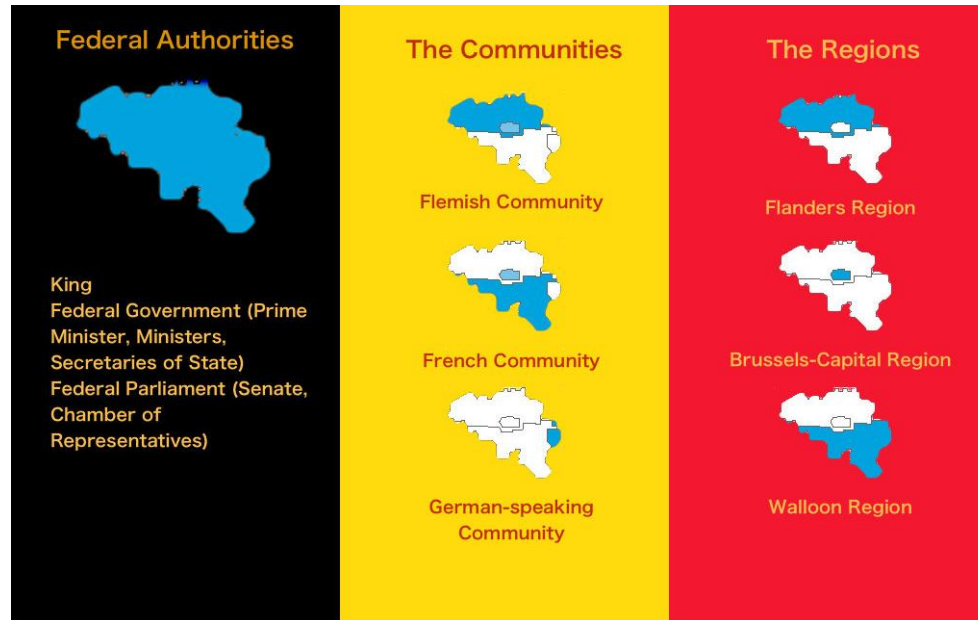


Tackling domestic violence in Flanders

Dries Wyckmans, Flemish Houses of Justice, Co-ordinator Family Justice Center Limburg



Belgium / Flanders for beginners



Flemish Houses of Justice

Assignments

- Probation
- Autonomous community service
- Mediation and measures
- Limited detention
- Electronic supervision
- Social research
- Victim assistance
- Early release
- Freedom under conditions
- Chain approach domestic violence
- ...

Regular DV interventions provided by prison & probation

- **Prison**
 - Psychosocial services
 - No specific DV programs
- **Probation**
 - Follow-up by a probation officer -> alternative judicial measures -> treatment programs (aggression control, insight into own behavior, consequences for victim, ...)



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Prevalence

Registered police reports in 2017



**Deadly victims in the context
of intimate partner violence (2018)**

**152 (BE)
119 (FL)**

**Very high
'dark number'**



1/4

**of the population will ever
be affected**

35



**Average number of violent incidents
before someone seeks out help**



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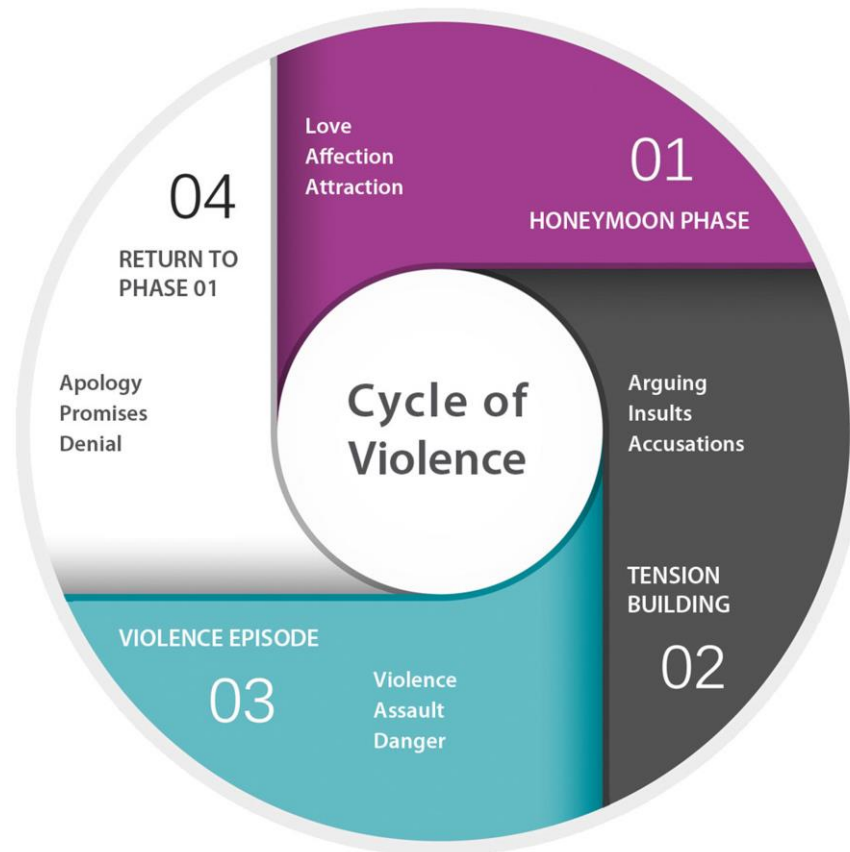
About domestic violence

