

Examining risk factors and escalation in non-criminal domestic dispute cases

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Agenda

- Project background
- Risk factor research literature
- Overview of our data sets
- Exploration of four multiple incident cases
- Audience discussion

Background to the Project

- Geographic area: mid-sized city in Ontario with rural areas; population of 35-40k
- High volume of DV calls to police: approximately 1000 calls annually; 1/3 result with criminal charges being laid.
- Demanding on resources; potential for improvement.
- Data is collected for every domestic violence call via two forms:
 - 1) Domestic Violence Supplementary Report – Criminal Code Investigation (DVSR-CC);
 - 2) Domestic Violence Supplementary Report – Non-Criminal Code Investigation (DVSR-Non-CC)

Risk Factors in the Literature

| Physical | Emotional/Psychological | Sexual | Social |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Previous exposure to family violence (7, 10) | Controlling behaviours (4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11) | Sexual jealousy (4, 7, 8, 11) | Age (1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9) |
| Threats to kill with a weapon or other dangerous objects (4, 5, 7, 8, 11) | Extreme jealousy (1, 5, 7, 8, 11) | Forced sexual acts with accused (8, 10, 11) | Lower SES (1, 5, 7) |
| Access to firearms (3, 4, 7, 8, 11) | Verbal aggression (4, 7) | Forced sexual acts with others (8, 10, 11) | Ex-partner or current separation (2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10) |
| Abuse resulting in serious injuries and/or life-long disabilities (5, 7, 10) | Victim and/or children in fear of being in danger or killed (5, 11) | Sexual degradation (4, 10, 11) | Cohabitation (1, 3, 8) |
| General threats of severe harm or death (11) | Stalking behaviours (2, 7) | Sexual infidelity (4, 11) | Substance abuse (1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11) |
| Destruction of property or belongings (4, 7) | Threats to commit suicide (11) | General ongoing and continual sexual abuse (9, 10, 11) | Mental health diagnosis or concerns (3, 8, 9, 11) |
| History of past physical violence (1, 3, 5, 8, 11) | General ongoing and continual emotional abuse and attempts to control (10, 11) | | Relationship to children in the home and pregnancy (3, 4, 7, 8) |
| General ongoing and continual physical abuse (10, 11) | | | Unemployment and low educational attainment (1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11) |

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Domestic Violence Supplementary Reports (DVSRs)

Non-Criminal Code Investigation (Non-CC) risk question examples:

- Does either involved person fear that the other will assault, seriously injure or kill her/him or the children? Explain.
- Has the relationship become more conflictual (e.g. arguing)? Explain.
- Has either of the involved persons ever threatened to harm/kill the other or any other family members/acquaintances? If so when?
- Does either involved person own/have access to firearms or weapons?
- Has either involved person attempted to control the other's activities, property, finances etc.? Explain.
- Do the involved persons have any known mental health problems (e.g. depression, bi-polar disorder etc.)? If so, what.

Overview of the Data Sets

| | DVSR – CC | | | | DVSR – Non-CC | | | | Total |
|--------------|-------------|------|---------|------|---------------|------|----------|------|-------|
| Cases | 985 | | | | 2429 | | | | 3414 |
| Children | 292 (29.6%) | | | | 797 (32.8%) | | | | |
| Gender | Victim | % | Accused | % | Person A | % | Person B | % | |
| Male | 271 | 27.5 | 710 | 72.1 | 781 | 32.2 | 1630 | 67.1 | 3392 |
| Female | 713 | 72.4 | 275 | 27.9 | 1645 | 67.7 | 791 | 32.6 | 3424 |
| Unknown | 1 | - | 0 | - | 3 | - | 8 | - | 12 |

- Criminal cases: January 1, 2011 – March 31, 2014
- Non-criminal cases: January 1, 2011 – December 30, 2014

