

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

Supporting Safety Together: Assessing Child Protective Services Response to Battering

With Maren Woods, Praxis Program Manager; Rose Thelen, Praxis TA Partner; and Jessica Nelson, Wright County Child Protective Services

February 7, 2017

Hello everyone thank you for joining us today. It looks like we're at the top of the hour so we can get started with today's presentation.

Thank you everybody. Hello this is Maron was with Praxis international we are so happy to have you all here today. This is a webinar on supporting safety together assessing child protective services response the cooccurrence of child maltreatment and battering. Today is February. Today is February 7, not the second and we are so happy to have you here I'm going to pass over to Liz quickly to give us and or intention to the AdobeConnect platform to optimize your experience and then I will be right back to get us into today's session. Liz?

Great. Thanks good morning everyone welcome we are so pleased of you with us today we have a large audience so this is a popular and important topic and we are glad that you are here today. Just to help pave the way to your participation in the webinar was like to touch upon couple of things. First of all if there happens to be anyone who is participating by telephone only the phone lines will be muted for the duration of our session and so the best way for you to be able to ask questions or comments will be via email you can send your comments to Liz you can send your comments to Liz@Praxisinternational.org and I will pass them into the webinar presentation and will pick them up and respond that way for the rest of you were in the webinar platform we encourage your comments and your questions to be added to the Q&A box that you see in the middle column, the top box. Those comments will be routed to us as presenters they don't get shared to the whole group, it's just to be presenters and then we will integrate and respond via the webinar. I would also like to call to your attention in that Q&A box -- actually in all of these little boxes there is

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

an option to adjust the settings to your own preferences. In the far right of each box -- in that Graybar you see a little drop-down and their options to alter the text size fonts etc. so feel free to do that at your discretion. If you happen to get disconnected to either the webinar or by telephone of course rejoined to your original process. I also -- for this next moment or two you will see at the bottom of your screen there is an option to download the PowerPoint and there are also web links that are denoted at the bottom of your screen in addition to the life captions that we ask for your patience. If you happen to notice a miss -- miss typed or misstated word within the captions. Finally this session is being recorded and will be posted to the [Indiscernible] webinar archive page. Maron I think we are ready for you.

Alright great thanks Liz. One other thing I will add is if resources are mentioned during the call today we will be keeping track of them and will send them out to everyone who registered for today's webinar. You don't have to keep track of them we will do that on our behalf and send them out a couple of days after today. Again, today we are talking about how we can support safety of battered mothers and their children together as it relates to child protective services response and we are fortunate to have with us today Jessica Nelson and Rose Thelen. Jessica Rose and I were the core group of folks that tested practices new assessment tool specific to child protection and it's just kind of old home week having Roseann Jessica here today. With Dennis couple of other webinars featuring this tool here today we are going to dive into several of the activities that are detailed in the Praxis SX the guiding you a sense of what you might do in your community back home if you are to take on this process to assess child protective services response to battering. I want to give an opportunity for Jessica and rose to introduce themselves reflate and say hello. Jessica will you start?

Certainly. My name is Jessica Nelson and I am a supervisor here at right County Health and Human Services I supervise child protection investigation and family assessment services. Have been supervising child protection for almost 10 years providing supervision for investigations, family assessment, and case management services from the beginning of cases all the way through adoption.

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

Great. Sorry I didn't mean to cut you off.

That's okay.

Jessica was crucial to the six -- successful testing of our practice assessment tool in the last couple of years and has continued in her willingness to work with us on promoting mutual across the country. Thanks Jessica for being here. Rose Stephen would you say hello and introduce yourself.

Oh everybody -- hello everybody. Thank you Maron and is Maron said the three of us were core I would guess you say to testing this new assessment tool and I was pleased to be able to work with right County Health and Human Services. I had known a number of people from that agency when I served as a County Commissioner I thought they would be great they were and so on word and forward with this and I hope that all of you will look into this because it really is a unique and comprehensive tool for getting at what of the issues and how to change things.

Great. Thanks Rose thanks to both of you for being with us today. I'm going to start with some framing around why we are concerned about the issues related to cooccurrence of battering and [Indiscernible] there's many reasons to be concerned about these overlapping issues. One of the first is that research is demonstrated by children are at great risk of physical harm when living in homes with batterers. Those are my children on the screen there I'm sorry for those of you who are just listening by phone my kids are really cute.

We also know researchers also shown that a large number of severe and fatal injuries to children occur when there is also battering. Children are harmed emotionally as well as physically I batterers -- by batterers. For these reasons we want to be attention to these cases in particular specifically because research has also shown that children are safer when they are kept together with their mothers and if we can keep their mothers safe we can also keep the children safe.

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

I'm going to transition here to Rose to ask you to talk with us about to the national scene in terms of the work and advancing child protection services response to cases that involve battering.

