

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.

Leveraging Relationships: The Role of the Advocate in Tracking System Response, Part II

Amalfi Parker Elder and Bree Adams Bill

October 11, 2018

>> Good afternoon everyone and welcome to this webinar, Leveraging Relationships Part II , The Role of the Advocate in Tracking System Response - A Blueprint Perspective . Presented by Praxis International in partnership with the Office on Violence Against Women . my name is Amalfi Parker Elder, training specialist with Praxis International. Today's presenter I will introduce in a moment. Today I am joined by Liz Carlson that will help us with the technical aspect of today's webinar. Liz, tell us a little bit about how the webinar works.

>> Thank you and hello everyone, good to be with you today . I will touch upon a few details relative to this webinar platform to ensure you have a good experience today. We would first of all like to call to your attention that you will see in the middle of your screen, the middle column, a Q&A box . we utilize that for the benefit of all of our participants. That is the means by which you will share your questions and comments. And those comments will get chatted to us. And Amalfi Parker Elder and our presenter Bree will respond within the platform itself. Rather than just having running chat. So the phone lines will be muted and you can utilize the Q&A box at the discretion of you. You also notice there are running captions at the bottom of your screen. That is for everyone's benefit. As always, with real-time captioning, mistakes are possible.

Praxis International –
Blueprint for Safety

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.

>> You have the option to adjust the display of all of the webinar boxes you see on your screen. If you hover over the light gray icon on the side of each box, you will see a range of options available to you. You can adjust the setting of the boxes, the individual boxes on your screen to your preference. We encourage you to do so. We also want to let you know, if you are utilizing Internet audio for your presentation, and the sound quality is unstable. Dialing in by telephone likely will improve the sound quality for your experience. Feel free to join by telephone at any point. If you choose to do so, once you make the phone connection, turn your speakers off.

>> If you so choose you can revisit this presentation, or share it with your colleagues. This session is being recorded and will be posted to the blueprint webpage of the Praxis International website . And finally if you experience any technology issue, feel free to use the Q&A box to send a message to myself or to the webinar host at TA2TA . We will do our best to help you navigate any sort of logistical issues you may be having.

>> With that, Amalfi I think we are all set to begin the presentation .

>> Great, thank you Liz. Today we are very fortunate to have an experienced community-based advocate here to share her experience and answer your questions. Just to give you a little bit of an idea of what her experience entails, I would like to provide a little introduction for Bree Adams Bill, who is in advocate and safety coordinator, and program director. You will hear us lovingly referred to [indiscernible] . she has worked with other women for over 20 years. Is a community-based advocate has been instrumental in coordinating a response team in partnership with the criminal legal system in St. Paul Ramsey County, to ensure victims of battering receive the responses and services they need and deserve. Through her knowledge of the criminal system, she has participated in the development and enhancement of the St. Paul safety on the creation of the companion piece, the studs distinctly vital role. The responses remain at the forefront and incorporate such when training locally, straight white and nationally. She serves on numerous committees unintended consequences of criminal and

Praxis International –
Blueprint for Safety

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.

family legal system and for three years, she was the coordinator for the encircled project of the batter intervention program, for repeat offenders.

>> Again, I thank you for your time being here today, Bree, but wanting to highlight your background . You have such a wealth of information and experience to share with us today.

>> And also, in the spirit of letting our audience feel like they can know you a little bit more and connecting with you today I had a couple of questions, warm-up questions for you. That was what drives you to keep doing system reform knowing the challenges that come with it . [indiscernible] do you look up to the most and why?

>> Good afternoon. Thank you for having me today. I'm excited to talk about one of my favorite topics, which is advocacy. So what drives me to keep doing system reform work? I have to say for most, survivors drive me. They want advocates and need advocates to show up every single day. And use our voices to stand in their place. When they are unable to. It really is there lived experiences that have and will continue to change the world. My sister advocates also drive me, all of those I have worked with over the years. It is never lost on me. How hard advocates work on a daily basis. And how many stories, really, that we care, carry within our souls of the hundreds of thousands of women and children that have been hurt the heart aches in their stories. I have to say I also am inspired by our foremothers. They drive me to keep doing system reform work. The organized efforts from so long ago to fight for women's advancement and against constant resistance, fuels me . they had a fire inside them and they still do, that burns brighter than the fire around them. And they also have built a sisterhood amongst each other, that when one individual fiery flame if you will, grows quieter, another advocate grows brighter. And there is a shared support offered to each other and places to regain their own spark. I have learned a great deal from that and as a representative for the next generation of applicants if you will, the work of those that came before me and their unrelenting efforts, keeps me going. And I have to say, the little things drive me and when I say little things, I mean these tiny sparks around me. It can literally be taking a crisis call from a

This project is supported by grant #2015-TA-AX-K032 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the U. S. Department of Justice.

