

**ASSESSING RISK TO CHILDREN FROM MEN WHO BATTER**

Lundy Bancroft

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**OVERARCHING CONCEPTS**

- Protect mother-child relationships.
- Avoid taking children away from their resilience supports.
- Foster care is a risk factor.
- Hold the abuser accountable / use only scientific measures of his change.

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**KEY ELEMENTS**

- Level of involvement of the children (we'll come back to this in detail)
- Past injury to children, intentional or not, during assaults on Mom

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### KEY ELEMENTS

- Use of the children as weapons
- Damage to mother-child relationships
- The batterer's level of manipulation
- Child custody litigation

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### KEY ELEMENTS

- Physical dangerousness toward Mom and the children (details to follow)
- Level of psychological cruelty toward Mom
- Indicators of child physical abuse
- Indicators of child sexual abuse

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### PHYSICAL DANGER

- She is attempting to end the relationship.
- Weapons, access to weapons, familiarity with their use.
- Lethal threats, explicit or implied.
- Suicidal threats.

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**PHYSICAL DANGER**

- Jealousy and possessiveness
- Escalation
- Severe substance abuse
- History of generalized violence

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**PHYSICAL DANGER**

- Violence during pregnancy
- Sexualized violence
- Step-children present in home
- Severe depression, despondence

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**PHYSICAL DANGER**

- “Centrality of the victim” /  
Obsessiveness
- Stalking behavior
- Violence to pets
- History of lack of consequences

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### PHYSICAL DANGER

- Victim is very isolated / perpetrator is very isolated
- The victim believes there is lethal danger

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### INVOLVEMENT OF THE KIDS

- Injury to the children during assaults
- Deliberate verbal involvement of the children
- Violence during pregnancy
- Interference with her maternal care

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### INVOLVEMENT OF THE KIDS

- Proximity to the incidents
- Use of the children as weapons
- Requiring children to witness or participate
- Damaging mother-child relationships

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**PROTECTIVE FACTORS**

- Mother's strengths as a parent
- Mother's protective efforts
- Strength of mother-child relationships
- Children's level of functioning
- Children's relationships w/each other

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**PROTECTIVE FACTORS**

- Positive school experience, school relationships (esp. teachers)
- Positive activities (sports, music, clubs, arts, dance, etc.)
- Expressiveness
- Not feeling guilty/not blaming Mom

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**PROTECTIVE FACTORS**

- Safe places to go
- Other healthy relatives
- Strength of peer relationships

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