Thanks Maren . This is been a concern I think of most people working in both domestic violence and child protection field for a long time. To that end, I guess it was somewhere in the mid 90s Praxis had a project to take a look at these concerns and do a number of things with them and out of that grew this graphic which you see which I think is still very relevant. What we wanted to be able to do this we wanted to be able to provide for both the adult the child victims together we didn't want to have to choose the woman safety over the children when in reality they both need to be considered together and in order to do that we really needed to weekend the opportunity -- the batterers opportunity than inclination to abuse the mother and the children. And some of the ways he does this of course is he uses the children against her and other ways damages and destroys the child's maternal bond. He also has a tendency -- not a tendency it's a very real concern that we see a lot of batterers doing is he uses the system itself for example child protection and the courts to foil her efforts to get help for herself and her children and they ultimately works to get the system to agree with him that he's responsible for the balance and to blame her for her failures to get him to stop. The batterer -- I worked with batterers for many years and we really saw them using this child protection and this child welfare and child custody arena as a way to continue to punish her coercively controller and sometimes he wanted her back.

We wanted to be able to stop him and that is one of the places of course it is then a challenge for the child protection system. Ultimately we want to be able to -- to our interventions restore that maternal child bond and also to strengthen the positive aspects of her life and the children's lives together that enables them to increase their resilience and resist the abuse and its effects. That the picture that's says 1000 words. We knew though, however, that there were struggles across the country to intervene in ways that protected the mother and child together and this was not through any failure of any individual about how the system was originally constructed. Like the criminal justice system it wasn't necessarily constructed to be

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

able to clearly identify really what's going on, what is the context. It was organized in such a way that there was a lot of pressure on the battered mothers themselves to stop the violence even though as we all know they are probably the least able to do that. Is also very reliant on separation as a primary safety strategy when in fact separation can increase risks as we all know.

What we know is there are all kinds of ways that she maybe trying to get some assistance and is not able to get that because maybe there's faulty systems operating or he comes in gets her back's with a very complex system of course and we saw a lot of systems that were mandating extensive lists of hoops that she had to go through in order to prove that she was a good mother, a good parent that she was doing and complying with the services demanded of her. Another big piece and I think this came up loud and clear in our particular assessment in right County was the child protection lacks the ability -- it in a test mechanisms by which it could actually control the offender, get them to stop, hold him accountable which is probably -- it is why often the default position was to get her to do something different. We also see that a lot of times the services do not match the needs. Maybe she comes out of their -- maybe she goes the child protection system and she's required to attend a parenting group went she may need something like housing or justice or again, some of the to make him stop.

There is also this concept a failure to protect that she was there, if she was being abused that in some way she was not protecting those children who might witness it or might even get involved in it. Those are the things that we identified again as some of the gaps. It wasn't just we but efforts across the country identified because gaps as well. I wanted to reiterates that it's not the result of the individual worker within that system is actually the fault of how the system is constructed. Bringing together people who were good thinkers in this regard and can take a look at their own system together was in fact one of the ways that we could work together to change this particular system.

I wanted to mention a couple of national efforts that had preceded what we did in right County I mentioned already that Praxis was engaged we had some OVW

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

funding back in the 90s to take a look at some of these pieces bit about them and in that capacity did some safety audits with child protection agencies which I will get to. A seminal case that was done in New York in 2002 was Nicholson versus Williams case in which the New York City administration of children's services was sued in a class-action lawsuit because they were removing kids from battered mothers on the basis of the fact that they were allowing their children to live with domestic violence. During that court case expert testimony on all sides empathized that harm was considerable when you separated a child from their parent. Is a quote appear from Doctor David Pell Noia who was one of the experts and he said that two separate a child from their parent and in particular where there's some trauma is tantamount to pouring salt on an open wound so that was one of the things that the court case new wasn't happening they weren't measuring the impact of removing that child versus the impact of staying with that mother even if the father was in the home and on the 20 and on 21 December 2002 the judge ruled that the children services had violated the constitutional rights of mothers for removing their children because they were victims of battering. What the judge ruled in that case was a couple of things, one that in fact they needed to weigh is the harm of removing the child less than the harm of staying with the batterer. To that end the judge also ordered that the administrators from New York City's children services go to and meet with the green book authors who were responsible -- green book is this guide effective intervention in domestic violence and child maltreatment cases -- they had put together a number of principles and had studied the problem. It was the national Council of juvenile and Family Court Judges. The judge in the north case that I want to do going figure out what these people crated the green book how it is that you can improve what you do so there's better outcomes for our children and their mothers when there's the problem of domestic violence also existing.

This became the sensation that swept the nation and you can find this book online it's still a good foundation. They came with over 60 recommendations about how to make some changes in three arenas that involve children and where domestic violence and child maltreatment can be considered. That would be within the context of child welfare, domestic violence advocacy and services and dependency courts. This is an important efforts to develop the screen book David Mandel and

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

Associates was also an early student of the green book and they created their safe and together model which you can find online as well. They take some of the principles a little further explicate them a little more and work with communities around the country to develop better outcomes than practices -- practices and outcomes. [Indiscernible] also involved in using institutional analysis to look at disparities in child protection and child welfare outcomes they originally organized disparities in racial outcomes than in working with Praxis [Indiscernible] domestic violence and child maltreatment. Then we had the safety and accountability audits of course -- is a of course but Praxis has a series of these particular methods of analyzing various systems. These were applied to child protection services and I don't know exactly how many of these were done at those are available also at Praxis to take a look at what their outcomes were. Is a very lengthy process, from those we developed -- I should say Praxis developed over a number of years this assessment tool which is based on the safety audit methodology to look specifically at the child protection and the domestic violence with a coworker to see how we can in fact make changes within that system to produce outcomes so again, that women and children can be together and that the safety is considered among both of them.