Praxis International –
Blueprint for Safety

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.

woman that is being abused . it could be something my daughter says to me. It could be a quote on social media. There are sparks everywhere and it's incumbent on me to make sure I'm connected and seeing them. So an early reformer for me and the balance against the women's movement what I have looked up to most and why, there are many but one I want to share today with all of you, is Sharon Rice von. Sharon Rice von was one of the founders of women's advocates in St. Paul Minnesota, which is one of the first federal women's shelters. And I was fortunate enough to know her and to look to her actually as a mentor for a very long time before her passing. And why, Sharon for me knew her purpose, and she stood strong in at . she demonstrated for me what it looks like when you have a passion, that burns brighter than any fears. She reminds me of a quote by Ayn Rand who said the question isn't who is going to let me, it is going to stop me. I love that. And I think of her anytime I hear it. She was also fierce and a warrior woman in the balance against women movement. One of the ones I mentioned earlier, every step of the way. Those efforts are not lost on me. I know many of you on the call heard from Rose in August. When she spoke about a place at the table. She mentioned our place at the table for advocates was never given to advocates. They fought for it and nothing has ever been given to advocates. Anyway as a later reformer, second-generation advocate, I truly believe it is my duty to honor all of the early reformers. Those that have passed and those still here. I know I walk on the backs of Giants, all of us advocates do. It's important to remember who they are, who they were, and that I am to keep changing the game as they did.

>> Thank you Bree, it is so important what you shared . Thank you for sharing about Sharon also did We will hear a lot more from Bree . before we transitioned to hearing directly about those experiences, we will do a brief overview of that background and history, that got us to where we are today. It will be brief. In this conversation is really almost par three of a longer conversation since last year when we hosted a webinar titled a seat at the table. That recording is available on the website, if you didn't catch it last year. We can send you the link after today . Bree was starting the conversation by explaining what we mean by legal

Praxis International –
Blueprint for Safety

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.

advocacy, by systems advocacy and how it differs from direct services, in the context . listeners to that webinar last year said they really appreciated it. The message. But they wanted more examples. Moore hearing directly from advocates doing this work. Who can really speak to the tangible ways they found to navigate the system while pushing for change. So we are now holding this series of conversations. And like TA2TA said August 21 this year we had Bart one of leveraging relationships. And Rose consulted with Praxis International TA in the rural programming and she primarily works outside the safety context . it was great in August to hear Rose talk about all of the different ways and levels and aspects of system reform like she has been doing for years outside of the different context . and we will provide a link for that recording as well for those of you that may have missed part one.

>> Today Bree will be speaking similar things that Rose is speaking to. Particularly from that perspective of being a blueprint for safety coordinator. She will talk to us about the same kinds of things. What does it mean to work with the system, within the system. Form those partnerships to be heard and taken seriously. But still to find your self stonewalled or shut out, still finding pressure to do things you might feel harmful to the rooms, or still the actual change and reform that maybe you're at the table talking about, it's just slow to actualize. With that being said I want to encourage everybody listening in, please type as many questions as you can. As you think of, as you are pondering, as you are listening. There is a question now I see asking about the slides to download and we will have a link to download at the end of the webinar. There will be a link to download today. We will send it out as well as a follow-up.

>> Type in as many questions as you can. We try to design today to be allowing is much room for you all to as questions of Bree and myself . To share from her as much as possible.

