Three Key Skills for Successful Interagency Leadership

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with Rose Thelen, Praxis CRR Technical Assistance Partner, Gender Violence Institute, Leah Lutz, MN Coalition Against Sexual Assault

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- [Voiceover] Your call is now live.

- [Maren] Hello everyone and welcome to Rural Routes to Change monthly Praxis discussions intended to strengthen your interagency responses to violence against women. We hold these calls on the third Wednesday of each month and we're glad you're able to join us for the first month in January. My name is Maren Woods, and excuse me I said the first month in January but I meant the first month in . My name's Maren Woods and I'm Praxis's Rural TA program manager and I'm subbing today for Liz. I'll also be facilitating the discussion today so I'm really excited about this call. My coworker Jane will be monitoring the chat during today's webinar so if there's questions or comments that you have about the discussion today, please feel free to chat those in. But I'm gonna start with some tips for participating in the webinar for those of you who might be new to this system.

Your, all phone lines today are muted except for the host folks and the guests today, but we do wanna hear your comments. So if you're listening by audio only, in other words not participating through the webinar platform, you can email your comments to Maren@praxisinternational.org and I'll make sure that those questions get asked of the folks on the call today. If you are using the webinar platform, you can chat in your comments or questions via the public tab in the lower left hand side of your screen. And you can see some chatting that's going on there now. And to practice, if you could please chat in who is listening with you today on this webinar. If it's just you, you can say, "it's just me." Or if it's you and a couple of coworkers, let us know how many people are listening in with you today using that public chat feature. If you need to speak with any of the presenters today privately, you can click on the private tab which is right next to the public tab and choose who you want to chat with privately to ask questions or to report any technical problems, and you can do that to either Jane or myself, and I think I show up as Praxis staff.

If for some reason you lose webinar connection today, please go back to the initial join link from the email invitation that was sent to you yesterday by some Praxis staff or email me to let me know that you've lost connection and I'll try to get you reconnected in the background. If you lose audio connection or phone connection, just dial back in using that phone number. And if that happens several times, you can try dialing back in by a cell phone, they say that that can override any problems you might be having connecting. This session is recorded and will be available on our website a couple of days after today, once we do some little editing to it. And the final thing, the technical thing is that when you close out of the webinar today, you'll receive, you'll be brought to a window that is a brief evaluation of today's session and it's just five short questions, and we ask that you please do respond to that survey as we do use that information to help us improve future training events. So with that today... Jane, does it look like everybody's hearing ok, no complaints about connections?

- [Jane] It looks good.

- [Maren] Great.

- [Jane] We'll cross our fingers.

- [Maren] Yea, wonderful.

- [Jane] Keep them crossed.

- [Maren] So today we are going to go over three key skills for successful interagency leadership and we're very fortunate to have with us two pivotal experts in coordinating interagency responses to violence against the men who train and consult both locally in Minnesota and also around the country, in particular with rural communities. We have Rose who you've probably heard from before on these calls if you're a regular with us. She's a technical assistance partner with Praxis on rural CCR efforts. Rose brings a wealth of experience related to coordinating rural community responses to violence against women. An advocate since , she's coordinated numerous CCRs herself, she's worked intensely, intensively, with many rural communities across the country to support their CCR efforts. She's trained internationally and most recently served for four years as a Wright County commissioner in rural Minnesota. We are very fortunate to have her continued presence with our work through the development and she tends to facilitate the rural routes to change, but I'm doing that today, so hi Rose, welcome.

- [Rose] Hi thanks, great to be here.

- [Maren] Glad to have you. We also have with us Leah Lutz, a collaboration specialist, in training and resources coordinator with the Sexual Violence Justice Institutes at the Minnesota Coalitions Against Sexual Assaults. Leah has over 15 years of experience in sexual and domestic violence related work. She's been an advocate, an executive director of a community based advocacy organization and a director of a family resource center, and she's also chair to local SART team in Minnesota. She's developed, facilitated, and delivered many types of trainings for SART such as webinars, the first national institute of SARTs leaders, for SART leaders, conference key notes, statewide trainings, and local team trainings as well. She has first hand experience working directly with teams and or team leaders in urban, rural, and suburban settings, so we're really fortunate to have Leah with us today too. Hi Leah.

- [Leah] Hi everyone.

- [Maren] Thank you to both of you for being with us today. So being an effective leader of coordinated interagency responses to violence against women requires lots of skills, obviously and it's sometimes a thankless job, but we know that there is good work being done across the country by leaders and leadership of these efforts. And today we're gonna focus on three key skills relative to effective leadership. The first that we'll go over is understanding and articulating a vision of community collaborations contributions to ending violence against women. Two, that leaders know what is happening with all victims and survivors in your community. And three, that leadership and leaders

elevate the central role in status of community based advocates in these efforts. Leaders need to be grounded in theoretical and philosophical assumptions that move collaborative agency responses from simply service provisions to actually making concrete institutional change. Today we're gonna discuss these leadership tasks and to move toward a united message regarding violence against women that centralizes survivor safety and well being and holds offenders accountable.

I'll also note that the content that we'll be covering here today is just a taste of the more in depth training that we'll offer at our March institute in Phoenix, Arizona for which I hope you've already received publicity. The fact that you've registered for this particular webinar session tells me that you're just the perfect person to come to that training institute and so I'll be sending out information about that training after this call is over, but that's here from me right now, we know that we've got a range of folks on the call with us today, but we're not sure who of all of you are actually currently right now tasked with leading these interagency efforts. So if you could chat in your title let's say, or if you're a coordinator, or if you're a leader, or if you're a participant of some sort of interagency effort, just so we have a sense of that. You can do that on the public chat tab now. And so while those are coming in, we've got a little bit of a shy group, there we go, thanks Sandra, thanks Susie. Let's dive into the first skill of effective interagency leadership as those are coming in. Looks live we've got some program coordinators, SART coordinator, great. And again, the first skill that we'll talk about is understanding and articulating a vision of community collaboration contributions to end the violence against women. As a leader, it's key to be able to tie your current efforts in your community to a vision of a world without violence against women. Sometimes that comes through an elevator speech, sometimes it's articulating this vision in a more thorough way at an interagency or a community meeting or a training. You can talk about your local community's history and efforts, but the power of that comes with recognizing and articulating the fuller context in which these efforts are made. And so as we dive into this first part of this discussion, also people are chatting in what their role, I'm wondering if you already have an elevator speech and if it's words or less if you wanted to chat that in about what it is that you do and how it's connected to this core context of working to end violence against women. But I wanna turn now to our guests today to get them to... in their range of experience with programs across the country, paint a picture of interagency efforts that we know are currently out there and what we've been seeing in there. So Rose, let's start with you.

