

— Interviewing Perpetrators: Effective Responses —

Good domestic violence practice includes intervention with perpetrators. This can, at times, be challenging. It is important to maintain a good engagement without colluding with the client. Here are some suggested responses to perpetrator statements that will help you to remain focused on:

- 1. The perpetrator's behavioral choices and their connection to child safety and well being**
- 2. The impact of the perpetrator's behaviors on children**

Perpetrators' Statement	Suggested Response
"I was drunk" "I blacked out" "I don't remember what happened"	"Do you believe the account of what happened that's written in the police report?" "Do you believe what other people have said occurred?"
"I only shoved her. She got hurt when she fell." "It's not like I hit her. I just got in her face." "I didn't even touch her. I punched the wall instead of hitting her."	"What is like for your partner when you act this way?" "What was it like for your children when this happened?" "Are you concerned that your children were scared when this occurred?" "What did you tell your children about the bruises they saw?"
"I would never hurt my kids" "I never hit my kids." "My children weren't even there."	"How did you explain why you were out of the house to the children?" "What did your children hear?" "How do you think your children felt when they saw you get arrested?" "Does the way you act towards their mother fit with your idea of being a good dad?" "Which of your decisions have negatively impacted your children?"

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<p>"I was only trying to help her. She was out of control."</p> <p>"She's bi-polar and she's been off her meds."</p>	<p>"Can you describe specifically what you did and said to try to 'control' her?"</p> <p>"How do your children respond to the way you talk about their mother?"</p> <p>"Does she experience the way you act towards her as supportive of her?"</p>
<p>"She was drunk and I was afraid she'd drive my kids."</p> <p>"She's a drunk"</p> <p>"I don't want her druggie friends hanging around my family."</p>	<p>"Since you're concerned about your children, how do you think they responded to you assaulting her?"</p> <p>"How do your children feel when you call her these names?"</p> <p>"How do you support her sobriety?"</p>
<p>"It's a woman's state."</p> <p>"I only got in trouble because that cop is out to get me."</p> <p>"Everyone just believes the woman's story."</p>	<p>"What, specifically, did you do that led to your arrest?"</p> <p>"How were you behaving before the police arrived?"</p> <p>"What do you see as your contribution to the problems in the relationship?"</p>
<p>"Can you tell my partner that (she) needs to do couple's counseling?"</p> <p>"My partner started it, I was only defending myself."</p> <p>"My partner pushes me. I'm not normally like this."</p>	<p>"I'm here today to talk with you about your behaviors and your children."</p> <p>"Your record shows that this isn't the first time you've acted this way."</p> <p>"I'm concerned about your behavior and at this point I'd suggest you do a program to address that."</p> <p>"I believe you can control your behaviors and I'm concerned that you aren't taking responsibility for that."</p> <p>"I'm also concerned about your control towards your partner, not just this incident."</p>