>> Really briefly, looking back at the roots of systems reform work. Those roots some might say were radical. Some might say there was initially a knocking down the door, rather than knocking on it. Really what we are drawing attention to is the fact in the 70s or so when

Praxis International –
Blueprint for Safety

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.

advocacy efforts were really leading to laws that would make battering a crime and hold batterers accountable . advocates were saying on the last webinar we are seeing the laws were there but they were not initially being used. You weren't really seeing arrest happen or prosecutions of crimes. So advocates were realizing the system wasn't going to reform itself and they would need to get involved with coordination and organization of the criminal legal system, if those goals that were [indiscernible] for safety and accountability were to be realized. Those early reformers, they'll early early advocates, when you were talking about a warrior advocate for working tirelessly with confidence and boldness to demand that the system opened the door. Opening the doors led to coordinated community response and over the course of building the CCR, developing relationships has become really important. We want to draw attention to the fact that it is really key for those doing the work today to remember those radicals, that brave pushing of the system, to have community-based advocacy heard and to have the system take you seriously. I think it's important, we kind of channeled that. You are opening I think that so much better than I can now Bree, I think you for the early comments you were making.

>> So in the early 80s , very well-known for the model of the CCR that started there in the early 80s. Shortly followed up with a lot of CCR activity in the state of Minnesota, particularly Rose was coordinating St. Cloud CCR and [indiscernible] in St. Paul. As well as in other places around the country. The idea behind CCR early on was to move intervention strategy beyond just arrest as a standalone strategy. And have this role of everybody working together.

>> So the image on the screen is a depiction of what that idea of CCR is . system reform work is happening in a lot of different ways today. Particularly what I liked about having both Rose and Bree speaking to this is listening to both of them will shed light on all of the different phases of what is happening. The graphic is showing the general framework. The core goals are the same to promote reform within institutions, with responses matching up with what the victims of violence need from it. Kind of whatever the key people you are looking at our.

Praxis International –
Blueprint for Safety

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.

And advocacy stays central in the entire process. Central to grounding the work and experiences of their survivors in the community, and the efforts usually led by a coordinator. That's why a coordinator, leadership are there in the center circle. A coordinator might be an advocate or practitioner in the system but no matter who your actual coordinator is, you actually want to be emphasizing advocacy. That is what the door opens when were talking about the radical pushing for the door to be open and for advocates to have that seat at the table.

>> And the green boxes are the work of the assessments looking at the response to evaluate and see is at producing any harmful or unintended, how we keep improving and finding gaps, identifying survivors needs. That bigger outer frame where it says intervening institutions, community-based organizations, in this instance we are talking about, the criminal system we are analyzing here . the whole idea of showing this general framework of the CCR is to recognize we are all coming into this work in different ways, in different communities and demographics. Different histories of coming together and community-based advocacy. No matter what method your community is deploying to get the system work, no matter how you are executing the general framework on the screen, we do all recognize that what is developed is this forming of relationships with practitioners. It is key that community-based advocacy has to form some sort of relationship with system practitioners, to make this reform happen. But what we really want to highlight today is that while those relationships are key, that you need them to be able to do the work, they are not the primary goal. They are a means to an end which is to facilitate efforts to make changes in institutional response. And so what I mean to say, they are key but not an end-all or primary goal. That's what Bree will speak to you today, the fine line between having those relationships , maintaining them, but realizing the main goal is the institutional change. And improving responses to intimate partner crime.

>> With that being said, Bree, if you could give us a little bit of context for how specifically the history of system reform work, and the coordinated community response . you will talk about

Praxis International –
Blueprint for Safety

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.

what this looks like in the different context today. And briefly if you can tell us how the blueprint evolves from what I just described.

>> Thank you as you mentioned, and I tried to articulate in my opening, advocates in this work had to fight courageously to be taken seriously, to have input in the system's response. In 1984, my agency as you lovingly described as spiff, was one of the first agencies that successfully thought to combine the coordinated community response work that was established in Duluth with direct service advocacy in the community that did not go into the shelter. So the mission of the agency, the one I work for has not changed at all since then. So although coordinated community response model created the proverbial table for all to sit at every meeting practitioners and advocates. Characterized by a drift away from regular system reform work. CCR is to become like a monthly meeting but no plan of action, kind of a checklist that we met. Characterized by developed policies and trainings for one or more agencies but not all, not cohesive and not collective. Also some parts functioned in silos. But there was no overall coordination, it was completely lacking. One institution didn't know what the other was doing, one agency had no idea how their policies affected another . there was just no coordination . and advocates became less involved over time in the CCR work year. Here . the multidisciplinary team, task forces if you will, only involved certain practitioners. Though the table exist, existed, advocates can't get a seat. How do you address that? About 15 years ago, long time advocate and cofounder of the Duluth model, who I am sure everybody is familiar with, Ellen Penn's, she came to believe that the CCR model, while helpful in reducing violence was not realizing its potential, to really leverage the criminal legal system's response to address this terrible violence that affects so many women and their families. Things were still falling through the cracks and a method was needed for the system and advocates to work together to identify and understand how these cracks or gaps in the system's response developed, how it impacted survivors and how they work together to close the gaps . the CCR model wasn't enough, it needed to be advanced if you will. So in 2007, the St. Paul and Ramsey County Minnesota coordinated community response at the time, created shortly after

