Safety Planning with Parents of Violent Youth

1. **Assess Risk Level**
    a. What behaviors is the teen using?

        -physical violence
        -threats
        -property destruction
        -emotional abuse

    b. Severity of violence
        - who has been hurt and how (i.e. bruises, cuts, medical tx required)
        - damage to property
        - use of weapons
        - types of threats (i.e. threats to kill or hurt; suicide threats)

    c. Are you afraid of your teen?
        - for yourself, others (i.e. siblings, partner)

    d. Are there weapons in your home?

    e. How much control/influence do you have with your teen?

        - no control; he does whatever he wants
        - some control; responds to some consequences
        - usually have control; often does what he is told

    f. How long has the violence been going on?

    g. How have you responded?

        - called police (number of times, what has been police response)
        - counseling, crisis line, hospitalizations

    h. Mental health issues

        - medications, psychiatric care, hospitalizations
        - refusing to take meds?
        - Suicide history – attempts, threats, talk

    I. Alcohol/drug issues

        - frequency, behaviors, drugs used
        - treatment?

2. **Safety Planning**
    a. What precautions (if any) have you taken for safety in your home?
    b. What dangerous behavior are you most concerned about that your teen might use?
    c. Is there anything you can do to prevent this behavior?
    d. What is the safest response to this behavior?
    e. What else can you do for safety in your home?
        Such as:
        -remove weapons, put knives away
        -locks on doors
        -do not leave teen home alone with siblings
        -keep a cell phone accessible at all times
        -have planned escape routes out of the house
        -call the police if youth is violent or threatening
        -call a friend, counselor, probation counselor, court advocate, or other support person for help
        -call the crisis line (Children's Crisis Response Team)

3. **Make a Plan of Action**
    a. With all of the above in mind make a 'plan of action'.
    b. A plan of action should include *prevention steps* and *intervention steps.*

        Intervention Steps – what you will do the next time your teen is violent.

        Prevention Steps – what you will do now to prevent harm or injury.

    Most effective immediate safety action is to:

    - Separate from your teen when he/she starts to escalate;
    - Do not engage with your teen;
    - Calmly go to another room or outside and decide what to do (take a walk, call for help, go to a neighbor, get in your car and drive someplace for help)

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