Maren I'm going to hand it back over to you to tell us more about this tool .

Thanks Rose. I will just pause here for a minutes before we dive in -- more into the tool to answer couple of questions that come up in the chat. The first question was about the power and control wheel that focused on interventions in cases that involve children and yes he will send that out to folks after this webinar. The second question is about how their local child protective services often require a mother to get what I'm guessing is the equivalent of an order for protection or a PSA is what she called it in order to keep her kids and how do we combat this mentality. I think this is one of the things that the child -- practice assessment process would help you is a community-based advocate explore with child protection around what mandated services means for battered mothers so philosophically what message that sense and terms of accountability. We're going to get more into that as we dive a little bit deeper into a couple of activities with -- that are detailed in the guide. I'm hoping

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

that answer the questions that came up in the chat. I'm going to take us then -- I will posit guess for one more minute to see if Liz got any questions via email. Liz?

I have not so far but this is a good opportunity to remind you please feel free to email Liz@Praxisinternational.org if you are on the telephone only for if you are connected via webinar be certain to utilize the Q and a box and we will do our best to respond in the presentation.

Thanks Liz. In the early 2000's Praxis had led and been a part of several safety and accountability audits in partnership with both the national Council of juvenile and Family Court Judges that was responsible for developing the green book in collaboration with lots of others and also with the center of study for social policy and as we were engaging in this work and also conducting training across the country and other issues related to battering and the experience battered mothers were having in relationship to their children we knew that communities were looking for tools to do this kind of work on their own to work in very collaborative ways between child protection workers and battered women's advocates because it's so important that collaboration a strong and clear in order to enhance safety for both battered mothers and their children. In 2010 we received funding from the office on violence against women to create this tool and it's now available for free download on our website I'm guessing most of you have been to the webpage where you can download the tool but this will be something we want email specifically out after today's webinar.

The guide in essence details a process for a small interagency [Indiscernible] to answer important questions about how are our community is set to respond to violence against women and specifically in this case is focusing on child protective services response to cases involving battering. The questions the tools help communities answer include things like do we know when battering is a factor in child maltreatment cases? If we do find out that battering is a factor do we know the impact that the battering is having on the child and the impact the battering is having on the mother. Two we know about the mothers protective strategies in relationship to her children and is our intervention make those protective strategies

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

better and easier and safer or are we diminishing her capacity to protect her children by mandating services.

The guy helps communities answer questions about whether our intervention is contributing to this -- different outcomes for specific groups of people. As we know it across the country African American and Native American children a particular disproportionately removed from their families and this is a national crisis that this tool has paid attention to an intended to and some concrete ways. The tool also helps us assess whether our intervention is increasing or decreasing the risk of harm from the batterer and it opens the door to having conversations about whether there's more we can do to stop the batterer. There's lots of reasons why child protection focuses their work in relationship with the protective parent but to the extent that we can explore ways to hold offenders accountable and to stop the battering behavior of the offending parents then we want to have those conversations and the guy really helps communities to that.

Before we publish the tool last summer we worked in Wright County with Rose and Jessica in addition -- a team of additional local practitioners to test the materials that we had developed and revise it based on that test experience and published we did last summer. Again, [Indiscernible] introducing communities overall to the process and the tool and the support is available from Praxis for communities to work with the tool which you can go look in our archive after this webinar if you want to have a basic introduction but today we're going to dive in a little bit deeper into the content of the guide and some of the core concepts that guy more protective [Indiscernible] and to give you a taste of what you do in your teams in your own communities.

Our practice assessment guide -- there's a couple other pieces of information I wanted to give about the assessment guide are related to the focused and who does the work that kind of thing because that's an important potential information to an hour guide offers the unity the starting point for enhancing responses to battering in child abuse in that it focuses primarily on the stages of initial screening and assessment that determine whether or not the CBS opens a formal investigation. It is not as exist renounce and into ongoing case management or to the role and

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

practices of juvenile independency courts but we know that as soon as you start working with child protection you get connected with those agencies right away and those institutions. If anybody ever calls me up and says hey Merrin I want to conduct an audit on the criminal legal systems response to sexual assault is a great and narrow your focus. Narrow your scope and focus look at maybe just the re-prosecutors response. Maybe just look at the investigators response.

Institutions in people's lives very complex and alert you learn the most we possibly can also have the greatest impact we really have to narrow the focus. A practice assessment guides has done that for you basically and narrow the point of intervention to be assessed at that initial screening and assessment. To help us understand the context of what we did in Wright County is that it would be helpful to hear from Jessica right now to describe the rough case processing steps that exist in Wright County because we know this is different in different states and just we get familiar with some of the terminology that we will be hearing as we talk about our experience in testing the process. I thought it would be helpful for Jessica to shape that up for us. Jessica would you walk us through that briefly?

