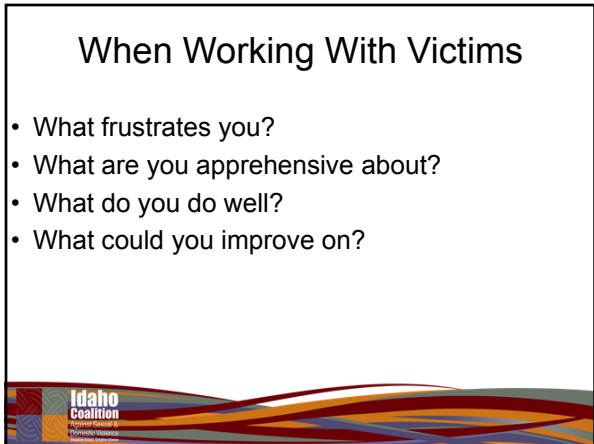


What is the Goal of your work with domestic violence victims?





When Working With Victims

- What frustrates you?
- What are you apprehensive about?
- What do you do well?
- What could you improve on?

Victim Empowerment

- A **process** not an **outcome**
- Control over resources and transformation toward self-determined goals
- Not an outcome of your work

Morgan and Coombs, 2013



Victim-Defined Interactions



- Victimization in the context of diverse lives
- Services fit victim's plan not vice-versa



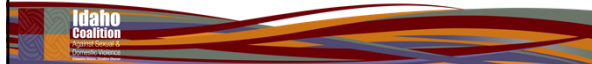
Safety

- Emotional
- Physical
- Financial

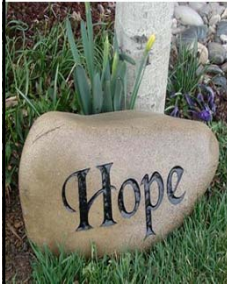


Decision Making and Safety Plans

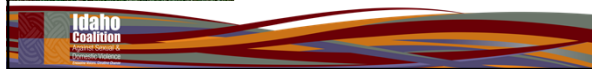
- Research shows victims try many strategies to deal with partner's violence
- Initially rely on their own resources; others only when sense of personal danger has increased.



Factors in Decision Making

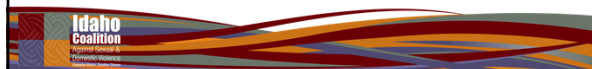


- Hope that partner will change
- Experience with resources
- Religious beliefs
- Abuse affecting children
- Financial resources



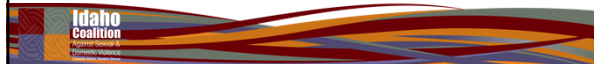
Victim's Safety Plans

- Protection Strategies
- Staying Strategies
- Leaving Strategies
- Time Frames



Protection Strategies

- Seek to prevent and respond to violence
- Fleeing
- Third Party intervention
- Self-Defense
- Trying to get abusive partner to change



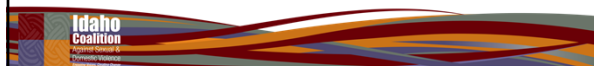
Staying Strategies

- May be short-term or long-term
- Counseling
- Agreeing with partner
- Building and preserving her support system
- Financial strategies



Reality

Most victims do not want the relationship to end, but rather the violence to stop.



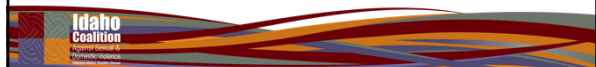
What Keeps Victims in Abusive Relationships

- Fear
- Family
- Finances
- Faith
- Fantasy
- Father



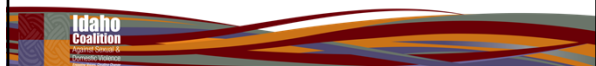
External Factors

- Lack of support in workplace
- Health practitioners
- Therapists
- Social support from family/community



Internal Factors

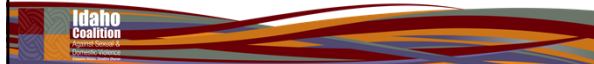
- Don't define as abuse
- Attribute abuse to their behavior
- Help seeking behavior of perpetrator
- Debilitated by excessive stress (PTSD)
- Diminished ability to cope



Leaving Strategies



- Short or long term depends on her risk analysis, personal and public resources and the strategy itself
- Evaluating legal actions



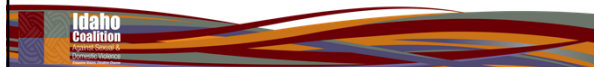
The Needs, Perspectives, and Risks of Victims Who Stay



- Batterer-generated and life-generated risks
- We focus on physical violence
- What is success?





