

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service  
Seminar on Risk Management

The Management  
of Safety Issues  
in Residential Setting



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# **Safety Dimensions in Residential Setting**

- 1. Individual Safety Issues**
- 2. Physical Setting**
- 3. Group Living**
- 4. Intruders / Batterers**
- 5. Documentation**





# Belief

All people have the right to live with **dignity & respect** and to be free from violence, abuse and coercion.

# Objectives of the Shelter



- **Provide an immediate and safe refuge for female victims of domestic violence.**
- **Offer 24-hour immediate support and referrals for people affected by domestic violence.**
- **Empower abused women to restore their dignity and self-esteem, and rebuild a harmonious life.**
- **Protect and address needs of children who witness domestic violence.**

# Services of the Shelter

(Since 1985)



- **Short-Term Accommodation:**  
*2 weeks to a maximum of 3 months*
- **24-hour Crisis Intervention and Counseling Hotline**
- **Hotline Follow Up:**  
*Ensure non-admitted callers' safety and arrange referrals if necessary.*

# Services



- **Case Counseling:**

*Interview by social worker within 36 hours after admission*

- **Therapeutic Groups for women and children**

- **Educational Programs and Recreational Activities**



# Services



- **After Care Services:**

*3-month follow-up by the case worker*

- **Collaboration and Outreaching Services (Since 2005):**

*Reach out to adolescents, low-income high-risk families and ethnic minorities.*

# Statistics of the Shelter

*(Capacity: 40)*



## 2006 (Jan. to Dec.)

<b>Total no. of New and Re-admitted Cases</b>	<b>411</b>
<b>Daily Attendance (%)</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b>Hotline Follow Up Cases</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Total no. of Service Calls</b>	<b>11119</b>
<b>Total no. of Rejected Cases due to Full Capacity</b>	<b>1018</b>



# 1) Individual Safety Issues



## 24-hour Hotline

### Hotline Log:

- *Location of the caller*
- *Safety*
- *Violent incident*
- *Past abused history*
- *Social network*
- *Provide information related to community resources*
- *Admission or referrals*
- *Follow up services*



- Risk Assessment: *low, middle & high level*
- Suicidal Assessment
- To assess victim's emotion, stress level, cognitive and behavioral status
- Victims in this stage may be confused. It is important to enhance their awareness of safety issues and assist them to make safety plans.

# Admission

## Case counseling and therapeutic groups

*Domestic violence leads to  
significant impact on  
abused women and their children.*

*Physical injury, depression,  
anxiety and PTSD  
to their low self-esteem.*



# Case Counseling

- **On-going risk assessment**
- **Healing of psychological effects of domestic violence**
- **Empowerment of the abused woman to make choices**
- **Introduce social services**
- **Make referrals, such as CSSA, Legal Aid, FSPSU.**

# Case Sharing 1: Suicidal Client



## Background

- Madam Chan, immigrated from China with daughter (6 yrs. old) for 3 years.
- Husband was unemployed, under CSSA, and with drinking problem.
- Husband was controlling, extremely jealous.
- After drinking, husband always in a temper tantrum and use violence against client
- Client and her daughter were referred by the police and admitted to the Shelter after being beaten by husband

# Incident



- Client had a lot of stresses due to financial difficulties.
- Application for CSSA, though FCPSU. During the interview with the unit, she became very agitated and ran away.
- When return to the Shelter, she locked herself up in her room. 5 minutes later a resident informed the office that she was attempting suicide.
- 3 staff (superior, case worker, and staff with first aid training) ran to her room and opened the door with spare key. It was found that Chan's hand was injured with 8 wounds, a knife was on the floor, two bottles of pills beside her and suicidal note.

