

# Overview of coercive control detection tools



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Action research :  
Psycho-social practices victim care,  
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# Overview of coercive control detection tools

## Introduction

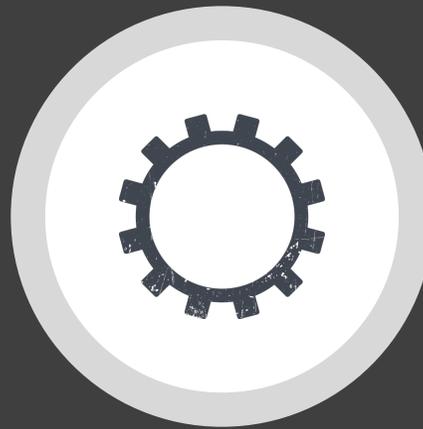
### Context

National Action Plan against Gender-Based Violence (NAP) 2021-2025.  
Measure 7 of this plan : define the concepts of "femicide" and "control of coercion"

### Objectives

- ✓ Improving the detection of situations of violence
- ✓ Ensuring better care for victims

# Coercive control: A Belgian definition



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# Coercive control

## Conflict

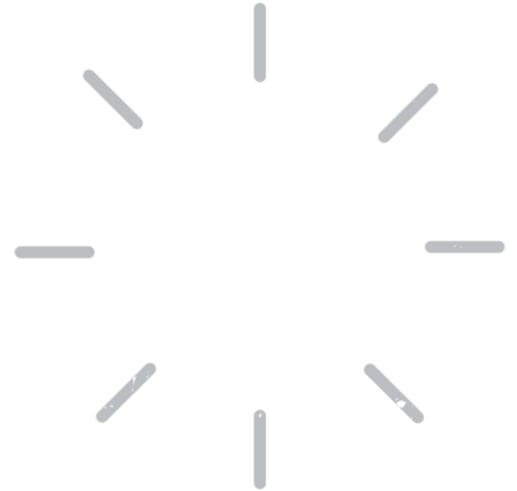
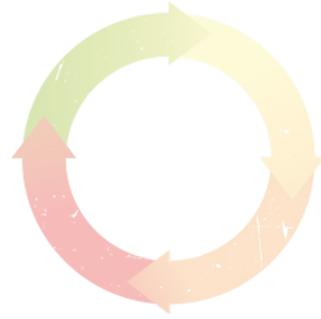
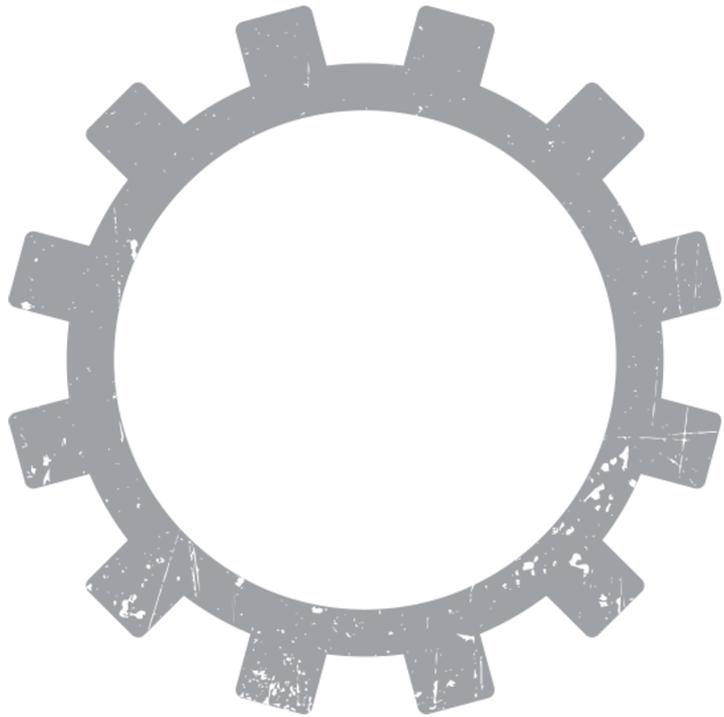
## Violence

