

### Mental Health and Substance Use Coercion in the Context of Intimate Partner Violence

Carole Warshaw MD, Director National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma and Mental Health

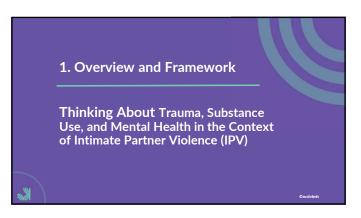
Danielle Pugh, Director, Judicial Education and Leadership Center for Justice Innovation

This project was supported by Grant No. 15JOVW-22-GK-04034-JJFX awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women. www.NationalCenterDVTraumaMH.org



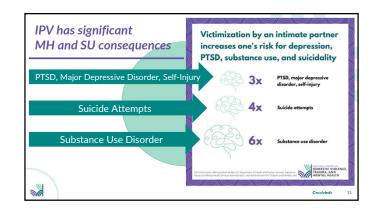
# **OBJECTIVES**

- Identify common forms of mental health and substance use coercion
- Increase understanding of the impact of mental health and substance use coercion on survivors of IPV and their children
- Describe considerations for addressing mental health and substance use coercion in family, DVPO, and other court settings
- Learn strategies to better address mental health and substance use coercion in cases involving IPV



## Mental Health, Substance Use, Trauma, and IPV: What Are the Connections?

- | IPV has significant MH and SU-related effects.
- | High rates of IPV and other trauma among people accessing MH and substance use disorder (SUD) treatment.
- Use MH and SU issues used as a tactic of control.
- | IPV impacts people's ability to access and engage in MH and SUD treatment.
- SU is a leading cause of child removal.
- Integrated, culturally responsive, IPV- and trauma-informed approaches are critical to the safety and well-being of survivors and their children.



### Mental Health Impact of IPV: The Importance of Context

#### 658 Women Survivors of IPV

### Psychiatric Diagnosis\* (52% during or after)

- 13% Prior to experiencing IPV • 43%
- During the abusive relationship 44% After leaving abusive partner

### **Psychological Well-being**

- 70% Good psychological well-being prior to IPV
- 90% Poor psychological well-being during IPV
- 65% Poor psychological well-being after leaving

## **Coercive Control Was a Primary Contributor**

Moulding, et al., 2021 Oncdv

High rates of IPV among people accessing mental health and substance use disorder treatment High rates of DV among women accessing substance use disorder treatment High rates of DV among women accessing mental health treatme On average-30% of women in outpatient settings 31% 47% 90% 33% of women in inpatient settings 67% 30%-60% of women in psychiatric ER Report DV in their lifetime Report DV in the past year Report victimization by an intimate partner

Less Well Recognized Are Coercive **Tactics Specifically Targeted Toward a Partner's Substance Use** or Mental Health...

# Mental Health and Substance Use Coercion

## Abusive Tactics Designed to Control a Partner by:

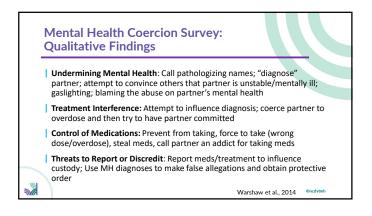
- Undermining their mental and emotional stability and well-being
- Coercing them into using substances
- · Interfering with their ability to engage in treatment
- Sabotaging their healing and recovery efforts
- Discrediting them with potential sources of protection and support, and jeopardizing custody

