



# The Harm to Older Persons Evaluation (HOPE)

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# Outline

- Day 1
  - Older adult abuse background – (pre-session video)
  - Violence risk assessment
    - Definitions, theoretical basis, goals
    - Types and accuracy (video)
  - Violence risk management
    - Definitions, principles, and strategies
- Day 2
  - The Harm to Older Persons Evaluation (HOPE)
  - Practice Case 1 (Justin & Dorothy) (pre-reading)
- Day 3
  - Practice Case 2 (TAN) (pre-reading) and discussion

# Landscape Leading to Violence Risk Assessment

The background image shows a landscape divided into two contrasting parts. On the left, there is a lush green field of tall grass. On the right, the ground is parched and cracked, forming a mosaic of dark, irregular polygons. The sky is a dark, overcast grey, suggesting a storm or a gloomy atmosphere. The overall scene conveys a sense of environmental stress and potential conflict.

# Older Adult Abuse: Landscape

- Less research and attention than other family violence (IPV 30 years ago).
- Recent increase in attention:
  - By 2025 the population 65+ is projected to more than double from 1995
  - By 2050, 2 billion people will be 60+, up from 900 million in 2015
  - Family dynamics are changing:
    - Unclear caregiving responsibilities
    - Living separately
    - Living longer (more and longer need for care)
  - Result is an environment more conducive to older adult abuse.

# Older Adult Abuse: Risk Assessment

- Many screening tools
  - Aim to identify abuse (assume no reporting)
  - Assess via victim, perpetrator or observation
- What do we do when abuse is identified?
  - Which perpetrators are likely to continue the abuse?
  - Who will escalate from threats to assault, or from assault to life-threatening violence?
  - Who will act imminently?
  - How do we select and allocate management strategies?

## Elder Abuse Assessment Tools and Interventions for use in the Home Environment: a Scoping Review

This article was published in the following Dove Press journal: Clinical Interventions in Aging

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**Background and Aims:** Caregivers in the home environment have an important role in timely detecting and responding to abuse. The aim of this review was to provide insight into both the existing tools for the assessment of and interventions for elder abuse by formal and informal caregivers in the home environment, and to categorize them according to a public health perspective, into primary, secondary, tertiary or quaternary prevention.

**Methods:** We selected the assessment tools and interventions that can be used by caregivers in the home environment included in previous reviews by Galloise et al (2017) and Fearng et al (2017). To identify published studies after these reviews, a search was performed using PubMed, Cochrane Database, CINAHL and Web of Science.

**Results:** In total, fifteen assessment tools and twelve interventions were included. The number of assessment tools for elder abuse for use in the home environment is increasing; however, tools must be validated over different cultures and risk groups. In addition, the tools lack attention for the needs of vulnerable older persons such as persons with dementia. Existing interventions for caregivers in the home environment lack evidence for addressing elder abuse and do not address potential adverse effects (quaternary prevention).

**Conclusion:** Assessment tools for elder abuse need further testing for validity and reliability for use by caregivers in the home environment. For interventions, meaningful outcome measures are needed. Important to note is that quaternary prevention requires more attention. This argues for taking into account perspectives of (abused) older persons and caregivers in the development of assessment tools and interventions protocols.

**Keywords:** caregivers, elder abuse management, prevention, assessment tools, interventions, review

## Are risk assessment tools more accurate than unstructured judgments in predicting violent, any, and sexual offending? A meta-analysis of direct comparison studies

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**Funding Information:** Simon Fraser University/Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada's Institutional Grants Program, Grant/Award Number: 23142

### Abstract

We conducted a pre-registered meta-analysis of studies that directly compared the predictive validity of risk assessment tools to unstructured judgments of risk for violent, any, or sexual offending. A total of 31 studies, containing 169 effect sizes from 45,673 risk judgments, met inclusion criteria. Based on the results of three-level mixed-effects meta-regression models, the predictive validity of total scores on risk assessment tools was significantly higher than that of unstructured judgments for predictions of violent, any, and sexual offending. Tools continued to outperform unstructured judgments after accounting for risk of bias. This finding was also robust to variations in population, assessment context, and outcome measure.