- ✓ Mutual Violence
- ✓ Violence triggers :
  - Stressors
  - Separation

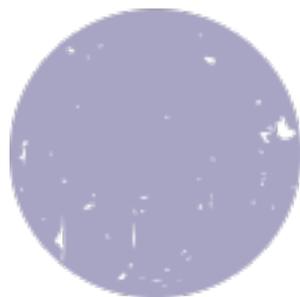
## Coercive control

- Violent Resistance
  - Post-Separation Violence
    - Femicide

# Coercive control: a Belgian definition



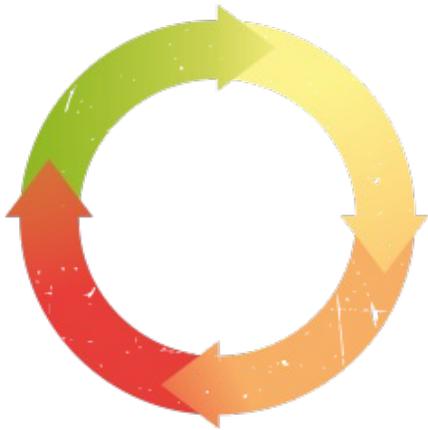
*The victim's experience – the central point around which the perpetrator will direct all behaviours and strategies of control and coercion*



Shared intimacy to the advantage of the author  
The perpetrator has access to a lot of information about the victim's life This knowledge that the perpetrator has of the victim will facilitate the process of gaining power over the victim.

## The Cycle of Violence

*The intimacy between the perpetrator and the victim is punctuated by four phases:*



**The tense phase:** the perpetrator of the violence will create a climate of tension by mobilizing different strategies and behaviors.

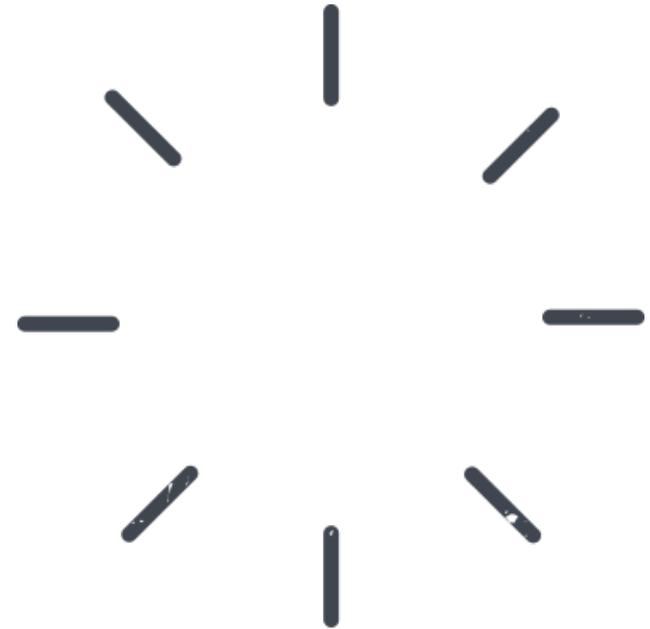
**The aggression phase:** the perpetrator implements coercive strategies with acts of violence in order to relieve the tension.

**The justification phase:** the perpetrator absolves himself of responsibility by denying, trivializing or justifying his acts of violence.