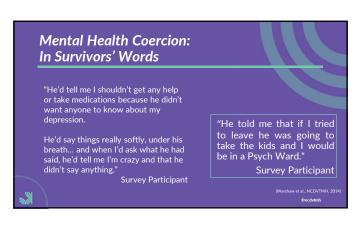
Warshaw et al., 2014

• Exploiting their MH or SU for personal or financial gain

Mental Health and Substance Use **Coercion Surveys** 





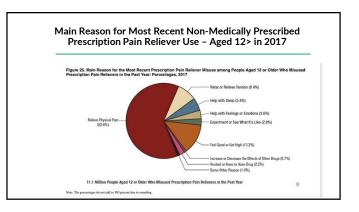


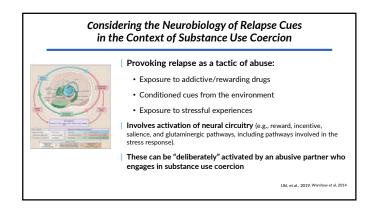
	Substance Use Coercion Survey National Domestic Violence Hotline and NCDVTMH Survey
26%	N=3,224 Ever <b>used substances to reduce pain</b> of partner abuse?
27%	Pressured or forced to use alcohol or other drugs, or made to use more than wanted?
15.2%	Tried to get help for substance use?
60.1%	If yes, partner or ex-partner tried to prevent or discourage you from getting that help?
37.5%	Partner or ex-partner threatened to report alcohol or other drug use to someone in authority to keep you from getting something you wanted or needed?
24.4%	Afraid to call the police for help because partner said they wouldn't believe you because of using, or you would be arrested for being under the influence?
arshaw et al., 2014 Warshaw C., Lyon E., Bland P., Phillips H., Hooper M., NCDVTM/The Hotline, 2014	



- Coerced use: Initiated into using; pressured to use with partner, unable to refuse; Manipulated/threatened into using; Drugged by partner
- Treatment Interference and Recovery Sabotage: Prevented from attending meetings/treatment; Transportation/childcare withheld; Harassed into leaving; Stalking at MAT; Meds controlled/diverted; Substances kept in home; Forced to watch partner use; Escalating violence if tried to cut down or stop
- Threats to Report or Discredit: Reported to judges, CPS, police, probation/parole officers, employers; Made false allegations;
- Opioid-Specific Coercion: Controls supply; Forces to use unsafely; Injures partner to obtain pain meds; Threatens withdrawal; Coerces into illegal activities; Plants drugs; Jeopardizes custody, housing, jobs, and public benefits







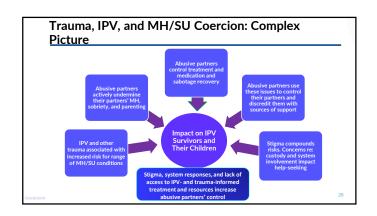
MH and SU Coercion Are Also Used to Undermine Parenting:

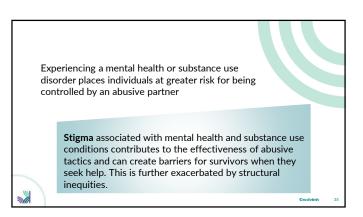
People who perpetrate domestic violence actively try to undermine their partners' relationships with their children, creating risks for their children's health, mental health. and well-being

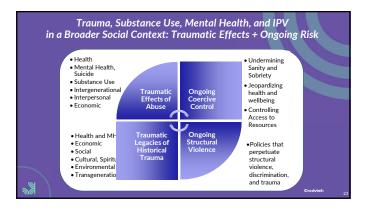


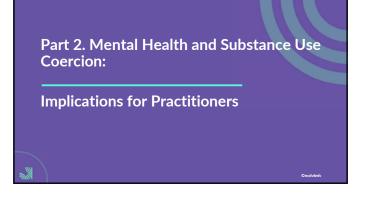
Yet, research consistently shows that attachment to the non-abusive caregiver is what is most protective of children's resilience and development

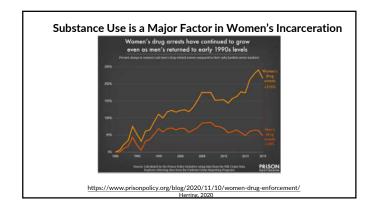
Llieberman et al., 2005; Naryan et al., 2019