Broad definition of DV

- Violence between (ex-) partners
- Child abuse
- High conflict divorce
- Sibling violence
- Parental abuse
- Elderly abuse
- Honor related violence / forced marriage
- ...

BE AWARE OF...

Dangerous vicious circle that is difficult to break



BE AWARE OF...

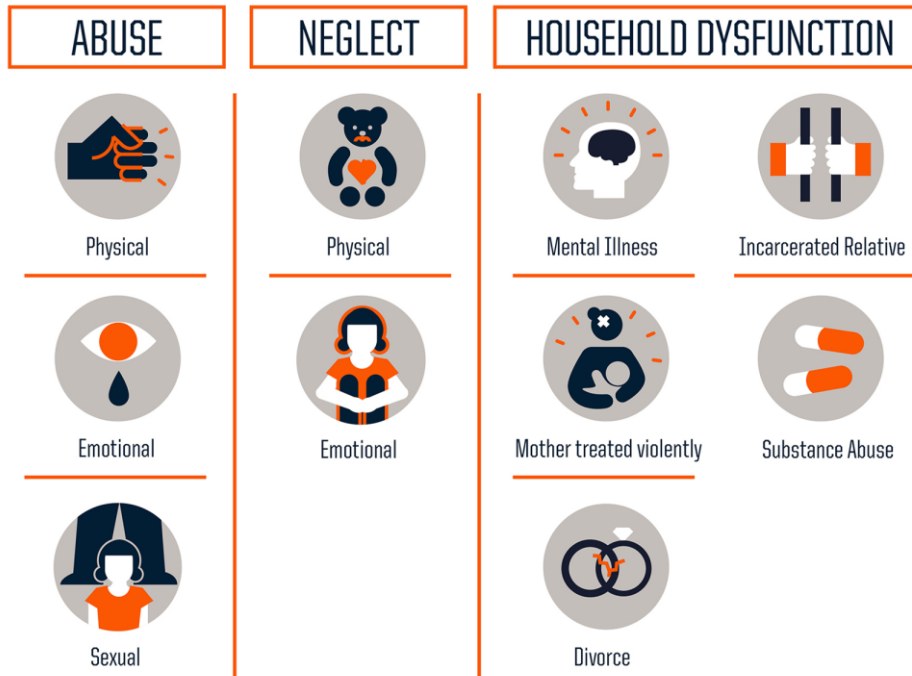
Underlying problems

- Aggression control
- Traumatic past
- Relational problems
- Work
- Financial problems, debts
- Living situation
- Physical health
- Mental health
- Mental limitations
- Isolation, lack of network
- Alcohol and drug use
- Personality disorders
- Educational differences
- Gender-related problems / role pattern
- Cultural factors
- Migration problems
- Residential status
- Honor related issues
- Child rearing problems
- Day spending
- ...

BE AWARE OF...