- [Rose] You know, I just wanna have a question, I'm not seeing the slide... There we go--

- [Maren] There we go, sorry, that's because I've got, I'm wearing these hats. (laughs) There we go.

- [Rose] Figures right? Well of course we see a whole gambit of various methods of organizing within a community to address the issues of institutional change. I'm gonna let Leah go into some, some length on that but I generally work from, as a preferred model, I work with none of the above which is the last check point that you see under the range. I work with CCRs that are involved in responding to domestic violence. And why I say I prefer that is that even though you may have a team, or an advisory group, or a domestic violence response team, or those sorts of things, or a council, that generally the work of making changes within the community and how it responds is gonna take place outside of those larger group meetings. So I use... I got grounded to the Duluth Model early on which is the first place in the

country where they collaborated together to change how everybody responded to domestic violence. That generally organized people to get together in numerous ways. So they would meet all the people who were involved and they took a look at one system at a time. So everybody that was gonna meet together to look at the criminal justice system response might meet maybe every six months or so but they didn't get together on a monthly basis, and I think that sometimes that an be difficult. That becomes a job in itself, just getting that many people to come again and again. But generally we got people together and then they would agree this is a noble effort and yes you go ahead and bring us together as needed. And what I mean by that is that the coordinator would identify particular gaps in the criminal justice systems let's say, and then bring together the various decision makers, the supervisors, the advocates who could bring attention to that particular problem, possibly identify solutions and then discuss the potential for changing how people responded to the crime of domestic violence. And generally, that group was going to be looking at what were the policies, the procedures, the protocols, the forms, what was in writing that organized a particular practitioner to do a particular behavior when coming into contact with the victim or the perpetrator in a domestic violence scenario. So generally I would look and I often recommend that if you're gonna change the system, you don't necessarily need to come together as a large group. I've worked in groups where I didn't bring anybody together in a large group. I worked with the law enforcement agency first to look at what they were doing. I worked with the prosecution agency second. I brought the prosecutor and the law enforcement agency together to look at how they worked together, and we maybe met for six or seven times, changed some policies, adapted some forms, and then it became to coordinators role to make sure that these tasks were being attended to between the meetings. So anyway, that's a way of working that I think specifically gets to the problem at hand and how to change what people are doing. We did the same thing relative to child protection agencies too. There were... I worked with a collaboration that brought together advocacy programs and child protection to take a look at how they work together, what they could do differently, what was out there that might effective in the local community. So generally, looking at a system per time, minimizing the need to get together on an ongoing basis and then working to identify the problems and identify solutions, so that's pretty much the collaborative model from which I like to work. And so I was thinking Leah you can, if you wanna go into some of these various types that are listed in the PowerPoint you could.

- [Leah] Certainly, yes I'd be happy to do that. My experience comes a bit more with sexual violence and sexual assault so I'll speak to that, and just thought we could start by maybe sharing the landscape of different collaborative responses that we see currently out there that are very common. And as you're listening to it, I think that one thing that we say at SVJI quite a lot is that there's different fits depending on the need of the community, your collaboration, you system players and so on, as well as what issue you're trying to address. We tried to talk about it as there's a range but try to keep those two different elements in mind. And then it can be also very helpful to articulate the vision for how you plan to organization for the work as well as the work itself so that there's kind of a road map, a plan for getting to the change that you identified that needs to happen in your community. So across the board and across the landscape generally, if there are teams, we see a variety of teams both informal and formal. It can take many, many different forms as you all know on the call. So CCRs, coordinated community

response which historically has been more focused on domestic violence type of response issues, but we see it too with some of these teams and also taking up sexual assault issues as well.

- [Rose] Let me interject--

- [Leah] Yea, go ahead.

- [Rose] Here because the CCR is not always a team.

- [Leah] It's not, nope, yep that's a great point and I wanted to identify that, it can be formal and informal and it's not always a team, right thanks Rose.

- [Rose] Right, right.

- [Leah] Yea, good distinction there. The SARTs like the CCRs can be informal or formal and the makeup of them is different across the country, I think depending on the needs of the community and the response issue, and that generally stands for the sexual assault response teams, but even within that designation, there is often different names for teams as well interagency councils, task force, and so on. We see the language as like MDTs and multidisciplinary response teams so really the language can be really varied and then the structure that each one of these takes is really, really different as well. And of course there's all sorts of others and all sorts of others on that spectrum of the informal to the formal. And informal I don't think is necessarily informal as far as the collaborative work, but just a distinction maybe not on the formal team meetings and so on but more on still being really deliberate about how to go about making that change and maybe more one to one type change. It may be more task force committees, different things like that. That's kind of an overview of the language that we see a lot and then another distinction is really how these teams are organized can really differ and I think that's a good thing. And just for you to think about these organizing factors and what of 'em would you really need to attend to or maybe really be intentional about for that fit for your community and your response issues. So that membership, what could that look like, what should that look like, would there be any funding for example, the coordination and all the behind the scenes efforts that need to take place, and where would that come from? And that's across the board too. We see different things with the coordination and the leadership, often community based advocacy but with some SARTs and things, we also use some system based teaming and collaborative efforts as well. So attending to that we see different settings and I know we have the real idea up here but depending if it's tribal, college, if it's really strongly affiliated with the sexual assault nurse examiner program, urban, that can really influence how you wanna organize for the work of this collaborative response as well. Frequency of meetings, if there's meetings, if there's no meetings, if there's subcommittee work, if there's time limited meetings, a few meetings to work and adjust the problem. And then what they're addressing is really varied. So some start addressing maybe adult issues, either with domestic violence or sexual assaults or both, we see child stalking, kind of all of the above, and I think on that just being really intentional about what different communities are addressing and then finding that fit for the community and attending to that could be important.

