

# **European Network Guidelines for Working Responsibly with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Alessandra Pauncz

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## **United States Adaptation of European Guidelines for Working Responsibly with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Melissa Petrangelo Scaia

Jon Heath

# Webinar Logistics

- Please keep microphones **muted** and webcam off.
- Type questions into the chat box throughout the presentation
- Moderators will pose questions from your comments and questions from the chat box.
- A recording of the presentation will be sent to all participants

# Webinar Co-Organizers

**European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence**

[www.work-with-perpetrators.eu](http://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu)

**Global Rights for Women**

[www.globalrightsforwomen.org](http://www.globalrightsforwomen.org)

**Pathways to Family Peace**

<http://www.minnesotaironwoman.com/pathways-to-family-peace.html>

**Family Violence Project of Maine**

<https://www.familyviolenceproject.org>

# Speakers

- **Melissa Petrangelo Scaia**

Director of International Training @ Global Rights for Women

Founder and Co-Facilitator, Pathways to Family Peace

International Trainer on Men's Perpetrator Programs

Turning Points: A Non-Violence Curriculum for Women

- **Jon Heath**

Prevention and Intervention Director @ Family Violence Project

Co-Facilitator Pathways to Family Peace

- **Alessandra Pauncz**

Executive Director

European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence (WWP EN)

# Context of COVID-19 in the United States

## March 31, 2020

- about three out of four Americans are now, or about to be, under some form of lockdown,
- A number of states, including but not limited to, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming and Iowa, have no lockdown measures in place.
- more than 175,000 confirmed virus cases and over 3,400 deaths.
- President Trump recently stated federal guidance urges social distancing measures to stay in place through April 30, and noted U.S. deaths will probably peak in two weeks. Earlier, two top U.S. health officials, Anthony S. Fauci and Deborah Birx, told the president that the U.S. could record up to 200,000 deaths.

Source: NPR

# What type of work to do with perpetrators of domestic violence during COVID-19?

Are you going to provide:

- 1) “crisis management” services,
- 2) no services, or
- 3) a behavior change program (domestic violence education program/ batterers intervention program),

with perpetrators of domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic?

# WWP EN Guidelines | Working with Perpetrators during the COVID-19 Crisis

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## European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence

The "European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence" (WWP EN) was founded as formal organisation on April 9th, 2014 in Copenhagen with 18 founding members from 13 different countries. Today we unite a total of 51 members and are...

[Show full member list](#)



# Background



- Formal founding: 2009-2014
- Membership now: 60 members from 32 countries
- Funding: European Commission, Oak Foundation, Membership Contributions



# The Network



- Network: organisations directly or indirectly working with people who perpetrate violence in close relationships
- Members: perpetrator programmes, victim/survivor support (or their management organisations), umbrella organisations and research departments
- Membership forms:
  - full membership (fee, voting rights; organisations/departments)
  - affiliate membership (no fee, no voting rights; individuals/organisations)



# What will be discussing today?



- Action plan for perpetrator programs in the COVID-19 crisis
- Preparation
- Shutting down of programs
- Guidelines:
  - How and who to prioritize, how to identify levels of risk, etc.
  - Intervention: goals and intervention settings (rules and options)
  - Victim support services and partner contact
  - Ethical dilemmas: accountability vs safety?



# Action plan for PP in the COVID-19 crisis



- Consider the context your clients are living in
- Consider the social responses that are available (these may change very fast)
- Consider the major stresses that families are facing
- Can we use “normal” curricular activities?



