



# Domestic Violence for GALs: A Four-Step (SAFeR) Framework

**Program dates start March 14. Register today!**

**7** CLE  
GAL Minor/Family  
GAL Family Violence

**1** EPR

# Domestic Violence for GALs: A Four Step (SAFeR) Framework

## Home safe

In cases where child custody and placement is contested and domestic abuse is a factor, it's critical for Guardians ad Litem (GALs) to be able to recognize and account for the abuse in recommendations to the court.

At *Domestic Violence for GALs: A Four Step (SAFeR) Framework*, you'll receive crucial guidance on effectively and safely screening for signs of family abuse and learn how to evaluate the implications abuse has on children. You'll come away knowing how to account for the child's safety in your final recommendations and with sound ethical advice on presenting the best interests of the child.

## How you'll benefit:

- Comply with statutory requirements to accept GAL appointments
- Detect signs of abuse/violence in disputed custody cases
- Understand the effects of different types of abuse on children
- Determine if a parent poses a risk to their child's safety or well-being
- Assess options for placement of children when abuse is present
- Learn how to incorporate findings of abuse into your final recommendation
- Advance the best interests of children in vulnerable situations

## Who should attend:

- Guardians ad litem for children
- Family law attorneys
- Attorneys representing children
- Attorneys who want to start taking GAL appointments
- Judges and court commissioners making custody and placement determinations
- General practitioners
- Probate lawyers

**Register now!**

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## Registration

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**State Bar CLE/PINNACLE Passbook Registrations:** Passbook certificates must be received by the State Bar at least one business day prior to the event. For in-person seminars, walk-in registrations using Passbook Certificates are also welcome.

**Registration Cancellations:** Please visit [wisbar.org/cancellations](http://wisbar.org/cancellations) for information on PINNACLE registration cancellation policies.

**Course Materials for Attendees:** Course materials are provided in PDF format and are downloadable from *myStateBar* on [wisbar.org](http://wisbar.org) up to two days prior to and 90 days after your seminar.

**COVID-19 Safety Information:** Complete and current safety guidelines can be found at [wisbar.org/covidsafety](http://wisbar.org/covidsafety).

## Faculty

### Program Presenters

**Meghan E. Healy**

Di Renzo & Bomier, LLC, Neenah

**Kari L. Niesen-LaScala**

End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin,  
Madison

**Christine R. H. Olsen**

Olsen Law Office, Wausau

**Gricel Santiago-Rivera**

RISE Law Center, Madison

## Credits

This prerecorded program will be submitted to the Wisconsin Board of Bar Examiners for **7 CLE/GAL Minor/Family/GAL Family Violence credits including 1 Ethics and Professional Responsibility credit.**

## Dates

## Location

### Webcast Seminar

Tuesday, March 14, 2023

Wednesday, March 22, 2023

Monday, March 27, 2023

Thursday, April 6, 2023

Tuesday, April 11, 2023

Friday, April 21, 2023

Wednesday, April 26, 2023

Thursday, May 4, 2023

*The March 14, 2023 webcast will feature prerecorded content and a live Q&A with presenters. All portions of this program for subsequent webcast dates will be prerecorded.*

# Schedule

## 8:30 AM Importance of “Checking” Your Beliefs, Biases, and Assumptions

- Overview of national research on these issues
- Preconceived notions of what a “real” survivor looks like or how they act
- Myths surrounding domestic violence
- Cultural competence and beliefs, biases, and assumptions

*Gricel Santiago-Rivera*

## 8:50 AM Is Abuse an Issue? Identifying Domestic Abuse

- Brief history of Wisconsin Domestic Violence Law
- Domestic violence defined – law provides multiple definitions
  - ▶ What domestic abuse is NOT
- Potential consequences for victims disclosing abuse
  - ▶ Additional potential consequences/ concerns for survivors from marginalized communities
- Screening protocols – what makes for a good protocol?
- The initial screening – looking for red flags
- Use of the interview to reveal signs of physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or coercive controlling abuse

*Kari L. Niesen-LaScala*

## 9:20 AM What’s Actually Going On? Defining the Nature and Context of Abuse

- Not all domestic abuse is the same
- Importance of asking the right questions to flush out abuse
- Documenting and reviewing red flags
- Examining ALL forms of abuse, per law
- Overview of coercive control
- Understanding potency, pattern, primary perpetrator, parenting problems, and perspectives of the child
- Impact of abuse on parenting

*Meghan E. Healy*

## 9:50 AM Break

## 10:05 AM What Does It Mean? Evaluating the Implications of Abuse

- Determining how an abusive person parents
- How do the children experience and react to the abuse
- What is the impact of the abuse on the children
- Can co-parenting be achieved? How?

