

Principles of Safe and Together Model

- 1. Keeping children safe and together with the non-offending parent is ideal from the perspective of the children.**
- 2. A successful partnership with the non-offending parents is one of the best ways to keep the children safe.**
3. How we define how domestic violence survivors are “active” in protecting their children is directly related to child welfare's willingness and ability to development meaningful partnerships with the survivors. A broader definition of “active” promotes collaborative safety planning that is based on the specific experience of the survivor.
4. The incomplete and unrealistic yardstick of leave/separate, call the police, get a restraining order needs to be replaced with a more realistic assessment of survivor's efforts to promote the safety and well-being of children.
5. Good decisions related to domestic violence must be made based on the five critical components identified in the Safe and Together model.
6. Making the domestic violence perpetrator consistently “visible” in case documentation and planning leads to improved risk and safety assessments, better partnerships with survivors.
7. Intervening with/engaging domestic violence perpetrators can improve outcomes for children by addressing the source of the risk to the children,
8. It's important to separate out the differing roles of mother and fathers in our conceptualization of the case and in our case plan.
9. Unexamined double standards about mothering and fathering typically benefit domestic violence perpetrators and hurt domestic violence survivors. These double standards need to be identified and addressed.
10. A focus on behaviors helps avoid stereotyping perpetrators by race, class, education, sex, improves safety and risk assessment, identifying survivor's strengths, and developing plans that set up measurable goals and that perpetrators are less likely to manipulate.
11. The Safe and Together model is not service driven. This means that the primary focus is conceptualizing the case based on the five critical elements. Appropriate services and the appropriate goals for services flow from the appropriate conceptualize.
12. The Safe and Together model should impact basic child welfare tasks like interviewing documentation, case planning and the development of petitions.
13. The entire system from intake to investigations to court filings to evaluations to collateral contacts and decisions regarding reunification can be informed by the model.
14. With support from the Safe and Together framework, the interests of child welfare agencies, domestic violence survivors and their advocates can more frequently be brought into natural alignment. (the shared interests in ending the perpetrator's abusive behavior and the children remaining safe and doing well.)
15. Domestic violence advocates and other providers can utilize the Safe and Together model to guide what information to include in their mandated reports and their advocacy for their clients.
16. Child protection has a legitimate interest in the protective capacity of the non-offending parent. The model helps them improve their assessment skills around that protective capacity.