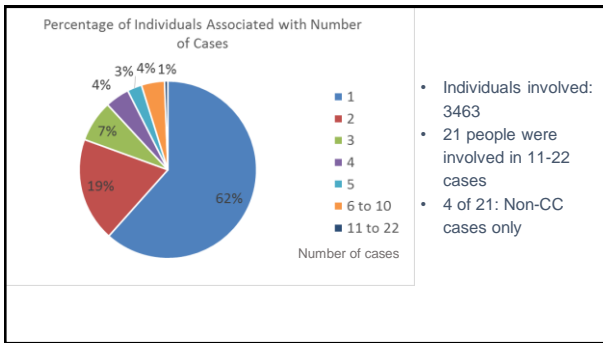
Overview of the Data Sets

| | DVSR – CC | | | DVSR – Non-CC | | | Total |
|-----------------|------------|--------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|-------|
| | # Officers | Mean # Cases | Range of Cases | # Officers | Mean # Cases | Range of Cases | Total |
| Officers | 90 | 10.94 | 1-36 | 111 | 21.88 | 1-81 | 118 |

CC only = 8; Unknown = 12 Non-CC only = 29; Unknown = 3

- 81 officers investigated both CC and non-CC cases
- These officers dealt with between 2-117 cases each
- 4 officers dealt with 100+ cases
- 40 officers dealt with 30-97 cases

| Level of Response | DVSR | Risk Question | % |
|-------------------|--------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Highest Yes | Non-CC | b) Has the relationship become more conflictual (e.g. arguing)? Explain. | 28.9 |
| | CC | q) Does the accused's personality feature anger, impulsiveness or poor behaviour control? | 49.2 |
| Lowest Yes | Non-CC | e) Has either involved person used or threatened the use of firearms or weapons against any other person? | 0.7 |
| | CC | p) Has the accused injured or killed a pet owned by the victim? | 3.2 |
| Highest Unknown | Non-CC | l) Has there been a noticeable increase in the abuse of drugs and/or alcohol? | 40.7 |
| | CC | j) Has there been a noticeable increase in the abuse of drugs and/or alcohol? | 38.1 |
| Lowest Unknown | Non-CC | h) Has there been a recent separation or change in the relationship between the involved persons or within the family? (e.g. Conflict between family members) Explain. | 31.8 |
| | CC | c) Has there been a recent separation or change in the relationship between the victim and the accused? | 26.0 |

