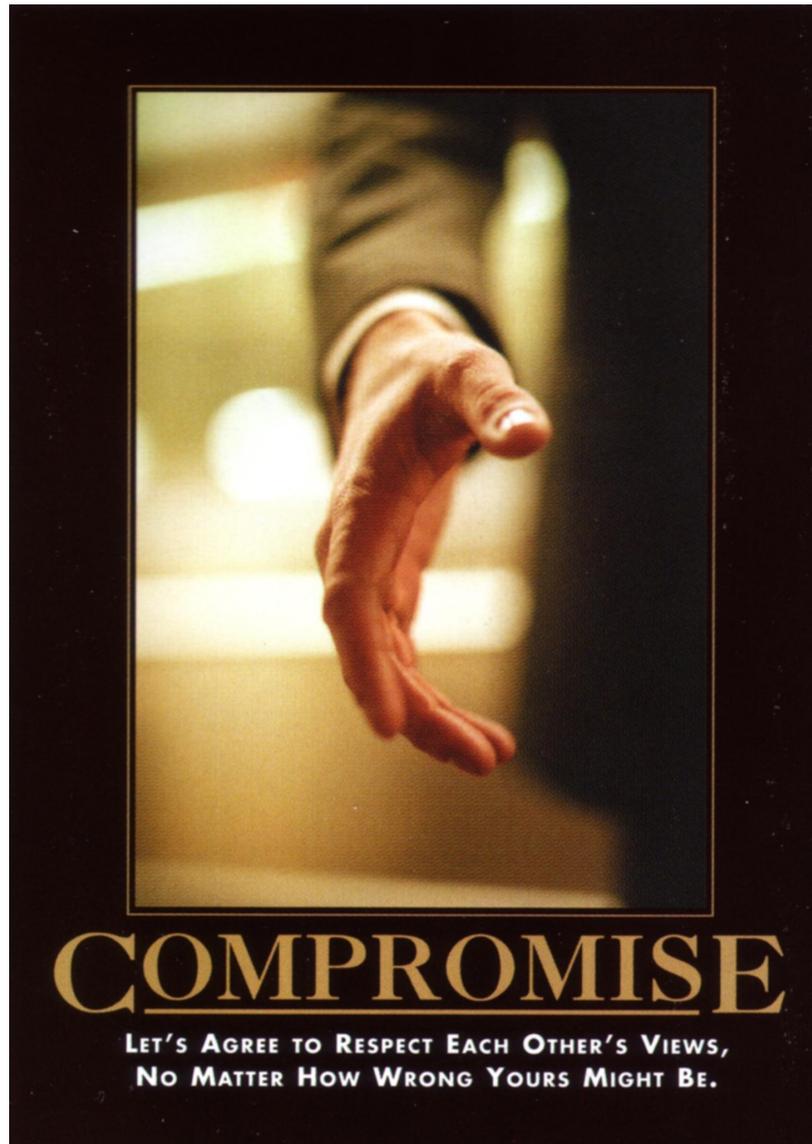


# **Divorce Conflict Training**

How to Recognize False  
Allegations of Abuse or Neglect  
During a Parent's Divorce or  
Separation





How often do we “Compromise”?



# **DCFS Divorce Conflict Training**

## **R512-204-2**

- \* DCFS often works with families where there is a conflictual relationship between parents as a result of divorce proceedings.
- \* DCFS will provide training that will assist the caseworker in assessing the family dynamics to try and obtain a complete picture of these dynamics.
- \* DCFS will provide training on how the information gathered will affect the conclusions reached at the end of an investigation.
- \* DCFS will provide training that includes information on fraudulent reporting in Child Protective Services investigations.



# Assessment Tools

## Safety Model

- ★ Threats of Harm
- ★ Child Vulnerabilities
- ★ Protective Capacity



# Assessment Tools

(continued)

## Intake & On Call

- \* ***Ask specific questions about:***
  1. The parents and their current living situation.
  2. Their current marital status.
- \* ***Accurately document information in the CANR***
  1. Relationships of all people involved.
  2. Addresses of adults involved.



# Assessment Tools

(continued)

## CPS workers

- \* Review family history in SAFE.
- \* Conduct interviews with child(ren) & family.
- \* Review CANR
- \* Immediate Protection & Safety Assessment
- \* Risk Assessment
- \* Third Party Interviews

## Permanency Workers

- \* Open communication with Intake and CPS workers.
- \* Engage both parents regarding their relationship.
- \* Child & Family Team observations.
- \* Document all observations in Child & Family Assessment and any Court Reports.



# Assessment Tools

(continued)

## All Caseworkers can use:

- \* Genogram: Can show any history of divorces and/or separations in a family and how those divorces played out (from amicable to highly conflictual).
- \* Ecomap: Can show supports on both sides of the family that could provide appropriate support without adding to the conflict. Can also be used to show if the child(ren) has access to supports that are neutral if there is high conflict.
- \* Timeline: Can show workers how the marital relationship deteriorated, what factors were involved and if there was a history of DCFS reports made during that time.



# Research on CPS Investigations involving custody disputes.

- \* Research has shown that too much emphasis is placed on the idea that all allegations made in the midst of a custody dispute are only made to be malicious towards the other parent.
- \* These misleading assumptions may be distracting the worker's attention from investigations where suspicions of abuse or neglect remain but cannot be confirmed.
- \* Research data has shown that a small percentage of reports to child welfare agencies are malicious and fraudulent in nature.
  - 12% of cases involving custody disputes involve intentionally false allegations.
  - Noncustodial parents are more likely to make intentionally false allegations than are custodial parents.
  - Intentionally false allegations of child neglect are far more common than intentionally false allegations of child abuse.

\*N. Trocme, N. Bala / *Child Abuse and Neglect* 29 (2005) 1333-1345



# What To Do If It Is Determined A Fraudulent Report Has Been Made:

- \* Utah Code Ann. [§62A-4a-1007.](#)
- \* DCFS Practice Guidelines 204.6 - False Allegations Of Child Abuse Or Neglect.
  1. Consult with AAG
  2. Notify law enforcement
  3. Notify Alleged Perpetrator
  4. Send SAFE letter CPS12 to referent via Certified Mail.
- \* Utah Code Ann. [§76-8-506.](#)
  1. Class B Misdemeanor