# Violence Risk Assessment

# What is Violence Risk Assessment?

- Aka threat assessment/management
- Critical part of decision making in clinical practice, criminal, and civil justice settings. E.g.,
  - Peace bond
  - Charge and bail
  - Commitment and release
  - Institutional and community management
  - Victim safety planning

Other ideas?

Please add them to the chat!

# What's a Risk?

- A risk or threat is a hazard that is *incompletely understood* and thus can be forecast only with *uncertainty*
  - Risk is context dependent, so we must consider numerous factors when we make judgments about future risk
    - What kind of violence?
    - How serious?
    - How often?
    - How soon?
    - How likely?
  - Judgements are speculative and will change with intervention

# What's Violence?

- Our definition:

“Actual, attempted, or threatened physical or serious psychological harm, either deliberate or reckless, of vulnerable older people that is unauthorized and perpetrated by individuals who are in positions of trust, responsibility, or authority with respect to the vulnerable older person.”

- Actual, attempted, or threatened
  - Includes fear-inducing behavior
- Physical or serious psychological harm
- Deliberate or reckless
  - Act or lack of action
- Unauthorized
  - Includes victims who cannot give full, informed consent

# Theory & Influences of Violence

- Decision/Action theory
  - The proximal cause of violence is a decision to act (i.e., is not random)
    - A choice (fast or slow) by the perpetrator of who, what, when and where
- Influences are biological, psychological and social

# Implications

- If it's a choice
  - Violence is not unpredictable or uncontrollable & is manageable
  - Just another form of human behaviour
- If it's influenced by various factors
  - We need to understand the choice and the factors that led to it
  - And identify if these factors will converge and lead to similar choices in future
    - These are our risk factors
  - By managing/mitigating/removing those factors we can encourage decisions to act non-violently (change the usual decision-making process)

# What's Assessment?

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- Gathering information to assist in decision making
  - Not simply providing a diagnosis or prognosis

Purpose-  
driven

Case-  
driven

Wide-  
ranging

# Violence Risk Assessment

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Characterize the risk that someone will commit violence in the future.

Develop interventions to manage or reduce their violence risk.

# Goals of Risk Assessment

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- 1) Violence prevention via guided intervention
  - Minimize the *likelihood* of violence
  - Minimize *consequences* to victim (target hardening)
  - Identify risk factors → risk → management strategies
- 2) Increase consistent decisions
  - Across professionals and over time
- 3) Improve transparency of decisions
  - Demonstrates how decisions were made
  - Protects the accused and the decision maker

# Nature of Violence Risk Assessment

# Risk Assessment is Complex

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- Violence risk has many facets
  - Nature – What kinds of violence?
  - Severity – How serious?
  - Frequency – How often?
  - Imminence – How soon?
  - Likelihood – With what probability?
- Risk judgments must address all components, not just probability, to provide a comprehensive assessment.

# Risk Assessment is Contextual

- We never know a person's risk for violence; we merely estimate it assuming various conditions
  - Perpetrator: Assuming institutionalization, assuming release with supervision and treatment requirement...
  - Victim: Assuming they will not contact the perpetrator, assuming they have ongoing support...
- Thus, *relative or conditional* risk judgments are more realistic than *absolute or probabilistic* risk judgments...

# Context Rich Judgements

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## 1) **Relative** risk judgment

- The perpetrator is high risk compared to other ongoing cases.
- The perpetrator's risk is reduced after completing treatment (compared to themselves).

## 2) **Conditional** risk judgement

- Current conditions/environment
  - The offender's risk will remain low while he is under the court's supervision.
- Possible future scenarios
  - If the offender refuses to take his medication and resumes his substance use his risk for violence will be high.

# Context Poor Judgements

## 3) **Absolute** risk judgment (not based on future conditions)

- The offender will engage in future violence.
- The offender is low risk for future violence.

## 4) **Probabilistic** estimate

- The offender has a 65% chance of violence over the next 10 years.