Sure. When we receive information about a family or situation where we like to call it an incident because usually it's an incident or something had happened we call that an intake or a report so we have a report of maltreatment or abuse and neglect and then we take that information and we strained -- screen that information. We screen that report and if that report meets criteria for abuse and neglect or maltreatment then screen it in Orphic meets the guidelines was -- the statewide guidelines based on statute then we screen it and and at that point we decide if it meets criteria for differential response which would be our family assessment track or if it would be an investigation which would be substantial child endangerment under our law. From there it would get assigned either an investigator or a family assessment worker. Is ill child protection -- it is still child protection it would just be whether it's a differential was on our investigation which would be our substantial child endangerment cases and that worker would may contact. In a domestic violence type of case most of the cases are going to be assigned to a family assessment worker where they are going to be making contact with the family and

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

working with the family as a whole. Obviously mystic violence situation that's not always feasible considering its domestic violence and when you're talking protection and working in a protective fashion -- working with the batterer and the victim together her in the family as a whole not always ideal so usually we will reach out to the victim and the children first and then we will work with the batterer second and reach out to the batterer and make sure the batterer is also getting services.

-- Not as a whole family system. [Indiscernible] there are domestic violence cases that do have an investigation because of the significant violence that has occurred where the children have witnessed, significant threats of violence or the violence was so significant that the children have witnessed that we feel it warrants an investigative response.

Sure. Thank you for that lay of the land because again these words can be used -- me different things in different states across the country so I know family assessment can mean the formal investigation in some states but for our purposes here in Wright County and in the state of Minnesota -- would you call it I lost the word for a second?

At the differential response.

I know differential responses more the common language.

Or alternative response that kind of thing. And the relationship -- the working relationship and the services that are recommended are just that recommendation there's not a mandate to do things in the family assessment phase.

Right.

Okay. That's the focus of our practice assessment guide is on these initial steps. We have to start with where the stage is set for all of those other more new ones and complicated parts of the child protection or juvenile court system intervention later on as the case might get screened into investigation for getting this part right the

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

initial screening in this family assessment part right was a big Ferdie for us in developing this will because we think it can set the stage for a better improved outcomes at the further end of the spectrum as well. The question about who does the work of the practice assessment is really this core triad of community-based advocates, agency being assessed and [Indiscernible] another interagency partners that are connected with that agency being assessed. Community-based advocates are vital to having involved in the process. Preferably that they be leaving and very active and are very active participants in the process. Community-based advocates [Indiscernible] other systems to in the community and they know that better than anybody in the community because that are specialties was vital to have community-based advocates involved. Is also vital to have representation and leadership by child protection workers and supervisors. They are the efforts of their jobs in a what can readily change and what will take more work there also the ones of the inside who can actually advocate for and make the change the institutional change that the process seeks.

And interagency partners might not have as much work to do in the practice assessment as child protection and the battered women's advocates others can bring really unique and viable perspectives on the agency being assessed so police officers might have a really unique perspective on the information that they can share with child protection related to ADV call that included children. They know the information that they need for themselves in order to do their jobs as best they can. We need different perspectives and assessing institutions response to have a well-rounded assessment of our work. This is the bulk of the group that does the practice assessment. Briefly I will cover the main steps in the -- that are detailed in the guide and I want to start by saying that the front-end of the practice assessment guide is loaded with support for relationship building and find common purpose one of the things we fear across the country -- this is coming up in the chats to us that sometimes battered women's advocacy programs in child protection are at odds with one another or there's a lot of contention for a lot of animosity between those aged these. For that reason archive really built a lot into early relationship building are either one-on-one conversation brownbag lunches, small group work to help establish common language, I share definitions of various concepts and that really

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

supports the other work that happens in the practice assessment related to gathering information about the Olympics there is a better mother to having a child protection for interviews or focus group but also support the examination of all is the forms and even case file reviews later on to really loaded that front end to the practice assessment guide to help build those relationships. One other stuff that we do we did a really rough sketch of it here with just about wrapping the case processing of child protective cases. This is really important to all of the team members have a clear understanding of how child protection is currently organized to respond to cases in the sense that they take to process the case of the times battered women advocates don't know all of the steps that a child protection worker makes in order to nationally and make a decision on a particular case is a really important part of this process to. Today we're going to dive in a little bit and demonstrate some of this front end relationship building discussions -- we call they may share discussion series. We are also going to demonstrate a little bit of an examination of policy and case file review that's detailed in the guide to give you all a sense of what you might do in your communities.

First, start -- the starting point involves the conversations erasure discussion series among child protection workers and others. There's a series of discussions detail than the guys and we have handouts for each session. The topics cover a range of issues some of them included in operating framework [Indiscernible] teams might also explore various perspectives on the strategies battered mothers may employ to keep their children's they so those protective strategies [Indiscernible] through another lens they might not look attractive and silly share discussion series on that issue really helps to eliminate the brings what perspective about that and just open up that conversation. Other topics addressed in the share discussion series is about how children are used as a tactic of battering. Another topic is about the varied experience shouldn't have with her bow to domestic violence. Again, this is also identify the common ground with the team -- the core group of people that will be carrying out the practices activity service your language but another big topic that I didn't mention that's the guide is addressed and have teamed discuss together as often the source of a lot of the dissidents across the country when battering [Indiscernible - low volume] treatment overlap [Indiscernible] is related to differing

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

definitions of safety and what gets family safe and what gets family to safety. In order to go further and advocating for institutional change at the top protection we have to have an understanding of our distinct perspective on safety and we have to discuss how is different definitions organize our work so we tested this particular part of the share discussion areas in Wright County we organize a series of brownbag lunches over the course of probably two or three months was in a just a car rose? Back yes.

