

The background of the slide is a soft-focus photograph of a pond. Large, dark green lotus leaves with prominent veins are visible on the left side. Several pink lotus flowers are in various stages of bloom, with some showing lighter, almost white, inner petals. The overall lighting is bright and natural, creating a serene atmosphere.

DV/IPV – Language Matters

Changing the way we speak about survivors and their experiences



Example One

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- **Better:** Father was arrested on May 10th after strangling mother in front of the children. During the incident mother was called derogatory names such as “bitch” and “slut”, and father threw family photos and broke the television. Children reported feeling scared of their father. Mother was also shared that she felt afraid for her life, as father has threatened to kill her before. Father has a pattern of calling mother names in front of the children, and.....

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- ***Why this works:*** Does not leave room for ambiguity. Draws a nexus between the perpetrator’s pattern and impact on child(ren) and family functioning. Clearly shows risk and harm to survivor and children.

The background of the slide is a soft-focus photograph of a pond. In the foreground, there are large, dark green lotus leaves with prominent veins. A pink lotus flower is in bloom, its petals showing a gradient from light pink to white. Another pink flower is partially visible in the upper left corner. The background is a hazy, light green, suggesting more foliage and water in the distance.

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- **Better:** While we are concerned that mother scratched/punched/bit father, it is clear that father has a pattern of severe coercive control over the family. Father has a history of utilizing systems, such as CPS and law enforcement, to harass mother by threatening to call police or make reports. He frequently threatens to take the children out of state, kill himself if she were to leave the relationship, or threatens to make the family homeless.



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- ***Why this works:*** Shows partnership with survivor, but still addresses concerning behaviors and impact on child safety while holding person using violence responsible for behavior.



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- **Better:** During a recent unannounced home visit, worker found father in the home with the children. Father has a pattern of harassing and stalking mother, and threatened to kick in the door until mother let him in. Mother made the choice to allow him access to the children to prevent damage to the home and minimize emotional impact on children.



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- **Why this works:** Continues to show partnership with survivor and shift accountability onto partner using violence. Calls out protective factors of survivor.