ACE-study

The impact of adverse childhood experiences – by Dr. Felitti

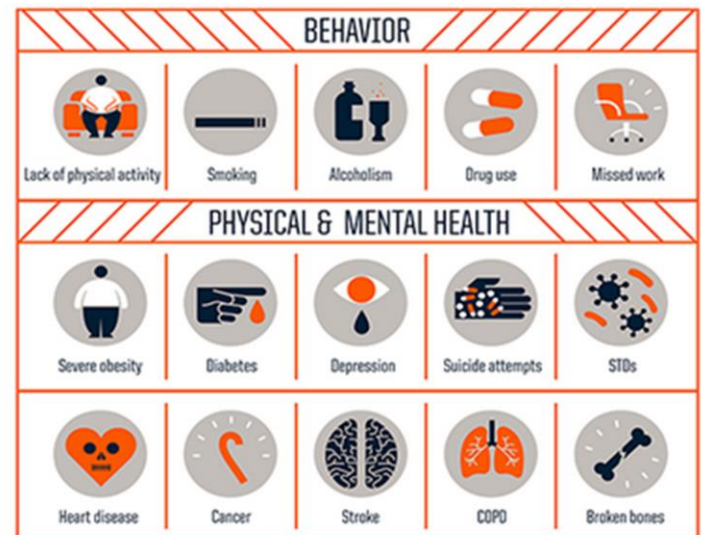


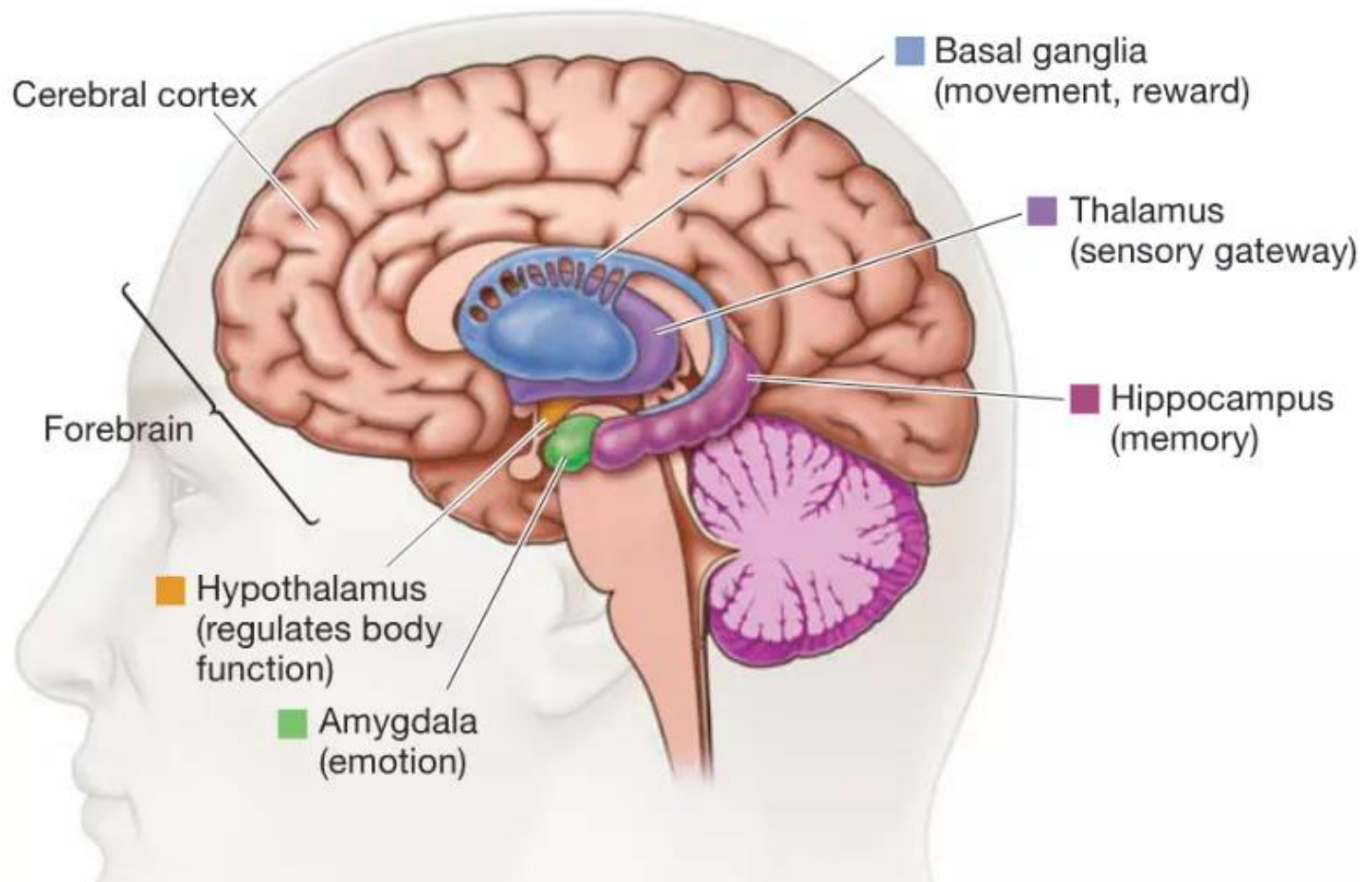
WHAT IMPACT DO ACEs HAVE?