# Preparation



- If you are still running in person groups or individual sessions:
  - Address the COVID -19 future possible challenges that will happen if there is a lock down. See exercises for preparing groups (courtesy of Chris Huffine) & guidebook to leading groups online: <https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/covid-19>
  - Collect information from the men on contact (phone, email), technological access (phone, pc) and technological literacy
  - Prepare service providers by providing dedicate cell phone, on line home access, software for videoconferences and technological support if necessary



# Preparation



- Prepare an action plan with key goals
- Problem shoot for high risk situations and connect with probation or other relevant services to provide safety for those that may be affected by the violence



# Guidelines: How to prioritize



- Prioritize the safety of those who are affected by the violence in your intervention plan
- Identify the risk level of perpetrators



# Guidelines: Intervention goals



- What is “crisis management”
- Goals:
- Reduce the risk
- Decrease perpetrator’s stress
- Increase coping mechanisms
- Mitigate effects of violence on family members+
- Continue to reach out and listen to survivor’s voices





# Guidelines: intervention



- Provide support
- Facilitate emotional release
- Increase coping skills



# Guidelines: Basic rules for online and phone intervention



- Service providers and men should not be friends on social media
- Accounts must be specifically set up and “work related”
- Dedicate numbers and sim cards for service providers to work from home



# Guidelines: Basic intervention rules



- Set up structure: specific times, weekly or daily contact
- All forms of online communications encouraged (messaging, WhatsApp, telegram, anything that works for the men) also used as emotional outlet, but clear rules must be in place in explaining that service provider will not be accessible at all times
- Take written notes of all challenging issues that come out, but always consider safety of victims first. Consider shifting to a supportive vs challenging approach in this phase.



# Guidelines: Individual Intervention (A)



- Individual weekly support (via Skype or phone):
- Daily journal of diary
- Using messaging with services to help express emotions
- Parenting concerns
- Adapt specific materials: COVID 19 time out
- Audio relaxation and other audio support
- Create structure: of days, activities, etc.
- Ideas and constructive ways of spending time
- When working on line or via chat, enhance “naming” of feelings



# Guidelines: Intensive individual intervention (B)



- Intensive individual support via phone/Skype
- Daily short check in/planning and problem shooting, but also support
- Children
- Additional individual 2/3 times a week sessions



# Guidelines: Group Format (C)



- Taking groups on line: new groups, old groups
- "Crisis intervention groups"
- Avoid eliciting arousal
- Supportive, catching up, assuring everybody is healthy
- Normal sharing should not be requested (might be not possible for privacy concerns)
- Men should be allowed to not talk if they choose to
- Check in on violence should be limited and addressed in individual sessions



# Guidelines: Group Format (C)



- Before starting groups:
- Individually reach out to the men and clarify:
- Are they interested in being involved?
- Differences in group format
- Men's privacy concerns (partner, children listening)
- Nobody will be required to share or contribute
- Technical tests



# Guidelines: Partner support service (D)



- Protect on line activities
- Set up systems to find out if she is safe (interview men as to when they are at work, send SMS asking, use emails)
- As much as is safe make sure you provide partner contact and put in the women in contact with running services

