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Event Started: 11/20/2013 8:00:00 PM

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>> Hi, everybody. Welcome to the Rural Routes to change discussion brought to you by Praxis international. This webinar is brought to you by zero VW and Praxis. It's intention is to strengthen interagency responses -- responses to battery -- brought to you by O VW. Our discussion is going to be around battered women who use force. And so I will introduce our speakers. Our host for the session. And our guest speaker today in just a moment. I should first introduce myself, Ms. Carlson. I am the audio conference webinar person here at Texas. And I'm going to just touch base on a couple logistical things on how this webinar will work before I turn the webinar over to Rose and to lower our speakers for today. So in case there are any of you participating in the session by telephone only and not connected to the webinar, there will be not -- there will not be an opportunity for interaction by telephone in this session. If you have a comment or a question to make it any time or if you have any technical issues, you should feel free to e-mail me, send a note to liz@praxisinternational.org. For the rest of you that are connected, by the webinar, I will just let you know that the best way for you to participate in the discussion will be through the chat function at the lower left-hand portion of your screen. So I will call to your attention that little box at the bottom. If you would all now just take a quick second to type in a hello, that's a good practice for you to be really comfortable in using that chat so that anytime during the day, our time together today, you will be able to chime in with a question or comment to our speakers. And I'll be keeping an eye on that throughout our conversation today. And be sure to integrate that into the conversation. Very good. Thanks and hello back to all of you. I also want to call to your attention that there is a little tab that says privates. That's also an option for you in case there is a technology issue or something that you would like a question or clarification that he would like to make directly with one of the speakers. Just click on that private tab and double-click on one of the names there. And that will open a line with that individual. That's an option too. Also, if you get disconnected by telephone or voice over IP or through the webinar connection, just reconnect in whatever way that got you here to begin with. And that will get you back on track. And then finally, this session is being recorded. So you'll be able to revisit it on the Praxis Burrell archive -- rural archive and webinar page of the website. So you can look for it there next week. With that, I'm going to turn the conversation over to Rose Tealin, the coordinator of community response technical assistance partner here. And our specialist on CCR issues. She will host our conversation. And I'm going to turn the topic over to Rose and let her introduce herself and the topic and/or speaker today. Rose, are you there?

>> I am. Thank you, Liz. It's great to be with you today. And I'm particularly pleased to have advocates for family piece on the line. Melissa sky couldn't be here today, but Laura Connolly, her able right-hand person is going to be with us. And we're going to be talking specifically about some of the things that they did, and continue to do, in their rural Grand Rapids program in order to be able to distinguish

between individual acts of violence and violence used to maintain and establish domination, power and control in a relationship. Because as many of you probably know, since the implementation or -- of mandatory arrest across the country and other cases as well, we've seen more and more victims being arrested for self-defensive and reactive or resisting violence. And of course when you are treating all acts of violence the same, you run the risk of not being able to actually intervene effectively on the battering. So one of the things that Laura's program -- I'll introduce her in a second -- we wanted to talk about mission statements because that is the place where you identify who you are and your position to the problem that you are working on. And so advocates for family peace did a lot of work on their mission statement. And so that's where we're going to start. Laura, welcome, this afternoon. It's great to have you here.

>> Thank you for having me.

>> So give us a little background on your mission statement development. And what kind of changes you made. And when we get done talking about this in a general way, I'm also going to reference specific parts of your mission statement. If anybody online would like to have that document in front of you now, you can e-mail Liz -- liz@praxisinternational.org. And she will get it to you immediately. Otherwise, after the webinar we can get that to you as well. Laura, tell us about your mission statement. What did you do and why?

>> Advocates -- Advocates for Family Peace, the organization I work for has six programs. One of those programs is providing advocacy for victims of domestic violence. And we wanted to create a mission statement specific to that program to make sure that we were clear about as you were saying earlier, Rose, when we are responding to domestic violence within our community and wanting to be an agency that is resourceful and also intervening in domestic violence, that we didn't want to cause further harm. We wanted to differentiate between who's doing what to whom and with what impact. So we took on this process of reevaluating for the most part about who we serve and why. So we started out by naming the reasons why we were seeking -- how we were going to see end violence against women in our community. And also violence against people who are being battered. So you try to figure out, where do you put most of your resources? We really wanted to put the bulk of our resources into ending this course of controlling, battering, domestic violence. When you have --

>> I was going to say I think that's an important distinction. Sometimes a program can be positioned to say we provide services for victims, but you are really also wanting to be very integral in terms of not just serving people who are the victims, but also ending it. Right? By working within your community. And what we've found over time is a lot of mission statements no longer include that. So it's good to look at your own mission statement particularly in CCR to make sure you are in fact organized to do this work. So how did you do it?

>> Well, we got together collectively as a staff. We held focus groups with the people we serve. We worked with different organizations to help us understand legally what we can do, what we can't do, and we just really put together something that we felt kind of named the reality of the people that we serve. So one of the things that we wanted to make sure that we could do is through the course of time

trying to to define who we served, we wanted to make sure we were distinguishing between these different types of domestic violence. So when I say that, I'm talking about the battering, domestic violence, resistive domestic violence, which resisted in the sense that somebody is being battered and they use this violence back on their abusive partner. And those two forms of domestic violence are directly linked. So you wouldn't have resistive domestic violence if you didn't have battering. So we wanted to make sure we had the ability to serve both of those people. And then, you also have the non-battering domestic violence, which I guess over the years I've worked here, I feel like that's kind of a rare thing. Most of the people that walk through our doors are experiencing the battering. And have potentially used illegal resistive violence against the person who abuses them.