As the number of ACEs increases, so does the risk for negative health outcomes



Possible Risk Outcomes:





BE AWARE OF...

Different dynamics and offender profiles

Intimate terrorism
(black & white)



Situational violence
(grey)



BE AWARE OF...

A great social cost

- Lower quality of life
- Higher government costs (police, justice, welfare, healthcare ...) in the short and long term
- Higher absenteeism & lower productivity
- More crime



Conclusion = domestic violence requires a specific approach

- Complex and dangerous dynamics
- Those involved often stay in each other's environment
- Devastating impact on children -> intergenerational
- Great social cost
- Gaps in interventions, approach and expertise
- Many services involved -> transcends policy domains, policy levels and competencies

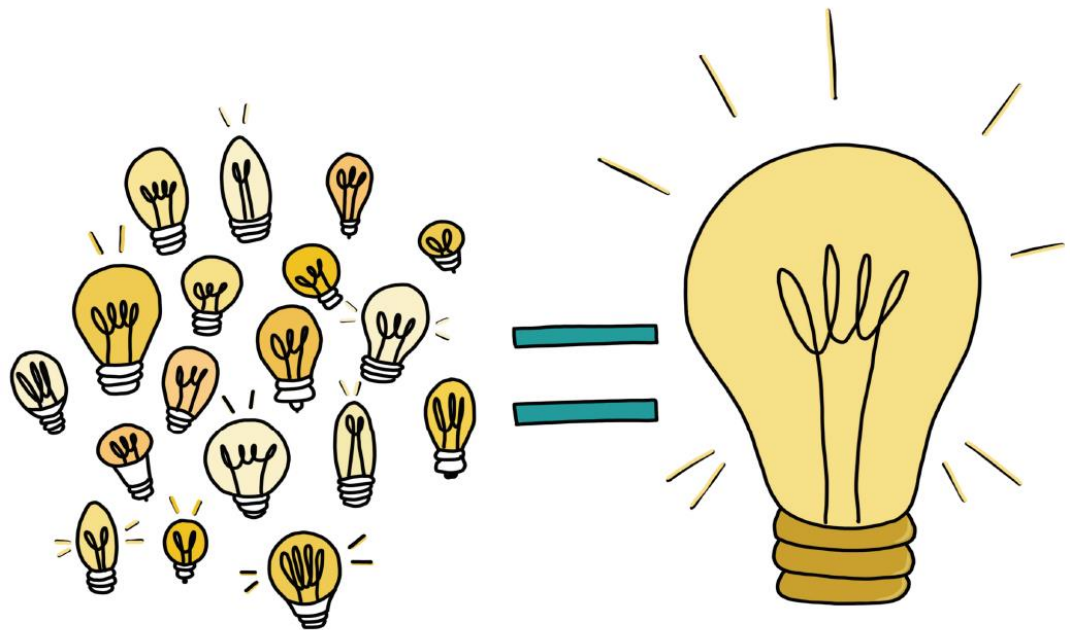


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**We need to
improve our
approach**

Need for a paradigm shift

- We are not doing well enough yet ...
- We need to work together more and smarter
- The approach to domestic violence must become a real policy priority