We met over lunch people literally brought their sandwiches and their pop and whatever in the past of the handouts and we just had a really informal in some ways but facilitated conversation on these issues. Jessica had invited -- everything she was there in a couple of other supervisors but there were frontline child protection workers. Should also invited the public health nurses and together we all sat down and talked about what a safety from the point of view of safety for children, safety for victims of battering and then safety for mothers and children together. Must demonstrate a little bit of this. Justin going to start with you if you're okay with answering from the perspective of answering from a child protection worker what is the definition of tasty? What does that mean from a child protection worker?

Safety is one where children are free from harm and nonexposed to a dangerous environment.

In a nutshell?

[Indiscernible - multiple speakers] [Indiscernible] then we would spend just a little bit more time hearing from everybody around the table about what the definitions of safety are for children but in the interest of time I will just jump right to rose to talk about the definition of safety that governs our work as battered women's advocate.

Everybody knows this but of course from the perspective of the battered women's program is usually that the risk of physical violence and other harm caused by the

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

abuser is reduced or eliminated and also that there's a basic needs for income housing and healthcare have been met. Those are usually what we hear.

There's a lot of overlap in those definitions right. There's freedom from physical violence and there's getting your basic needs met. Where does the dissension arise when we're thinking about safety for battered mothers and safety for children in the context of child protection? I will let either one of you was on to that question.

I think what we were doing effect size it was really -- very informative because everybody agreed that the only way you could guarantee safety for either of them was if he stopped the violence. That was a huge intersection for us and how do we get him to top and then when for example you require her to get a protection order and that might make it more risky for her that is not met your definition of detecting those children if he still has access to them. There were discussions around that and ultimately what I was really happy about was everybody seems to come to some agreement that the mother and the child our best protected when they are both considered together and that we need again, to intervene on his capacity to manipulate her and the system and therefore create for the rest. Jessica what do you think? [Indiscernible - multiple speakers]

I think the ultimate conclusion that we came to was that just because they have physically left the home doesn't necessarily mean they are safe that can actually endanger the more and make them less safe. Really going and in assessing that.

[Indiscernible - multiple speakers]

Is something that has to be done on individual situation in each individual circumstances different. I think it's interesting that the one gal had commented that there agency required the month to get similar order for protection that is what we would call it because it actually might make a situation more risky.

Yeah. [Indiscernible - multiple speakers]

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

It might provoke him and escalate the situation. You really have to take it on a case-by-case basis in assessing the safety.

Right. I know that my daughter is now working for child protection agent the and what they're told is essentially this Jennifer force is that she's told she supposed to lead with if you don't get a protection order and leave him you're going to lose the kids and she worked with that -- better through number of years really knows to miss the violence or she grew up with us and she's just -- she can't get it through to her supervisors that this may be the worst thing to do the first place we don't even know in our community weather protection orders are worth the paper they're written on. Are they being impaled other consequences were failures to water them that sort of thing. I think that was a really significant breakthrough because right away when the child protection worker agreed to the women with if you don't this was going to happen Ralph right away if that's up an adversarial relationship and in these conversations that's one of the things that the child section workers talks about to they didn't like to be in that role.

Right. I would add -- or member sitting at the brownbag lunch and having a little lightbulb go on related to the point that you made earlier rose about the best way to keep them both safe to stop him from battering to intervene with him as much as we can if anybody can in the community in this matchup against this limitation -- especially in the family assessment process is not a requirement to receive -- go to batterers intervention program let's say but I know that this other states across the country that are working on exploring ways to make the focus of their intervention really about topping his that are in behavior.

And also suggest you that she is an active Rosses to be able to do something about the battering in the exposure that the children have to that should be doing all kinds of things in her daily day-to-day life to protect them from what's going on or she may of reached out to her pastor and all other kinds of places to really -- to be active in that regard and that was something that the child protection system wasn't picking up either as it was currently organized. One of the things asserted to shift is a result

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

of this assessment is what I should done. What she currently doing what has she done what has she tried did it work with that she need.

Jessica any other comments about the safety and what you've experienced in Wright County related to what might be a dissonance between battered women's perspective -- advocates perspectives on safety. What I talked to [Indiscernible] this perspective that if you're only focusing on the children then you are not -- there's no safety for her and you might be compromising her safety which it think was also another lightbulb moment that even if we can't get control from the offender because of our -- the way our system is structured in the store of macro level ways you can focus on what it means for the mother to be safe with her child and together keep them safe.