>> Of course in your mission statement itself, it references the definition that you lay out in terms of those three types. And that comes from a document that was put together as part of a supervised visitation project. I think it's really good and it's good for the community to be able to think about it. We're not just talking about individual acts. So how does the mission statement that you put together organize you to provide services for victims charged with criminal offenses? As well as advocates -- advocating for differential court strategies? Essentially, that's the sorting you wanted to do. You didn't want to be providing services to somebody who was using ongoing violence to maintain domination in the relationship, who was identified as a victim through individual arrest, let's say, right?

>> Right.

>> So how does it organize you to do that?

>> It organizes us in a couple different ways. It organizes us on an individual level. So when somebody comes here and they are saying they are a victim of domestic violence, they want to use our services, we are meeting with those people and trying to determine based on the information that they are giving us, who's doing what to whom and with what impact? Is the person living with somebody who's battering them? So that's the one piece on the ground. Always working with people having dialogue with them. Learning from their stories. Asking them questions about what kind of fears they believe they are in. So there's some level of analysis that you need to be doing when you're working with people in that regard. But then we're also -- our mission statement has organized us to do this systemic advocacy which is trying to make sure that we're aware of what's happening within the criminal justice system response so that we aren't taking up how people are labeled through that process and using that as our guide. So like you said, somebody who has been battered for years could use illegal resistive violence, get arrested, their partner maybe never arrested -- and they get arrested. And the criminal justice system is typically going to see them as the offender. That's what they're going to be labeled as. So we're working all the time with our coordinated community responses to hash that out but then also working on an individual level with the people that we think there is a potential this person was being battered and they used this resistive violence. So we would like to help them.

>> Right. Of course, part of what the impetus is, is that when you're helping the wrong person, you're actually helping that person to maintain their power and control. Right?

>> Absolutely.

>> And I think that just one tricky thing too is that people who battered typically always see themselves as the victim. So it really is about this process of trying to understand the context, the history, what's going on here in people's lives? To make sure that you are working with the right person.

>> Yes. And we'll go into some of the specifics on that. And I thought it would be -- before we proceed, for you to talk about some of the bullets that you lay out in terms of your underlying I suppose -- philosophical approach in your mission statement where you talk about how you seek to end violence against women. Could you go through those, Laura? With me?

>> Sure. So we have a sentence in our mission statement for advocacy program that says, advocates for -- Advocates for Family Peace seeks to end violence against women by -- first thing we put is that we're working to end its cultural and social support. So we're doing a lot of work within our community to try to bring down the structures or the foundation if you will, that allows so much violence against women to flourish.

>> And in that way you also say, look, this isn't an individual problem. This is part of a cultural phenomenon. Right?

>> Absolutely. I think that's a lot of people have kind of talked about this idea that most of the women that we've worked with over time that have used resistive violence to battering, they are doing that they don't feel like the community has supported them in ending the violence as well. So a lot of times, people take matters into their own hands. In order to cope, keep themselves safe, the kids safe. Yes, it is definitely a community and social problem from our perspective.

>> The next bullet?

>> We are going to make sure that we prioritize our resources for the needs and safety of battered women and their children. And then --

>> You don't have resources -- not organized to provide resources for anybody who was a victim of violence per se as an individual act, that you are really targeting this particular definition of domestic violence, which is the battering.

>> Right. So here's an example of that. Not too long ago, we had a family where the wife slapped her partner when he had an affair. And a neighbor saw it and called the police. That woman got arrested. We worked closely with her. We talked with him. Neither one of them were in fear of the other. It was a one-time thing that had happened. There was no history of violence. Both of them -- they just spoke to this idea that she's not a batterer, he is not battering her. It was a one-time event. -- she's not a batterer. Of course you would like for that's not to happen but we are really focusing on this battering.

>> Yeah. That's a good point. What are some of the other points under that in terms of how you think about and where you take action?

>> So we also -- we are taking on the cause of speaking on behalf of battered women and their children. So that obviously is at a community level. In our system. Just kind of trying to keep the real lived

experience of the people that we serve on the table. We're also working to educate our community about the root causes of domestic violence. So advocates for family peace definitely believes that this is a social problem and it's a result of how people are socially constructed to be in the world. So we work on it from that perspective and try to raise awareness from that angle. We don't view it as a relationship Robin when we are talking about battering or resistive violence. We view it as a bigger social problem. We're working all the time for social change and policy and practice that supports safety for battered women and accountability for violent behavior.

>> And this point of course goes to the whole CCR concept that you are looking at. Changing policy and practices. I think this is an important piece because if it's part of your mission, then you're able to actually -- I would say in some ways justify what your approach is and why you're getting involved. Right? The other ones go to that too, that is a social phenomenon that the culture, the community agencies, whether they intend to or not, maybe part of the problem and so in order to address it, it's about becoming part of the solution. And then your last point under there I think is also very important, Melissa. I mean, Laura. So would you talk to that one a little bit?