# Intervention



- 1. Staff called the ambulance and performed first aid at the same time.**
- 2. One worker comforted Chan's daughter and brought her to the office.**
- 3. Another worker accompanied Chan to the hospital.**
- 4. Informed FCPSU.**
- 5. Brought daughter to visit her mother every day in the hospital.**
- 6. Provided both Chan and daughter with emotional support.**



## Insights

- **Teamwork is essential.**
- **Important to keep close contact with FCPSU, especially when dealing with client's psychological needs.**
- **On-going risk assessment**
- **Nurture parent-child relationship .**
- **Work on concrete tasks to build up client's coping abilities.**



# Case Sharing 2: Depressed Client



## Background

- Madam Lee, immigrated from China 2 years ago. She came to Hong Kong for family reunion with husband and son (7yrs. old).
- It was her second marriage. Her 1st-husband deserted the family and present husband has EMA.
- Lee was physically and sexually abused by husband.
- Under the threats from the husband, Lee agreed to give her husband custody of the son.
- Lee was beaten by her husband on the street and was admitted to the Shelter.

## Incident

- Lee was depressed and emotionally unstable.
- She had no friends and had adjustment problem and conflict with residents.
- Relationship with the case worker was not satisfactory, unwilling to be engaged.
- Lee also didn't respond to FU's calls.
- Regularly sent phone message to husband .

# Intervention



- 1. Although Lee refused to talk, the case worker was very patient and gradually building trust.**
- 2. Persuade Client to seek medical advice.**
- 3. Encouraged and escorted client for psychiatric assessment.**
- 4. Ensure client took medication.**
- 5. All staff encouraged her to participate in routine activities, social groups and gave a lot of encouragement**



## Insights

- Psychological assessment treatment complement work at shelter.
- Daily routine and exercises help stabilize emotion and raise spirits.
- Social skills programs
- Liaison between duty staff and case worker ,help provide comprehensive care.
- Team work again is important.



## 2) Physical Setting

**Safety is the  
primary concern!**

- **From the outside the Shelter is unrecognizable.**
- **Controlled access**
- **CCTV for surveillance**
- **Alarm system**



# Confidentiality

- **Guidelines for escorting new residents to the Shelter**
- **Staff recruitment and orientation**
- **Management of Shelter's phone no.**
- **Confidentially agreement with residents, staff and visitors: *address, location, appearance and neighbourhood.***
- **Designated officers of the Police and Fire Services Department**

# Home Life Setting

- **Daily necessities:** *shampoo, tooth-brush, tooth-paste, rice, canned food, milk powder, diapers, clothing, bedding, crib*
- **Common area:** *shared living room decorated to provide relax “homely” environment*
- **Leisure:** *residents get together to read newspapers, watch TV, movies or chat.*
- **Playroom:** *toys and child case services*
- **Kitchen:** *prepare meals for themselves, also a way for residents to increase their independence*

### 3) Group Living Routine Schedules

- **Children award system: *reinforce positive social behaviors in the Shelter***
- **Sharing of responsibilities among women**
- **Children Tutorial Class Women and Children House Meeting**
- **Educational programs & activities: *Legal.***





## Routine Schedules

- **Ex-resident sharing session**
- **Community resources visits**
- **Birthday party**
- **Festivities**
- **Women and children therapeutic groups**

# Conflict



***Conflict is inevitable.***

***Conflict develops because we are dealing with people's different life background, values and interests.***

***Although conflict is inevitable, it can be minimized, diverted and / or resolved.***

***Conflict also is an indicator of service needs.***

# Conflict Management



- **Trustful staff-resident relationship**
- **Frequent communication**
- **Carefully planned house rules**
- **Review and evaluation**
- **Informal interaction**
- **Mutual support among residents**



# 4) Handling Safety Issues related to Intruders / Batterers

## Outdoors Activities

- Escort the woman to safe place, away from the batterer.
- Assist other participants to return to the Shelter
- Call police if necessary
- Refer the woman to other shelter if necessary
- Report to supervisor and file in critical incident report.



