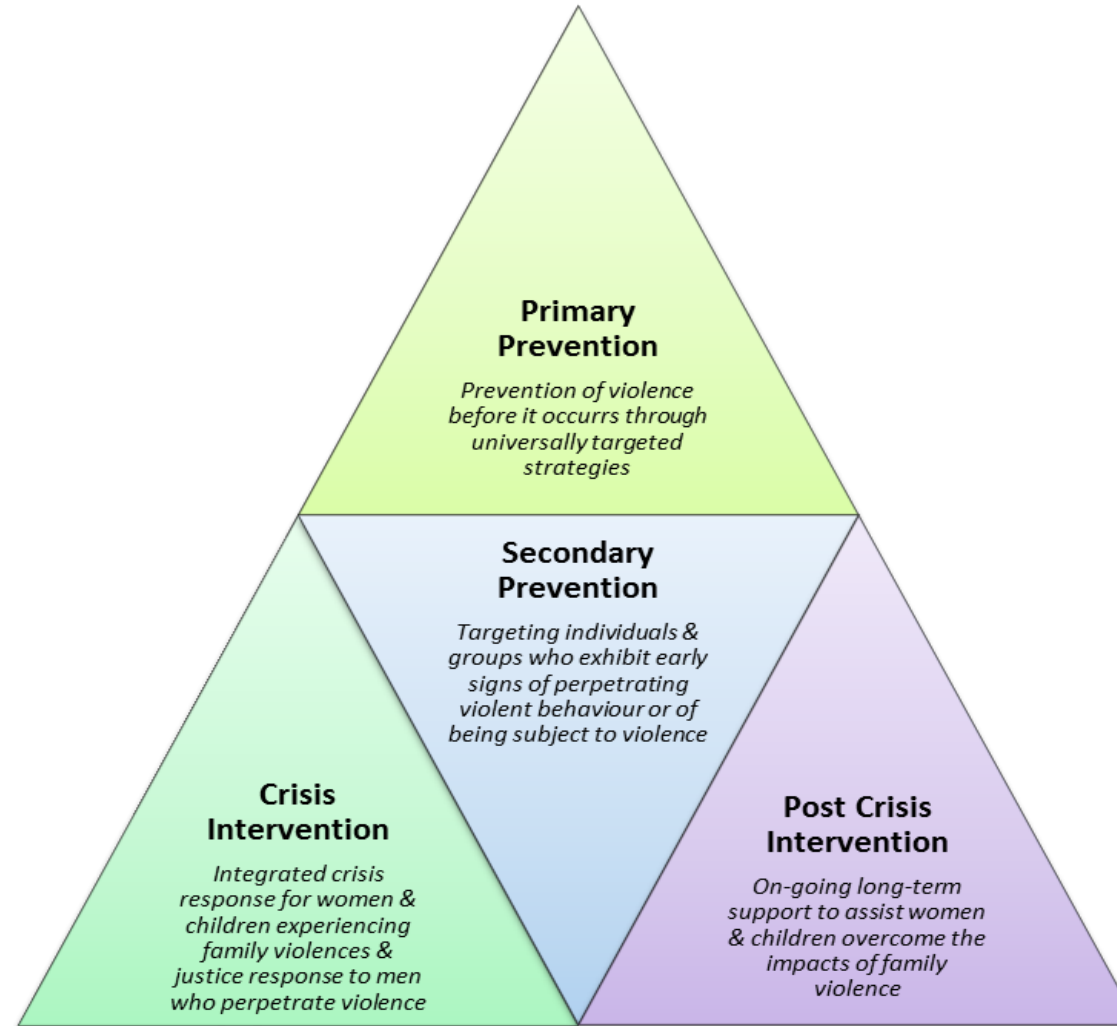
Emotionally holding hopelessness
while still nurturing hope'

(Flaskas, 2007 p. 197)

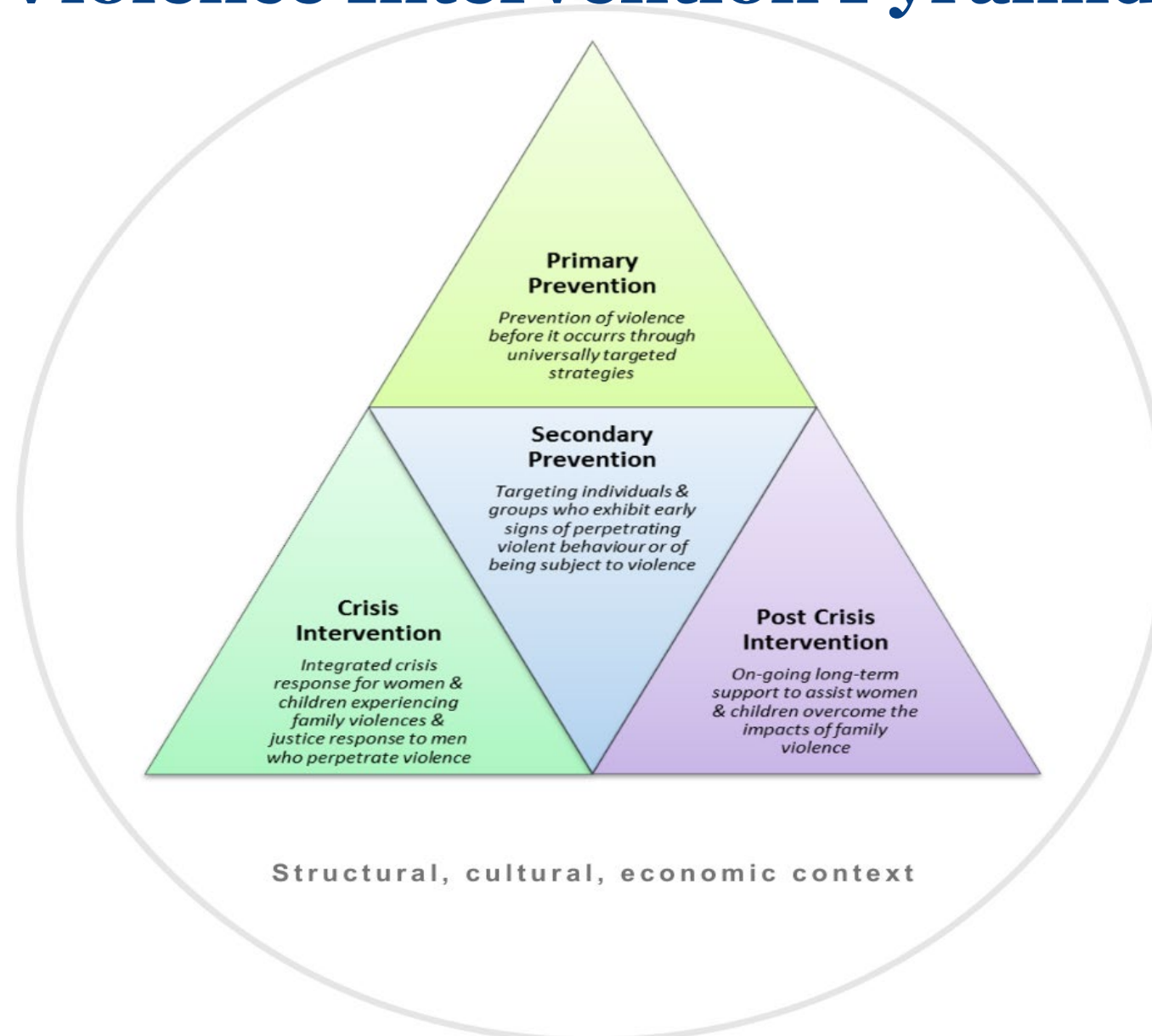
The donkey or the seal?