Flemish ambitions

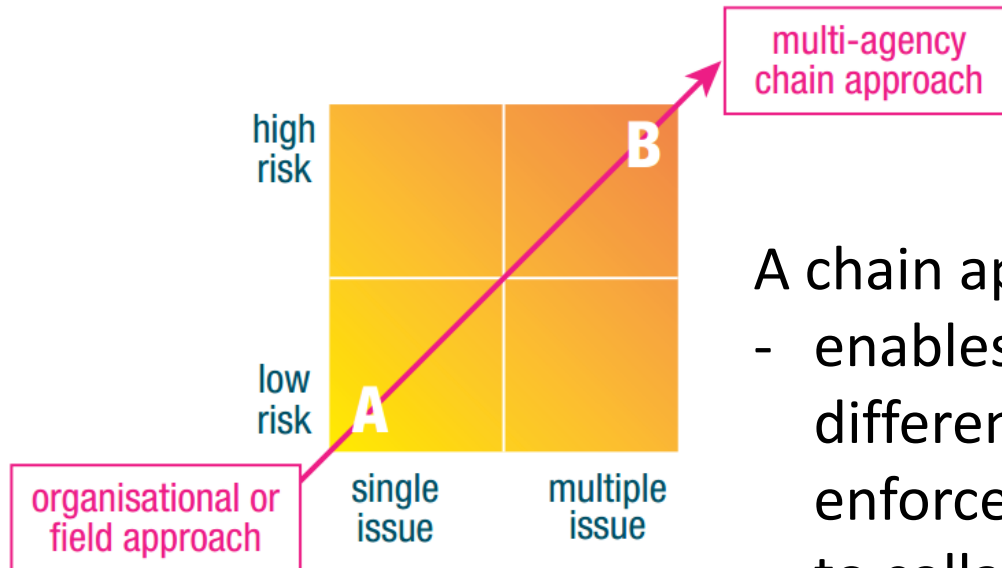
- Sustainable safety for the whole family
- Pro-active & low-threshold aid offer
- Preventing violence and gaining a clearer picture of it



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Collaboration via a chain approach in the whole of Flanders (2018)

The casuistry determines the approach



A chain approach = model that

- enables several organisations from different fields of care, safety, law enforcement and administration
- to collaborate in a multidisciplinary manner
- to provide clients with customisation
- and puts the clients central.

DV chain approach

- Methodology for multidisciplinary approach between police, justice and assistance/welfare in top layer of DV files (complexity / risk level)
- In every Flemish district
- Sharing need-to-know information in DV cases in order to achieve co-ordinated collaboration in the families involved -> chain direction by a neutral case manager

Partners DV chain approach

- Co-ordination: House of Justice
- Core partners: office of the public prosecutor, local police, probation, centre for general welfare, youth welfare, confidential centre child abuse, mental health care
- Network partners: cities / municipalities, local welfare organisations, prison, broad youth care, health insurance, ...

Process steps chain approach

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-DTiN-IA0Uw>



Application -> Filing -> Appraisal -> Case direction -> Execution -> Evaluation

Goals chain approach

- Stopping the violence
- Decreasing the number of risk factors
- Increasing the number of protective factors
- Systemic and individual approach
- Integral and integrated approach, monitored by a case manager



Want to know more?

Book & blended training

- ▶ Module 1: Child abuse
- ▶ Module 2: Collaborating in a chain
 - What is chain collaboration?
 - Implementing a chain approach
 - The designed chain approach
 - What does a chain approach deliver in practice?



Download via www.formachain.eu



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A good practice in Limburg (BE)



**What do victims / offenders / families
experience? What is going well?
How can we improve?**





The Family Justice Center Limburg involves the co-location of a multidisciplinary team of professionals who work together, in 1 location, with the goal to provide safety & integral care to clients confronted with domestic violence

“Take the best of what you already have and bring it all together”



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Phase 1

Structural assessment of
all DV police reports
+ specific DV approach

(in a region of 330.000 inhabitants)

Police training

“As police officers increase their knowledge about the dynamics of domestic violence, they will respond better while markedly decreasing their level of frustration”

1. UNDERSTAND THE DYNAMICS

- The cycle of violence
- Why does she stay?
- Experiencing violence as a child

2. DISPLAY EMPATHY

3. SAFEGUARD THE CHILDREN & OTHER VICTIMS



Step 1:
police intervention



+



Step 2:
**police and public
prosecutor make a
DV-file**



+



Step 3:
**risk assessment
& triage**



+



Step 4:
**multi-disciplinary
alignment**



Step 5:
**dialogue with clients
& organize help**
(whether or not in
combination with criminal
law)



+



Step 6:
follow-up



Organizing help for the entire client system =

- DV intake
- Create safety plan & plan of approach
- Use regular assistance & link to ongoing processes
- Case management
- Intensive case management (after temporary barring order)