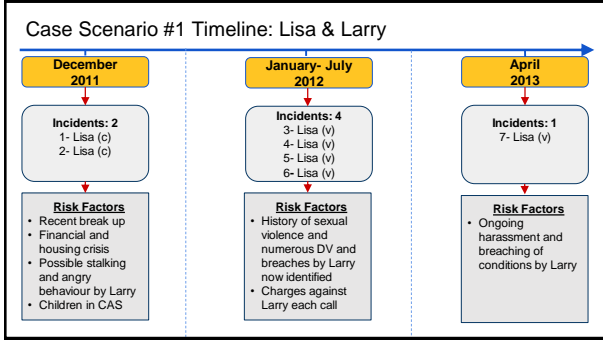


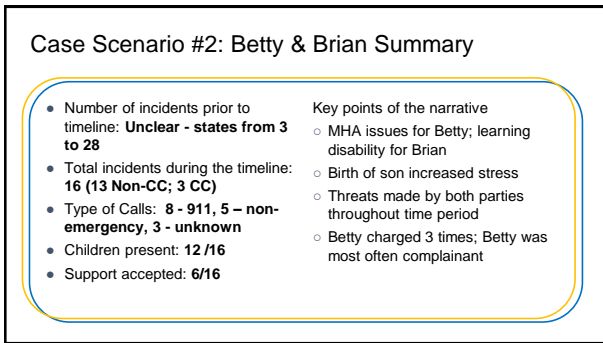
Case Scenario #1: Lisa & Larry Summary

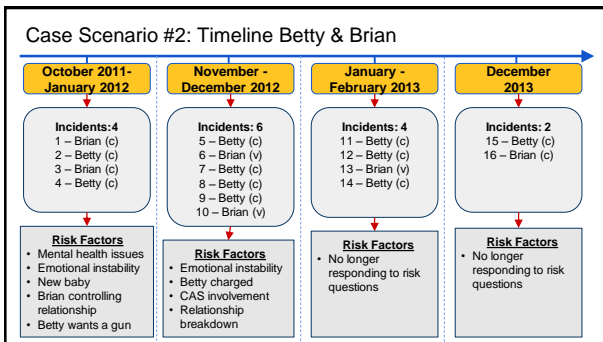
- Number of incidents prior to timeline: **Unknown**
- Total incidents during the timeline: **7 (2 Non-CC; 5 CC)**
- Type of call: **4 - 911, 2 - non-emergency, 1 - unknown**
- Children present: **27 incidents**
- Taken to shelter: **3/7**

Key points of the narrative:

- Children in the care of CAS (ages 7 months and 23 months at time of first call)
- Lisa identifies being afraid from the first incident
- History of sexual violence and DV, not flagged until third call





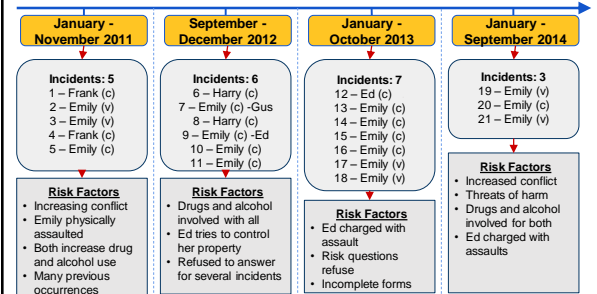


Case Scenario #3: Emily & Ed, Frank, Gus, Harry

- Number of incidents prior to timeline: **Unclear: Frank 2-33; Harry 7-13; Gus 2-3; Ed 3-27**
- Total incidents during the timeline: **21: Frank = 5 (2 CC); Harry = 2; Gus = 1; Ed = 13 (4 CC)**
- Type of call: **16 – 911; 2 non-emergency; 2 – unknown; 1 found by police;**
- Children present: **12/21 Incidents**
- Support accepted: **5/21**

- Key points of the narrative:
- Drug and alcohol use by all throughout incidents
 - Multiple men involved
 - All men with prior police involvement
 - Two of four men involved charged with assault resulting from calls

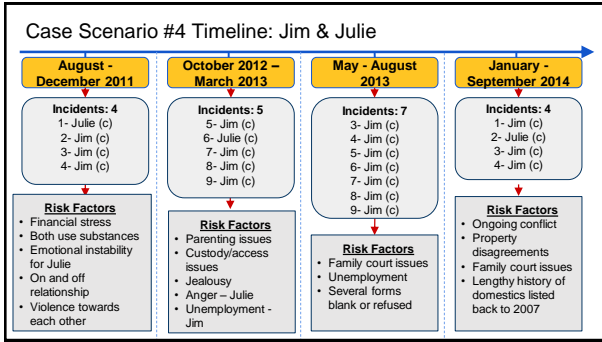
Case Scenario #3 Timeline: Emily & Ed, Frank, Gus, Harry



Case Scenario #4: Jim & Julie Summary

- Number of incidents prior to timeline: **26**
- Total incidences during the timeline: **20 Non-CC**
- Type of call: **19 - non-emergency, 1 - 911**
- Children present: **10/20**
- Support accepted: **1/20**

- Key points of the narrative:
- Children in common, CAS is involved throughout
 - Custody/access and family court noted most consistently
 - No criminal charges
 - Drugs and alcohol used by both



Discussion

- What generalized issues do you see in these cases?
- What might be impacting police response to these cases?
- What would indicate a 'good response' by police and others?
- How can the risk evaluation be improved?
- How can the overall response be improved?

(potential considerations: police response, offering/accepting of support; children involved and how deal with?; potential attitudes of police and helping professionals?; housing and poverty issues?; drugs/alcohol misuse?)

Thank you!

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