- [Rose] Well I'll jump in here, I think that you covered it very well--

- [Maren] Oh I'm sorry, I started talking and I muted myself. (laughter erupts) Instead of unmuted myself, unmuting myself.

- [Leah] It's a well oiled machine here.

- [Maren] So thank you for giving us that range of what's out there and what you all have had experiences working with. It looks like there's a couple folks chatting and that they've got multidisciplinary teams that... quarterly meetings that, or one on one work with occasional meetings, so there's a big range. But what is at the heart, and both of you talked about creating systems change, and reform efforts, and coordinating interagency responses, but what's at the heart of all of this? Like what is the purpose, what is the bigger picture of why we're doing these coordinator, leading these coordinated efforts? And Leah, let's start with you.

- [Leah] Sure, that's a great question and one I know I contemplate a lot, often times when I'm driving to team meetings I'm thinking about what's the heart of it and things. I think I'd wanna start with we believe and I believe each community is the expert on their response and then often is with the community based advocacy agency with knowing the heart of what women need in the community, what's happening in the community, and responders with that expertise as well. Now we can continue to grow that expertise and that's often needed, but with any community that expertise is there with really knowing the issue, and I also think with knowing how to organize for the work and the different models that are out there on to do that, to achieve the change. So when I think about this and I often use the word meaningful change, that whatever approach we do work a lot with SART teams or not a team or whatever it may be, that it is, I think, important to be intentional about what kind of process you would use, what works for your community. And then what I always think about is that the strategy or it's a tool to achieve meaningful change. So for example, when I'm out working with teams, the teaming themselves and the monthly meeting, usually does not result in that system change that they want, that can be part of it, but just the meetings themselves, that process, that's not gonna necessarily translate into that change that you wanna see. But how can that be used as a tool or a mechanism to achieve that change in the community which the experts are there and in the community didn't know what change should take place. And I think that it can, the process can really yield improvements. And I think it should be two fold, the victim experience and response changes, so attending to both of those. And a true, I think, collaborative process is also predicated on research analysis, really essential to hear from victims and responders to identify where change needs to take place. I work with a team, not a rural team, but another team where they've just spent a year and a half doing this before even identifying changes and things like that. And their prosecutor said, "I see victims everyday," they do have a high caseload and volume going through, but recently they took part in actually really hearing from victims and one issue they wanted to hear from more were those victims who were voluntarily intoxicated who were sexual assaulted. And she came back to team meetings and said, "it's been a long time since I really heard a victim." So really being intentional about that. And even if responders, you know, initially with that team we heard things like, "well we know the needs," "we know what's happening, I work with victims everyday." But how being systematic about a process, they really kind of opened their eyes to deeper listening, deeper listening and so on. And so the team, or the process, really works to design, training, evaluate, it's really about influencing the deeper structural and

institutional change. We like to say that it does require a heavy investment and commitment however that the system change work also complements other forms of advocacy which I'm getting to learn a lot this Praxis about, I'm part of the advocacy learning center. And it can complement other forms such as the individual advocacy, agency to agency advocacy doesn't take the place of but really having some kind of conversations about how all the different forms of advocacy can compliment all the different efforts that are happening to achieve that ultimate goal of system change and making the experience better for victims. And finally I think it really gives a great chance for members of this process to step into one another's roles and shoes and understand why things happen in the way they do. Again, I just heard this from a same nurse who just said, "I had no idea really what my peers" "and colleagues were doing," and stepping in those shoes, and I think once you can do that, there's just a different level of transparency, a different way of identifying what needs to happen, and I think overtime hopefully, it creates an opportunity to delve more deeply into one another's world and that spirit of learning because no matter what changes the community has made, there's always gonna be a need for more. There's always gonna be some best practices that's coming along, for example, in the sexual assault world, we're talking a lot about suspect exams now. So if they have the spirit of learning and the meaningful change, I think over time it gets easier and easier to adapt future changes for improvement.

- [Maren] Great, great points all of those. Rose, how about for you what... What is at the heart of what you teach and what you hope community collaboration can accomplish?

- [Rose] Well I'm, a lot of what Leah said I completely agree with. I think primarily the whole point about generally these community efforts have started with advocacy programs whether they're currently facilitated or coordinated by an advocacy program or somebody outside of it. But that they generally started up because the advocacy program is organized to meet the needs of victims and survivors. And one of the things that's very clear to anybody that works in a program, is that that's... that what the victim needs and the survivor needs is a community that understands its role in stopping the violence or preventing the violence from occurring in the future in protecting the victim and the survivor. And that the advocacy program itself, can't do the job. And to that end, you know, what the advocacy program is doing is either through starting an effort or in talking about it and trying to get some interest in developing something that the victim really needs the community to understand the important role that it plays in protecting the victim and the survivor as well as holding the offender accountable and then preventing, and hopefully, eliminating violence of this type, of sexual and domestic violence. And so I think... I generally talk about we need help. We can help individual women but we can't provide everything she needs. And we can't actually make up for the sorts of injury that may result, or the difficulty that she may have in... recuperating let's say from her assault because she was responded to in a way that wasn't helpful. Generally when I talk to the community, I'm gonna be very... I'm not gonna emphasize the problems at that point, but I'm gonna emphasize that generally we all work in systems that can be improved and particularly relative to sexual and domestic violence, it's a relatively new phenomena that the system is actually taking it on as a community issue. And so I'm looking for the leadership in the community, the movers and shakers, the decision makers, the stake holders, that they wanna do all that they can to identify where there might be gaps, to identify what might solutions look like, to identify changes in practices that will effectuate the bullets that are put up on the screen right