*Christine R. H. Olsen*

## 11:35 AM Accounting for Abuse in Recommendations to the Court

- Distinction between “divvying things up” and “making things work”
- Priorities of recommendations in accounting for abuse
- Recommending safety for the children

*Meghan E. Healy, Kari L. Niesen-LaScala, Christine R. H. Olsen, Gricel Santiago-Rivera*

## 12:05 PM Lunch Break

## 1:05 PM Accounting for Abuse in Recommendations to the Court, (continued)

*Meghan E. Healy, Kari Niesen-LaScala, Christine R. H. Olsen, Gricel Santiago-Rivera*

## 1:55 PM Case Scenario: 4-Part Analysis

*Meghan E. Healy, Kari L. Niesen-LaScala, Christine R. H. Olsen, Gricel Santiago-Rivera*

## 2:45 PM Break

## 3:00 PM Ethical Issues in Obtaining or Presenting the Best Interest of the Child

- Obligation and responsibility when the GAL does not believe parent(s)’ desires are in best interest of child
- Duty to control the process
- Confidentiality concerns when a victim does not wish information such as health or medical records to be revealed to court

- Does duty to protect best interest of child extend to duty to protect parent who is a victim?
- Addressing nonspecific orders such as “reasonable notice” when there is known domestic abuse
- Cultural competence: how beliefs, bias, and assumptions can negatively impact decision-making

*Meghan E. Healy, Kari L. Niesen-LaScala, Christine R. H. Olsen, Gricel Santiago-Rivera*

## 3:20 PM Ethical Considerations When GAL Recommendations Are at Odds with Parties or the Court

- Obligation when the best interest of child is in conflict with the agreement parents wish to present to court
- Obligation if GAL believes court is not applying the right legal standard or law
- Is there an ethical obligation to interview the child? At what age? How might evidence of impact on children be obtained without an interview?
- How does a GAL get evidence of impact on child(ren) if not interviewing them?
- Duty to litigate or force a deal when Court does not agree with GAL recommendations
- Responsibility to address safety concerns for both child(ren) and non-abusive parent
- Issues with interim authority

*Meghan E. Healy, Kari L. Niesen-LaScala, Christine R. H. Olsen, Gricel Santiago-Rivera*

## 3:50 PM Question & Answer Session

*Meghan E. Healy, Kari L. Niesen-LaScala, Christine R. H. Olsen, Gricel Santiago-Rivera*

## 4:30 PM Program Concludes

*Following start time, schedule will vary slightly from above listed times.*

## Book Bonus!

### The Guardian ad Litem Handbook

Seminar attendees will enjoy a **free two-week trial** of *The Guardian ad Litem Handbook Books UnBound*® title and an invitation to **save 20%** on either a one-year subscription to the Books UnBound title or purchase of the print book.\* Wisconsin's most comprehensive guide to being a guardian ad litem explains the challenges, the variety of roles and situations, and the proceedings that GALs encounter.



\*Attendees will receive information to access the free trial and discount via email after attending the program. Discount applies to both print and digital Books UnBound editions of this title and cannot be applied to previous purchases. Offer valid as long as CLE credit is available for this program. For Books UnBound users, discount may be applied to purchase of individual Books UnBound title only and may not be used on purchase of full library.

## Additional Learning Opportunities

### GAL Training 2022

Whether you're hoping to take on your first appointment or you're an experienced GAL, *GAL Training 2022* will give you a deeper understanding of your role, plus arm you with tools you need to help manage expectations while fulfilling your duties. Learn what court commissioners expect from GALs, how to handle abuse allegations, and approaches to issues specific to COVID. **7.5 CLE/GALF/GALM; 1 EPR**

CLE OnDemand™ Seminar: #CA3308D; Member: \$269 | Nonmember: \$349

### Minor Guardianships of the Person: Wisconsin Children's Court Practice and Procedure

Minor Guardianships will give you the history of the law and bring you up to speed on the very recent legislative overhaul that moved private guardianships of children from chapter 54 of the Wisconsin Statutes to chapter 48 and created the new Wis. Stat. §48.9795.

Print Book: #AK0128; 192+ pp.; 1st ed. 2020-21; Member: \$169 | Nonmember: \$211.25

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### Family Law Forms Library

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## Domestic Violence for GALs

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### WEBCAST SEMINAR

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