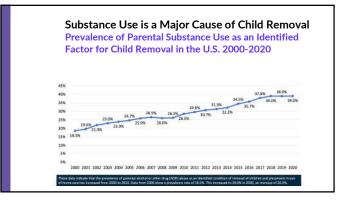


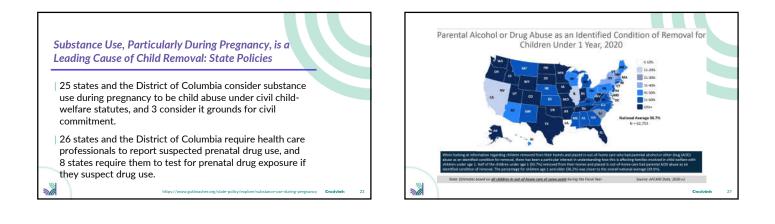












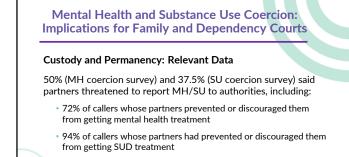




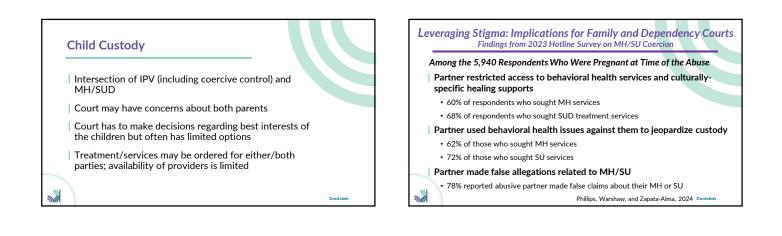
## Mental Health and Substance Use Coercion: Implications for DVPO Court

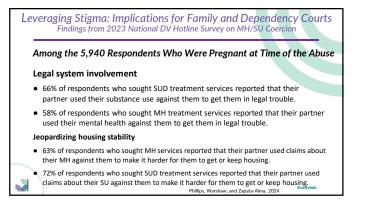
#### Abusive parties use MH/SU coercion to manipulate courts

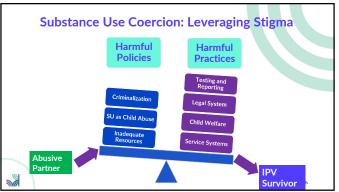
- Impugn partner's credibility
- File sensitive documents (including partner's medical records) in the public record
- Claim partner is mentally unstable in order to obtain own PO against partner
- Intimidate petitioner into dropping the case due to concerns about  $\rm MH/SU$  being used against them

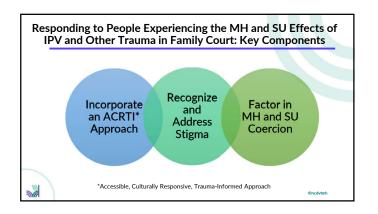


Warshaw et al., 2014 Cncdvtmh

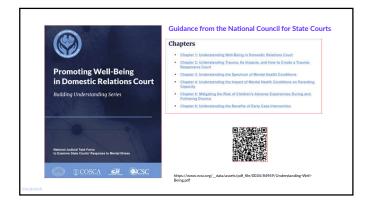


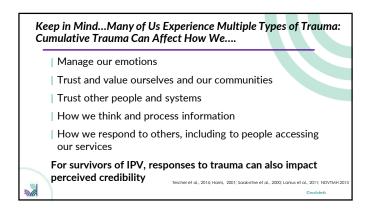


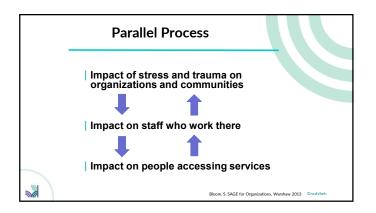














Notice Your Response

(Save the Antelope Video)

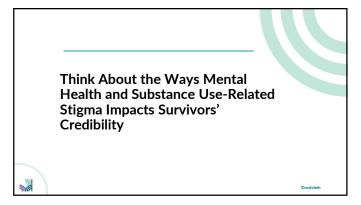
# Mental Health and Substance Use-Related Stigma

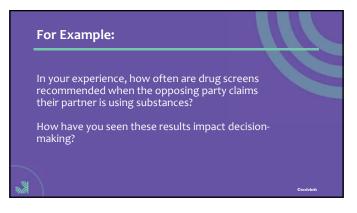
# Take a Moment to Reflect

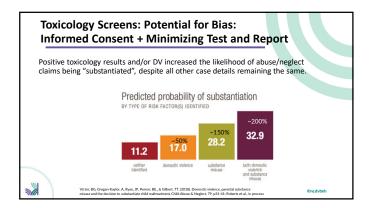
- 1. What experiences have influenced my views on mental health and parenting?
- 2. What experiences have influences my views on substance use and parents who use substances?
- 3. How do these views show up in my work?



