

Key Takeaways
Resist, Refuse & Resolve: Turning the Corner on PCCP Conflict
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Morning Presentation:
The Biggest Challenge



- PCCP/RRD cases are the biggest challenge. Teamwork is critical as is family systems approach. Cases are complex. They are multidimensional. A differential approach is important to take in terms of assessment & intervention. Cases are not created equal. Cases have multiple causes & solutions. Cases that are successful have many pieces. Clear and measurable expectations are important. Evidence-informed interventions are called for as is accountability critical. Successes are measured in a multitude of ways. Time is of the essence. Cognitive flexibility – on everyone’s part is foundational – as is concurrently seeing things from different perspectives and challenging biases. The missing piece in PCCP/RRD matters maybe a missing trauma lens.
- Sometimes PCCP matters are rooted in reality, sometimes rooted in perceptions, and sometimes not rooted in reality.
- Current research shows that shared parenting (shared physical time) is not always in the children’s best interest.
- Family systems therapy is the treatment of choice for parent-child contact problem matters.
- Abuse and/or alienation is a false dichotomy. The answer is “and.”

- The use of hypotheses, decision trees, and a systematic approach to an assessment/evaluation helps organize data, not miss pieces, offset biases, increase evaluator competence, and avoid preventable errors.
- The use of a stepwise decision-making model including matrices helps both organize and weight data while considering the effect of trauma.
- The key to assess and to achieve is both safety and contact – concurrently.
- Family violence includes intimate partner violence, domestic violence, coercive control, child maltreatment, pet abuse, cyber abuse, legal abuse, and elder abuse.
- Coercive control is a form of intimate partner and domestic violence that involves harmful conduct that subordinates the will of another through intimidation, intrusiveness, isolation, and/or control and may or may not include physical abuse. The main objective of coercive control is to restrict the freedom & autonomy of the victim. Coercive control may involve constraint through force, the monitoring of everyday behaviors, routines, and interactions, includes barriers to leaving, and involves deprivation of freedom and liberties.
- The main differences between “regular control” and “coercive control” is that with coercive control, control is mainly with one person, and that with coercive control there is a pattern of control, isolation, manipulation, intimidation, domination, humiliation, and coercion whereas with “regular control” power is more evenly distributed and the other patterns are not present.
- Screening for safety issues and possible abuse is required initially and on an ongoing basis in all parenting plan cases.
- A look at context is critical in all matters with parent child contact problems and that best includes a look at the frequency, recency, severity, directionality, intention, circumstances, and consequences of any patterns for connection, strengths, resiliency, and vulnerabilities including the existence (or not) of “ghosts in the nursery.”
- The healing of trauma and creation of coping skills/strengths is required as part of resist-refuse/parent-child contact work.
- The delay of contact in service of a full evaluation may be counterproductive as time is often the friend of the aligned parent and the enemy of the restricted or rejected parent.

- Taking responsibility for patterns one has contributed to in family systems is a foundational piece of moving forward in family systems healing.
 - Expectations for change need to be managed and measured in small and incremental changes in parent-parent and parent-child interactions. These can be building blocks for changes in the family.
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Afternoon Presentation

Playing the Game: Aspects of Interventions



- What's in the name: Parent Child Contact Problems? It is beyond alienation. It is beyond abuse. It is beyond both.
- The abused child and the alienated child may look like each other except in their extremes.
- Adaptive protective gatekeeping may result in PCCP. The question rests with whether the protective parent can differentiate their feelings from those about the resisted parent while seeing some redeeming qualities that the resisted parent offers to the child.
- It is in the best interest of the child to develop coping skills as they may be able to use them at other times in their life.
- The protective and facilitative parent assists their child empower themselves and to use healthy and adaptive skills (e.g. mindfulness, emotional regulation, distress tolerance, and/or communication skills) while remaining in sync with developmental goals.

- It is critical that each family member and professional learn to measure and manage their expectations as to treatment progress.
- Often times the part of the coparenting relationship that needs the most healing is the trust in the coparent relationship. Learning to incrementally re-build that coparenting relationship is critical to the healing in the family.