University of Worcester

Original citation: *Looking Back in Anger: the Impact of Domestic Violence and Abuse on the Mother and Child Relationship.* In: Multiple Early Childhood Identities. Thinking about Pedagogy in Early Childhood Education . Routledge, London, pp. 172-184. ISBN 9780367001339 (paperback) 9780367001315 (hardback) 9780429444357 (e-Book)

Permanent WRaP URL: https://eprints.worc.ac.uk/id/eprint/9150

Publisher's statement:

This is an Accepted Manuscript of a book chapter published by Routledge in *Multiple childhood* Identities on 5 June 2019, available online: https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429444357

Thinking About Pedagogy in Early Education: Multiple Childhood Identities

Section Four: Working with systems

Author: Claire Majella Richards

Chapter Title

Looking Back in Anger: the impact of Domestic Violence and Abuse on the Mother and Child Relationship.

The chapter will examine the impact of Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) on the mother and child relationship, and this focus will include a consideration of professional assumptions that abused mothers have reduced capacity to care for and protect their children. Douglas and Walsh (2010) highlight how mothers as victims of DVA are viewed as being un-protective of their children, especially where they remain in a violent relationship. This point has considerable implications for a mother as a victim, because the fear of her intimate partner may be further exacerbated by a fear of being judged by professionals, where an ultimatum might be to "leave him or lose the child". The chapter aims to challenge the risks of assumptions and judgements about vulnerable women as mothers in the context of DVA, and will discuss the research evidence of protective strategies women use in the active protection of their children. This includes a need for a better understanding by all professionals working with children and their families as to why a mother "does not just leave", as the point of leaving or having left an abusive relationship is the most dangerous (Fleury, Sullivan & Bybee, 2000; Kim & Gray, 2008). The chapter will also consider the links to DVA and the impact on young children and examine the issues related to trauma in early childhood, and the role of early help by agencies in supporting mothers and their children. The issue of childhood identities is considered in the context of the increasing recognition of the adverse experiences of living with DVA has on children, who may develop anxiety, depression, anger and aggression or symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Øverlien, 2010). Similarly, with the focus on childhood identities, the chapter acknowledges the belief that children who witness this experience of violence between their parents or carers, may develop traits of victim or perpetrator attitudes and behaviours within their own intimate relationships in adolescence and adulthood.

The scale of the problem of Domestic Violence and Abuse

Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) is a serious and pervasive global problem that affects women as the majority of its primary victims (García-Moreno, Pallitto, Devries, Stöckl, Watts, Abrahams & Petzold, 2013 & Romito, 2008), while children are also recognised as victims in their direct and indirect experiences of witnessing DVA within a violent household (Morrison, 2015; Ocenasova & Smitkova, 2018, Øverlein, 2017). The area of violence studies, in particular DVA, hereon referred to as "domestic abuse", has consistently raised a better understanding of the impact of violence and abuse on women and their children

(Radford et al. 2011 & Wherry et al. 2015). One in four women may be affected by this concern and one in six men (DoH, 2013). This issue is further compounded by the realities of children and young people who are caught in the destructive dynamics of witnessing violence and who may be directly affected by this abuse. It is estimated that 133-275 million children worldwide witness domestic violence each year, (O'Brien, Cohen, Pooley & Taylor, 2013). Therefore, there is a critical significance for early childhood educators and practitioners in understanding the impact of domestic abuse on children's formation of their own identities and how they view and relate to others in their world.

Since the 1970's, on the wave of feminist politics and activism on a worldwide scale, the issue of violence against women has gradually been recognised as a human rights concern through drafts of legislation, policy development and service provision. Most notable amongst these provisions in 2011 was the Council of Europe *Convention on Preventing and Combatting Violence against Women and Domestic Violence*, otherwise known as the 'Istanbul Convention' which came into force in 2014. Each member State signatory committed to enacting law and policy to address violence against women, including domestic abuse. The Convention is recognised as the most comprehensive and effective international legal instrument to be developed in recent decades. Subsequently, since 2017 the UK is preparing to ratify the Convention and is incorporating its provisions within domestic law and policy. Domestic abuse comprises a series of violent and abusive acts which are characterised by the corrosive effects of control and coercion on a woman and child. In recognising and responding to the impact of domestic abuse, the UK adopted a cross-governmental definition to promote a shared agency and practitioner understanding to promote more effective responses to victims.