>> The last point is strengthen the voices of battered women and supporting them to self determine their own best interests.

>> Now, so, that's -- all of these are obviously really well constructed sentences. And my assumption then is that when you take a look at the activities and the job functions and the job descriptions for people within your organization, do you all incorporate intention to these things? Or are there particular jobs that incorporate some of these more than others?

>> Our agency -- we have six programs. We all most certainly -- we're a team, working on this issue from the standpoint of what I talked about earlier. This is a social problem. Here's why we believe it happens. Here is what we would like to do and where we would like to put our resources. This is specific to our advocacy program. Some of them most certainly are across-the-board. Like we're working together collectively. We might have different roles within our organization but we come from the same philosophical framework.

>> One of the things I think is important for me in terms of looking at the mission and what people do is when you think about the different roles of people -- maybe you have your community education specialists, how much do they bring up the fact that there's a function of your agency which is to work for social change? Or provide system advocacy or that sort of thing? So one of the things that we can see happen over time is that direct services -- probably first and foremost, very important. If we don't pay attention to these other things, they can take a backseat. And then you start to lose this whole aspect of actually changing the community as a method of preventing and intervening more effectively on the problem. Any thoughts about that, Laura?

>> I'll just would agree. I think that we always have to keep our eyes on both sides. So we're always wanted to do the individual advocacy, but then we should be taking what we're learning from the people that we serve and having that guide the work that we do on a systemic level. And when I talk about systemic level, most people think about the criminal justice system which is what we are primarily

talking about when we're talking about a coordinated community response on some level. But then I think we're also talking about we have to actively be working to reform other community institutions as well. The church, the media, the educational system, the clinics and hospitals in terms of how they take up and understand the battering course of controlling domestic violence. Because if we can get more than one place to shift, we have a better chance of really making some huge social change.

>> Can I interject here? There was a comment in the chat that pertains to the point that Laura is making right now. About just the cultural social support that relates to the work that the CCR is doing. The comment is, Yolanda Coffman would like to hear more about howAFFP -- how you talk up and take the social and cultural support and how you get to the root of the problem of violence. And integrate that in the cultural and social supports.

>> That's a great segue, because that some of what we'll be talking about in the next couple of slides. And as you look at what's up in front of us right now, it's really important that the CCR discusses and understands the distinctions between the violence committed by the bachelor -- batterer and the nd the victim. That's a key shift for the community in taking a look at in terms of how they construct their own activities around the problem. And so Laura, you were talking about -- all participants in the CCR should be thinking about the context. What do you mean by that? Are there particular things you want them to think about?

>> Yes. What I mean by that is that -- like we said earlier, if you create your intervention around domestic violence and you are losing sight of the fact that not all acts of domestic violence are the same, your -- you are potentially creating interventions that are unsafe. Those would be unsafe in particular for people experiencing the course of controlling battering. And also using the resistive violence and getting sucked up into the criminal justice system. So like in the state I live in, Minnesota, in my county, domestic violence is a very broad term in the criminal justice system. It can be used for the person who strangles their partner, to the person who slaps the partner one time. And those two people could potentially end up with the same criminal disposition just based on is there enough evidence for the case? Is the victim cooperative? All these things we see play out in the criminal justice system. So you have to constantly be challenging your selves and working and pushing to see what's really going on here? What do we need to do to make sure that we are paying attention to the people who are being battered? And then if they are being battered and they use resistive violence, those two people -- the one battering and the one using resistive -- using violence for different reasons. Their intention is different. The impact is different. And to contextualize that will help us create interventions that are ultimately safer.

>> Now, you have three or four or five -- three broad questions that you have all participants in your CCR thinking about in terms of the context. Could you talk about those now? Yolanda, as we go through these next slide -- if you still have some further questions about the cultural change, we will get to that too. But I'm thinking it may be answered in the next commentary. So what are those questions?

>> So typically -- these are pretty basic questions. They get right to the heart of the matter. One question you might ask is do you think he or she might seriously injure yourself or your children? Why

do you think so? Why or why not? When are you the most afraid him or her or the most seriously injured? And is the abuse changing in any way, you better or worse? So you're wanting to understand those on an individual level with the people that you serve but also as a coordinated community response wanting to be asking those questions in general. About how you are taking up the cases. Does everybody at the table believe that same action -- outcome should happen for the person who is telling the partner, I'm going to kill you, I'm going to kill you -- doing all sorts of things to make them believe that they will -- as the person who is trying to cope with the violence that they are experiencing? Is that fair? Is that justice? These are the big, philosophical questions. But they need to be on the table because otherwise, what you'll see is blanket response. By the system.

>> I recognize those questions as being similar to the ones we want to integrate into the function of the law enforcement officers at the scene.

>> Yes.

>> Those are in our community -- we have those risk questions. So any time a law enforcement officer goes to a domestic violence arrest, they use those questions. We call it a supplemental reporting form. But it's really helpful because it helps us see flags -- we believe that there -- here's the higher risk situation? It's also become extremely helpful in our community because the judges look at those three questions and those help determine potential relief conditions.