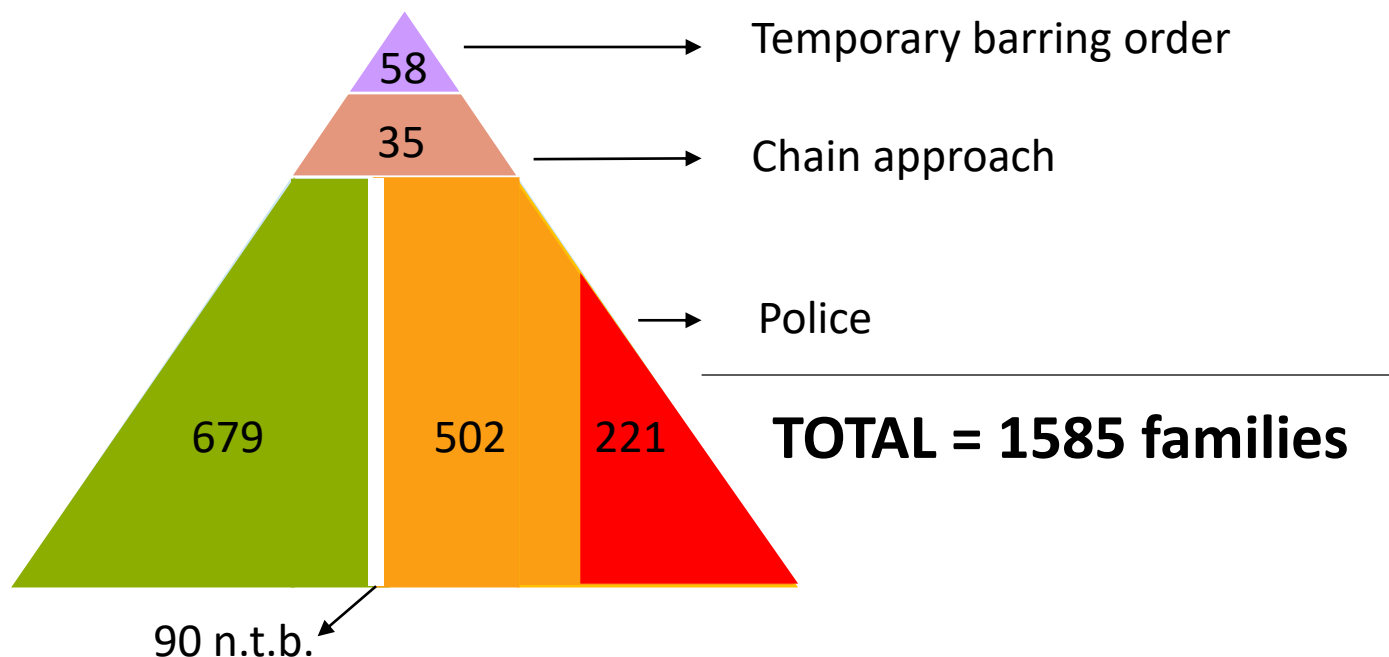
www.fjclimburg.be



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Overview triage DV cases

Period 16/10/17 – 6/2/19



76 % (Ex-) intimate partner violence

11 % Child abuse

10 % Divorce battle

6 % Parental abuse

3 % Sibling violence

1 % Elder abuse

0,5 % Honor-related violence

68 %

Number of cases
involving minor
children

44 %

Number of heavy cases
in which NO welfare or
care organizations were
involved

Thorough analysis first 400 dossiers

► Risk factors

- Antecedents DV (police): **65 %**
- Other relevant antecedents (police): **51 %**
- Problematic substance use: **44 %**
- Risky attitude towards the facts: **43 %**
- Psychological functioning: **42 %**
- Fear of safety: **41 %**
- Past relationship problems: **40 %**
- Risky attitude towards police: **23 %**
- Housing: **22 %**
- Escalation of violence: **21 %**
- Finances: **18 %**
- Pending court proceedings: **16 %**
- Extreme fixation / jealousy: **16 %**
- Education: **16 %**
- Social functioning: **13 %**
- Presence of weapons: **12 %**
- Daytime activities: **11 %**

Added value

Under 1 roof

Swift approach



Pro-active approach



Alignment



Tailor-made approach



Prevention of re-offending





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DEPARTEMENT WELZIJN VOLKSGEZONDHEID EN GEZIN

Afdeling Justitiehuisen