The current UK Home Office (2013) definition (which at the time of writing is currently under review alongside drafting of the Domestic Violence and Abuse Bill) describes domestic abuse as:

> Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of age, gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse: psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional (p.2).

Controlling and Coercive behaviours are described as follows:

> Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour. [While] Coercive behaviour is an act or pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation or intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish or frighten their victim (Home Office, 2013, p. 2).

The above definitions do not directly name the experiences of children under the age of 16 years of age however, research has identified the overlap of the experiences of women and children in the mutual victimhood of their lives (Katz, 2016 & Mullender, Hague, Imam, Kelly, Malos & Regan, 2002). There are numerous definitions of domestic abuse but O'Brien et al. (2013, p. 96) suggest that they "do not go near to capturing the totality of the horror and shame child witnesses typically experience."

2

Researchers and practitioners in the past may have overlooked the individual experiences of trauma on children, and the focus by child protection practitioners has been, and arguably continues to be on how mothers are expected to protect their children from their abusive partners. Children historically have been rendered as silent or viewed as passive amid the abusive dynamics of the violent home (Mullender et al., 2002). This viewpoint needs to be revisited and challenged in terms of our thinking and practice as we endeavour to truly understand the destructive nature of domestic abuse within the family, and the protective strategies women and children collaborate and operate together in avoiding or attempting to reduce the onset and impact of abuse in their lives.

In recognition of the shared experiences of domestic abuse between a mother and her child, the various narratives of young children encapsulate the complexities and challenges of their relationships with their mother and their father or her abusive partner. These dynamics and the associated trauma are intensified by the child's perceived threats of, or the realities of, formal outside interventions by agencies within their family home. The intersectionality of domestic abuse highlights the multiple layers of victim identity in the initial context of race, with intersections of culture, sexuality, class or disability (Crenshaw, 1993). There is a need for early childhood practitioners to understand the additional risk and needs of children as victims and the influence of these factors on their overall development and learning. Women and their children may experience discrimination and exclusion because of prejudice and judgements about their status as "victim'" in terms of vulnerability, need or even if "deserving" of a service. What becomes apparent in terms of the literature on mothers' and their children's experiences of domestic abuse is the significance of a positive relationship between the mother and child (Katz, 2016) and the protectiveness of mothers in trying to create a home without violence, separating the child from the violence, or attempting to separate from the violent partner (Moulding, Buchanan & Wendt, 2015; Ocenasova & Smitkova, 2018). This may include their attempts to mitigate their negative experiences by professionals who sometimes, can overlook or misunderstand the bond of protection between some mothers and their children that strengthens their relationship.

Violence as an Abuse of Power

Domestic abuse is inextricably linked to an abuse of power within the intimate relationship and the effects of the abuse are recognised by the imbalance of power within the relationship. Violence, or the threat of violence may be used as means of exerting power over another person. Foucault (1994) writes of power and the use of violence as follows:

> A relationship of violence acts upon a body or upon things; it forces, it bends, it breaks, it destroys, or it closes off all possibilities. Its opposite pole can only be passivity, and if it comes up against any resistance it has no other option but to break it down (p.340).

Although Foucault may not have had the experience of domestic abuse in mind when he wrote about the use of violence, there is a striking relevance in this description and its application to what we understand about intimate partner violence. His graphic description of the impact

of violence on the victim reinforces the experience of associated terror. He suggests that the only response to such violence (or terror) is submission or compliance, in order to stop the violence or to avoid further use of violence. The reference to breaking down the subject of the violence (the victim of domestic abuse), is potent as in doing so is to command absolute power over the victim/s and to render them powerless. Yet, victims or survivors of domestic abuse, women and children, may oppose these references to "passivity" or "break down", as much of their coping with violence and avoiding violence depends on their reliance on each other as mother and children in terms of their resilience and coping strategies (Øverlien, 2017). This point will be discussed further below.

Violence as a Form of Control

Domestic abuse comprises many forms of violence and abuse towards a mother and child, but coercive control, is a central component in the context of dominating and attempting to regulate their lives in all aspects of daily living. This facet of domestic abuse is particularly harmful and destructive to the mother as her life is consumed by the whims and wishes, rules and regulations of her partner that govern her life within and beyond the home. The fear or threat of violence is a constant reality due to the risk of dire consequences of not complying with the household rules or demands. Stark (2009) describes how,

> Coercive control extends women's already diminished personhood and decisional autonomy in families and relationships into a comprehensive form of regulating whether and how they express themselves in every arena of existence (p.1513).