### ▪ Problems:

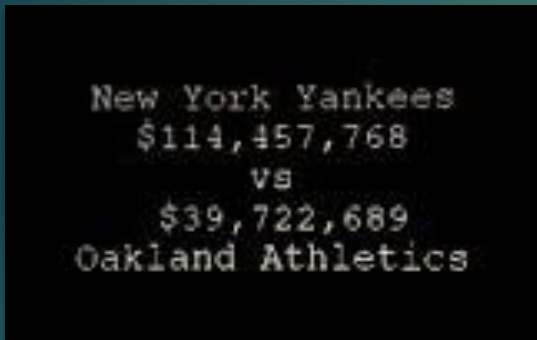
- Based on group data (from past decades)
- Numbers fail to provide
  - Meaning
  - Type or level of intervention

# Structured Professional Judgement (SPJ)

- Information is gathered, weighted, and combined according to the evaluator's judgment.
- Structure is Imposed on the: evaluator, evaluation process, and decision-making process.
- Risk factors are dynamic (changeable)
  - E.g., substance abuse, mental health problems
- Includes guided development of management plans.
- Includes guided determination of risk level.

# Impossibilities of Violence Risk Assessment

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New York Yankees  
\$114,457,768  
vs  
\$39,722,689  
Oakland Athletics



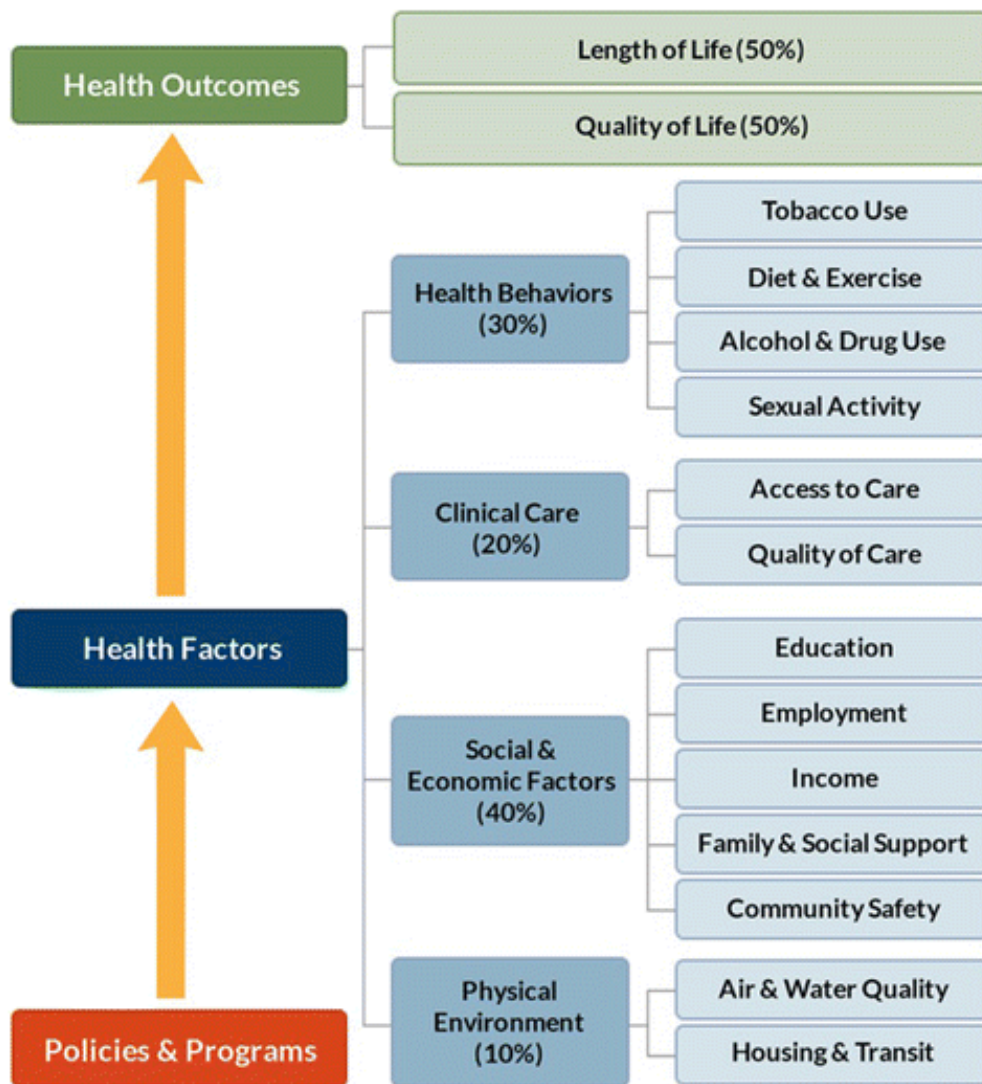
- Highly certain and specific predictions about individuals are impossible, violence is too complex
  - It's a transactional process between people or between people and environments that changes and evolves over time.
  - We must estimate violence risk assuming certain contexts
    - E.g., if released, with support, on medication
- This is what makes management so important