there that will create better outcomes for the individual women as well as all women, that will also make for better outcomes for the community agencies because, I work with a lot of law enforcement agencies and they're not happy when they go to the scene of a domestic and they intervene in a particular way that nothing comes of it, that there's no prosecution let's say, that the perpetrator is able to avoid responsibility. And it makes for a better community when you can create a culture as well that says, "ok we're on board, everybody here" "is gonna do what we can to, let's say," "do a scan of what we currently do," "identify where there may be gaps," "and then identify where there's potential solutions," "and then come together as needed" "to implement those solutions, evaluate," "and continue one in that process." And I think, you know, generally there are the moves and the shakers in the community and generally within any agency, there are those people who say, "oh yea, I think we could do a better job." You might run up against some defensiveness at first but depending upon the skills that you develop, you'll be able to talk about it in a way that removes defensiveness and helps people to understand that this doesn't just address the social cost but also the financial cost of not responding appropriately to sexual and domestic violence. Maren mentioned I was a commissioner when she did my introduction, I was thinking, "why that sounds like a non-sec-water." (laughes) You know working some years as an advocate in domestic violence and all four years as a commissioner but it was so, it was so instructive to me that if anybody talked in terms of dollars and cents to me as a commissioner, or other people on my commission, that was where we were all supposed to pay attention. And there's real ways of being able to communicate the problem in ways that... that raises the level of self interest with whoever you're talking to. So essentially, I think these bullets on the right here are the crux of the biscuit lets say and then... just hone in your message depending on who you're talking to is very important. And I think in that process, like Leah said, it's surprising the extent to which people who work on a case within the system might not know what the next person who is handling that case is doing. So getting, just getting people together in that way, whether they're meeting on a semi regular basis as a larger team, or whether you're bringing particular people together to look at a particular issue. The level of communication that can be a byproduct of getting together and learning about each other's job I think is really, it's really of interest to the people involved and they... I've never seen a coordinated effort when it was run well but wasn't thoroughly embraced and welcomed by the people in the community who wanted to make some changes. So that's what I would have to say on that topic and of course there's so much more to say but you know we don't have all day right?

- [Maren] That's great, yea, yea. All the points that you were making do segue us nicely into this second area that we are gonna talk about today. Clearly all of us on this call right now know that violence against women is an issue that needs to be addressed and stopped, however, I'm guessing for some of us in our interagency efforts, we may find ourselves trying to sell this effort to reluctant players who simply don't know the full extent of the experiences of survivors of violence against women even in their own communities let alone how those experiences are connected at the national and even global levels. So a big selling point is being able to fully describe and ground the reality of violence against women in data and descriptions of the violence that women and children are facing in our communities. And this is strengthened when we can connect that information to what is happening across the nation and the world. It sort of says, "well you may think" "that's not happening in here," "but here's what we know is happening here," "and here's how this is connected" "to what's happening across our country." Rose

and Leah, we're gonna go back to you again and ask you to describe the information that you suggest that leaders or leadership of interagency efforts have at the ready at all times. We're gonna start with you Rose, but I'll also invite our participants to chat in what information they already have about the points of data that Rose and Leah recommend because there might be things that you already have access to, but as you hear them talk about other data they have at the ready you can chat in maybe some challenges that you have in accessing some of that information. So Rose, let's start with you. What data do you suggest folks have at the ready?

- [Rose] Well I think you touched on it, but you really gotta be able to articulate what is happening to victims and survivors in your community. I think that's something that you should look at as an advocacy program or if you're coordinating position and not in the advocacy program to work with the advocacy program to provide to you. We'll be discussing where to find that information. But if you're talking about the criminal justice system, how many times does a police department or a sheriff's office respond to a domestic in your community? Of those times, how many arrests occur? When there's an arrest, what's the prosecution rate? Are people being charged with the same crime they were arrested for? Are they being convicted? Again here's a kind of a... a place where you can get into are our tax dollars being used well from the point of view, "ok we fund particular aspects" "of our community to engage in these activities." So I'm talking public data there, and again we'll be talking about that in a bit. But also I think that advocacy programs are complete receptacles about what is going on and what is maybe happening that isn't working for victims and to make it part of your job to collect that data, whether you're doing it... well I keep wanting to jump ahead into the message here but, frequently we fail to go, we fail to collect it. We hear, "oh a woman had this bad experience" "with this community agency," and we commiserate with her and try to help her to understand that it's not her fault and to take particular action that might help her. But to be able to document that so that you can start to get a sense that it is or isn't working and where is that happening. So I think primarily you're gonna wanna know what's going on in your community. And you're gonna wanna be out there getting that information, but you're also wanna gonna be like Maren said, what are the global rates? How do we compare? Are different communities getting a better deal or a worse deal than others? How does the victim feel about the responses that she's receiving? Does she feel like she'd call them again for help? Or was the door slammed in her face? Did it or didn't it make a difference in the level of violence that she was experiencing if she's a victim of domestic violence? So those are the sorts of things I think that you should have at the ready. And Leah, do you have any other things to add there, or do you agree?

- [Leah] Yea, great, no thanks. I was listening to you and have at the ready I think has really resonated with me because I think there's different ways to get a collaborative process, or a community, or responders to articulate that vision, so that was really, really interesting to me to listen to you as you were talking about that. One thing we do a lot of work with SVJI is being intentional about attending to that bigger picture regarding the clarity, the purpose, the focus, and the direction of the collaborative process and then the ability to clearly articulate goals, which can sometimes be two separate things, so sometimes even practicing how you're gonna articulate those goals with your colleagues, your peers, or friendly audience to begin with, I think, can be really, really helpful. As far as like with sexual violence, there is just a whole lot of different data sources that you can use. There's the criminal justice type data,