Stark refers to the major restrictions imposed on the life of the woman as a victim; being affected and controlled in terms of emotional regulation, finances, education, family and relationships, employment or how she mothers her children. The literature on the impact of coercive control has primarily focused on women as victims, but more recently, authors such as Katz (2016) has considered the impact of this experience on children. She identifies how pervasive and controlling non-violent forms of abuse by the perpetrator, can negatively affect the relationship the child has with their mother, such as restricting or stopping visiting relatives or friends, "going on 'days out 'or, participating in extra-curricular activities" (p.47). Similarly, Morris (2009) has previously described the concept of Abusive Household Gender Regime (AHGR) in the context of maternal alienation. It damages the relationship between mother and child by the perpetrator's tactics of control using gendered stereotypes and behaviours that privilege men over women, and "manipulate degrading and dehumanising constructions of mothers as irrational, lying, monstrous and unloving"(p.417). The dominance of the father's position in the family, through words and behaviours to the mother and child potentially programmes them (mother and child) to believe they are at fault for all the problems in the household and, their fears or experiences are diminished as not important. Morris (2009) refers to the toxic power of AHGR on women and children's realities as it permeates all aspects of their daily lives, from waking to sleeping, thinking and doing, eroding their sense of reality and identity. This can also relate to the perpetrator's strict expectations about gender roles and identities in the family; the demands of a mother and the fear of girls' and boys' not fulfilling the expectations of femininity and masculinity; for example, rigid gender norms that prescribe how children should behave; girls as weak, submissive and compliant and boys as being loud, forceful and strong.

Women's and Children's Victim and Survivor Identities

The concept of the "cycle of violence" (Ireland & Smith, 2009) inspired by Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1978; Pagelow, 1984) offers a perspective on the impact of domestic abuse between parents/carers on their children, as an indicator of peer bullying, adolescent dating violence or, violence in future adult intimate relationships. The concern that children who are victimised and abused may grow to become future victims or perpetrators consequent to the violence they have witnessed and accommodated as a norm, is a challenge to early childhood education and care services. The learned and assumed identities as victim or perpetrator is also interchangeable within a range of family contexts and dynamics, children are more likely to have difficult interactions with their siblings and their peers based on bullying and conflict (Hoffman, Kielcolt & Edwards, 2005). However, educators and practitioners alike should take account of Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1978) where children also learn by observing behaviours of their carers and teachers who demonstrate kindness, compassion and empathy. These attitudes of tolerance and respect can be highly influential in offering alternative ways of being for children who have limited positive reference points within their home environment.

As mentioned previously, there is emerging research about the survival strategies used by women and children in avoiding or attempting to reduce the impact of violence and abuse. The research evidence challenges some of the thinking about the assumptions of victims' passivity and emphasises their own agency in surviving their daily experiences of domestic abuse. There are assumptions at large about women who stay in abusive relationships as being helpless or tolerant of the abuse, this also leads to criticisms of their care for their children by child protection agencies (Douglas and Walsh, 2010 & Fleury et al. 2000). Likewise, there are assumptions that violence ends when women leave an abusive relationship, but in reality, violence is more likely to escalate in severity and risk (Douglas and Walsh, 2010). Economic dependence on the abusive partner is often cited as the primary reason women stay in the relationship; this is where the partner controls the finances of the family. Although women also say they fear leaving because of the risk to the children and other family members when the violence and threats escalate (Kim & Gray, 2008). A woman may prefer the uneasy reassurance in knowing where her partner is and can better anticipate and deal with his behaviour than the uncertainty of *not* knowing where he is, if she leaves the family home with her children. A picture begins to emerge of the critical decisions a mother has to make on a daily basis in order to protect her children and herself.