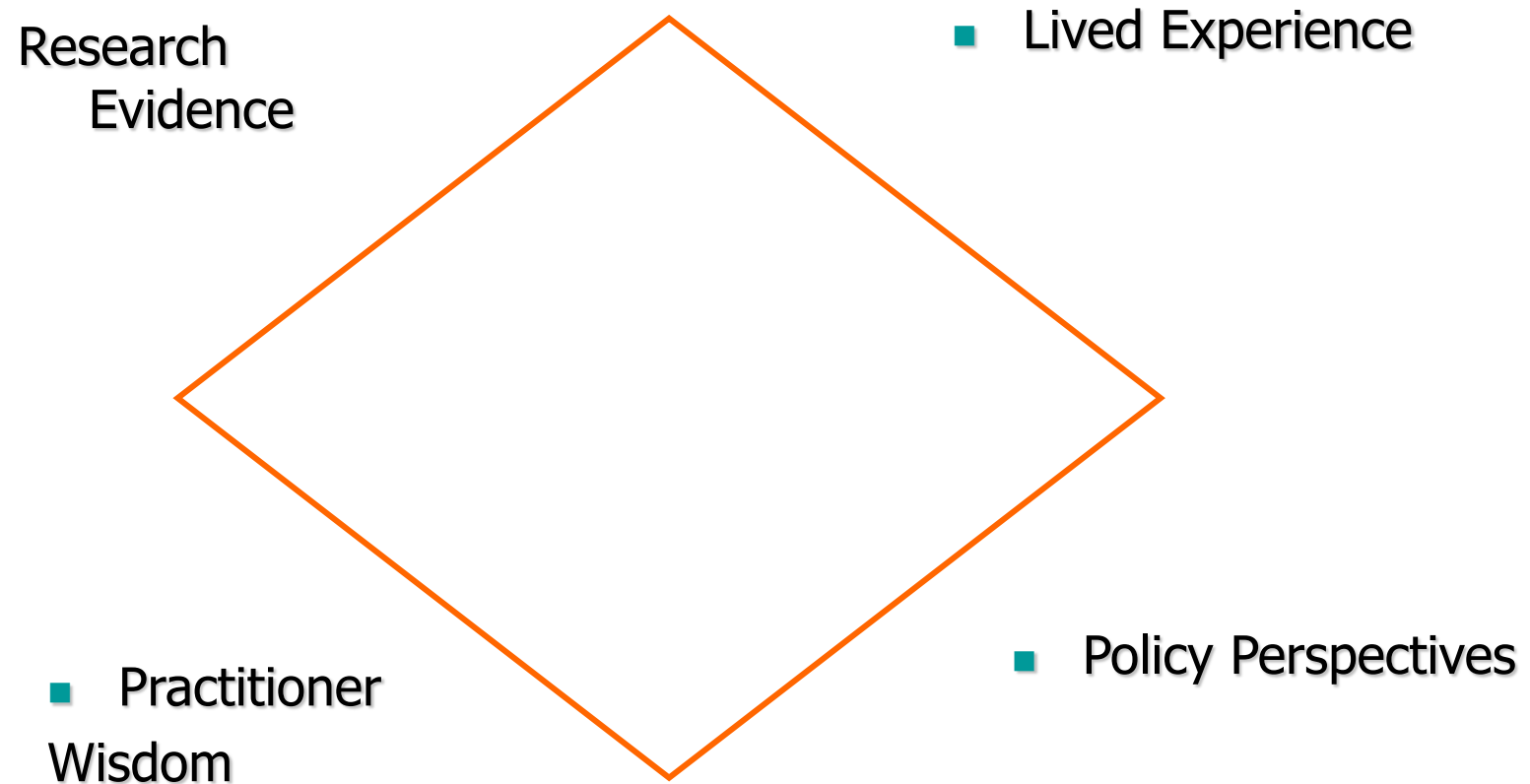
Family Violence Intervention Pyramid (Desmond 2011)



Family Violence Intervention Pyramid (Desmond 2011)



The Knowledge Diamond



Humphreys & Kertesz,
2012

Research Facet: Starting with Peter Jaffe and team

- Seminal papers by Peter Jaffe and team

Wolfe D.A., Jaffe P., Wilson S.K., Zak L. Children of battered women: the relation of child behavior to family violence and maternal stress. *J Consult Clin Psychol* 1985; 53: 657–664.

