

**TIPS FOR WORKERS WORKING WITH DADS:
FLEXIBLE APPROACHES
FOR MEN WHO HAVE BEEN VIOLENT WITH THEIR PARTNERS**

Fatherhood engagement involves a **flexible approach** where the engagement varies depending upon the father's risk levels and strengths:

- ◆ If the physically abusive man is moderately violent and has some strengths, we can consider services to help him address domestic violence *and* to support his parenting. If he is not in the home, visitation may be highly advisable.
- ◆ If the physically abusive man is an ongoing reassaulter or is highly dangerous, access to children should be restricted and supervised if possible, and our emphasis should be more narrowly focused on services to address domestic violence and/or substance abuse.
- ◆ If the physically abusive man is exceptionally dangerous such that he poses a grave and acute risk to the mother and/or children, we may consider no contact with the father by DCF.

Fatherhood engagement may not involve access to children. The list below will help you assess risk/dangerousness and make decisions about how to engage a man who has a history of domestic violence.

NATURE OF FATHERHOOD ENGAGEMENT & ACCESS TO CHILDREN	
<p>MODERATELY VIOLENT PHYSICAL ABUSER: SOME STRENGTHS & INDICATORS OF LOWER RISK</p> <p><u>LESS RESTRICTED CONTACT W/CH.</u> ⇒ Assess children's level of trauma; assess ongoing impact of his fathering or aftermath of visits if he is out of the home. ⇒ Do not divulge information provided by mother unless she has given permission or there is harm by the father that needs to be addressed. Safety plan with the mother if information provided by her must be used. ⇒ If the father is out of the home, may use unsupervised visitation.</p> <p><u>ENGAGEMENT:</u> ⇒ Build on existing strengths; support good fathering practices; making amends (fathering after violence). Help father accept & undo traumatic impact of his past behavior. ⇒ Use other Tip Sheets to promote his positive fathering involvement.</p> <p><u>SERVICES:</u> ⇒ Attend fatherhood program. ⇒ Attend batterer intervention program. ⇒ Substance abuse services.</p>	<p>HIGH RISK TO PARTNER AND/OR CHILDREN: ONGOING REASSAULTER OR POTENTIALLY LETHAL ASSAULTER</p> <p><u>MORE RESTRICTED OR NO CONTACT</u> ⇒ Assess children as on left hand column. ⇒ Do not divulge from mother if possible; conduct careful safety planning if there is harm by the father that needs to be addressed ⇒ If mother & children are in shelter, redact all information about her whereabouts; consider having another Area Office work with him, so he does not know what area she and children are in. ⇒ Supervised visitation. In another community? ⇒ W/high risk, consider no family contact.</p> <p><u>ENGAGEMENT:</u> ⇒ Focus on programming that will help him address and lower his risk factors (see below). ⇒ Assess capacity to take responsibility for past behavior. Assess behavior in ongoing fathering or during visits.</p> <p><u>SERVICES:</u> ⇒ Attend batterer intervention program. ⇒ Substance abuse services.</p> <p>CONSIDER NO CONTACT: If contact is expected to provoke assault (active stalker w/lethal threats, and/or history of severe violence) consider no contact/no engagement with the father.</p>

The manual Accountability and Connection with Abusive Men, has more information. It is available at: <http://www.thegreenbook.info/documents/Accountability.pdf>