This resilience and coping is also recognised within the worlds and behaviours of children living with domestic abuse. These children can be seen as social agents in how they negotiate the threat of violence or abuse, in attempting to protect their mother, distract or appease their father/step-father or their mother's partner. Øverlien (2017) captures some of the remarkable efforts of children in such chaotic and fearful circumstances as she describes how children skip school to be at home to look after their mother, or stay up at night until they are certain their father has gone to sleep. Young children may call the police for help or, try to calm their father by pleading with him to stop. Of course, the impact on babies and young children is more concerning as they are not able to process or understand the event of

violence, other than witnessing and living the fear and experience of the trauma of abuse. Mothers may mitigate this impact on their baby by leaving their child with family or neighbours as a protective strategy, if violence is anticipated. Katz (2016) refers to children's resistance to violence and their father's attempt to isolate them from their mother. Consequently, children try to make the most of their time alone with their mother. They watch films together, go to the park, or "make pretend cups of tea with a plastic kitchen set" (p.56) all in secrecy as a semblance of some normality in their family life.

Despite increased awareness about the impact of domestic abuse as a gender-based crime and public health concern (WHO, 2009) and assurances to women of a more positive response from agencies, including non-judgemental attitudes by child protection agencies, women remain anxious that their children will be removed from their care (Douglas and Walsh, 2010). Women as mothers are enmeshed in feminine gender identity; this perception surrounds prevalent societal expectations across many cultures of what it means to be a "good mother". The problem of domestic abuse where mothers remain in an abusive relationship creates conflict with society's expectations about caring and protective mothers. This includes professional expectations, where mother-blaming becomes apparent and the woman is blamed for "failing to protect" her children. There is undue focus on the mother as the non-abusive parent, being blamed for the violence, while there is poor focus or accountability on the father/partner as the perpetrator (Moulding et al. 2015). One particularly concerning feature of coercive control as part of domestic abuse on women and children is their perceived lack of power or autonomy within themselves, their home life and beyond. The freedom to think and act and to have a voice can be greatly compromised; this oppression can lead to negative self-perceptions and self-esteem that filters into all aspects of their lives, including a reduced sense of aspiration or "daring to dream" of a better life.

Implications for Professional Practice

Working with families where domestic abuse is known to be the lived experience of the members of a household, either as victims or perpetrators, is a stressful, exhausting and worrying experience for the professionals who may be involved with the family. The multi-agency response in terms of risk assessment, information sharing and good communication is an important aspect of working together to protect vulnerable children living with domestic abuse. There is a need for a greater understanding of the concept and impact of power and coercive control by practitioners in the context of domestic abuse and its effect on women and children. It is also important for early childhood practitioners and educators to be mindful of the reluctance of mothers to seek the help of support agencies for fear of mother-blaming attitudes. Hence, she may be more likely to rely on informal support strategies such as family and friends, and as a result the family may not be known to formal child protection agencies, until the event of an emergency call out by the police or ambulance service. When we consider the concept of coercive control in a family, violence may never be present, but the threat of violence is very real. Mothers and children in this instance are more likely to remain unknown and under the radar of protection agencies. Finzi-Dottan, Goldblatt, & Cohen-Masica, (2012) emphasise the importance of responding to the needs of "alienated children" (p.324) who are often under immense pressure from the father and his family to reject their mother and to be critical of her. This results in children feeling confused, traumatised, guilty or angry, having to make a choice between parents. This pressure of choice is further inflicted by professionals

who make decisions about which parent a child should live with, and this ironically, is not necessarily the mother, who is the non-abusive parent. These are complex and challenging family dynamics. In order to improve understanding by practitioners of how power operates in abusive households, there is a need for regular quality training about domestic abuse and access to good professional supervision (Richards, 2011), to ensure and uphold good practice and sound decision making within a team, and with other child and adult protection practitioners.