For us it was even the realization that we were putting all of the focus on the mother there was her responsibility to make sure that he she was keeping the kids safe and there was no accountability on the offender and the batterer and that we weren't recognizing the protective fact yours and that there were times that we were making the situation less safe just by the requirements that we were asking of the victim to do. Certainly there are times when a day go or domestic abuse contact order is effective in is warranted in an order for protection is effective and it is warranted from certainly not going to say it isn't because I've seen situations where it's useful if the useful tool but that's what it is a tool for your toolbox and is to be used as just that. There are times where it isn't and so you have to do a good assessment and use it wisely. We've just been a little tiny little sense demonstrated one aspect of the share discussion series that's details quite specifically in the practice assessment guide in the way that their structured is that they build on each other overtime over the course of the series into might not be ready in your community to sit down with a child protection workers and for battered women's advocates or whatever proportionate would be and how these conversations depending on the history the community you might just start with a one-on-one conversation if you're a battered women's advocate in you that you want to be more advocacy related to the child protection system maybe just find one child protection worker that you can talk to about this kind of areas and start building those relationships that are so crucial to

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

being able to advocate for individual women but then also advocate for change at the institutional level to in essence advocate for all battered women's.

I'm going to shift us to the next part of the activities that we were going to demonstrate focus on today related to analyzing policies, forms, checklists, and case file we are not going to do all of that but that's the general section of activity that we are going to talk about. Policy reviews really important because it helps the assessment team discover the extent to which agency guidelines address battering and reflects the recommended practice that are recommended nationally. Holiski regulates the practitioners must do and establishes the boundaries of their discretion and responsibility and so if we are building into our policies in our protocols was kind of known as recommended practice then we are really mandating the work to shift and change and be more accountable to cases that involve battering. In the practice assessment the team looks at whether or not and how policy has been constructed to reflect principles, procedures and monitoring activities that are consistent with national recommendations and guidelines for responding to do the involve cases. So note or to analyze the policies forms, checklists, etc. there's a body of work to do to just gather them all in one place because they don't always live in one place so I just wanted to spend a couple of moments to ask Rosa Jessica to recall the work that was involved in collecting the policies and forms answer these were things both at the state level that kind of directed work across the state but then also there's unique local policies and protocols and whatnot that we collect it. Rose maybe you want to start.

I think the way we were guiding in this was with this mapping process we understood that each time the institution came into contact with that case whether it was at the report -- of the initial reporter screening our family assessment or family investigation that there were a number of deaths involved in that process and each of those steps where the institution was interacting with the case they were guided by a number of things in writing. We would ask that each of those intersections okay what form do you use what law comes into play here is there a checklist, is there a policy, procedure etc. and also not justice or something in writing but what is it policy that lives in the heads of the -- for example in Wright County there's some

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

supervisors were very well grounded in domestic violence is a guiding a process at screening level so what to that consist of. We ultimately came up with over 25 documents in writing that govern what they did and I think this is the goal of mine because then you see this is why they do it they do or this is why they don't pay attention to this piece but they pay attention to another and so the process of identifying at the mapping process all the forms procedures, protocols, checklists unwritten policies directors etc. and then putting them into a big three-ring binder to analyze was that particular process and it took a while but it really produced a lot of results.

And to have it all in one place to then gave us a full picture of what it is that the child -- the frontline workers are -- have available to them to guide their work and then also have the agency -- the local agency itself is being directed by state level work. Jessica what you want to say about the gathering of policies and forms and checklists?

What I would say is that [Laughter] they weren't all nicely in one spot so I think it took a little bit more organization then we were expecting and we probably need to put some things in writing as far as process goes like you do step a, B, and then see -- C just for new staff coming on it would be helpful but the fact that we do have some things in place is better than none to guide practice and it does guide things to a certain extent. There are a few things in the statute which was nice to see.

Is good for the frontline workers to have that stuff collated and available to them but for the purposes of the practice assessment it was really vital for us to see the full picture of what you all are working with at the child protection agency. As a practice assessment guide includes very detailed worksheets that the teams can use to then review the policies and forms and the worksheets are collected and they are organized around these four main areas but then that's very specific things that are each of these overall heading so I'm just going to touch on a couple of them right now just introduce you to what's included in the worksheets. When looking at policies the review worksheets there in the practice assessment guide take you through weighing the policies of against effective practice principles. These are

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

things like keeping children in the care of the non-offending parent whenever possible. Is it includes things like differentiating between forms of domestic violence and defining battering specifically as a pattern of coercive control. And effective practice principle is -- that would be embedded in child protection policy would be related to holding batterers accountable not the victim for the violence and the harm caused by the violence. And effective practice principle would include the opportunity or the availability of a differential response such as family assessment that we are talking about here in Wright County and generally speaking child protection discourages victim blaming interventions line which that sort of thing. The review worksheets help you assess current policy up against those affected practice principles and so on in relation to protocol and procedures monitoring and accountability for the agency overall and also addressing disparity. Related to protocols and procedures was detailed in the worksheets that you would use to review various protocols in the chop section agencies are things like the separate interviewing for known or likely domestic violence victims separate safety and service plans when domestic violence is a factor that workers would utilize domestic violence specific screening and assessment tools. That service and safety plans would be tailored to the unique needs, safety needs and other needs for each particular family.