- When is the evidence enough?
- Are the measures appropriate? Children's mental health and behaviour rather than safety and well-being.
- An increase in validated child-report measures on their safety (Booth et al, 2024). 32 different instruments – but many limitations are noted





Endless research on DFV effects on children

A consistent research finding is that the emotional well-being of a substantial group of children is undermined by living with family violence.

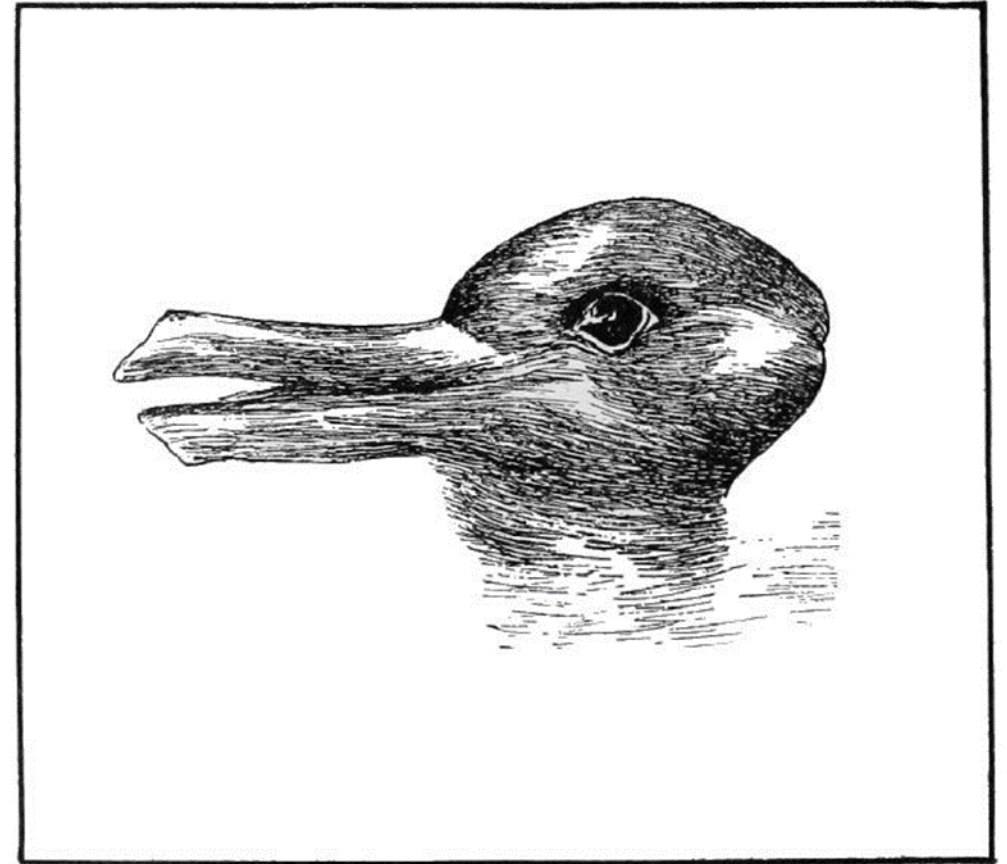
Meta analysis of 118 studies showed significantly poorer outcomes on 21 psychosocial measures for children 'witnessing' family violence, than those not living with violence (Kitzmann et al, **2003**).

63% of children 'witnessing' domestic violence doing worse than those who do not witness domestic violence.

Children exposed directly to FV were 3 times more likely to access MH services after the FV ended; significantly higher use of Accident and Emergency and primary care. (Rivara et al **2007**)

Areas of increased knowledge (Quant studies)

- Longitudinal studies
- Prevalence Studies
- Post-Separation Violence
- Child development impacts
- Poly-victimisation
- Some attention to resilience



- ABS survey - of 5000 children surveyed: 4.5% experienced severe and chronic FV; 25% witnessed violence against a parent (Indermaur, 2001)
- Domestic violence incidents attended by police in Victoria – children present at 48%
- Child Maltreatment Study (Mathews et al, 2023)
- 8,503 ‘randomly’ selected Australians (aged 16 years and over)
- 39.6 per cent experienced DV before the age of 18
- Significant poly-victimisation
- 44% had experienced DV in their own peer to peer relationships (18-25 year olds).



- Child custody disputes and domestic violence (Jaffe & Geffner, 1998)
- Children's interviews x 3 studies about of post-separation contact (Holt, 2018)
- Mothering Through Violence (Radford & Hester, 2006)
- More present than absent (Humphreys et al, 2019)
- 30% of violence increases on separation (PSS, 2016)