Nixon, Bonnycastle & Ens, (2017) highlight the significance of asking mothers as victims of domestic abuse how they manage to protect their children; this has a different nuance to a question which suggests that she fails to do so. The approach can tentatively acknowledge the resourcefulness of women as mothers within controlling and abusive relationships and, may instil some confidence in her self-belief and identity as a mother. Where domestic abuse is suspected, it may be a simple but effective intervention and signal of support by a practitioner in asking a mother how she is and, how she is managing as a parent. A sensitive register of concern may not necessarily yield an immediate disclosure of DVA by a woman, but it does highlight concern for her well-being as a parent and for the welfare of her children. Relationships of trust and openness are important but this commitment does take time, and a mother will speak only when she is ready to do so. Moulding et al. (2015) mention the importance of explaining to women that they are not responsible for the domestic abuse in their family as women tend to blame themselves, as does their abusive partner. These messages to women are further compounded by wider societal perceptions of 'good mothers' and mother-blaming stances by professionals. The authors also encourage this dialogue between mothers and their children to re-examine and challenge the "expectations of fatherhood and the unacceptability of violence"(p.258) [in any circumstances]. These discussions are indicated as being vital in restoring the mother-child relationship and in their mutual recovery from violence where separation from the abusive father/partner has occurred. Practitioners have an important role in supporting mothers still living with domestic abuse to keep their children safe and strengthen their relationship with each other by encouraging a dialogue about their feelings and worries. Similarly, accountability and focus must be placed with the perpetrator for their abusive and controlling behaviours. All interventions with perpetrators of domestic abuse within a multi-agency response, require appropriate risk assessment measures and law-enforcement as necessary. This approach is a signal to perpetrators of the non-acceptability of violence and abuse, where there is no collusion or minimising by professionals towards the abusive behaviours and the impact on children within the family.

Conclusion

The chapter has sought to challenge and reframe some of the assumptions about women as mothers in the context of domestic abuse. The attitudes that may prevail about failing to protect their children need to be challenged in view of the research and literature, which describe a range of protective strategies mothers may use to limit the impact of violence and abuse on their children. There is little doubt about the damaging effects of DVA on the well-being and identity of children who may endure this experience from their early childhood years, to middle childhood and on to adolescence. Despite the gravity and severity of living

with AHGR (Morris, 2009) we are reminded of the resilience and survival strategies deployed by children with their mothers in trying to avoid or reduce the impact of abuse in their lives (Katz, 2016; Nixon et al. 2017 & Ocenasova & Smitkova, 2018). There is no room for professional complacency about the apparent resilience of some children living with DVA. O'Brien et al. (2013) suggest that resilience is not a natural character trait of a child but is a process of accruing essential coping skills when dealing with adversities in their lives. Early childhood practitioners need to be critically aware of the importance of building a supportive and understanding rapport with children and their mothers. There is a need to be acutely aware of our "power" as outsiders to the family and how we use this power for the good, listening respectfully and without judgement to children and their experiences. When we reflect on our own positions of authority or influence, it is our duty to advocate for the needs and interests of those who may seem to be less powerful or who have less of a voice. An approach of responding effectively and sensitively to the needs of children and their mothers, enables children to fare better in the knowledge that there are safe and reliable adults in their world. Knowing that they have been listened to properly and attentively, and the importance of the bond with their mothers in surviving domestic violence and abuse is acknowledged and valued. Subsequently, these children may be less likely to look back in anger at the failings of practitioners and agencies.

Questions for Reflection

1. *Why are women as mothers "expected" to protect their children from the effects of domestic abuse? Think about this question in the context of gender identity and the associated roles and expectations of women as mothers, by culture and society.*

2. *What are your thoughts of the expression "failure to protect" and mother-blaming responses by professionals in child protection practice? How should you intervene positively, advocating for the protection needs of the child, while attempting to avoid mother-blaming attitudes?*

3. *What do you consider to be your professional strengths and skills in supporting mothers and children of DVA in your practice? What additional support do you need to improve your knowledge and skills in this area of practice? How can you access the additional support or resources?*

Reference List.

Bandura, A. (1978) Learning and behavioural theories of aggression. In I. L. Kutash, S.B. Kutash, L.B. Schlesinger & Associates (Eds.). *Violence: Perspectives on murder and aggression* (pp. 29-57). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Crenshaw, K. (1993). Race, gender and violence against women. In, Minow, M. (Ed) *Family matters: readings on family lives and the law.* (pp.230-232). New York: New Press.

Department of Health (2013). Health Visiting and School Nursing Programmes: Supporting implementation of the new service model. [Online] http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/   [Accessed 30 May 2018]

Douglas, H. & Walsh, T. (2010). Mothers, Domestic Violence and Child Protection. *Violence Against Women.* 16(5), 489- 508.

Finzi-Dottan, R., Goldblatt, H. & Cohen-Masica, O. (2012). The experience of motherhood for alienated mothers. *Child & Family Social Work*. 17, 316-325.

Fleury, R.E., Sullivan, C.M., & Bybee, D.I. (2000). When Ending the Relationship Does Not End the Violence. *Violence Against Women*. 6(12), 1363-1383.

Foucault M. (1994). *Power. Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984.* Faubian, D. (Ed.) London: Penguin Books.

