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# Gender-based and domestic violence: working with perpetrators in a multidisciplinary setting

Slovenia  
2022

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## Guiding principles multidisciplinary approach

How to build a culture of trust to work together, gap bridges and support

“Taking the best of what you already have and bring it all together.”

Casey Gwinn





## **Domestic Violence requires a specific approach**

- Common and under-reported problem
- A lot of deadly and other victims
- Complex and dangerous dynamics
- Those involved often stay in each other's environment (parents, family)
- Devasting impact on children -> intergenerational transfer
- Great social costs
- Gaps in interventions, approach and expertise
- Many services involved -> transcends policy domains, policy levels and competencies



## What is an integrated multidisciplinary approach?

- A coordinated community response in which social service agencies, health care providers and criminal justice providers join forces to work together to tackle domestic violence.
- **Ending domestic violence is everyone's responsibility = Multi-agency approach**





**“Survivors should not have to adapt to what is offered by the service providers or systems”**

**It’s all about placing the survivors in the middle!**



## Example: Family Justice Centers

A Family Justice Center is the co-location of a multidisciplinary team of professionals who are cooperating under one roof to offer help and support to victims of domestic violence and genderbased violence and their families.

Movie: [www.efjca.eu](http://www.efjca.eu)





## FJC: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- **Safety comes first**  
Increase safety (direct and stable)
- **Victim-centered**  
Provide victim-centered services that promote victim autonomy and increases empowerment
- **Survivor-driven**  
Shape services to clients by asking them what they need
- **Empowered**  
Offer survivors a place to belong even after crisis intervention services are no longer necessary
- **Relationship-based**  
Maintain close working relationships among all collaborators/agencies
- **Offender-accountability**  
Increase offender accountability through evidence-based prosecution strategies and/or evidence-based treatment programs