Lived experience facet: qualitative studies with children

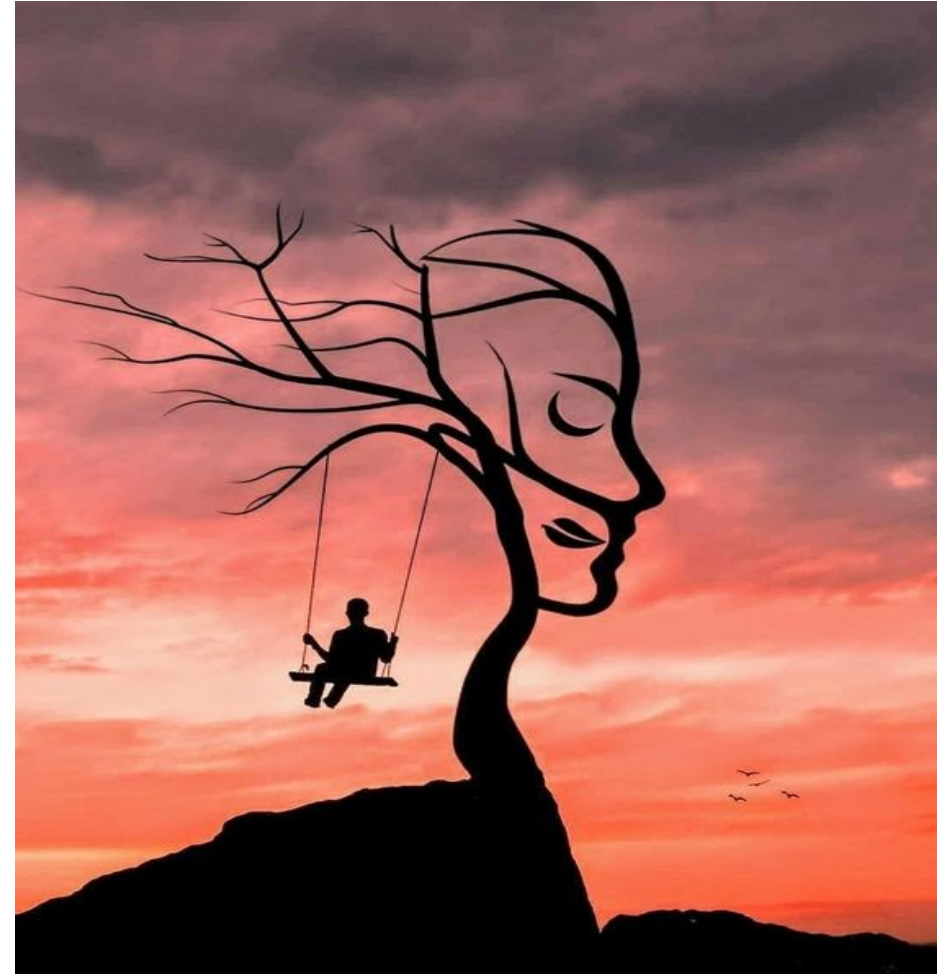
- Significant shift in research focus to listening to children
- VOICES: systematic review of perspectives of children and young people – 33 publications (Arai et al, 2021)
- 6 themes: lived experience of DVA; children's agency and coping; turning points and transitions; managing relationships postseparation; impact of DVA on children; hope for the future.





Listening to children through research: 2 different perspectives

- Seen and Heard: Embedding the voices of children and young people who have experienced family violence in programs for fathers (Dr Katie Lamb)
- Safety and Resiliency at Home: Voices of Children from a Primary Care Population (Dr Anita Morris)



Children's experiences of fathering

Dr Katie Lamb (Lamb et al, 2018)

Powerful stories of the impact of fathers who use violence, the undermining of their mothers, and the need for reparation from their fathers.

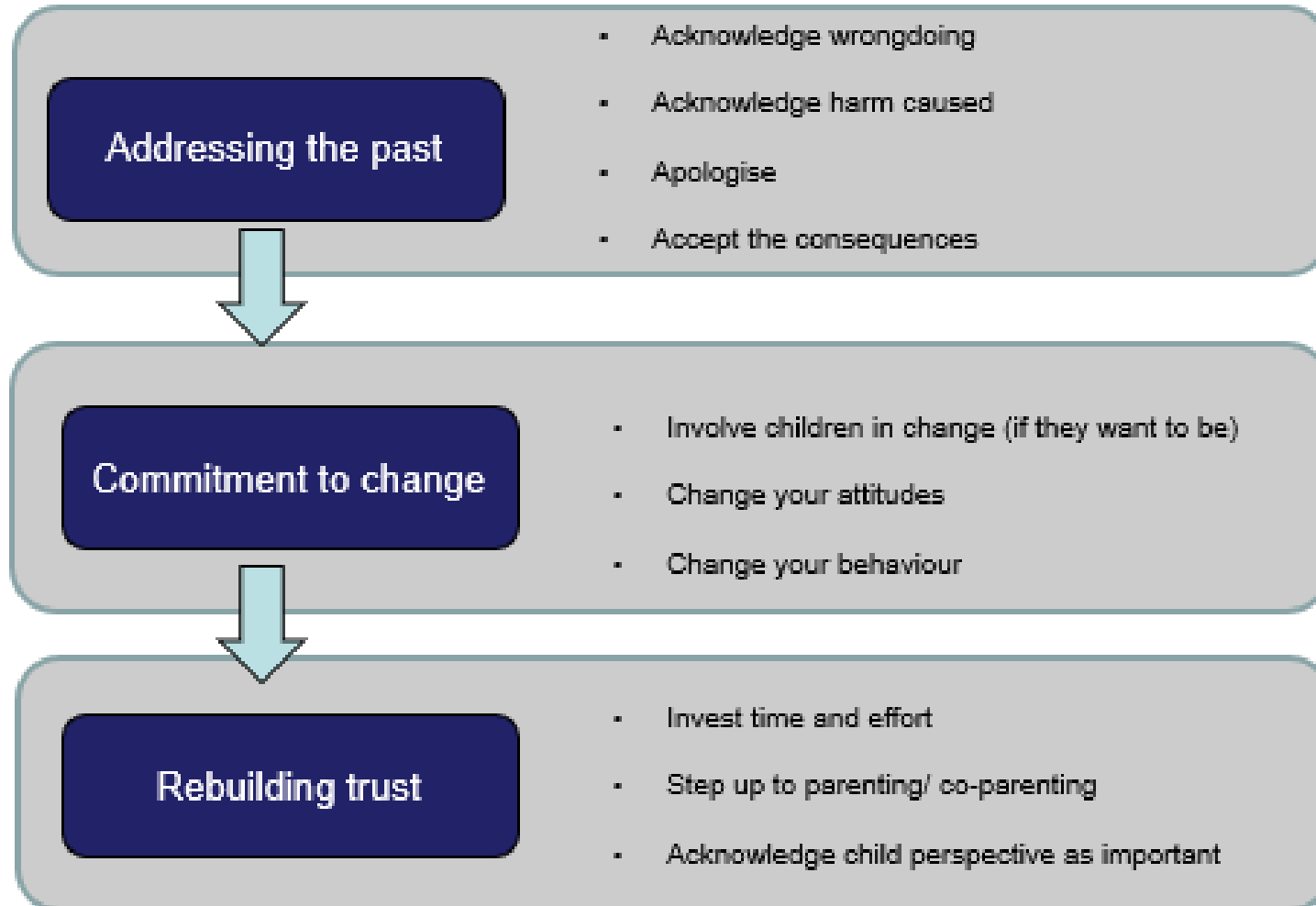
- Interviews with 14 children and young people with experiences of DFV and talked about what they would look for in a father;
- focus groups with 21 facilitators from parenting, healing and MBC programs.
- 8 constructed digital stories (used in Caring Dads programs)