usually you can find some local county data with the uniform crime report, and things like that, advocacy data how does that align with the number of reports that were made and so on, and you can have conversations about why victims aren't reporting, why they are reporting. It can help identify some gaps. There's national things to look at like the nififth data and other sorts of different data points. We usually, they'll say to like really be intentional about how you're gonna work with that data, but it can be a great way to start seeing the problem in the community and then to make those larger connections as well. When Maren was talking about the elevator speech and suggesting you chat it in, actually that is something we do with a lot of our efforts and have the responders actually once they do this learning and we can do some really intensive / day trainings with communities and at the end we ask them to share their elevator speech. So if they were going to share what this means, this process means, with their colleagues, with their partner, with a friend, with their stakeholder, with their agency leadership, what might it be, and they literally present that. They practice it and that starts then to trains them to that bigger picture where it's not just the coordinator carrying the torch for it, but it's a much bigger broader initiative as well. And I would just encourage to practice yourself and my title is collaboration specialist and things like that, but really practicing your elevator speech as well. And I say like my title and things like that 'cause I can kinda sometimes get engrossed in the work and the language and alphabet soup. I was at a conference speaking recently a few months ago and somebody raised their hand and they're like, "what are you talking about," meaning I was using so many abbreviations and kind of talking that language that I was not clearly articulating the vision of my presentation and things which I really appreciated hearing. So even taking time now and again to practice like in your own elevator speech. 'Cause the more we practice, I think the more we use it.

- [Rose] Yea, I was thinking too Laura, I mean Leah, as you were talking that it's not just important to have how many women are, you know, call for assistance from cops let's say and nothing is done, there's no arrest, or there's no prosecution, but what's... to be able to talk not just about the extent but also the impact--

- [Leah] Absolutely.

- [Rose] What kind of difference did that make in her life? I mentioned something about does she see that community agency as a help or a hindrance and so being able to contextualize these kinds... these kinds of lets say raw data into her life. I mean I always think that the advocate or the leader in an interagency effort is gonna be amplifying her voice, and making sense of what does this mean. I mean I know that it's kinda big news to people in the community when they understand that a bad response, let's say, can and it can strengthen a batterer's capacity and opportunity to further use violence against her.

- [Leah] Yea, that's a great point.

- [Rose] You know, and that that can also have implications for the children living in that relationship, and that the problem is part and parcel is the socialization of children that makes this happen and community support. And I think that is... Any, any kind of, any time you're gonna be talking to anybody about anything, not to scare anybody, but I think it's really good to have what you can an elevator

speech and to run it by people who maybe don't know the jargin too, so like you said, you're speaking for a time in front of an audience and they don't know what you're saying--

- [Leah] Right, they don't know the-- (laughter erupts)

- [Rose] Yea, they don't know the language so I used to go talk to my mom about it, she was always a good tester whether I was speaking, talking normal or just talking in language that she didn't understand. So I also--

- [Leah] Anyways--

- [Rose] Yea, you know I also gave that example 'cause sometimes I think that we lose that bigger picture when we do, you know, resort to a lot of jargin which is appropriate use in some contexts but gave it for that reason too is how can we make sure that we're still articulating the bigger outcomes and goals.

- [Leah] Yea and I think one of the other things too besides the data about what's occurring with women is also how do you work with these stoppers. Let's say you meet with somebody and they tell a big joke about sexual assault victims or battered women, this used to be endemic, I don't find it so much anymore, but how do you respond to people who make jokes or have complete misinformation or think that victims ask for it or those sorts of things, and to be able to have at the ready responses that don't make them wanna argue with you or that can help to, I suppose, to move the discussion forward and not use them to stop the conversation.

- [Maren] For example, I think something that comes up a lot is that women are just as violent as men. That's a good example of a stopper that even in an interagency context, all of a sudden everybody's nodding their heads with this person, so what's your advice for responding to that kind of stopper?

- [Rose] Oh me? Rose?

- [Maren] Either of you, either of you.

- [Rose] Well I think, that's something that maybe I would suggest we take a look at that. That we should have a conversation about the incidents of violence and who does to whom with what impact that maybe we'd set up a discussion in particular to take a look at that. Something that requires... That's my off the top statement. I think it's important to not be too didactic and just get into a lecture about, "oh but women are just doing it" "because they're the victims." You facilitate a discussion about that, well what do you know about that? And that sometimes you're not gonna take it on directly there, but you're gonna set up a learning environment later or maybe you're gonna bring it up, make a topic where if it's a cop that's saying that, that can come in and speak to that. Sometimes I'm gonna be organizing what I do to bring in other people to say what I have to say. So that's a big one right there because that's a huge issue within, in a lot of communities. I wouldn't necessarily take that on right away but I would probably just say at that point, it is true that women and men can use violence, both use violence, and we should look at the context because sometimes women, sometimes people will use violence to control

somebody, and sometimes they will use it to defend themselves. So let's set up an opportunity to take a look at that in some... with some concentrated effort.

- [Maren] I think--

- [Jane] Hey Maren?

- [Maren] Yea, go ahead Jane.

- [Jane] Oh well this is Jane, and I was just going that I have posted on the chat something that was just released in the last week which is a compilation of research and it's called Practical Implications of Current Intimate Partner Violence Research for Victim Advocates and Service Providers. And part of preparing for the Phoenix training that Maren mentioned, we're trying to kinda go and look and identify where some of those very ready sources are that can help prepare coordinators and leaders on a community basis. And one of the things that this does is also frame it in some of these very basic questions and almost provide the talking points that you can develop.

- [Maren] That's great, we'll get--

- [Leah] And I think that is a good point to raise, what does the data show? Is that Andy Kline, Jane?

- [Jane] That's Barbara Heart and Andy Kline, yes.

- [Leah] Ok, good.

- [Maren] Well the link is in the chat and we'll also send that to you afterwards. I like what you were saying Rose 'cause it buys you some time that if you don't have the data at the ready to respond to that and you don't wanna die on that hill at that particular meeting, you can buy yourself some time to go collect that information so the next time you do intentionally come around to talk about that particular stopper, that you've got that national data, the global data, that really contextualizes the full picture of violence against women. So let's... We went down a little bit of a wormhole 'cause that was interesting and I wanna pull us back out just a little bit to get to where do we get the data. So Jane has offered us one resource, obviously, right here and this is Barbara Heart and Andy Kline's research that is very current. Let's talk about gathering this local information, this local data. A couple of folks have chatted in that their statewide data collection methods that local programs can access or that there's biannual reports that come out that provide both statewide and local program data. Leah, let's start with you. How have you been working with communities to find out this information relative to sexual assault?