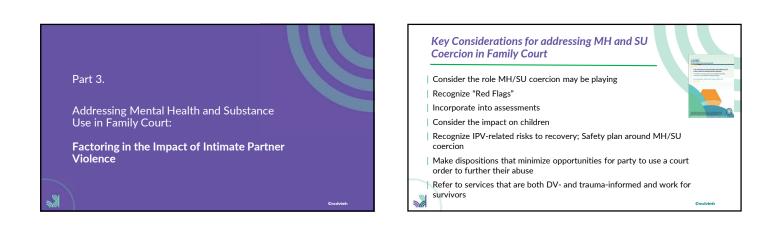


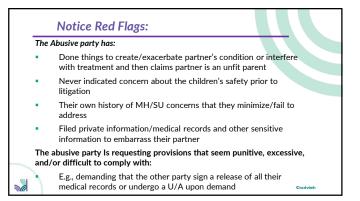










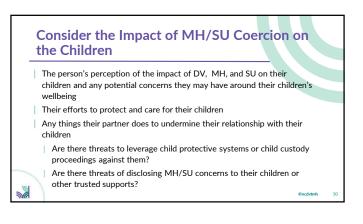


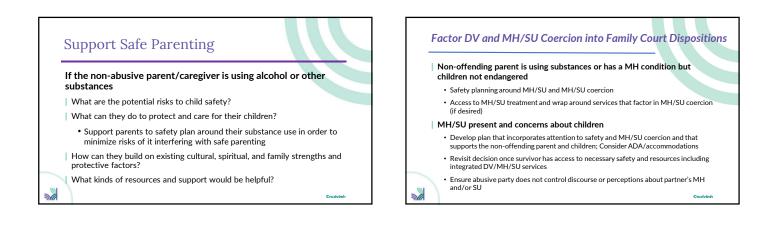


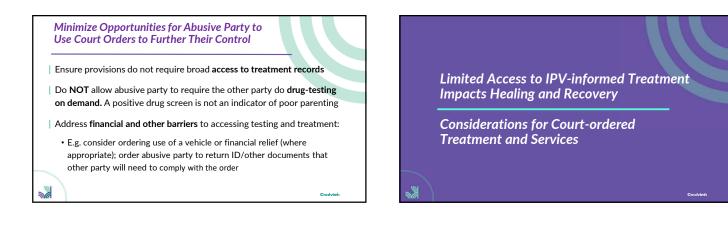
# Be Specific with Evaluators Regarding MH/SU Coercion

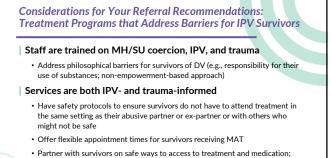
Require/Request Recommendations that Factor in MH/SU Coercion

 Ask evaluators to incorporate questions about MH and SU coercion into assessments and evaluations









 Partner with survivors on safe ways to access to treatment and medication; factor substance use coercion into relapse prevention Considerations for Your Referral Recommendations: Treatment Programs that Address Barriers for IPV Survivors

#### Services meet survivors where and how they are

- Reduce unnecessary restrictions/requirements that prevent those most in need from accessing services; offer harm-reduction approach
- Provide transportation, childcare, extended stays, intakes at DV programs
- Incorporate a harm reduction approach and are gender-responsive, culturally resonant, and trauma-informed

## Discussion

What strategies can Courts use to account for the safety and recovery of survivors while protecting the best interests and well-being of their children?