# Violence Risk Management

# Risk Prevention

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- Planning to prevent an event or minimize its impact
- We do this all the time
  - Getting sick (COVID precautions)
- Cannot do this based on a numerical prediction
  - No information on how to alter the risk or avoid the bad outcome (e.g., illness)
  - Need more information about the specific individuals and the type of risk to create a good plan
    - SPJ benefit: more and dynamic risk factors provides scope for targeted management and change



County Health Rankings model © 2014 UWPHI

# Model of Population Health

# Risk Management Challenges

- Little research on what works
  - Unfortunate since goal of risk assessment is prevention (not prediction).
- Must consider, the perpetrator, victim, & environment/society around them.
- Must be adaptable based on changes in risk, the victim, & the environment.
- Must also manage many aspects of a perpetrator's life and problems.
  - Requires the involvement and coordination of many agencies



# Scenario Example

- Alice is 80 and living with her two 40-year-old son's who are addicted to crack cocaine. Alice is financially supporting her sons and going to a dangerous neighbourhood to buy drugs for them. Alice's neighbour has noticed bruising on Alice's arms and reports this to police.
- What kind of intervention and management do you think is needed to reduce the risk of future harm?

# Scenario Management

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- From 3 sentences we can surmise that;
  - The sons need substance abuse treatment
  - The sons need assistance or vocational training to obtain employment and/or income support
  - If physical abuse is confirmed the sons
    - Require relocation
    - Require treatment (e.g., anger management)
  - The sons may need relationship counselling
  - Alice needs an advocate or counselling to recognise the danger that she is putting herself in when she buys drugs
  - Alice needs a victim advocate to help her understand any legal processes, and learn how to protect herself
  - Alice may need an advocate to identify what she wants

Other ideas?

# Principles of Risk Management

1. Develop an explicit, assessment-based management plan
  - Each important risk factor should be tied to one or more management strategy
  - Strategies should be translated to tactics
  - The plan should be detailed and distributed widely
  - The plan should be active
  - The plan should have target dates for review and revision





# Principles of Risk Management

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## 2. Establish a team

- Aim is to deliver comprehensive and integrated services
- Composition should depend on the perpetrator(s) and the risks they pose and victim needs
- Roles and responsibilities of team members (i.e., agencies, individuals) should be made explicit
  - Including documentation, communication and coordination
- The team should include victims or designated liaisons

# Management Strategies

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## Monitoring

- Surveillance or repeated assessment

## Treatment

- Rehabilitation, including further assessment

## Supervision

- Imposition of controls or restriction of freedoms

## Victim Safety Planning

- Enhancement of security resources for identifiable targets

## Community and Institutional Supports

- Strengthening or improving coordination of community supports/resources

# Monitoring

- Goal - evaluate changes in risk over time so that management strategies can be revised when appropriate. E.g.:
  - If the perpetrator begins using substances again
  - If they begin to voice homicidal ideation
- Delivery - range of mental health, social service, health, caregiving, law enforcement, corrections, and security professionals.