(Lamb et al, 2020)



Results:

Young people's perspectives on reparation





Safety and Resiliency at Home: Voices of Children from a Primary Care Population

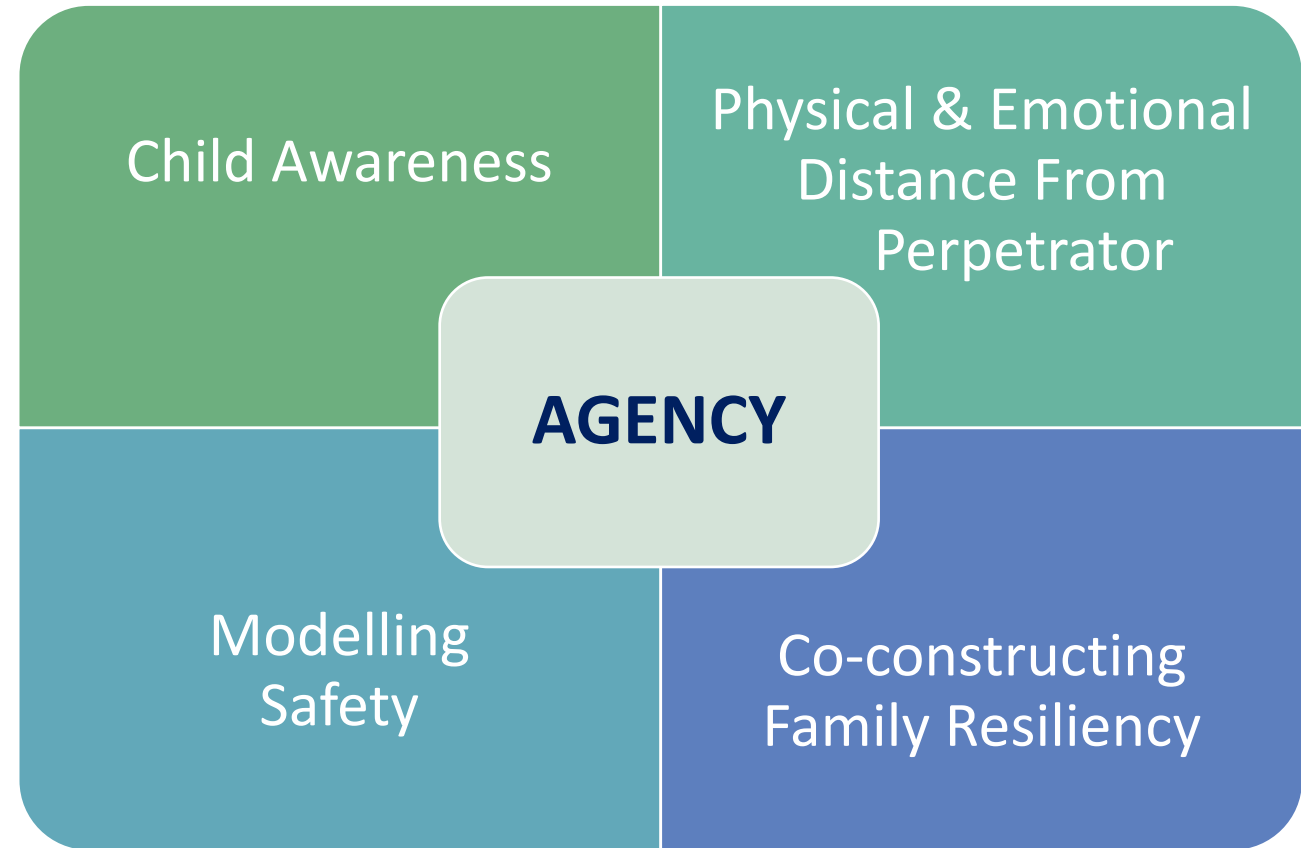
PhD by Anita Morris

- Interviews with 23 children and 15 mothers from a primary care population who had experiences of domestic and family violence
- Children require agency to negotiate their safety (the opposite of agency is powerlessness)