- [Leah] Right and kind of specific to the local level Maren?

- [Maren] Yea, let's start with the local level.

- [Leah] Sure, sure. We really kinda pinged, start with that actually and assessing the status quo it can involve more than just the data, it can also involve talking with victims, survivors, and responders and so on. But as far as the data, we really first encourage them to look at services in their community. We have in here there's not that much data or the data is flawed or it doesn't reflect the reality, but the

reality is that we also believe that data also drives policy and practice. So what is current, and that could be anything from how many people are accessing advocacy services, how many reports are made to law enforcement, with law enforcement they can release data about their clearance rates if how the case was adjudicated founded, unfounded, exceptionally cleared, and so on, you can get that from your local law enforcement which could also really tell you where the attrician rates are. With medical, those programs, that have full functioning sexual examiner programs can get data there as well, so really looking into that. Prosecutor's office, assistant based advocates are often a great vehicle we've found to kind of collecting that whole. It can take some legwork but usually there is some sort of community data, and working with if you're luck to have a campus in your area, a university, college, finding those people who may have expertise on this as well and making those approaches. Again other forms of data like the UCR, minispus which is not criminal justice related, it's behavior related, they are gonna start, they did start combining and asking for statewide data which it was only one time, so you can yet draw trends and things like that, and patterns but they'll be collecting more statewide data as well. And so just looking at different sources with data. I think that, we always say there's more there than usually people think there is and to start with what currently is in place. And even if, and people say, "well it doesn't" "mean anything the data's flawed," which we hear a lot. Well, for example, with law enforcement, we can still really illustrate the gaps, so is there a gap with and how things are coded, or if law enforcement goes to a party and there's a sexual assault, does it still get coded as a noise ordinance call and so on. So even looking at it, it can also be a great way then to start finding out where the gaps are and making change that way was well.

- [Maren] So Rose, how about you? On the local level, finding out this information about the experiences women are having in your community.

- [Rose] Well I think Leah makes a good point when she talks about it's one of the first things they do. I think that if you're doing a CCR or you're gonna be coordinating or are coordinating an interagency effort that that's more or less part of what you're selling is the need to get a handle on this data and so you will find, for example, in the processing of a criminal justice case that different agencies in that system will have that data, so getting agreements with them about providing that data to you. Now one of the difficulty might be, you may operate in a state where that data isn't available to you. So you may have to work around that in order to get somebody within the system who can collect it and then can... let's say redact who the names are to be able to come up with the things that Leah was talking about, number of arrests, prosecutions, et. cetra. And I think when we talk about when we look at, for example, the child welfare system, how many women are entering that system as domestic assault victims and how many of them are being threatened with the loss of their children or losing their children if they don't leave. So whatever the problem is, there's gonna be data to bring to the table that will be able to identify the extent of it and I think that you can... For all the data that we, for the local data you can first of all find out locally where you might be able get it, come up with agreements. You probably wanna have agreements that says how we are gonna use the data. You know if I'm collecting data from a law enforcement agency that says, that demonstrates (mumbles) in 90% of the cases that they responded to whether it was an alleged domestic, they didn't make any kind of an arrest. Well that's not something the local law enforcement agency is gonna be very keen on me making public. Now

so I might, I'm gonna make an agreement about what I'm going do with that data, and generally if I come up with that kind of a horrible statistic, I'm going to be going to that law enforcement decision maker, the chief or the sheriff, and say, "wow, this certainly suggests a need" "for some change here, let's work on that change" "and that way we can turn these statistics around" "and I can trumpet your success" "as opposed to this is public data" "and I think it would be good to be proactive on this." So that's a long way of saying depending on the system you're working with, somebody in that system is gonna be able to have that data whether it's compiled and you're gonna be working to find that out. In the criminal justice system, there's public terminals, additionally where I think you're gonna get the local experience is when you start asking women. I always recommend perhaps a time limited survey just a few questions that you might add to an intake and then ask women if they would participate in further lengthier discussions, either one on one or in a focus group, and get the qualitative data about the experience of victims and survivors in your community. So those are some of the things that I think about.

- [Maren] That's great, I wanna ask one question. Both of you talked a lot about accessing data that might be system generated or stored within the context of the criminal justice system and obviously as an advocacy program, accessing women who are using services, that is a way to access finding out about women's experiences. But how about, I mean this is kind of a topic for another call, but for... the point of it being included here, the experiences of all women is capitalized on our side intentionally, and so what about women who aren't using advocacy services or aren't caught up in some way in the criminal justice system? How do we find out about their experiences?

- [Leah] Right, yea. Rose do you want me to start or you start?

- [Rose] Go ahead Leah.

- [Leah] Ok. I think that's a great question and something we've worked a lot with teams and also getting people to think of data is obviously the data that we talked about but the real lived experience of victim, survivors, women is data too if it's systematically generated and intentional about how it's also analyzed as well. So one thing that we do a lot with is like informational group interviews. Focus groups, we tend to call it more information group interviews and networking in your community. So for example, a team that I was on there was obviously significant groups that also weren't accessing advocacy, criminal justice system, you know the traditional type of social services as well. And we went, there's was the welcome center, and partnered with that group to do informational group interviews with communities of color. We also had a large undocumented women in the community, so going through maybe different untraditional ways and mechanisms but using other groups in the community to help coordinate that. And is also attending to the needs of the women, so offering child care and transportation if needed, and so on, to make it an experience they could actually participate in. One on one interviews and phone calls, again, I think there's different ways of doing that and setting that up with both victims, people in the community not accessing services and so on, having different surveys available through out the community and in different entry points as well where they could hear about that. We had actually public forums where anybody in the community can come and many of our teams then have worked to create safe practices and safe zones where people could feel like they don't have

to disclose their experience if they don't want to but they could still say what they would wanna see from improvements. And one thing too that we found really key to getting, influencing a whole for is also... surveying and interviewing responders. For example, one of our teams interviewed all their prosecutors. Another did all the differences between investigation and patrol and so on so that they can start to see to that their work is going to be influenced by the collaborate interagency initiatives in their community but also they were able to provide meaningful input into the process as well. And we have tools for any of this, so any of this that people are interested in, please feel free to follow up with me.