>> Right. So let's get into the nitty-gritty to talk about first of all, one of the things you are establishing here within your mission statement and within -- you also have eligibility criteria. So you have ways of sorting out who can get your services. And one of the things you do is you ask these questions. So --

>> Rose? I'm going to pause you. For some reason, looks like a bunch of our participants lost their audio. So is there anybody who can't hear me -- can you chat a quick little yes in the chat box if you can hear me? Okay. Yolanda said yes. Okay. There are a bunch of guess's coming in. Very good. -- yes's coming in. On the phone? Okay. So I'm not sure -- I'm just going to pause for a second here. I want to see if we're having trouble with the VoIP. Yolanda, I believe you are on VoIP. And you can hear me? Okay. If anyone is having difficulty, I think -- I hope we're back on track. It's hard to know. I'm going to chat this in. I guess March chatted it in too. Okay. Go ahead and continue. We chatted in -- hopefully everyone has audio that they need. All right. We are new to this -- to this webinar format. So you have to bear with us a little bit and seems like we do have vocational technical difficulties but let's go on and talk about these services and hopefully we'll have everybody able to listen to what you're going to be telling us, Laura. But talk to us about the individual advocacy you do. And take us through this slide.

>> Sure. So I'm going to -- in general, when anybody comes here seeking our help or services, we would sit down with those people and just dial up a gain, listen to their stories, try to figure out -- if it fits within our mission statement and if it does, what we can do to help them in any way. So when we are doing that, I think that we just want to make sure that we're always -- like safety and where people are changes constantly. It's an organic process. So you have to allow room for that. And I say that because sometimes I think there's this stigma about if somebody comes to you and not just totally scared but talking to you about a lot of things happening that are -- it's a pattern of symptoms nation, portion,

control, that people go in and out of where they are in terms of their safety. So I want people to be conscious of that when working with other people. When we're talking about this in terms of working specifically with women who have used resistive violence and they were arrested, then you want to make sure that you're always really, really mindful of the complex and dangerous position that woman might be in. Okay?

>> I was going to say, so now we are specifically -- when we're talking about advocacy for victims who have used violence, you are contacted by law enforcement pretty quickly after there's an arrest. Right?

>> Right.

>> So that's --

>> Every domestic violence arrest. We get a call from law enforcement.

>> Right. So you get a call and it goes to your hotline. Right? Generally if it's after hours -- you have volunteers or I guess there are people who received a stipend to run your hotline, right?

>> Right.

>> Okay. So they get on the line and they are talking to them in general about these kinds of ways of assessing okay, what's the risk? Who's doing what to whom without -- with what impact? Do your hotline people ask the questions about -- the three questions we have. That discussed before about how serious it is and will they seriously injure you? When were you most afraid of him or her? Is it getting better or worse? Do your hotline people ask that question?

>> Yes. They may.

>> Okay. So --

>> So I'll just set it up so people can see how this works. So if it's after the office is closed and somebody gets arrested or -- for domestic assault, law enforcement calls us, gives us the information about the assault, was arrested, what the victim's contact information is and then we call the victim. And we call the victim on every case just -- not because they have to work with us, but because we want them to know that we are here and also to see if they have any input about release conditions or what will happen in our community. Most of the time you will see the judge the next day if you get arrested for domestic assault. So we are doing a couple of things. We're kind of trying to assess immediate safety needs and what resources people need after domestic assault. If it's a battering situation or resistive violence situation and also trying to determine if they have any input for the criminal justice process on that point forward.

>> So if your hotline advocate takes the phone and says, even though this person is identified as a victim, through this arrest, I'm getting the sense that they are really not the the victim in the ongoing battering, what do they do with that? Do they treat it differently than they would treat it if they were okay -- I'm talking to the victim, clearly she's a victim, that sort of thing?

>> I think what they would do -- they would provide information referral. Whatever resources we have that fit potentially -- like if that person needs to work with an attorney or we're going to give people information and referrals.

>> And then you fall -- follow-up the next day.

>> Yes. So I come in and monitor the criminal justice system response to the -- I coming in the morning, check with the people who were on call and I also -- the court administrator e-mails me every day the court calendar. So I can see who's been arrested the night before. And I can also see who has ongoing criminal cases. So I check the court calendar. If there's a domestic on their -- I also checked with the backup person and see if they got a phone call and if they were able to contact the victim? A lot of times, it's hard to get a hold of the victim because you aren't getting the call from the police until like two, 3:00 in the morning. Typically aren't always try to contact them before I go up to look at -- to monitor the court hearing. Sometimes I will meet victims up there. Sometimes I won't. If it's determined that it's somebody who got arrested that was using resistive domestic violence, I'm going to try to go up and meet with them in the jail.

>> Okay. So that's where -- at the point at which first of all you've talked to the identified victim in this particular arrest. And then if you have a sense through your -- the questions you asked or the risk questions and other methods of finding out that this person probably isn't the problem let's say -- then you -- what do you say to the person who's been identified as the victim?

>> Let's say it's a batterer and he's -- let's say it's a guy and he's a batterer. Maybe you have some history that you know he's a batterer. Or maybe it comes up just through talking to him. Do you say to him at that point, anything like, well, we won't be able to provide you with services? Or not? Or how does that work for you? I think this is where some programs get stuck is because once they've talked to a particular person in a criminal case, they might feel like they've got to stick with that person. They get their services --

>> Like whoever gets there first?