That's the area of protocol and procedures and related to monitoring and accountability the worksheets help teams process for things like ongoing data collection that related to their capable service for all diverse families that if an effective child protection agency is really doing its monitoring and accountability of their practice overall that they be collecting that kind of data. That there is built-in to monitoring and accountability things related to ongoing training for staff and referral sources are vendor specific to domestic violence that's there's regular reviews of up frontline workers and specifically related to intervene in cases involving domestic violence that sort of thing and regarding addressing disparity the worksheet guides teams to review policy in relation to the collection of data by race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation or equal a Indian child where for act eligibility in order to assess for whether there's over underrepresentation in that particular agency's response. It also recommends that the a is publicly and readily available so that

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

there's community accountability to the local agencies practice. I'm just giving you a tiny little taste of all of the detail is involved in these four areas.

To demonstrate the how this actually rolls out with your team. I taken a little picture of a protocol checklist that was used -- is used in Wright County and really it acts as an internal policy than going to ask Jessica to orient us to this protocol checklist how it's used and that sort of thing right now.

This checklist is used as kind of a guide for the worker has been assigned a case in reason for all of our family assessment cases and that our investigators have a server checklist that the use. It's really to go through and kind of make sure that they do everything that they are supposed to do on a case. What date was the report received and did I meet the family or the victim within my identify timeline so what they did I receive the case on and that any to them within my hundred 20 hours and then did I send out what the mandated reporter letter sent out into the me to the primary caregivers and I meet with the child to meet with the other children in the family. Did I meet with the alleged offender did I meet with the other parent. [Indiscernible - multiple speakers]

That I thought all my forms -- did I fill out all my forms. That I do everything I am required to do.

Is all the required state -- steps that are involved in a family assessment. When we looked at this form we first and is see where domestic violence was specifically -- where if anywhere on this protocol checklist where domestic violence was specifically mentioned and it might be difficult to senior screen but number nine reads substance-abuse animistic violence screens and parenthetical note that says to see parents separate of concerned. What did that mean in your protocol and the steps -- the required test for the family assessment response?

What that means is that they have to assess it basketcase determine if there is a history earth there are concerns for domestic violence. When they are reviewing the information or the history of a case they have to be looking for domestic violence are

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

when they are meeting with a family they have to be asking questions about a history of domestic violence or if it's a case that specifically was referred for domestic violence they should be setting up a separate meeting with the family so with the victim and the alleged offender regarding domestic violence. Currently we have a separate to Musick violence family assessment worker. A lot of times she will meet with the victim. Stereotypically the mom and the kids separately from the batterer and she will meet with them separately. [Indiscernible - multiple speakers]

She really has a different protocol checklist because she is specific to domestic violence and that's one of the outcomes -- the recommended outcomes from this assessment process in Wright County was that they seek resources to establish a TV special is for child protection cases. She now has a protocol checklist that looks similar to this but would be DV specific including further up in those first couple of steps doing the screen for domestic violence and then meeting with the batterer separately meeting with the victim separately doing separate safety plan service plans that kind of thing right?

Technically she wouldn't have to screen for domestic violence because her case [Indiscernible - multiple speakers]

She's going to do a separate safety plan and her safety plan is going to be much more focused and thorough. She doesn't Josh -- she does a much more safety plan on the victim [Indiscernible] it's much more comprehensive. -- Than a safety plan that someone does just --.

For those of you who might not have the resources or you don't maybe currently have the resources for a DV specialists in this area -- it's something that Wright County is working on for all of their frontline workers is to build into this protocol checklist some of the things that were detailed in the review worksheets the policy review worksheets from our assessment guide so specific to this -- specific interviewing separately of domestic violence is known as an issue the screening that you would do to determine what is domestic violence was an issue the discussion of separate safety plans and using DV specific assessments for the safety assessment

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

that number seven says do safety assessment in that would be -- with data using something specific to domestic violence. These are the ways that you would embed this recommended practice into the work of all of their frontline workers that a child protection agency is to build it into things like this that I really an internal policy or an internal protocol that really direct the child protection worker.

Maren if I could just add this is the place where we suggested that there be additional direction for checkups about things like documenting the adult victims protective strategies. What were the steps she was taking considering the threat of the harm or wishing able to take protective strategies because level violence was too high or the only one which to she knowingly allow -- allow or condone the maltreatment that would be most egregious sort of stereotype the battered women doesn't care should rather stay with her husband and doesn't care if it impacts your children at all that's kind of the stereotype that some people have in their mind to it when it's more clarification there. The other thing was we wanted to be very explicit about who was doing what to whom set of just is there domestic violence, documenting specific ask that that errors taking and who is it and all those things history contacts etc. history contacts etc.

Rosenstein mentioned that I'm going to jump is ahead to a similar sort of process related to the case files because I think this is where her lived experience becomes a written record. It's really important how workers are writing and documenting what their discovering in their work with families and particularly with victims and so I wanted to bring up the slide about the case notes. We don't have time to go to deeply into it but this is an example of some things. These are from actual case files that included a police report and the intake notes and just focusing on this aspect right here going to read case number one pick the police report of the incident involved in anonymous complaint that stated that a female is being hit and drug inside the residence. The officer observed minor injuries to the children -- victim back to prior felony domestic assault convictions within 10 years. Battered women's advocates are looking at that place reporting going well -- wow she's really scared to talk about an . anything the suspect because his criminal past [Indiscernible] the way that police report was translated into the intake notes was it was reported that

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

child was present during domestic between mother and father. That note doesn't tell you who is scared of home and who is doing what to home and with what impact. Post practice assessment imposed all of these conversations that we had with battered women's advocates in child protection workers in Wright County you might see something now more like this was in the right-hand column, child present in observed father had mother and tracker inside the house. Mother reluctant to speak about anything due to suspect criminal past and -- is very concrete is using the same language that was in the police report and it's much clearer about who's doing what to whom and who has a history of violence.

