

# Domestic and family violence and co-occurring mental health issues and addictions

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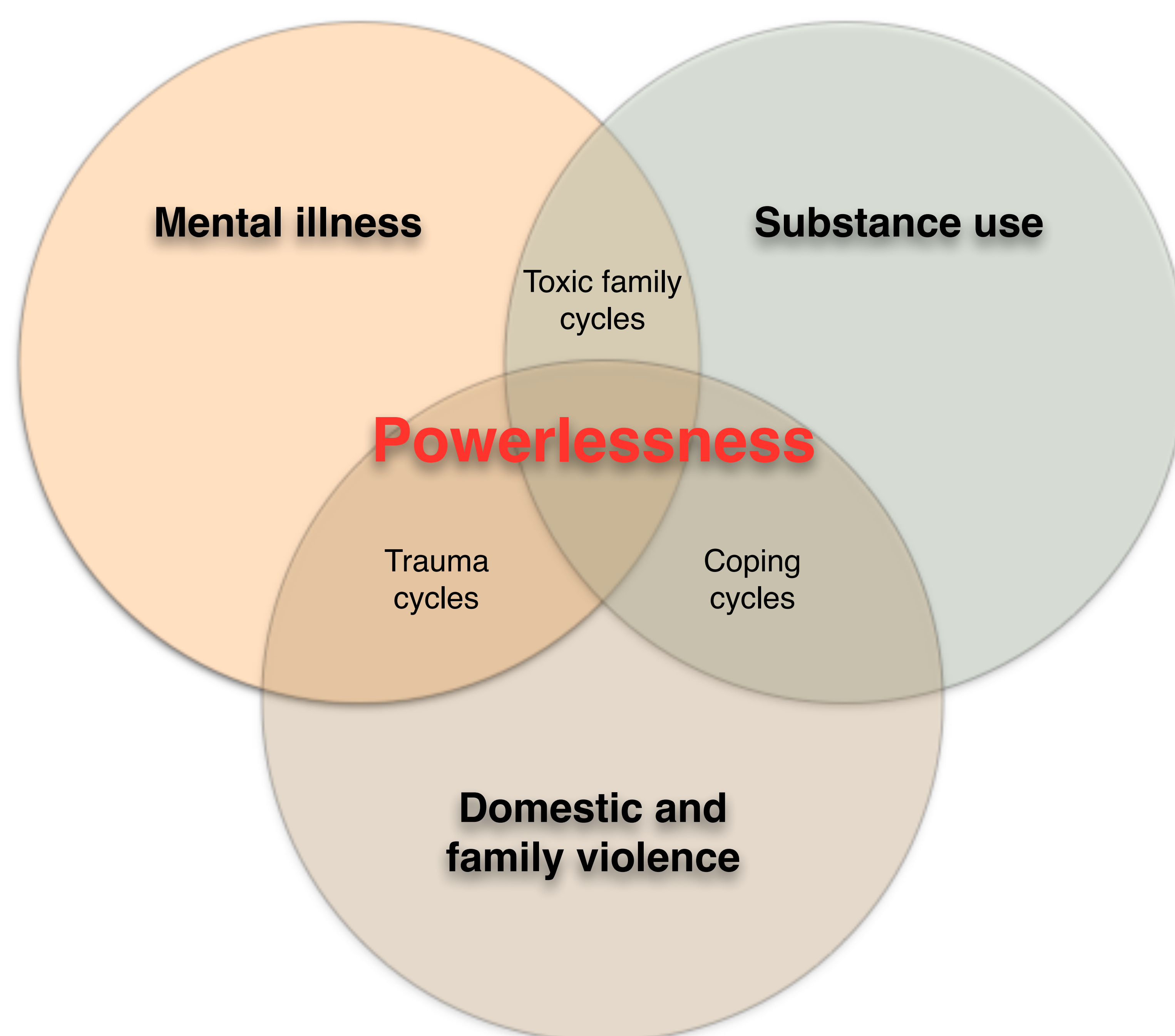
## Abstract

Many mothers experiencing domestic and family violence are also battling mental health issues and substance abuse. A major concern for these women is that their mental health diagnoses often serve to further disempower them. Reinforcing social systems and intergenerational violence are formidable barriers to mothers who are seeking to recover.