Garcia-Moreno,C., Pallitto, C., Devries, K., Stöckl, H., Watts, C., Abrahams, N. & Petzold, M. (2013*.) Global and regional estimates of violence against women: prevalence and effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence*. Geneva: World Health Organisation.

Home Office (2013). Information for Local Areas on the change to the definition of Domestic Violence and Abuse. Retrieved from https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/142701/guide-on-definition-of-dv.pdf   [Accessed 4th June 2018]

Hoffman, K.L. Kielcolt, K.L. & Edwards, J.N. (2005). Physical Violence Between Siblings. A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis. *Journal of Family Issues*, 26,8, 1103-1130.

Ireland, T.O. & Smith, C.A. (2009). Living in Partner-violent families: Developmental Links to Anti-social Behaviour and Relationship Violence. *Journal of Youth Adolescence*, 38, 323-339.

Katz, E. (2016). Beyond the Physical Incident Model: How Children Living with Domestic Violence are Harmed By and Resist Regimes of Coercive Control. *Child Abuse Review*. 25, 46-59.

Kim, J. & Gray, K.A. (2008). Leave or Stay? Battered Women's Decisions after Intimate Partner

Violence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. 23(10), 1465-1482.

Moulding, N.T., Buchanan, F. & Wendt, S. (2015). Untangling Self-Blame and Mother-Blame in Women's and Children's Perspectives on Maternal Protectiveness in Domestic Violence: Implications for Practice. *Child Abuse Review*. 24(4), 249-260.

Mullender, A., Hague, G., Imam, U., Kelly, L., Malos, E., & Regan, L. (2002). *Children's Perspectives on Domestic Violence.* London: Sage.

Morris, A. (2009). Gendered Dynamics of Abuse and Violence in Families: Considering the Abusive Household Gender Regime. *Child Abuse Review*. 18, 414-427.

Morrison, A. (2015). 'All Over Now?' The Ongoing Relational Consequences of Domestic Abuse through Children's Contact Arrangements. *Child Abuse Review*. 24, 274-284.

Nixon, K.L., Bonnycastle, C. & Ens, S. (2017). Challenging the Notion of Failure to Protect: Exploring the Protective Strategies of Abused Mothers Living in Urban and Remote Communities and Implications for Practice. *Child Abuse Review*. 26, 63-74.

Ocenasova, Z. & Smitkova, H. (2018). Mother-Child Relationship in the Context of Intimate Partner Violence. In, Holt, S., Øverlien, C. & Devaney (Eds.) *Responding to Domestic Violence. Emerging Challenges for Policy, Practice and Research in Europe*. (pp.61-76), London, Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Øverlien, C. (2010). 'Children exposed to domestic violence.' *Journal of Social Work.* 10 (1) 80-97.

Øverlien, C. (2017). 'Do you want to do some arm wrestling?' children's strategies when experiencing domestic violence and the meaning of age. *Child & Family Social Work*. 22, 680-688.

O'Brien, K.L., Cohen, L., Pooley, J.A. & Taylor, M.F. (2013). Lifting the Domestic Violence Cloak of Silence: Resilient Australian Women's Reflected Memories of their Childhood Experiences of Witnessing Domestic Violence. *Journal of Family Violence.* 28, 95-108.

Pagelow, M.D. (1984.) *Family violence*. New York: Praeger.

Radford, L., Corral, S., Bradley, C., Fisher, H., Bassett, C., Howat, N. & Collishaw. (2011. *Child Abuse and Neglect in the UK Today*. London: NSPCC.

Richards, C. (2011. Quality Matters because Quality Protects. In, Reed, M. & Canning, N. (eds.) *Quality Improvement in the Early Years*. London, Sage.

Romito, P. (2008). *A Deafening Silence, Hidden violence against women and children*. Bristol: The Policy Press.

Stark, E. (2009). Rethinking *Coercive Control*. *Violence Against Women*. 15(12) 1509-1525.

Wherry, J.N., Medford, M.A. & Corson, K. (2015). Symptomatology of Children Exposed to Domestic Violence. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Trauma*. 8, 277-285.

World Health Organisation (2009). *Violence Prevention: the evidence. Changing cultural and social norms that support violence*. Geneva: WHO. Retrieved from http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/norms.pdf [accessed 5th June 2018]