This project is supported by grant #2015-TA-AX-K032 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the U. S. Department of Justice.

Praxis International –
Blueprint for Safety

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 was founded from inception in 1973 . at the time we decided the response to domestic violence could be strengthened and improved. Though we were doing good work here in St. Paul Minnesota, being a leader in such efforts on combining combating violence against women, the criminal legal system and speak worked with praxis to conduct safety audits. And that was the [indiscernible] the blueprint for safety. So a partnership of Praxis International , SPEC , and the coalition of churches. The request was to create a framework that would delineate the way our criminal system should respond to domestic abuse crime at each point of the case process. Using best practices in our community that were already established, then to develop a stronger cohesive and collective response to that is rooted in the foundation of shared philosophy. So a two-year effort, two years, we could've probably spent longer. But two years effort involving advocates, survivors, practitioners, researchers, and experts from all fields resulted in the St. Paul Blueprint for Safety did St. Paul launched the Blueprint for Safety in 2010 .

>> As many of you know, a practice that created a model version of the blueprint for any coordinated response can adapt for their community . the blueprint itself emphasizes the inclusion of all practitioners within the criminal system from 9112 probation, while also equalizing the necessity of community-based advocacy like what I do, not just having advocacy people but having a role in the leadership. After eight years with the blueprint in St. Paul Ramsey County, responding to domestic violence crimes, we do have an established table, literally a table. A few of them. For the partners to come to on a regular basis. The main table if you will is actually within my agency. And though the original coordinated community response exist that I mentioned prior to the blueprint, the table again that I'm speaking of, for the duration and purposes of this presentation, is actually a table built of blueprint leaders within the criminal legal system that currently meets quarterly, and has also meant monthly when needed, and we have a lot of small group meetings as necessary. As a matter of fact like I said this table is replicated within multiple agencies. And currently advocates are not only invited, but rarely will a meeting be held without us. That is quite amazing when you think

This project is supported by grant #2015-TA-AX-K032 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the U. S. Department of Justice.

Praxis International –
Blueprint for Safety

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.

about the history and how as Amalfi was speaking that doors had to be knocked down to demand a spot at the table . Saying all that I would also say though we do have a seat at the table, it is also equally true that challenges and barriers with system reform still exist and navigating are needed at the table as a strategic process, that I will share more on as we go along.

>> Thank you Bree . Just to give you a sense, I am moving us forward in the slides. I think it was frozen for a moment. Just so you know where I am at . I do want to let everybody know, do type in any questions you have. We will pause and answer them as they come in.

>> So we want to hear from you Bree about how this is working in St. Paul, the St. Paul Brent blueprint CCR did thank you for clarifying. As you are talking you're really talking about a specific group in St. Paul, that is composed of people from blueprint agencies. And just maybe if you want to clarify for the audience, when you say blueprint, like it is the same agencies that are part of the general CCR. But you have a core group of blueprint representatives right, from each agency. Specific to blueprint, is that what you would say, to clarify what you meant by that?

>> Absolutely. Thank for that. The response team still exist. Multiple representatives from all sorts of different institutions and agencies. What I will be talking about today, is our blueprint for safety steering committee, which is a smaller CCR that only represents the actual agencies in the Blueprint for Safety, as well as community-based advocates . So that is the table I will be speaking on now. It has become the foundation if you will of our CCR work.

>> So one of the last things he was saying, the proverbial table has been created. Advocates have a seat there but there is still a set of challenges even working in that framework. Tell us more about what you mean by that.