- [Maren] That's great, and we can send out links to get more information about that too. Rose, you may have a response to that question, but a question did come up in the chat from a woman in a small town in Alaska about what does data, I'm gonna put it in quotations, she didn't, but, "what does data mean?" And how do you in a very small, what I'm guessing might be an isolated, maybe even an isolated village in Alaska where there's so few people that you don't have the critical mass necessarily to represent what's happening with all women in your community, if you can speak to that nuance a bit.

- [Rose] Well I think you can tailor what data means to the community you're working with and the problem you're working on. I've worked in small communities with small police departments and one of the things we did was contact victims who are in arrest and non-arrest situations and there weren't many but it was... we were able to identify fairly quickly that a lot 'em were not happy with the response they got. So that's data. 40% of the women we called, in other words four outta women would never call again for assistance. They felt humiliated or disrespected or that sort of thing. And I think given some of what Leah said comes to floor there too, meeting with women in places that isn't necessarily about their contacting law enforcement or getting involved in the criminal justice system, or even coming to an advocacy program, but where else might they be gathered that you can ask them about their experience and there's different methods of doing that. You don't have to have a full blown research project to get data, it can... I've been very... impressed with the amount of leverage that any kind of data that's gathered can have on somebody that runs an agency that shows that there might some problems there. Generally, agencies wanna have a good record publicly about what they're doing, so I don't know if that answers it but I don't have anything else to add about the various ways that Leah mentioned, I think she covered them very well.

- [Maren] Ok, and Leah--

- [Rose] Let me know if that helps, I lived a woman in Alaska but she could sit there and contact us later to talk about that too about again, it depends on the community what you're looking at and where you go to get that and you can be very creative about that.

- [Maren] Great and then please chat in if you have any follow up questions to that. But I'm going to segue us to the third skill that we wanted to talk about today. All of this data, so we can have access to of this data, but it's easy for system based or coordinating interagency criminal justice system players to slip into focusing on ways to make let's say case processing steps easier, or case processing work easier for practitioners versus really staying grounded in the reality and the experiences of women in the community. And we rely... we rely on the community based advocates who help us stay focused in these

efforts. They're uniquely positioned in the community to speak about the full range of experiences women are having in the community. Yet sometimes this perspective is welcomed, and other times it's marginalized or maybe intentionally the door is shut to community based advocates participating or leading system reform efforts. Regardless of the home base of the leader or the leadership of coordinated efforts, whether that's in a community or a systems based program, leaders of interagency efforts must support, elevate, and strengthen the voice and the authority of community based advocates. Understanding of what is happening with women in your community and really identifying the big gaps and the challenges that the community needs to address. So Rose and Leah, we'll turn to you again to ask you talk about the key roles that community based advocates need to play in relation to interagency work. And Leah, let's start with you.

- [Leah] Sure. I found it really helpful to think about attending to three primary key aspects or key roles for community based advocates, and that is the facilitator, the coordinator, and the leader. And some of this is behind the scenes, at first usually all three have some behind the scenes and then obviously the work that is visible and up front. So facilitator, meaning creating the conditions for the meaningful work in a team or a collaborative setting in the community, whatever collaborative type or team you decided to set up and organize, or enhance if you're already doing that work. For the coordinator, establishing and maintaining the connections and the continuity, so for example, that could be attending to agendas, attending to subcommittees, attending to meeting structures, and so on but just those logistics that often need to happen in order for an initiative to be really effective. And then the leader, holding the big picture and how to convey that, how to get the buy in, and so on. And then just a few points that kinda fit into the different headings on it. We found it's really important to secure meaningful leadership buy in, capture that shared vision about what success looks like, for example, you can't just be at the table to be at the table. While you're at the table, keeping the systems changed and focused, and keeping the experience of women on focus. One check and balance that I often use with teams if you start collaborating on behalf of the system, that probably means that your work may not be as effective as possible, 'cause really what you wanna be doing is collaborating on behalf of the victims, survivors' experience in your community and making that process better and improving the criminal justice, so keeping that. Identifying the successful and promising practices, things continue to evolve, they will continue to evolve, so how can we continue to be at the forefront of that. Recognize courage and challenges. I mean this is hard work and I can tell you I made so many mistakes in my work and my learning curve too, and it can challenge to admit the mistakes but it's really courageous work I think when you really get to the authentic work, and to recognize that both within yourselves and with the system players in your community. It can be really helpful to identify like immediate short term, long term goals in any stage of the process and then communicate with that. Building that evaluation processes, a best practice work group for example, if you're gonna do some sort of review of cases, have some sort of system consultation way of doing that which Praxis has all sorts of tools on that. And celebrate. Celebrate the new approaches and successes.

- [Maren] That's great, Rose, how about you? What are you... What are the key roles you see community based advocates playing in these efforts in addition to what Leah's outlined? Not a small job so far, (laughs).