# Client's space FJC Antwerp







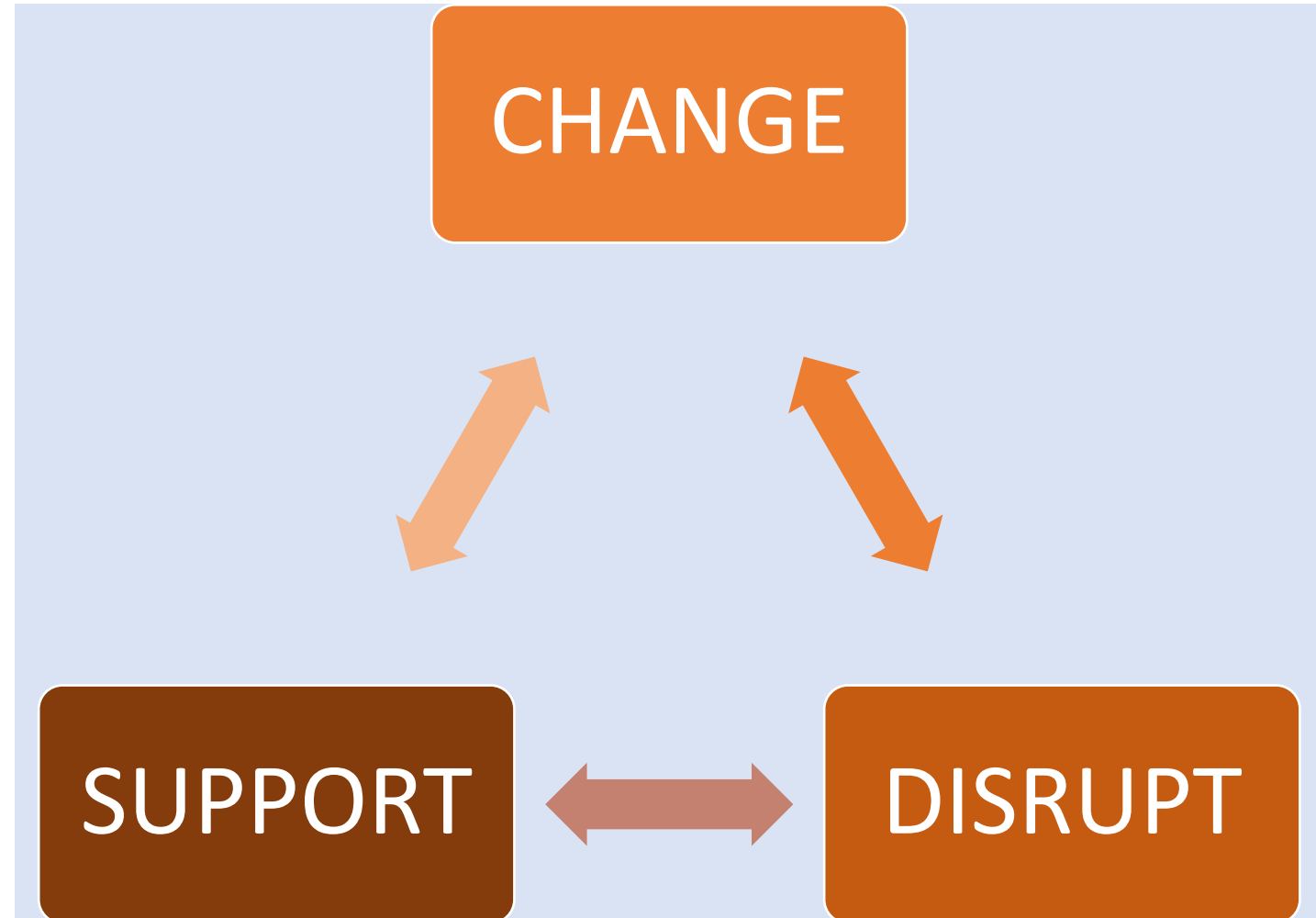
## Children's space



# Triangel in working with perpetrators

## Conditions:

- Multidisciplinary approach
- Risk taxation and risk management: ongoing
- Accountability of perpetrators starting from safety of victims
- From extrinsic to intrinsic motivation
- Hope and perspective





## Example: Restraining order (temporary prohibition to enter the home) and intensive case management

- Serious and imminent threat
- Home and contact ban for 15 days (not allowed to contact partner/children)
- Victim stays at home
- Guarantees period of rest

After 15 days: prolongation possible by Family Court (3 months)





## Procedure

- Police contact the Prosecutor and provide a detailed account of the facts
- Prosecutor orders a temporary restraining order, which can last a maximum of 14 days
- For prolongation: Prosecutor submits the file to the family court. The family court can be extended to a maximum of three months (can be 1x prolonged)
- Within the same procedure, specific measures can be requested
- Violation of restraining order is punishable (maximum penalty : 1 year imprisonment)





# Team Restraining order of the Family Justice Center

- Intensive case manager who takes a central role, 3 months, tailored to the client and intensive
- The intervention focuses on each person in the family
- The short-term perspective is safety, the long-term is breaking the cycle of violence
- Pro-active and activating approach: acting quickly in a crisis & creating safety and peace
- Working on all underlying problems and stress-factors
- Specific attention for the children
- Aftercare program of three months







# Importance of training

- Profiles of domestic violence:  
coercive control and intimate partner violence , stress-related aggression, abuse-related violence, violence caused by psychiatric disorders, honor-related violence, parent abuse, sibling abuse, stalking by (ex)partners,...
- Dynamics of violence:  
Wheel of power and control, co-relation with stress factors (life-domains under stress), intergenerational transmission of violence
- Position of children in situations of domestic violence, including the impact of adverse childhood experiences
- Risk taxation and mitigation
- Safeguarding victims and children
- Offender accountability
- Empowerment: HOPE-training: how to give victims back control over their own lives



## Belgian law: Training of judges

Mandatory training for all Belgian judges (law since 2021)

3 or 5 day training, depending on the type of court (whether or not to deal directly with cases of domestic violence/sexual violence)

Content of training:

- Law (1 day for every-one)
- Partner violence (1 or 2 days)
- Sexual violence (1 or 2 days)

Partner violence: dynamics of violence, multidisciplinary approach, offender accountability, victim's safety,...



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