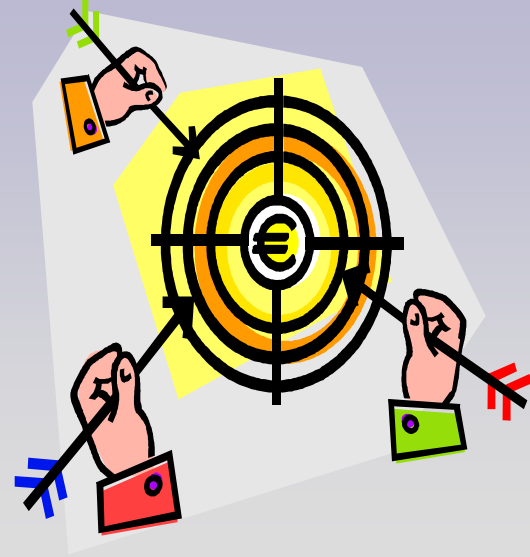
# Intruders in Shelter

- 1. Inform all residents immediately.**
- 2. Remind residents to stay in their rooms.**
- 3. Inform residents who are not in the Shelter to implement safety plans.**
- 4. Contact property management office or call police if necessary.**
- 5. Refer the woman and her children to other shelter if necessary.**
- 6. Report to the supervisor and file in critical incident report.**

# Support to Staff

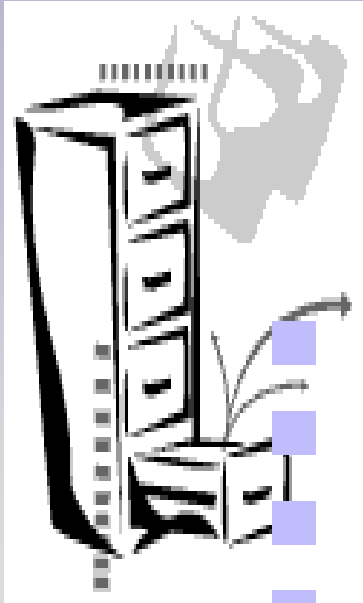
- ✚ **Detail orientation program for all staff.**
- ✚ **Different social workers for abused woman and batterer.**
- ✚ **Provide staff with resources, information and consultation, regular in-service training, case sharing.**
- ✚ **Develop guidelines and standards for immediate and consistent responses to domestic violence, at all levels of service operations, Shelter Standards and Protocol, SQS standards, etc.**

# Support to Staff



- To foster a multi-disciplinary intervention, through partnerships with internal units, outside service providers and law enforcement agencies.
- Assess the effectiveness of the program through clients' feedback and regular survey of clients' needs and comments.