>> Yeah. Whoever gets there first. Sorting out.

>> I think it couple different things. So obviously I'm speaking in very gendered terms here. Just because most of the violence IC over the years working here -- that I see is the battering with the -- women are the victims of the violence. But obviously I'm not trying to rule out -- if there were a man I believed were being battered, I would work with that man in the same way I would work with a woman I believe is being battered. If a man who is battering comes here and is claiming he's the victim, I'm going to try to assess that situation and see like has he ever had in order for protection against her? Is there -- has she ever been arrested before? Has he ever been arrested? All these things where I'm trying to figure out, what's the history and context here? So I don't have to make anybody a client just because I talk to them. I don't have to -- they don't have to be somebody who gets services from our agency. You can talk to people and give them information and referrals. They don't have to be working long-term with you. So like I always try to help people the best I can with what I have. But if I believe that somebody is

battering another person just based on the information that I got, if there are other criminal histories, if it's somebody who I know has been in trouble for domestic before, all of that is going to factor in to what to do. We have an intervention program for men and fathers here. A couple of the men who work within that program will meet with men just to talk through some of this stuff. But in order to receive the advocacy services that we have, we really are trying to make sure we are determining who's doing what to whom and with what impact.

>> This is Liz. If I could interject, there was a comment in the chat about when a man is assessed for not qualifying for IPV, that he doesn't fit the criteria, this person I think is just wondering about how you let him know that he doesn't fit your criteria.

>> Well, I think I would try to be as transparent as possible. These are all individual case-by-case bases. I don't want to put out this blanket way of doing this, because I want people to think through what you do. If it were me, I would be -- try to be very transparent and say specifically, what our resources are. Designed for -- I think that we have some kind of form letter that we can give people here too that says, potentially the conflict of interest for us. Here's why. If it is somebody where they -- the partner has used this before and they may not know that, we can say it's a conflict. And we don't have to give them an explanation for why that is. Those of the types of things that I try to initially do with people. It's tricky. I understand that. But it's in no way like you're trying to be biased or secretive. You're just really trying to analyze what's happening and making sure that your analysis takes in the context of the violence. So that --

>> I think this is where your mission statement and eligibility criteria are helpful too because you very clearly states that you're looking to intervene on a particular kind of violence and that's the violence that is used to maintain and establish power and control. Also within your eligibility criteria which is part of this document -- that we discussed earlier that Liz can send you -- it also says that just because you get information and referrals, doesn't mean that you are a client. So that kind of sidesteps that whole thing about first-come first-served sort of. That situation. And I think -- we'll get into this too. Over time the community is understanding that you are there to intervene on a particular phenomenon whereby one person abuses therefore -- their power over another. Let's get back to what you do when you meet with the victim -- the women in jail. What happens there? You have decided, okay, I've got to go talk to the woman in this case -- we've got -- I'm going to go meet with a woman in jail who is now arrested because she is a victim of battering. Right? And she used illegal force. What do you do when you get there?

>> So just let me say that we also -- every morning after a domestic happens, we get the incident report. Whatever was the call to law enforcement and how the law enforcement responded, we get that. So know that that's another piece to what I'm looking at before I go forward. I'm talking with people and looking at all that information. Let's say I get an incident report that says within their, so and so assaulted her partner. She said he had been assaulting her as well. He had scratch marks on his neck. Okay? So they arrest her. Potentially we live in a small community -- I might know the people. That's more common than not here. If you didn't, it's the same level of analyzing what's going on. I would go to the jail. I meet with her. And I'm just really kind of trying to talk with her about what happened, what --

just getting her side of the story. And then making sure that she gets directly hooked up with the people she meets. So if she qualifies for a public defender, then I'm going to work with the public defender in terms of getting them resources. Like I send a lot of public defenders the e toss -- the thing they put together about intimate partner violence, victims charged with crimes -- Equitas. It's a really wonderful piece in terms of how you work with people when they are considered victim defendant if you will. That's kind of the criminal justice language. So I will send that. I will talk with prosecution about -- could we potentially do something different with this case in terms of an offer based on the history? Sometimes you might even be pushing prosecution to dismiss it if you know that -- there's been a long history of violence against this person and they just happened to be the one who got arrested this time? Obviously you're doing this with the woman in jail's consent. That's going to -- not going to do all that without her wanting to do that. But I think that you can always do systemic change work, not using individual cases. Right?

>> Right.

>> So you also -- you're talking about a lot of stuff in place that goes along with this. For example you have an incident report. There's an agreement with law enforcement about getting that. Also contacted after a call. So there's an agreement about that. There's a relationship that's been established with the court administrator to send you the daily court docket. And you also mentioned when we were talking before that your judge discourages and won't accept please -- pleas until they have talked to a defense attorney.

>> That's right. I've only seen one person -- actually a man -- be able to just plead guilty right away at arraignment. Arraignment is the first hearing typically after you've been arrested. I have women -- I don't know if this is documented research anywhere -- I know a lot of people in the fields talk about it and I've seen it myself -- women are really, really, really prone to say I did it. Here's what I did. I'm guilty. Let's just get this done. Okay? So in our community, if somebody is trying to do that right away, the judges really want them to get -- speak with an attorney, get legal counsel before they make any decisions even if it is just a day later that they see the judge a gain.