**the "Honeymoon" phase:** the author makes promises of change, he says he wants to change.

## *Pattern of Behavior*

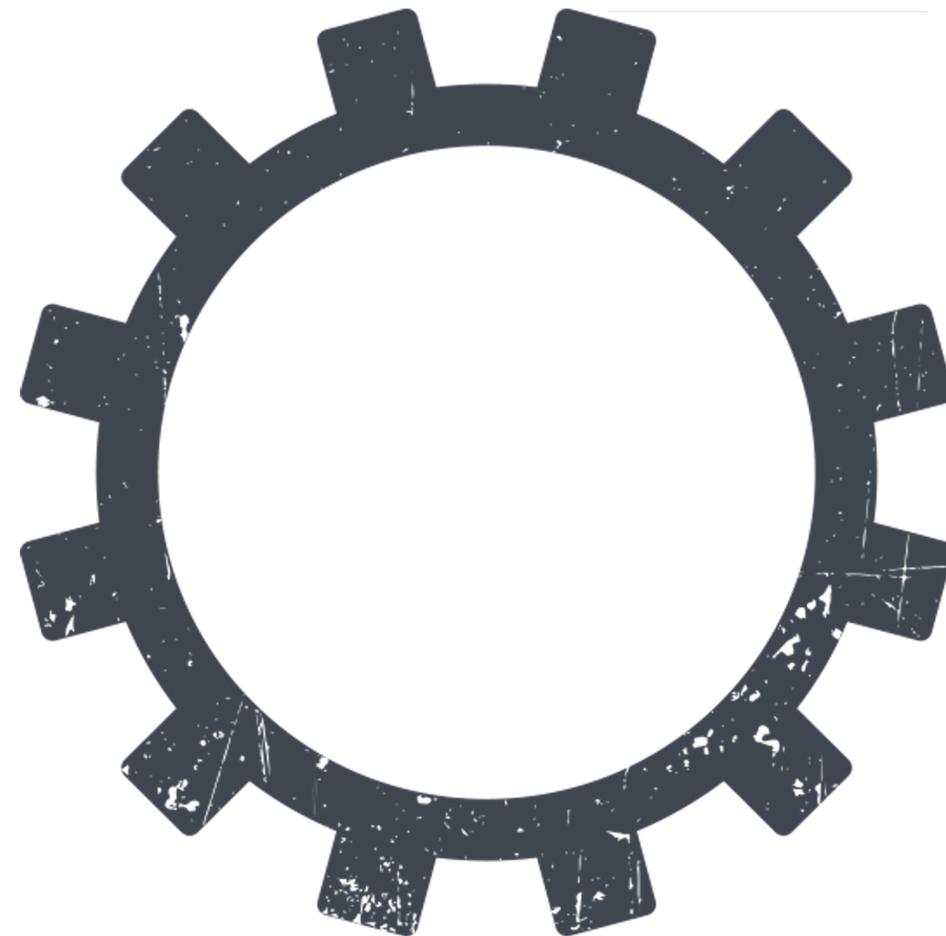
Coercive control results in a pattern of violent and non-violent behaviours that conduct to the victim's submission. These behaviors are repetitive, they last over time, and the effects of these accumulate with each other.



## *Author's Strategies*

### Coercion and Control Strategies

Each behavior is related to strategy of control or coercion



## 22 strategies identified in the scientific literature

### Coercion:

Coercion is **tangible**, it involves the use of force and threats to force **the person to act in the way** expected by the aggressor.

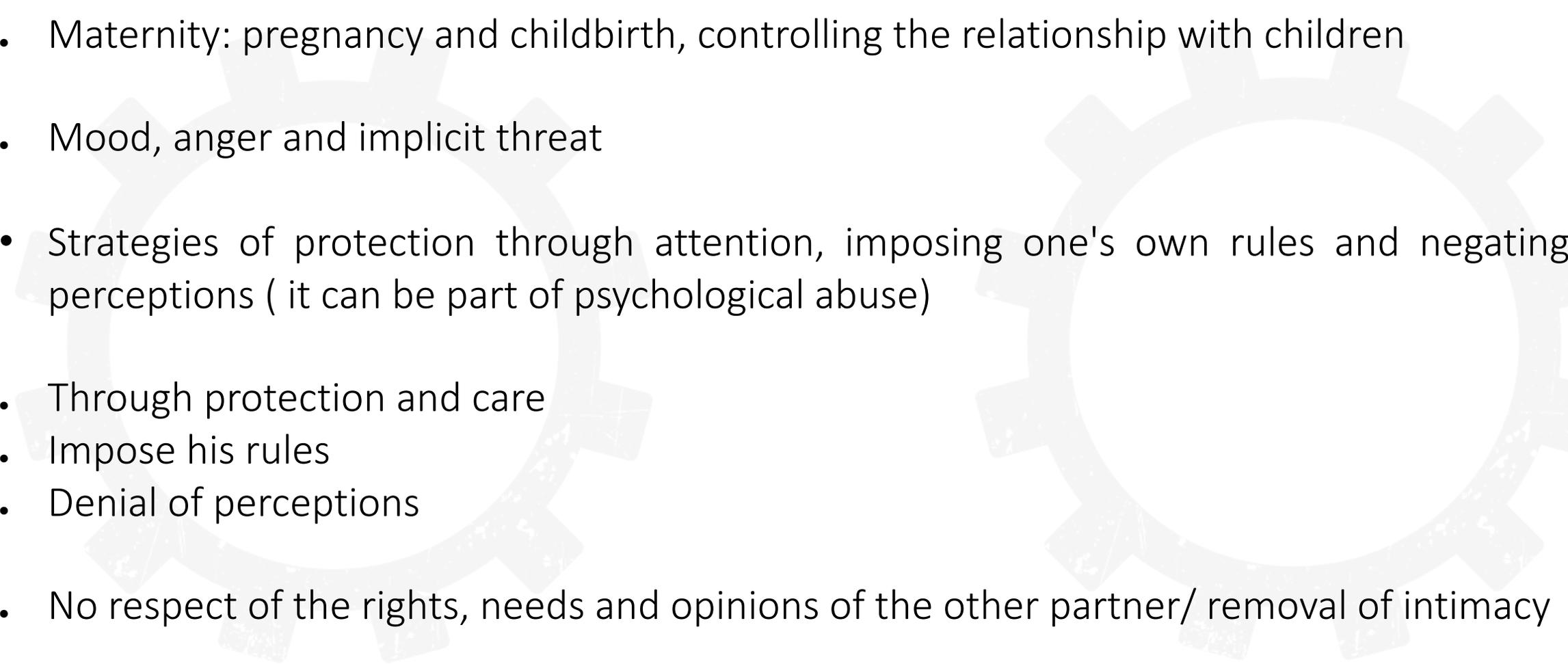
- Physical Abuse and Physical Coercion
- Threats and/or physical abuse of children  
Threats or domestic violence in front of children
- Violence, jealousy and sexual humiliation
- Reproductive coercion