What is autonomy?





Shifting the Expectation of Leaving

- Preserve victim's right to make decisions
- We must remove leaving as a pre-condition for services




Understanding Risk

- Each victim is an individual
- Communicate simply and effectively
- Victim's assessment of your agency
- Understand victim's perspective will change



Batterer Generated Risks

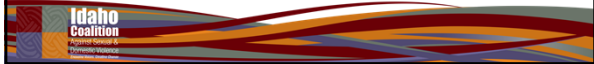
1. Physical injury
2. Psychological harm
3. Risks to and involving the children
4. Financial risks
5. Risk to or about family and friends
6. Loss of relationship
7. Risk involving arrest or legal status



Batterer Generated: Physical Injury

Will leaving increase or decrease the violence?

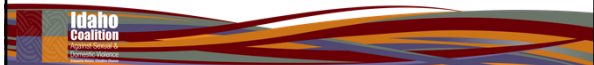
- Battery during pregnancy
- Risk of lethality
- "Separation assault"



Batterer Generated: Psychological Harm

Used to undermine victim's self-confidence and autonomy

- Insults, threats, attacks
- Preventing social contact
- Mental health risk
 - PTSD
 - Alcohol or Drug Abuse
 - Suicide



Batterer Generated: Child-Related Risks



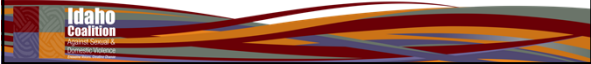
- Parenting
- Victim may be choosing between two negative alternatives (staying vs. non-supervised visitation)



Batterer Generated: Financial Risks



- Most batterers are skilled at controlling their partners by threatening their financial security and independence.
- Staying means batterer controls
- Leaving may mean decrease in standard of living
- Employment issues



Batterer Generated: Risks to Family and Friends

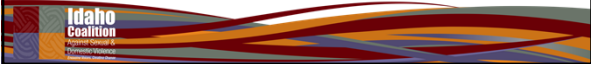
Fear losing support or family/friends may be injured or threatened.

- Resource or barrier



Batterer Generated: Loss of Relationship

- Sense of loyalty and a responsibility to make the relationship work
- Fear of being alone



Batterer Generated: Risks Involving Arrest and Legal Status

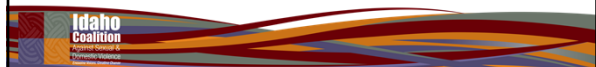
- May be coerced into criminal activity
- Immigration or residency concerns



Life-Generated Risks

May be thought of as environmental or social risks

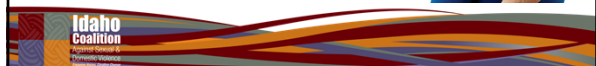
1. Financial
2. Home location
3. Physical and mental health
4. Inadequate responses by social institutions
5. Discrimination



What Is Safety Planning?

An individualized plan that identifies specific strategies and interventions that may increase a survivor's safety.

- Strategies should:
 - Respond to the issue
 - Meet victim's basic human needs
 - Adapt to the victim's broader life p



Safety Plan is a VERB




- “Safety plan” is not something you can put in a drawer. “Safety plan” is an activity.



Why Safety Plan?

- Provides practical ways to decrease risk
- Puts victims in contact with a variety of services, agencies, and individuals who can help
- Is not a guarantee of safety, but can assist in improving safety
- Perpetrators continually change tactics




Steps of Safety Planning


- Listen and ask questions
- Identify specific needs & goals
- Discuss risks
- Explore strategies & resources
- Provide education without judgment
- Identify individuals and service providers who can help



Questions to Consider





- Safety strategies that don't involve the legal system?
- What if law enforcement or the system is not responsive?
- What if the perpetrator has access to or works in the system?




Subjects to discuss with victim

- Balance freedom and safety
- Next steps
- How often to re-assess
- **Risk-reduction versus absolute safety**





Advocacy & Support



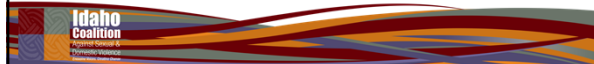
Prediction & Preparation

- Victims need **information**
 - Practical information
 - Emotional responses
- Information can help the victim regain control & take an active role in deciding what to do



Options to Enhance Safety

- How broadly does victim define safety?
- For all victims, safety will likely go beyond the elimination of physical violence to the elimination of the range of perpetrator and life-generated risks



Fluidity of Safety Plans

- Depends on hopes, fears, success or failure of safety strategies, response from others, partner's response.



Questions?

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