>> I think that's -- that gets rid of one big problem. In so many areas, we see the victim going in -- the victim of battering going in and pleading guilty. And then without having talked to an advocate, without having talked to a defense attorney and then they have all the repercussions of that.

>> Laura? It's Liz. So could you just -- there was a question or two -- a comment in the chat about the document that you referenced that the defense attorneys use?

>> Sure. And it is actually a prosecutor's resource. But it's perfect to give to defense attorneys when they are working with victim defendant's just because it's all about what is justice here? How do you distinguish between the different types of violence? What is a just outcome? But it's from Equitas, which is actually spelled Aequitas. We can probably put links to this stuff somewhere, right?

>> Right. I will type it in right now. I could put it in the chat. And then we can send it out later. So I can dig for it. Do you know the name of the document?

>> The name of the document is intimate partner violence victims charts with crimes. And then the subheading is justice and accountability for victims of battering who use violence against their batterer. It's a great piece. And you can give that to the defense attorneys. It's also a great use to start to have conversations with your prosecutors about -- a lot of prosecutors really do kind of have school of thought of like, a hit is a hit. You hit somebody, you are in trouble. And so to start to kind of tease that out a little bit and try to distinguish between that is different. And then the other piece which I think we're going to get too -- I'll put it out there right now so you can put up there, Liz, is the crossroads manual. That was created -- we'll get to that.

>> Right. And then thinking that we should move to the next pieces and get to that. And one of the pieces that we want to talk about too is how does this relate to working with your CCR, then? The systemic advocacy that you do? Can you say something about that? You referenced it. It's a good thing for your CCR to be thinking about -- we have to be able to make those distinctions in order to be able -- develop solutions.

>> Absolutely.

>> So you've done a lot. Obviously your CCR is very involved in shifting how people think about this.

>> Yeah. I would say so. And I will also say that sometimes it's not easy. Sometimes we don't agree. We are all willing to come to the table and try to figure out what's in the best interest of the people in our community? Right? We don't want to be creating interventions that are ultimately unsafe. Nobody wants that. So I think it just, you know, an initial discussion that everybody should be having as an organization and as a coordinated community response is, how do we distinguish between the different types of domestic violence? And that's another article, Liz, you could put up there, right. The article about domestic violence -- a great starting point for people to kind of start to have a discussion about, how do you determine who's doing what to whom? And then once you get that kind of -- like everybody's on the same page about that, what are we going to do with the different types of domestic violence? How are we going to respond to them? Should there be a differentiated response between them?

>> Then you look at embedding most of your changes. Of course into policies. Whether they are advocacy, policies, law enforcement, postconviction policies, so those policies incorporate this attention to contextualizing the violence in a particular way. I think that's a key feature, is that you're all on the same page and it's embedded in the guiding documents that you use to intervene on the problem. Right?

>> Sure. Yeah.

>> One thing that -- in terms of framing these discussions within our community -- we should all always be trying to understand the role that the violence and power plays within shaping the relationship of the people that are before us.

>> Yes. I think this leads to a good thing to consider too which is that you're going to be describing and defining to the community, what is the impact it of not making these particular sorts of distinctions? That's where the victim's experience is brought to the fore. Do you have regular ways of assessing the impact of practices on the battered women and victims that you serve?

>> Well, I think that just from -- by the nature of my role in terms of watching and monitoring the criminal justice system and walking people through that process, I get to see like huge gaps in terms of what we think would be helpful for people and what ultimately makes them less safe. And then I can bring that back to the coordinated community response team. I think that's another way in which you have to be working on a lot of different levels. Like you want to be increasing your community awareness. So that we think -- just last month, we have a local radio station. I work really closely with them to get stories out there from survivors, victims, about their experience with domestic violence. And it's their voice but all anonymous. And I think that that created a lot of awareness in our community about what people are experiencing and what they believe they need to feel safe. So you're always trying to take up that within the work that you're doing.

>> Before we move to the next slide which is the crossroads program -- we want to finish up with that -- you have some questions for CCR's to consider relative to what each of these law enforcement agencies are doing. Would you take some time to pose some of those now, Laura?

>> Sure. I think that a couple things that are really important for people to consider is, at a bare minimum, does your state law encourage or require predominant aggressor arrests? When we're talking about predominant aggressor, talking about the person who -- in an incident-based case -- may not be the primary aggressor, but they are the predominant aggressor in terms of their has historically been other violence perpetrated by this person. There is a reason to believe that the person is causing fear in their family. All this kind of battering tactics we talked about are playing out but within one little incident. They were not the primary aggressor but they are the predominant aggressor. So that's a big distinction but it's a good one to have. A good conversation to have within your community. And the blueprint -- everybody can get that --

>> It's on the practice website -- it's on the Praxis website.

>> You're talking state laws, but one of the things you need to know is you may have state laws, but how are the local laws being applied if you have them, right? So that's an important piece to know.

>> Exactly.

>> And you're talking about ways of avoiding that arrests. We have some communities where they're getting upwards of 30 car -- 35, 40 for -- 35% or 40% of arrests are for women. We are not establishing by gender but the profile of the crime suggests it is primarily a gender-based crime and so you're going to want to be knowing in your community, what is the incidence? If we have predominant aggressor laws, are they being applied? Right? And then in keeping with that, there's questions about the officers. Their training.