I'm going to ask Jessica if I made up the third column because we didn't have time to poll more recent case files from Wright County but I'm guessing this is the kind of impact that these conversations and the practice assessment process has had in terms of the documentation that intake workers are making now.

Absolutely and in fact I think now we're even just copying the police report and if we get somebody from the community calling we are definitely being more aware of the language we are using we are not using the passive language for being more aware not even just on the domestic violence cases but on all of our cases to make sure that we are not being vague but very specific as to what happened because it just minimizes the violence and the abuse of the -- this occurring. Sometimes it's easier to talk about it to protect ourselves sometimes from that secondary trauma but ends up being [Indiscernible - multiple speakers] otherwise it is the being vague about who's accountable for the harm in the violence like in the second case that the child intervene in the fight between his parents there's no indication there up was the perpetrator. [Indiscernible - multiple speakers]

As though it's a mutual fight where there's equal playing power.

The example I like to use with that if you're talking about sexual abuse and child would you stay between? No I wouldn't so I think you need to refrain that they the same. Is not sexual abuse is not that is just sexual abuse they -- he -- this person molested this child or even that he penetrated this child actually I make my workers

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

get more specific and tell me exactly what happened so I can document it when we're talking about cases when we're making a decision about a finding. Specifically I have that information so we are making a good decision.

We just have a couple of minutes left in is a question about challenges and conducting separate interviews when domestic violence is present especially in the context of differential response where is a whole family approach I wonder Jessica if you could comment on how that's been working for your caseworkers around doing the separate interviews. The person is saying that she's guessing that there would be resistance by the child protection workers in her community to doing separate interviews. I'm wondering about how to overcome the resistance.

Separate interviews with the parents?

Correct.

There are times that we have resistance especially when there are power and control dynamics but not usually a lot of the times we will reach out to the victim first or do a drop-in visit during the day when we think the batterer is going to be at work.

Jessica I think the question isn't that the textured -- child protection workers [Indiscernible - multiple speakers]

How would the intervene -- what did they say about that.

Well, it was best for the victim and I guess I don't know why they would be resistant. I would explore that with your workers a little bit with their hesitation I would ask some of those questions. I guess I'm not under the ending what their resistance is and why they would not want to meet [Indiscernible - multiple speakers]

We know the person is asking the question really well so Carmen just Collison we can talk with you more about that.

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

She certainly welcome to contact me I don't -- I guess I don't -- I haven't had that experience so is foreign to me.

Is advocating for changes is a delicate process.

It is tough -- am sorry that we've run out of time here we got really deep into these activities into now we have to kind of wrapup on our webinar here today. There's a whole report that details the recommendations that came out of the Wright County practice assessment and on the site right now is just a couple of the bullets of those recommendations and things that Jessica and others in Wright County are actively working on there's also state-level advocacy going on right now in relation to shifting in making chopped action a little more new ones in terms of its was wants to cases that involve domestic violence in a guess that will be part two of our webinar if we can have time in your future. Mostly we really want to encourage people to explore the possibility of working with this tool if even a just really organic, slow, methodical processes. It doesn't take a lot of resources to do engagement in a process like this except for time and commitment but it's not a process that on for million to child protection because of their quality service reviews and other activities that they engage in to constantly reflect on their work and review their work this is a very similar process to that but it's revealed different things related to child protection practices. I encourage you to explore the community readiness tools that are available in the guide and also just wanted to make one other statements that OVW squirrel branch program -- rural branch program supports collaboration with child protection in relation to cases involving cooccurrence of child battering and [Indiscernible] that grant program is open -- is receiving solicitations now and they are due in the next couple of weeks here. We got lots of resources on our website to support you in writing a grant that might involve this kind of work specific to child protection or other practice assessment [Indiscernible] that we talked about in the last couple of months on our webinar is. I'm sorry that we had to cut our time short but I really want to thank Jessica and roads for sharing your it variances in your expertise and I know that you are available for ongoing consultation 14 the might be thinking about doing the server advocates that want to explore the possibility of

Praxis International –
Technical Assistance on Analyzing Institutional Responses to Violence Against Women

Please note: This text was generated during the in-session webinar closed captioning and is less accurate than an official transcript. We apologize for any confusion created.

bringing us to their child protection workers. We would be really happy to work with any of you support your work out there.

Roser Jessica any final comments?

No thanks everybody for being on the line to go into check this out it's really invaluable tool.

Jessica?

No thank you.

Thanks much everybody when you close that of this webinar you will be brought to an evaluation and we really appreciate you taking just 2 1/2 minutes to fill out that evaluation form is actually use the information to make sure we're delivering and designing programming that meets your needs and is good for you. We appreciate you taking the time to do that. With that everybody can get back to grant writing and progress report writing and all that sort of good stuff and working on ending violence against women and children in this country. We appreciate all of your efforts and thank you for being with us today. Take care everyone.

[Event concluded]