>> I think that one of the things that is important and helpful to me as I speak about this, is with the Blueprint for Safety , and with all the work we are doing around it, building our

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.

blueprint community if you will, it's important for me to know and state yes, I see myself as an advocate working within the criminal legal system. But I do not work for the system. And so that's always going to be true of any advocate. That is important to recognize. Know and speak to anytime you are at the table with the other representatives in your CCR. We are there as advocates but often times we are the only one that does not work for the system. So therefore, we have to remember our role is not to blend in at the table. Our role is to stand out as we do as advocates whose sole function and focus is making sure and ensuring the survivors voice are heard and their experiences considered. Some of the examples I will speak about, to like what to do when you're being stonewalled are shut out, as well as what to do and advocates are not included in reform work despite having a long-standing agreement. It is important that I think it is never done, never just we are at the table and that's it . our work will always continue as advocates . we will always be challenged. And we need to be mindful of that, we need to embrace that, as I said because, we are there to stand out. Maintaining balance within these relationships is always challenging. No matter what, no matter if you are trying to get through the doors and be accepted at the table, if you're trying to remain at the table, or if you have been shut out and trying to get back in . as advocates we also have to, like question how we compromise within such a relationship. Like with the criminal legal system, without risking our personal or agency integrity. Without jeopardizing potential funding or fracturing a relationship that has been hard-fought to create, especially when we are keeping in mind fully the challenges and hard work our foremothers gave to the movement. We need to make sure our history is with us at the table. That means what do we do, we need to strategize. It's always about strategizing, and always having, embracing like I said that even though it might appear things are absolutely wonderful and great we are at the table and having a conversation, we will always be the ones that have the biggest challenges because we are the ones that stand up the most.

>> Does that make sense pick

Praxis International –
Blueprint for Safety

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.

>> Absolutely peered I think the nuance is the heart of like how do you do that. I know you have some particular examples. I know one of your first ones is you know, a process where it seems like something was developing that might leave advocates out of the process. So how did you handle that? And what were you able to do to strategize when that was happening?

>> You're exactly right. This example I will share with everyone literally has been within, it happened a couple of years ago. Remember I said, we have been around since 1984. Had decent relationships and strong relationships, so much so we created Blueprint for Safety together and so on and so forth . Here is an example of what you are talking about Amalfi . a few years ago it seemed like I heard a rumor almost, it felt like that a little bit because I was amongst colleagues. They were chatting about this upcoming I think they called it a CC JS meeting. And of course I am curious as we should be, I questioned what this new meeting was about. What I learned was that some of the very same people that served on the Blueprint for Safety steering committee , the core CCR group I referred to a moment ago, a lot of them with other individuals within the jurisdiction, established a, a, they literally called it a CCR that it was only for criminal legal professionals. Only them. It was like the head of agencies, leaders talking like chiefs, prosecutors, assistant prosecutor. People in decision-making positions. Anyway I heard and the response was like you don't know about this, let me tell you. I was suspicious because how come we never knew about this so I asked? I am seeking information, trying to learn as much is possible to understand what this group is, what they do, what they are tasked with . I asked and was given kind of platitudes, and a little bit of I don't want to say overtly, just what I wanted. As an advocate I have to strategize . again I wanted to say was curious but then I became suspicious, like what is going on. So my first activity after learning this, in my strategy, was I contacted literally the people I had built trust with that were leaders. And I presumed were at that table. I will call it the CC JS. To find out more information and to really, I was trying to understand why we were there and what they were doing. It was through that means of communication, through those relationships that I learned actually, it's a criminal justice, CCR only did they are there to talk about a bunch of different things, having

Praxis International –
Blueprint for Safety

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.