- [Rose] Yea, I've been out there doing some onsite technical assistance and I think one of the things that I see is that advocates, community based advocates don't necessarily themselves see how important they are. You know that maybe they see themselves as one part of a system and that they're there to provide services to the victims once there's been an arrest or someone the system has identified them and they don't necessarily see that really that's individual, and perhaps, legal advocacy but this institutional advocacy I think is so important. The whole advent of domestic and sexual violence services was more or less institutional advocacy. We saw the need to create services in order to provide victims with what they need, that we also, that was a change in the community and in the institutions as they were organized. I'm talking in very complicated sentences, I notice. First of all, the advocacy, the programizing needs to up its self esteem (laughs) and I'm a big, I'm a critic of the whole self esteem model, but to know how important an advocacy program is in changing the world, I think, needs to come to the floor that you're not just there to provide services, but you really are there to be a conduit between that victim's experience and the community that needs to know what her experience is and how she needs the community to be doing something different. This is one of the main reasons that I don't recommend trying to do too much work in terms of identifying problems and solutions with the larger group because it can be hard to manage the power differential because let's face it, as advocates we may be sitting at a table of community leadership and we may have, in terms of, the hierarchy of who has power and authority in the community, we may be at the bottom. So I'm gonna say that I'm not gonna necessarily come out looking like people are gonna pay attention to me in that kind of setting because I'm an advocate, and everybody thinks I'm, really have a lot of worth. Often you'll see in a larger group setting where the judge is the one who thinks they know the most because they got the most power and they may dominate. I was recently at a meeting where the prosecutor thought that they knew everything there was to say and everybody just shut up because they had power, they had the power of their position, but we have the power of the truth and so once we know that truth which is is our agency organized to identify these problems. Then we need to figure out, ok, how can we get people to hear about this. And that might be finding allies in the community who care. Like for example, is there a county commissioner that has some authority in your community who might care about this problem, who then can carry the message forward. Or who in the system that exists, is a mover and a shaker and has the kind of personality or approach that says, "yea I'd kinda like to reform our system a little bit." But primarily, you're gonna be there and you're gonna know, and you need... You're gonna know your importance in being able to have a vantage point from which you're able to see the world through the eyes of the victim and that is so important to be able to be there in that way. When you see what's going on with victims, you're also going to be prompted by the system in which you operate to not just know that, "ok, now I'm gonna" "make the victim feel better about the fact" "that she just got treated very poorly in this system." "I'm also going to ask her, do you wanna work with me" "to make a change about this particular practice?" And I'm going to work with her and hopefully, and include her in my efforts to identify that problem in all its glory. Find people in the community that might care on an individual basis within the systems themselves, hopefully first and foremost, but if they're not attentive, then who else in the community might care. So I'm gonna be selling that to different people in the community, maybe people on my board that look I'm not, we're here because we know certain things that aren't working. Do you know people who might, do you have influence with people who might care about this? I worked with one community that had on its CCR, they understood and that was something

that the coordinator talked about was that advocates in the room here have a piece of the truth that we all wanna know, so that was up front and at the table. And in fact when they'd have a vote, they gave the advocacy program three points to everybody elses, three votes to everybody elses one because they really elevated it, talked about it, made it central to what they were doing. So it was getting everybody on that, in that CCR or in that SART or on that team to understand that. So that I think is key. I know we'll be getting into what are some of the obstacles to that, but I think that's essentially it. You're gonna be talking to the women, identifying gaps. You're also poised to be a conduit to what's out there that might make a change in your community. So you're not just gonna know what the problems are, but what the solutions might be. And then again, organizing to identification of allies, et cetera, to make these changes. If you're a coordinator right now and you're on this call and you're aren't from an advocacy program, I think the best coordinator in that regard is gonna be one who understands and goes over to the advocacy program and say, "I need your help, tell me" "what you want me to do here." So that would be what I think is important in that regard.

- [Maren] That's great, thanks Rose. And you did speak to some of the common obstacles the community power dynamics, we've had extensive interviews with rural grantees and rural advocates over the last several years and a key piece of that was... Or a key example of that was prosecutors, that the prosecutors and judges, they just were feeling stymied about how to get them to listen in anyway shape or form to what the advocate has to say. And because we are rapidly closing in on our time, I'm going to let that suffice for common obstacles. I'm sure you all have encountered other instances of the experiences we have listed on the slide and probably lots of others. And I'll just close... I'll just say to wrap up that part of the discussion, that we are here to help you. Sometimes those obstacles are really unique to the dynamics in your community and maybe aren't shared by lots of other communities and so we are here to help you strategize and think through. If you ever find yourself in need, so don't hesitate to call us. Closing comments or summarizing Rose or Leah.

- [Rose] Oh you know, I lost track of the time so I'm sorry if I kind of went over there in my little thing, my diatribe let's say. Closing comments is, boy I just welcome everybody to reorganize and take a look at what you do and understand that there definitely are solutions out there and you're gonna be the ones who are changing the world. So I think it's great that you're on board and don't hesitate to contact us. And thank you.

- [Maren] Leah, closing thoughts, comments?

- [Leah] Yea, I mean just a big thank you to everybody who's out there doing the work. I know how challenging and rewarding it can be, just wanna recognize that. And I think my only final comment would just be to keep in mind that long term solutions usually require long term planning and strategic thinking about how you're gonna influence that, so just taking the time to really think about the planning, the strategic thinking, 'cause usually those are the types of changes that will stick over time and become kind of a normative way for your community to function and approach problem solving.

- [Maren] Great, thank you so much to both of you for sharing your expertise and your experiences. So in closing again, that institute that we've referenced a couple of times throughout the webinar today is

March 26 through 28 in Phoenix, Arizona. Both Leah and Rose will be there as will Jane and I talking more and more in depth about the topics that we touched on today as well as a whole wealth of other things. And I'll send out publicity for that shortly after today's call. Also we have a community assessment institute, our annual institute that's April 29 through May 2 coming up here St. Paul, Minnesota. That's an intensive training institute that outlines, that goes through mock community assessment and we teach the methods that Praxis has developed to assess your institutional responses to violence against women. Next month's webinar on February 19 will talk more about the role of the coordinator and some additional tasks and skills vis a vis our e-learning course that we developed for rural programs. So watch for registration to come out with that. Rose will be delivering that training. And one other pitch is about our advocacy learning center, we are taking applications until Friday, January , that's this Friday just in a couple of days. The application process isn't too extensive and for information about how to apply, I will send you a link or you can go to our website at www.PraxisInternational.org. Thank you to whoever advanced the slides (laughs) for that, 'cause that's just something I'm not thinking of. So I will also just pause and say to all of you thank you for your work on behalf of women and children and helping me to change their behavior so that we can ultimately end violence against women. And as my key mentor and leader of interagency responses, Ellen Pentz used to say, "probably somebody or something" "out there loves you and if it isn't your mother" "you can get over it." (laughs) And my delivery isn't as good as hers, but I'm remembering her this month as it is the second year anniversary of her passing, so we're thinking about her and her family. Thank you everyone and have a lovely rest of your week and we'll talk you hopefully next month. Take care.