>> Yes. Are they trained in investigation techniques to determine if somebody was acting in self-defense? And then like I said if both parties committed assault, who was the predominant aggressor? Do the sergeants and administrators monitor for compliance of these protocols? And then like we're going to get too, I have this question of do prosecutors have a charging policy similar to those described by Aequitas or the crossroads program? Is that followed? A lot of times as the domestic violence organization, we're trying to do a lot of different things. Obviously to end the violence -- sometimes you also have to be that person within your community that's monitoring how all this stuff plays out within the system. And then bringing about -- bringing to light some of these caps that UC. So like in might have somebody that says that yeah, we have a predominant aggressor arrests policy, but then you sit down and look at 50 police reports and that's just not the case. Then that becomes something where you want to have that conversation with your CCR.

>> Right.

>> I would also suggest that you have some sort of agreement with your defense bar about how to help victims charged with assault. And it doesn't have to be like a written agreement but I think it conversation about how can we help each other out when we believe this is the case? I would talk with probation officers who are doing the presentencing investigation to make sure that they have avenues and ways of bringing to light the history of abuse. Because they are ultimately on some level putting out there what they believe the final sentence should be. And then you're just always wanting to work locally with your judges around, are they trained on this idea that not all acts of domestic violence are the same? Most people in general believe that they are. And those of us who work in this field just know that there's a difference. There's a difference between the person who comes to you and has been living with somebody who is terrorizing them, then the person who something happened one time and they're just not scared of that person.

>> Right. So let's move specifically to prosecution and the crossroads program. I wanted to add one question to consider, which is, how is this relationship between the advocacy program and the victim -- it requires agreements with the law enforcement agencies to notify advocacy programs when there has been an arrest so you can do this early intervention. Right? And one of the things I know about that is that in some places, state law does not allow the law enforcement agencies to do that. So sometimes when you think about what do we need to do in our community, the solution is not going to be in the community. It's going to be in changing a state law. Working with your coalitions, if you are not able to get involved with a victim as soon as possible after an arrest, because of the law within your state, it's very important to work together at the state level to make sure that you can be contacted by law enforcement and then you can go to law enforcement and make sure that you get those kinds of relationships in place. And that's not just to be contacted but also to be able to look at the police reports like you say. So I'm going to move to -- looking at the time of course. And we could go on and on, but let's talking about the crossroads program. Because this is a specific method or strategy used by prosecutors to provide a different Cheryl -- a differential response to battering. From there I want to finish up with the groups that you have for women who have used violence who are themselves battered. So tell me some about the crossroads program. This is available on the Praxis website as well. But Laura, you don't use this program verbatim, but you do take up the essence of what the crossroads

is trying to get at. Tell us what you do relative to prosecution.

>> The Crossroads Program was designed for victims of ongoing domestic violence criminally charged with offenses against their partner. And it's specifically designed to kind of give participants this opportunity to address their use of violence within the larger context of the victimization. So it's not necessarily saying that we're not going to hold people accountable if they are using illegal resistive violence. There are going to be some consequences to that but we're going to figure that out in a meaningful, helpful way. Because we know they are actively being battered, and that's what they used violence and resistance to. So it's a different framework than most prosecutors use around the country. I've done a lot of trainings in communities around women's use of violence. It really is a lot of people to believe that if you hit somebody, a hit is a hit and you should have equal criminal disposition when it's all said and done. But the Crossroads Program was actually created in Duluth by a great group of people. Written by Mary Asmussen. She's still the city prosecutor in Duluth. It's a brilliant piece that's a great thing to use as an outline when you're kind of talking with prosecution about what can we do with these cases where we know that this person is not the same public safety risk as the person who is battering people? So that's -- we have actually had Mary come to our community and meet with our County attorneys to kind of talk about how they created it, why they created it, it's actually a gender neutral document. And I think when people look at it and they talk it through, people are open to the ideas. Some communities can't completely -- if you have a criminal charge, and it's a domestic violence that there will have to be some sort of programming or something that goes along with it.

>> Specifically, what do you look for? A deferral or -- what is the outcome you are looking for?

>> In our community it would be a stay of adjudication, which means that potentially they could get in trouble if they didn't accomplish like the group that we have for women who use violence.

>> Okay. And they have a certain amount of time and then it goes off the record or --

>> Right.

>> The court understands that the only reason they were using this violence is because they themselves are the ongoing victims?

>> Right.

>> Great. And so do you have anything in writing that your prosecutor office does? Or is this more or less a case-by-case sort of a mutual understanding that you will be talking to them in specific cases and they will be considering what you have to tell them?

>> Case-by-case --

>> Okay.

>> I would like to -- we're working on potentially creating some sort of framework in general. We don't want it to go away if those of us who work in the system go away. Right? We'd like to institutionalize some of our thinking around this type of work. But we don't have like a written document at this point.

>> Okay. All right. And it seems like in case of the prosecution arena, there's less about the written policies. You're dealing with fewer people. It's not like a law enforcement agency where you want all 20 officers to go out there and do the same thing and so in this case, generally you're working with one or two people. And there's greater opportunity to put some of these things in place without necessarily putting them in writing.