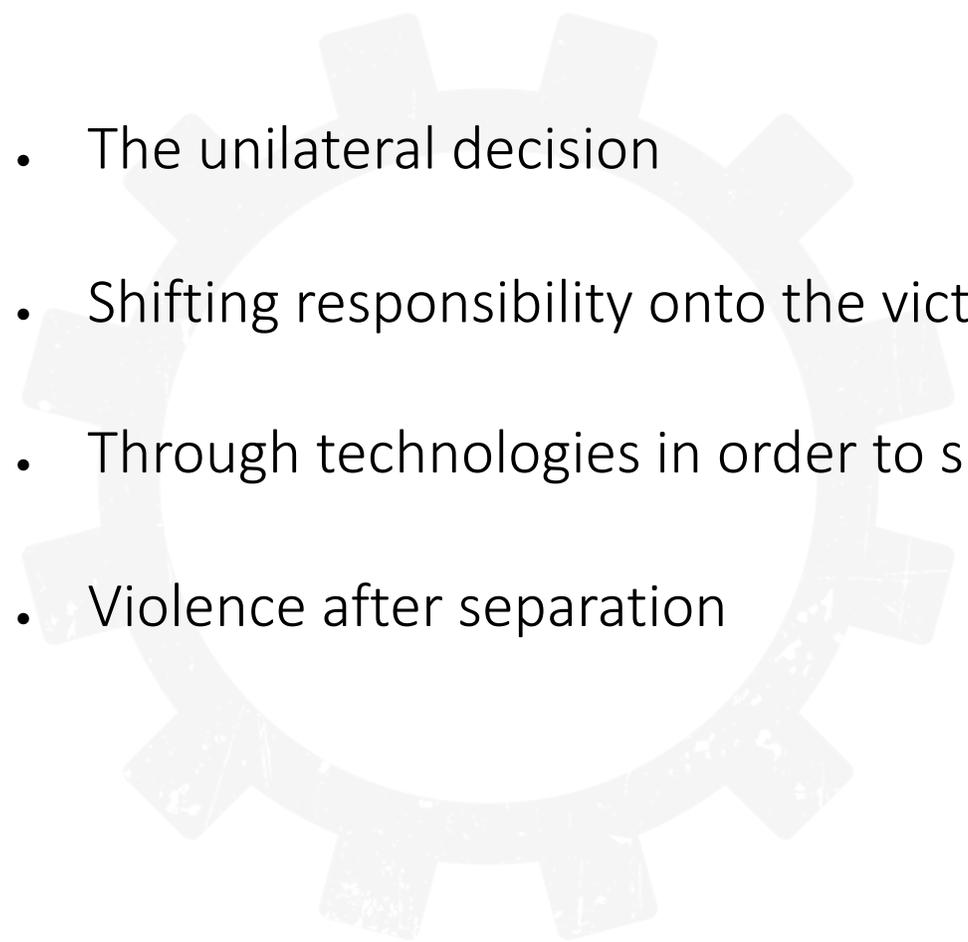
- Economic Abuse During the Relationship
- Explicit Threat  
Death Threat
- Harassment  
Harassment can be better characterized by taking into account other factors such as duration, intensity, intrusiveness, timing, and implicit and explicit threats. In other words, the focus on the content of the harassment may not accurately reveal its severity or the total impact on the victim.
- Humiliation
- Appearance Control