# Monitoring Tactic Examples

- Checking in (e.g., face-to-face or telephone)
  - Perpetrator, victims, and other relevant people
- Field visits (e.g., at home or work)
- Checking the state of the home (e.g., cleanliness, clutter, food)
- Inspection of mail, financial statements or communications
- Electronic surveillance (e.g., GPS, ankle bracelet)
- Physiological evaluation (e.g., urine, blood)

What else to you do currently that would fit under monitoring? Please add tactics to the chat!

# Monitoring Tactics

- Specify the type and frequency of contacts required
  - Weekly face-to-face visits, daily phone contacts, monthly assessments etc.
- Specify “triggers” or “red flags” to monitor for that signal imminent or escalating risk
  - Anniversary dates, perpetrator loses job and likely to turn to victim for money, court decisions.

# Treatment

- Goal - improve deficits in the perpetrator's psychosocial adjustment.
- Delivery - typically health/mental health care and social service professionals:
  - Inpatient or outpatient clinics, agencies, support groups, counseling providers

# Treatment Tactic Examples

- Treatments for mental disorder
  - Individual, group, or family psychotherapy
  - Psychoactive medications
- Attitude change
  - Psychoeducational programs (IPV, sex offender)
- Social skills training programs
  - Interpersonal, anger, vocational programs, caregiver support, education around cognitive decline to help expectations and responses
- Stress reduction
  - Crisis, employment, relationship counseling

Are there other treatment options that you are aware of? Please add them to the chat!

# Treatment Tactics

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- Should be multi-method where possible
  - E.g., individual, group treatment, and reading
- Target deficits that are causally related to the perpetrator's harmful behavior
  - Risks or criminogenic needs
    - E.g., anger, attitudes toward older adults
- Maximize perpetrator's ability to learn from intervention
  - Responsivity
    - E.g., ability to read and comprehend, learning style, motivation

# Supervision

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- Goal - make it (more) difficult for the perpetrator to engage in further violence
- Delivery - typically law enforcement, corrections, legal, and security professionals
  - In institutions or the community
- Key difference from monitoring
  - Monitoring – aim is surveillance
  - Supervision – aim is controlling or stopping behaviour

# Supervision Tactic Examples

- Incapacitation
  - E.g., prison, forensic hospital
- Community supervision
  - E.g., court order, probation with restrictions on:
    - Activity (e.g., no go 1 km of victim's residence)
    - Movement (e.g., house arrest)
    - Association (e.g., criminal associates)
    - Communication (e.g., no contact victim)

What else to you do currently that would fit under supervision? Please add tactics to the chat!

# Supervision Tactics

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- Implemented at a level of intensity that matches the degree of risk posed by the perpetrator
  - Least restrictive alternative, high intervention for high risk and low for low risk
- Target risk factors that are causally related to the individual's violent behavior
  - 'Criminogenic needs'

# Victim Safety Planning

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- Goal - prevent harm or minimize the impact of future harm on the victim's psychological and physical well-being
- Delivery - range of health care, social service, human resource, law enforcement, and private practice professionals
- Relevant for “targeted violence”

# Victim Safety Planning Tactics

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- Dynamic security
  - Provide information about risk to victim and their social supports
    - Show them the HOPE / your concerns
    - Prevention and decrease denial/minimization
  - Counselling to increase awareness and vigilance
  - Treatment to address psychosocial deficits that interfere with self-protection
    - E.g., high distress
  - Training in self-protection
    - E.g., Plans to handle unwanted communications, methods of escape
  - Finance management
    - E.g., reduce stress and further loss
  - Monitoring
    - E.g., Health, ongoing abuse and safety via existing appointments

# Victim Safety Planning Tactics

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- Static security
  - Improve visibility: add lights, alter landscaping, install cameras, etc.
  - Restrict access: add or improve door locks, security checkpoints
  - Install alarms or provide victims with personal alarms
  - Relocate victim's residence or workplace

# Victim Safety Planning Tactics

- Good victim liaison is paramount
- Focus on victim vulnerabilities causally related to harmful behavior
  - This is not victim blaming
  - Attitudes, behaviours
  - Education can help,
    - E.g., educating the victim about their risk, and about what to do should the harm re-occur.