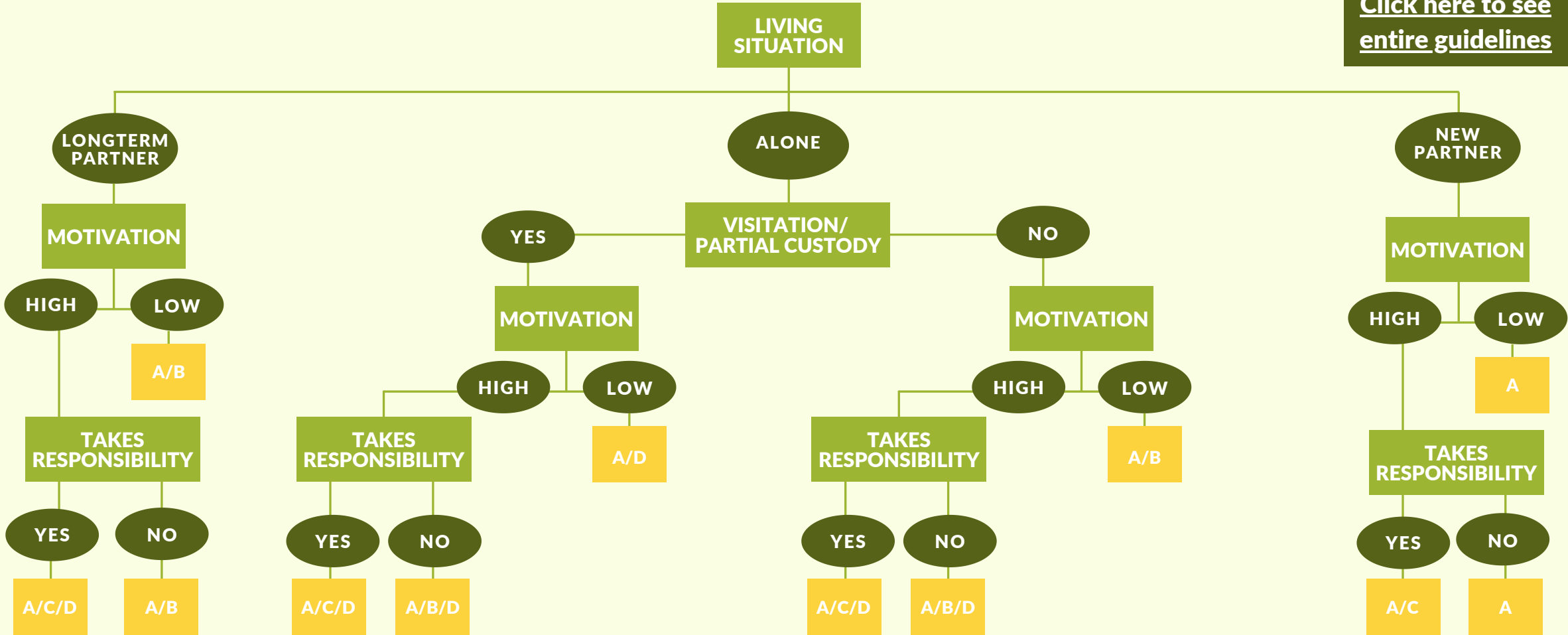




# ENSURING RESPONSIBLE PERPETRATOR WORK DURING COVID-19 | HIGH RISK PERPETRATORS ALREADY IN PROGRAMMES



[Click here to see entire guidelines](#)



# Feed back from partners confirm our recommendations



- 5 women contacted with men currently at different stages of the program
  1. Pre-contact via SMS: women felt positively about being pre-contacted, it allowed them to have the privacy to speak.
  2. Concern for the current situation and job instability, often leads to discussions and conflicts;
  3. Management of children: the presence of children in the home is a source of conflict, especially as some partners report that they are solely responsible for the management of the children. As for the separated couples, there is a strong request for limiting visitation with the fathers, as they fear for the health of the children.



# Feed back from partners confirm our recommendations



4. Violence: in most cases verbal abusive behaviour has increased (screams, yelling plus others), in one case physical violence has occurred. In another case, the man was asked to leave the house by his partner; in another case, law enforcement officers intervened and placed the man under house arrest in another residence.
5. Contact with the women's support service: only two partners are currently in contact with women's support service. A partner says she will contact them. Two say they don't need it.
6. Videoconference with group or individual man: All partners underline the importance of service providers of perpetrator programs reaching out. Some of these women have experienced a worsening of the situation with the interruption of the group and the health emergency. They are relieved in knowing that their partners are being monitored and assisted by the perpetrator programs.
7. Emotional status of the partner and management of moments of stress: most women report feeling tired and worried by the situation, not only because in some cases the changes have increased, but also because of the economic instability, the management of the children and isolation. Some of them practice yoga, puzzles, try to retreat to their rooms for a moment of relief.



# WWP EN Resources



- Papers, National Reports
- Newsletters, Webinars
- Social Media
  - Facebook page
  - LinkedIn Company page
  - Twitter Account
  - Instagram Account
- Website



# Links



- Website: [www.work-with-perpetrators.eu](http://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu)
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WwpEuropeanNetwork/>
- LinkedIn Company page: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/work-with-perpetrators-european-network/>
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