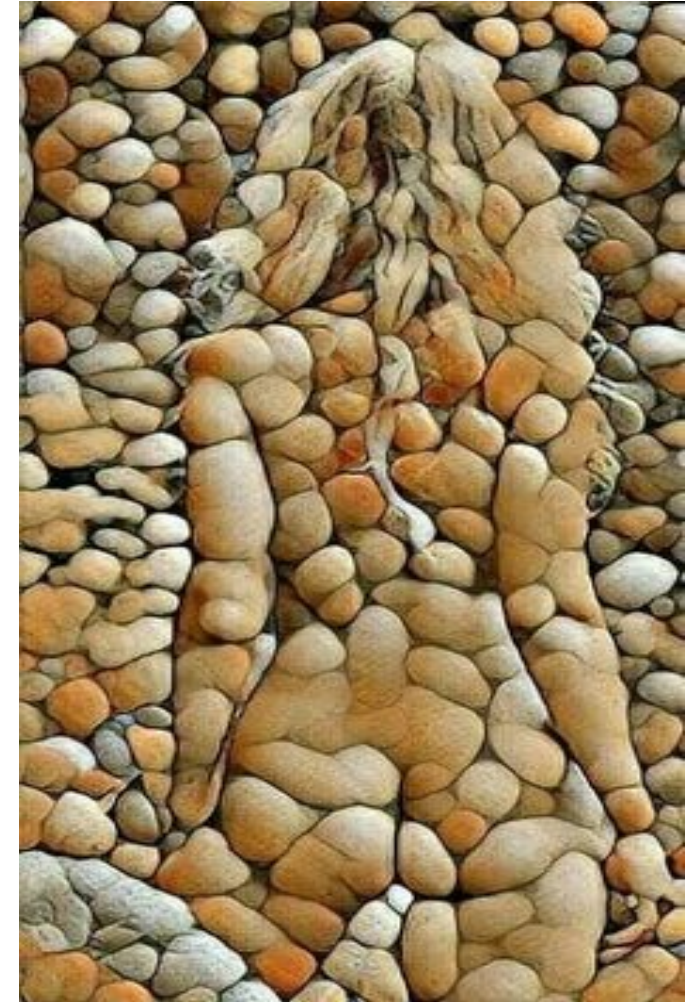
Model of Children's Agency

- **Awareness** of disruption or danger in the parental relationship
- Physical and emotional **distance** from the perpetrator
- **Modelling safety** in relationships by trusted adults and older siblings
- **Co-constructing family resiliency**: informal supports, reciprocal caring, rituals, playing together



Shifts in research evidence

- Change in language
- Children becoming visible
- Greater emphasis on resilience and contexts of prevention, recovery and response (the 30%)
- Men as fathers who use violence (thank you Katreena Scott)
- Some (but not enough) attention to diversity of experiences and intersectionality
- Focus on protective factors in mother-child relationships



Practitioners & Policy Workers Facet

Practitioners and Policy Workers:

- Constructing the response
- A key role in making children visible or marginalised
- Part of the solution or part of the problem?
- Responding in the context of their organisations (Train last)



‘Children in their own right’

‘I’m here for the child’ (No!)

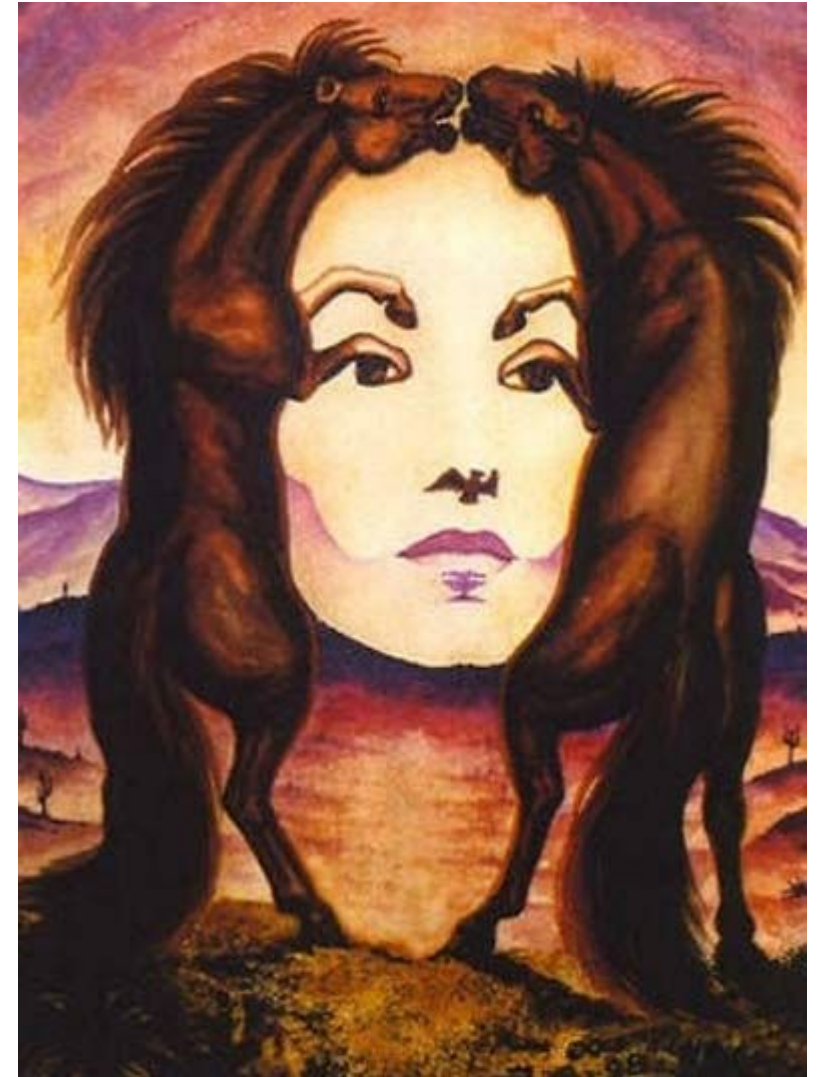
‘I’m here for the child in the context of their relationships’!