# 5) Documentation



■ 「和諧之家」安全政策

■ 熱線記錄表

■ 家庭暴力危機評估表

■ 受虐者自我保護評估表

■ 自殺危機評估表

■ 嚴重/緊急事故：處理指引、紀錄表

■ 緊急及非緊急聯絡電話資料

■ 戶外活動：一般指引、緊急應變措施、  
交通安全備忘、參加者走失處理指引

■ 特別天氣：熱帶氣旋、暴雨、雷暴、惡  
劣天氣工作指引



■ 防火設備：操作指引、火警處理、逃生圖、演習紀錄表、檢查紀錄表及証書

■ 急救箱用品清單、定期檢查紀錄表

■ 宿舍前後門、窗及水電掣關閉紀錄表

■ 宿舍衛生指引、清潔紀錄表

■ 宿舍一般設備操作指引、檢查及維修紀錄表

■ 電器安全操作指引、檢查及維修紀錄表

■ 爐具檢查、保養及維修紀錄表

■ 電器維修聯絡資料表

■ 婦女清潔分工準則及記錄表

■ 兒童獎勵計劃及星星表

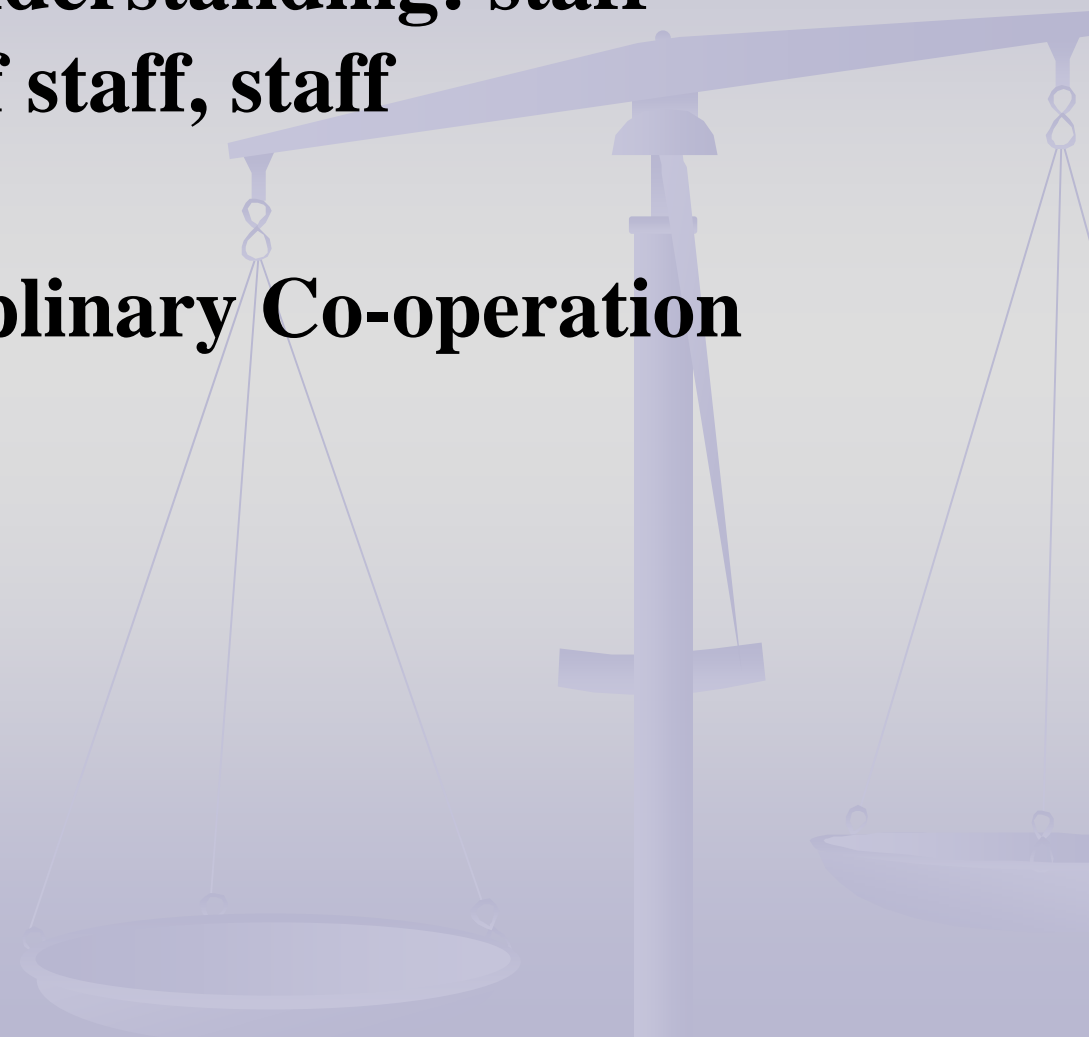




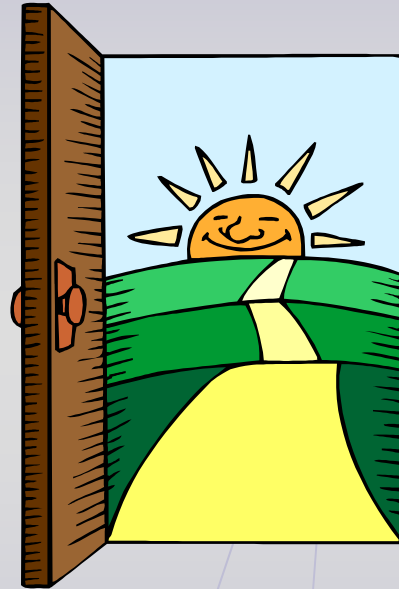
**Mutual Understanding: staff  
client, staff staff, staff  
supervisor**



**Multidisciplinary Co-operation**



# Thanks !



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