What else to you do currently that would fit under victim safety planning? Please add tactics to the chat!

# Community and Institutional Supports

- Goal - Strengthen or improve coordination of community supports and resources available to the victim and perpetrator
- Delivery - range of all groups and organisations that might have contact with the victim or the perpetrator and their risk factors.
  - E.g., care home, hospital, family, transition homes, social services

# Community and Institutional Supports Tactics

- Identifying a lack or scattered family support/awareness
  - Developing a plan, roles and responsibilities
- A care facility with limited security
  - If a move is not possible can other security measures be brought in, e.g., panic button, priority police response
  - Train staff to deal with conflict, safety plan with staff for future event
- A lack of inter-agency communication
  - Co-develop communication (including information sharing) and response plan with dates for revision.

# The Harm to Older Persons Evaluation (HOPE)

JENNIFER E. STOREY, STEPHEN D. HART, & P. RANDALL  
KROPP

# HOPE: Definition

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- Actual, attempted, or threatened physical or serious psychological harm, either deliberate or reckless, of vulnerable older people that is unauthorized and perpetrated by individuals who are in positions of trust, responsibility, or authority with respect to the vulnerable older person

Behavior

Consent

Age/Vulnerable

Relationship

Exclusions

# The HOPE

- Developed using:
  - Empirical research on older adult abuse
    - Associated with re-offending
  - Clinical/Professional considerations
    - Practical utility (e.g., management considerations)
  - Legal considerations
    - Fair and reasonable
- Developed for:
  - Assessing & Managing risk of older adult abuse
- Developed in:
  - Structure Professional Judgement format
  - Guidelines for assessment

# Using the HOPE

The background features a teal-to-blue gradient. On the right side, there is a dense cluster of overlapping circles in various shades of blue and purple, connected by thin, light-colored lines, creating a network-like or molecular structure. A solid red rectangular box is positioned in the top right corner, containing the white number '49'.

# HOPE Administration

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1

- Case information

2

- Presence of factors

3

- Relevance of factors

4

- Risk scenarios

5

- Management strategies

6

- Conclusory opinions

# Step 1: Case Information

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Sources

Resources

Secondary  
Victims

Relationship

# HOPE Domains

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## Nature of Abuse

- Characterize the seriousness and diversity of the perpetrator's abusive behaviour

## Perpetrator Risk Factors

- Perpetrator characteristics and behaviours that can increase risk

## Victim Vulnerability Factors

- Victim characteristics and behaviours that can increase risk

## Community and Institutional Responsivity Factors

- Reflects resources and support in the community for the perpetrator and victim

# Step 2: Coding Presence

## Coding Values

1. Present (Y)
2. Possibly or partially present (P)
3. Absent (N)
4. Omit (O)

## Timeframe

1. Past
  - Prior to past four weeks
2. Recent
  - Within past four weeks

# Step 3: Coding Relevance

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## Coding Values

1. Present (Y)
2. Possibly or partially present (P)
3. Absent (N)
4. Omit (O)

## Timeframe

### **Future management**

- Relevant to decisions to commit future violence?
- Relevant to developing management strategies?

Ask yourself: Do I want to manage this risk factor?

# Step 2: Coding by Domain

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Nature of Abuse

- Past & Recent

Perpetrator Risk  
Factors

- Past, Recent, & Relevance

Victim Vulnerability  
Factors

- Past, Recent, & Relevance

Community and  
Institutional  
Responsivity Factors

- Victim Relevance
- Perpetrator Relevance

# Homework

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1. Read Case 1 Justin and Dorothy (2.5 pages).
2. Watch 'Scenario Planning' (11 minutes)
3. Watch 'Types of Violence Risk Assessment' (28 minutes)