The latest trope – easy to lead down the mother-blaming path



Structural Problems (Don't blame the workers)

- Differential response required
 - child
 - adult
- Two victims :
- Working with men -underdeveloped
- Dealing with complex, interlocking issues:
mental health, AOD, DV
- Recognition of DV as a primary issue
- A history of institutional racism



Challenging CP/ DV issues (cont)

- * Recognition of DV as an attack on the mother-child relationship – assessing for the absent-presence of the perpetrator
- * No ‘actuarial’ risk assessment available for children and DV – what risks are assessed? (Peter Jaffe and team’s work again)
- * Post-separation violence – what is the Safeguarding Response when there are children in danger or risk of harm but a competent and protective mother?





Safe and Together Model

1

Keeping child Safe and Together™ with non-offending parent
Safety Healing from trauma Stability and nurturance

2

Partnering with non-offending parent as default position
Efficient Effective Child-centered

3

Intervening with perpetrator to reduce risk and harm to child
Engagement Accountability Courts

Practice Principles

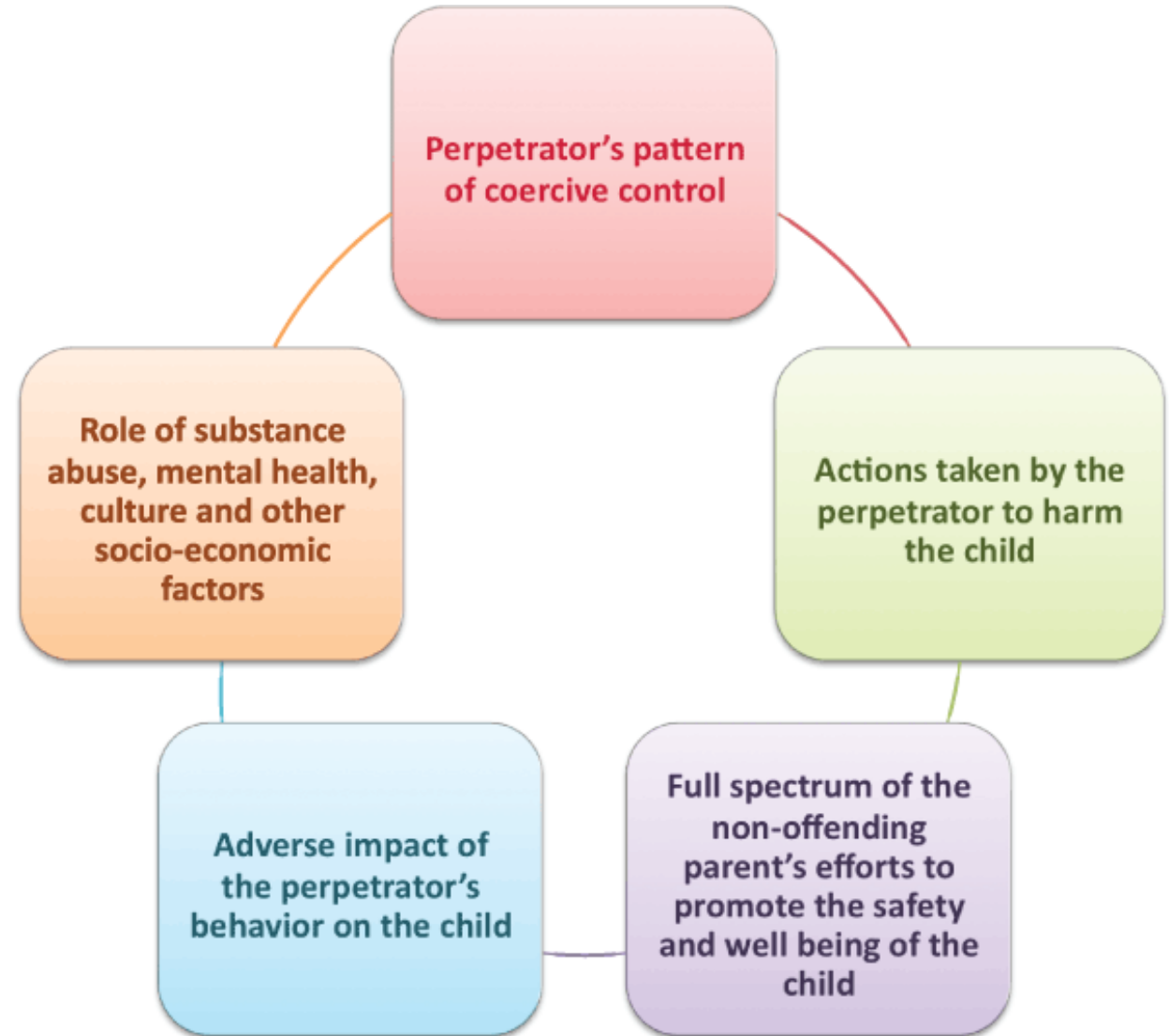
for assessment and case management decisions -

A knowledge translation partnership drawing on 6 action research and practitioner-led research projects.

<https://safeandtogetherinstitute.com/safe-together/safe-together-overview/assumptions-principles-critical-components/>

Considerations

- Map the perpetrator's pattern of abuse and coercive control
- Note the harm to children
- Partner with women
- Check the intersections with other issues