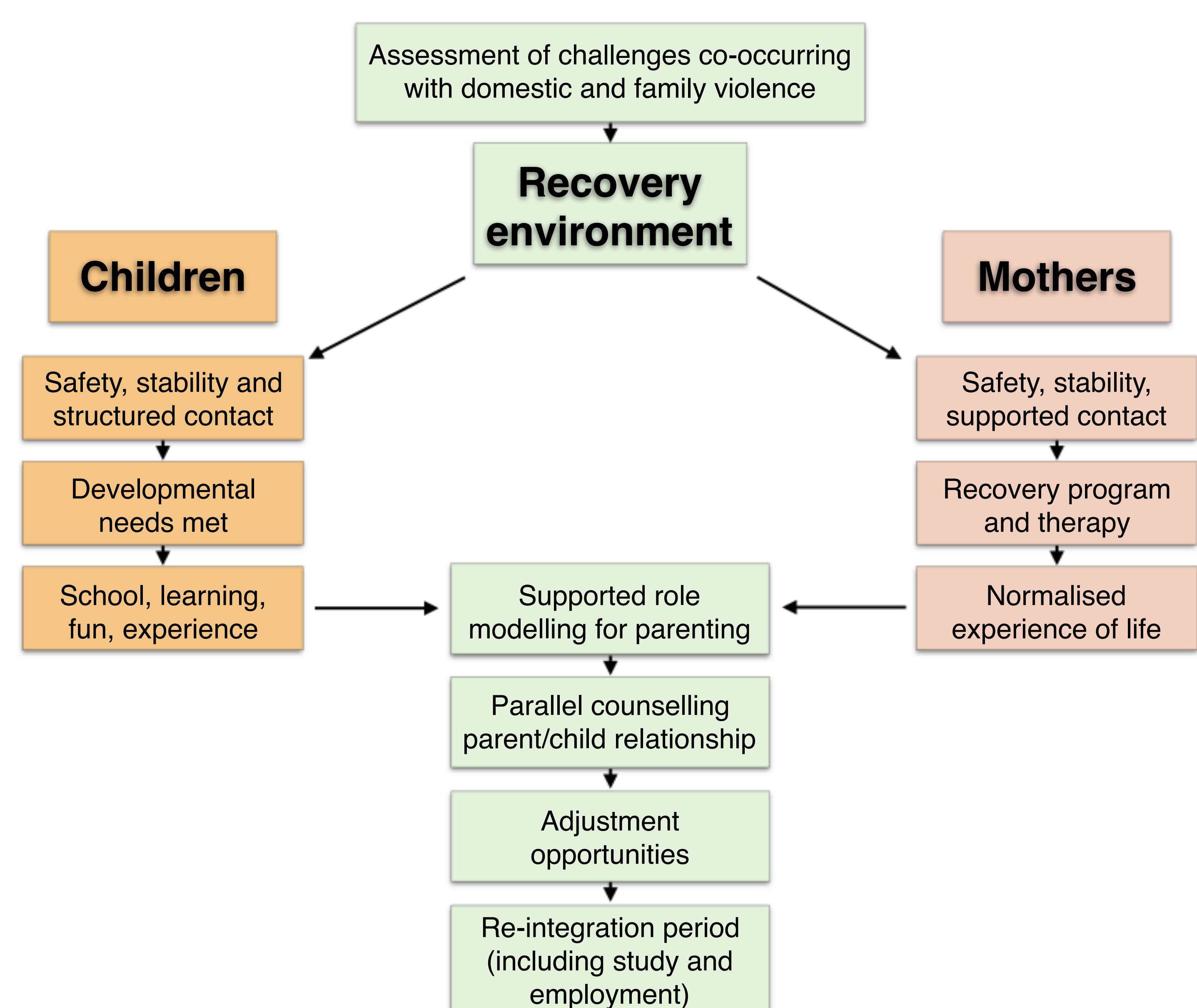
## Introduction

The inter-relationships of trauma, violence, mental illness and substance use in women have been described by researchers as 'profound' and 'staggering'. As many as two thirds of women with substance use problems report a concurrent mental health problem, for example, PTSD, anxiety or depression.

They also commonly report surviving physical and sexual abuse either as children or adults. A Washington DC study showed that over 70% of women with mental disorders have co-occurring substance use problems and virtually all women with co-occurring disorders have a history of trauma.



## Breaking the cycle



## Conclusion

This paper proposes that the needs of dual-diagnosed women and their children who have experienced chronic domestic and family violence can be met through establishing residential recovery centres.

This is particularly important in remote and rural regions.