>> Right.

>> Okay. So this is going to be -- we're going to move quickly here. I apologize but this document is available again -- Liz will send out the links to be able to get you to this -- I believe it's on the Praxis website. Is that right?

>> It is. And I put in the chat. It's available for free download. It's kind of a big document. And so it's broken up into four sections. But the link is in the chat. And then I can also send out the link again to the page where this document lives on the Praxis website after our webinar today.

>> Okay. So moving right along into the next question, you have a specialized program for women who have used force who are themselves battered. Right?

>> Right.

>> Could you -- talk to us about that -- is that something that is available to the callers?

>> It is. We could probably get that connection as well. Myself, Melissa Scott, we wrote a curriculum for women who use violence and get arrested and are ordered group. The curriculum is called turning point, in nonviolence curriculum for women. -- in nonviolence correctly. To help women understand violence in their lives and help them take concrete steps to end the violence they are using and experiencing. So early on in my work at Advocates for Family Peace, probably 10 years ago now, I was doing groups with women who used violence and were getting arrested. And it became really apparent that probably 99% of women in my group were also actively being abused. And so Melissa and I started working on trying to understand what you do with that, back then people didn't really have a curriculum to use with women. They were trying to adapt the men's curriculum to fit women and it just wasn't working. So we partnered up with Ellen. And we wrote a curriculum specific -- specific to women using resistive violence and ending up in groups.

>> And how many women -- how many women do you see coming into your program? With all the work that you've done, in this arena, I'm assuming your numbers are fairly low in terms of erroneous arrests. Yes?

>> Yes.

>> So it ebbs and flows. Sometimes we don't have anybody. So we have no groups. Sometimes we have three people. Right now we are at an all-time high with five people. Which I know in a lot of communities I get calls from people all the time in regards to implementing this curricula and what it means and a lot of states are saying that women or -- it's so hard not to talk in gender terms -- people using resistive violence, whether or not you have determined that in your community should be quote, ordered to the same amount of groups as somebody who batters their partner? That's why all of the CCR work is very important. Because we end up creating things then in terms of criminal dispositions that aren't safe and aren't helpful to people. And the groups being one of them.

>> Right. Right. And yet -- I mean, it's a tall order being able to shift -- shift the ship that's moving in a particular direction. Any closing comments you'd like to make? Are there any questions out there? I know there's that outstanding question I think that Yolanda asked about how do you do cultural change? I just wanted to make the comment that this is cultural change when we change -- we change the institutions to change the culture. And changing the institutions is about being able to get them to expand their understanding of what they are doing and creating differential responses like you say, that really target the problem with precision. So that we actually end the use of violence as an effective means of controlling another and in if -- enslaving another and dominating their lives.

>> Right.

>> And I think that's just some big picture quick things like when you're talking about social change is that we have to bring down social structures that promote this idea that one group of people is better or more powerful than the other. Like so people believe within their relationships one person has the right -- and is entitled to control and coercively manipulate their partner. So those are bigger things that you are always constantly trying to have on your awareness and work towards. Taking down the structures that support this to be such a widespread problem.

>> Right. Right. And we didn't say a terrific amount about your eligibility, but it's clearly about getting to the person using the violence to maintain this kind of power and control. And one of the pieces that I think gets that also is how to determine these sorts of questions when it is the same-sex relationship. We've been primarily talking about heterosexual relationships. At the same time we are trying not to be using gender terms -- but it's important for an agency to be able to say, okay, it's not just that somebody comes to us and says it's happening. It's how we are able to hear what they're saying is happening and then why it's happening and then what's the outcome of it occurring? So that's another important piece in terms of establishing first of all not only what you do and why and what particular kind of violence you intervene on but then also who is eligible for your services so that you don't become inadvertently the tool of the batterer to keep his victim -- his or her victim from getting the services they need and ending the violence. Other closing comments from you, Laura?

>> I just thank you for having me. I think that it is a big shift that needs to happen but I think that we can do it. I really do. I think we need to be doing it.

>> The other thing too is that we are doing it too because of the efforts of programs like yours that are thinking through these things and then sharing very generally -- generously with other programs around

the country to be able to say, this is how they did it, here's the products that they developed, here's how we can use this in our own community. So thanks so much to you up in Grand Rapids for all the work you do.

>> Thank you.

>> And I see that it is 3:15. Did you have anything to say before we break?

>> Just very briefly, thank you. Of course so much, Rose and Laura and to all of you for participating today. I apologize for the technology issues that we had. Thank you so much for your patience and for bearing with us. And to let you know that once you disconnect from this webinar, you will be routed to an evaluation. Of course, we always super appreciate any feedback that you give us. So please take just a minute or two of your time and give us your thoughts about this session or ideas you have about the future. For other sessions. And just a little reminder, we'll be together again on Wednesday, December 18, for our next Rural Routes to change webinar. So please watch for publicity about that session. And make sure it's on your calendar. We hope that you'll be able to join us then. So thank you so much, everybody. Take good care. Thanks, Rose. Thank you, Laura. Thank you, everybody.

>> Thank you.

>> Goodbye.

>> Happy Thanksgiving.

>> Take care, everybody.

>> [event concluded]