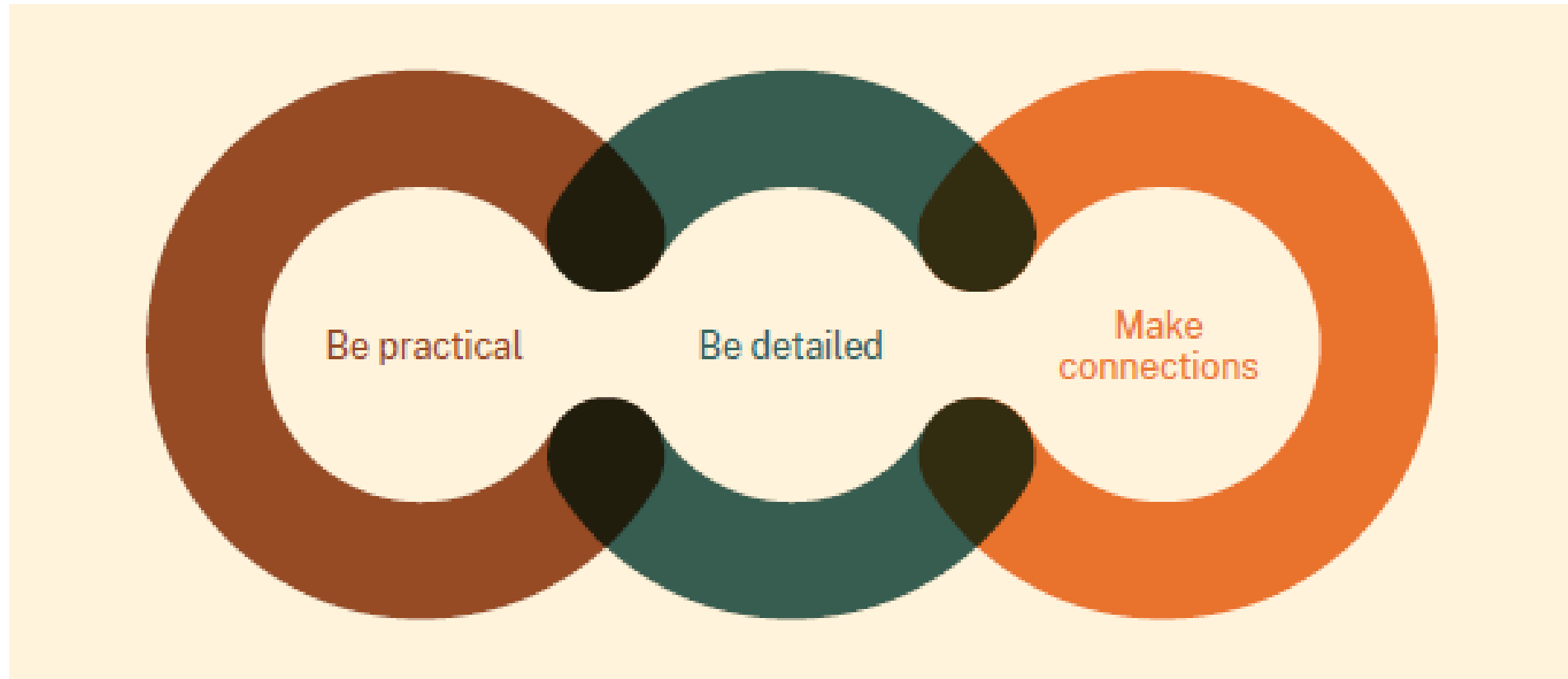


Importance of attention to language and documentation



- Holding perpetrators accountable starts with language.
- Language and documentation stays with clients across services.
- Documentation is an advocacy tool to create DFV-informed narratives.
- Documentation has the potential to help or hinder the victim/survivor's/children's safety and healing.
- Attention to culture is essential and should be reflected in documentation.
- Impacts immediate and long-term aspects of service experiences and responses.

Effective documentation





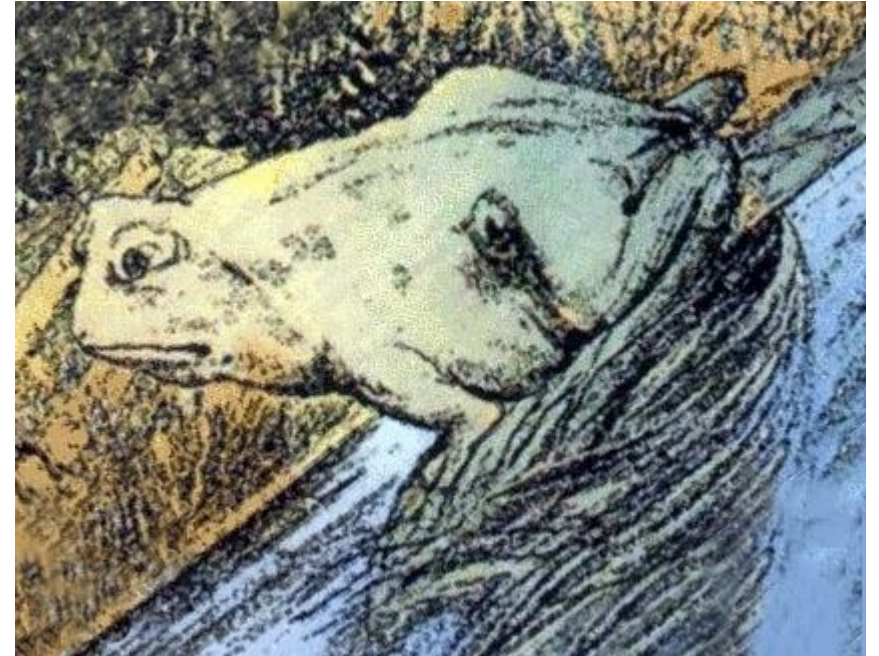
Healing and Recovery (a sweet spot)

- Creative work with children in refuges
- Strengthening the mother-child relationship (Children and Mothers in Mind; Talking to My Mum)
- First Nations healing programs
- Attention to inter-generational trauma





- "A happy child uses their childhood to embrace life, while an unhappy child spends so much of their life healing their childhood."
(Vietnamese saying)





Listening to children/young people and hearing them

Take notice!

Believe us!

Act!

<https://lnkd.in/g8ZTBk2A>



- Participation and visibility is a reflection of power relations. The least powerful will require more resources (and innovations) to be heard.

‘The ultimate test of a moral society is the kind of world it leaves its children’

Dietrick Bonhoeffer





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