## **Control:**

The control, on the other hand, is **more subtle**. The strategies deployed by the aggressor will push the victim to subordinate himself, to be dependent, to obey him directly or indirectly; It doesn't matter if the author is present or not.

- Isolation/restriction of contacts
- Stereotypical language and behaviour  
Any explanation for domestic violence that legitimizes it, including stereotypes attributed to people based on their sex or gender.
- The Critic

- 
- Intimidation
  - Maternity: pregnancy and childbirth, controlling the relationship with children
  - Mood, anger and implicit threat
  - Strategies of protection through attention, imposing one's own rules and negating perceptions ( it can be part of psychological abuse)
  - Through protection and care
  - Impose his rules
  - Denial of perceptions
  - No respect of the rights, needs and opinions of the other partner/ removal of intimacy

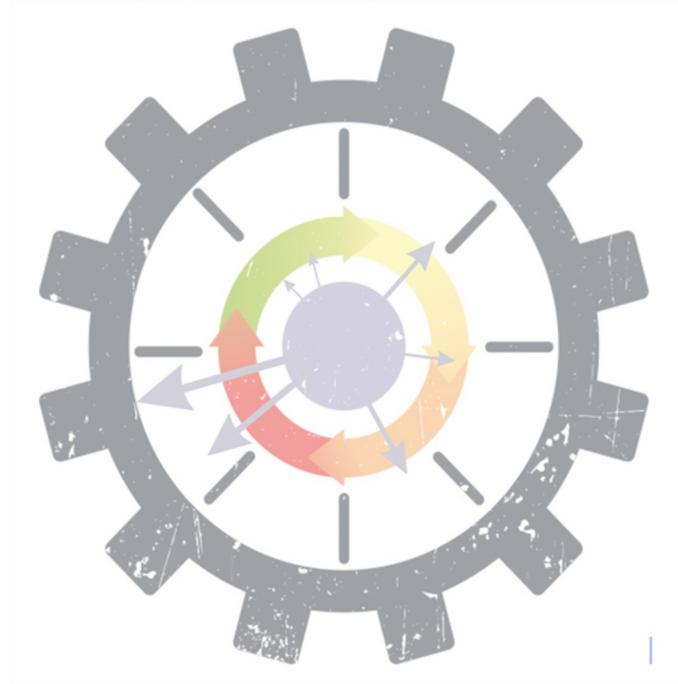
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- The unilateral decision
  - Shifting responsibility onto the victim
  - Through technologies in order to spy and monitor without the victim's knowledge
  - Violence after separation

# Coercive Control: An Illustration



## A new paradigm

The concept of coercive control invites us to consider violence between (former) intimate partners as a deprivation of resources and freedom.



# Tools for detecting and evaluating coercive control

Three tools were developed on the basis of a literature review and in co-construction with professionals and with victims.

These tools include:

A "rapid" detection tool for police and Psychosocial Workers ;

A tool for detecting coercive control and its red flags, intended for psychosocial workers;

This tool combines both assessment and intervention

A tool for assessing coercive control.  
for clinical psychologists.

The objectives of these tools are to help professionals to:

Know how to identify situations of violence that are part of a dynamic of taking power of one partner over the other;

Know how to assess these situations using dynamic tools that articulate assessment and intervention;

Know how to identify the perpetrator and the victim;

Know how to differentiate conflict and violence;

Understand the issues surrounding the care of victims of violence.



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DU CONTRÔLE COERCITIF**

Guide destiné à la police, aux services d'aide aux victimes  
ainsi qu'aux intervenant-e-s psychosociaux de la première ligne

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# Rapid Detection Tools

explores three dimensions that are very present in coercive control: the control of financial and material resources; Isolation - Harassment - Restriction of contact and "subtle" violence

Checklist of questions

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# Tools for Detecting and Assessing Coercive Control and its red flags

The tool is not a questionnaire. It is part of a global approach to care

It is important to remember that no tool will replace continuing education

or safety protocols that allow responders to be proactive when the situation calls for it.

# The Continuum: A Range of Possibilities



# Tools for Detecting and Assessing Coercive Control and its red flags

**Green :** Lack of danger cues.

**Yellow :** Low danger Ratings.

**Orange :**

Presence of signs of coercive control and at least one red flag (orange or red) – a worrisome situation that requires further management and assessment.

**Red :**

Presence of signs of coercive control and more than one red flag;  
Presence of dangerous behaviors (identified here by a black bomb)



# Tools for Detecting and Assessing Coercive Control and its red flags

## BEOORDELING VAN DWINGENDE CONTROLE EN DE WAARSCHUWINGSSIGNALLEN ERVAN

● BESCHERMENDE FACTOR

▲ AANWEZIGHEID VAN GEDRAG

■ RISICOFACITOR

SNELLE OPSPORING VAN DWINGENDE CONTROLE	
Controle over middelen • Beperking van contacten • Isolement • Pesten • 'Subtiel' geweld VERTREKKEN VANUIT DE BELEVING VAN HET SLACHTOFFER	
● <b>Weinig of geen signalen van dwingende controle.</b>	 ■ <b>Sterke aanwezigheid van dwingende controle.</b>
<b>BEWUSTWORDING VAN HET SLACHTOFFER</b>	
● <b>Bewust van het geweld; Implementatie van beschermingsstrategieën; Niet gericht op de dader.</b>	 ■ <b>Hypervigilance; Gewelddadig verzet; Poging om de macht terug te krijgen.</b>
<b>BEDREIGINGEN</b>	
● <b>Weinig of geen bedreiging.</b>	Bedreigingen en intimidatie Vooral non-verbaal: ▲ <b>Controle door humeur;</b> ■ <b>Pesterijen;</b> ■ <b>Bedreigingen richting de kinderen;</b> ✨ ■ <b>Doodsbedreigingen;</b> ✨ ■ <b>Extreme jaloezie.</b> ✨

## ESCALATIE VAN HET GEWELD ✪

VERTREKKEN VANUIT DE BELEVING VAN HET SLACHTOFFER

- Geweldcyclus niet aanwezig.



- De dader diversifieert, versterkt en verandert zijn strategieën. ✪
- Hij schakelt over van intentie tot controle naar intentie tot vernietiging. ✪

## ANGST VAN HET SLACHTOFFER

- Geen angst.



- ▲ Chronische angst;
- Angst voor het eigen leven. ✪

## VASTHOUDENDHEID VAN DE DADER GEBASEERD OP DE WAARNEMINGEN VAN HET SLACHTOFFER

- Respect voor de grenzen en meningen van het slachtoffer.



- ▲ Gebrek aan empathie voor het slachtoffer;
- Niet-naleving van gerechtelijke beslissingen/waarschuwingen van gerechtelijke autoriteiten; ✪
- De dader handelt obsessief, haatdragend, beledigend en minachtend richting het slachtoffer. ✪

## AMBIVALENTIE

Weinig of geen ambivalentie.



- Ambivalentie zeer aanwezig;
- Aanwezigheid van een hoge dissociatiescore.

## RISICOFACOR(EN) GEÏDENTIFICEERD

**Aanwezigheid van dwingende controle:**

 JA  NEE

FACTOR(EN) GEÏDENTIFICEERD:

**Geïdentificeerde strategie(ën):**

- Controle over middelen
- Pesten- intimidatie- isolement
- 'Subtiel' geweld

**Verzet door het slachtoffer:**

 JA  NEE

FACTOR(EN) GEÏDENTIFICEERD:

**Bedreiging:**

 JA  NEE

FACTOR(EN) GEÏDENTIFICEERD:

**Escalatie van het geweld:**

 JA  NEE

FACTOR(EN) GEÏDENTIFICEERD:



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## Assess and intervene in A situation of coercive control

- ✓ Recommended Tests
- ✓ Assessing ambivalence
- ✓ Identify a pattern of behavior

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