to do with all crimes if you will. And so it wasn't just about violence against women issues . however it included violence against women issues. What I found out is some of the information in the work we were doing in the steering committee, was being informed to this other group of just criminal legal system leaders. Not really sure but how communication was going to be between the two groups, which was something that was important, I then asked with the people I connected with an trusted. A couple of them I presumed correctly were at that table. And one particular practitioner realized that there was a potential harm that could cause you know, if there one consistent communication between the groups, potential harm that could cause, especially to the of blueprint CCR meeting. To make a longer story short, I recognized that it's not appropriate for community-based advocates to be at the CC JS table. Because it's not appropriate for us to sit there when they're talking about crimes that have nothing to do with violence against women or domestic crimes . however we needed to be there when in fact those conversations were happening. Trying to figure out the best way to do that. So I literally, talk to the print steering committee members again, some of them were on this other one. And we diplomatically, I brought the concern forward and asked for input and spoke at our table, blueprint table, about the impact of the concerns. It was through this kind of shared philosophy we already had in the blue print steering committee, how centered we are with you know for victim survivors and how important advocates are that we came up with a resolution. We problem solved it out . what it looks like now, there is a person that is named as a liaison between that criminal justice system group, that is only for criminal legal system, who is a liaison then to the Blueprint for Safety CCR. If there is a need to have advocates at that table I go. It is also agreed if there is domestic related issues that are on the agenda, or someone wants to raise, it would go through the steering committee. So it was a little bit of a process but I'll be honest at first it felt a said it felt offensive and we were not at the table. I had personal feelings about it because of how centered we are in all the work in our community. And like I said I became suspicious of what is going on and why are we there. But then recognize we don't have to be there for everything. We don't want to be and don't

Praxis International –
Blueprint for Safety

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.

have the time . but how can we make sure it is truly we are informed when problems of domestic related crimes are at the table. We worked that out. Also it was recognized on therein that probably, a sense of a commitment they have to us in our partnership . they should've explained what this was and why and maybe had that conversation beforehand. But we are able to communicate and diplomatically, to work through the challenge and right now it is working.

>> So a lot of what I have heard you describe about who comes to the table for the meetings for CCR work, are the agency heads or maybe higher-ups appointed by agency heads to represent them. I was curious about the trickle-down on those, that a practitioner is doing the work in the field. That for instance, as a community-based advocate on raising certain issues, bringing a certain perspective, getting agreement working things out with the people at the table. How is that have, in terms of trickling down, do you ever make agreements at the table that those practitioners on the ground are not getting behind, or you know, that kind of disconnect in a way that can stall maybe what you feel you were accomplishing at the table?

>> Absolutely. I think this is such an important topic for us to address. So okay, I think there is a lot, let me start by saying this, to get buy-in and commitment, from those that are actually doing the work day in and day out, the practitioners on the ground, front-line workers. Requires its own strategy. Which is apart from building with agencies and institutions. So yes, there is definitely a trickle-down from the agency heads. There is a different strategy. So agency heads, it's true they will give direct tips. Directives are given all the time from an agency on down. But that's usually not the thing that gets buy-in or backing, or even creates inspiration from those doing the work. That comes from within their own . what I mean by that, I learned over the years, I have had to learn, I have been taxed with it, making a task myself, assigning myself, that I have to know, I have to learn, who the folks are at the front-line level that influence there appears . as an example influences their peer's . who has influence amongst their coworkers. Who are they? Who other prosecutors that have

Praxis International –
Blueprint for Safety

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.

responded respect amongst their own folks. It's super important to create relationships with them because they are the ones that are going to influence their own. Right. They will be the champion about whatever they get behind for everyone else. So, I want to also say that is also for relationship building across the board. What I mean by that is I will focus on the one that maybe is not behind these efforts. We actually did that with the Blueprint for Safety when it was unrolled, as far as trying to get patrol officers, over 600 peace officers here and basically had them change the way they are doing things, responding to domestic crime. It was actually Ellen Penn's in Praxis that provided a specific police officer that had credibility and respect by his peer's, but also what is the word, critical of the change. That was the person honed in on to train the officers did it worked brilliantly. If this person has respect that's doing the front-line work on the ground, saying yes, they can get behind these efforts in this change. That is what will inspire everybody else, right. The other thing about why it is so important, I think to make sure that there is that trickle-down, and yes again, the leaders within the agencies, heads of agencies have a role but so do we as advocates. We need to make sure we are building a relationship with both decision-makers and the front-line workers. We have to be able to check things out. We have to be able to understand and see if the policies and protocols that are in place are actually working in practice.

>> The decision-makers will not necessarily know that they are not the ones doing the work. So we then need to go to the front-line workers and build relationships. And have a more truthful engaging conversation I think. Where it is like let's have the space, a between you and me conversation if that works. Maybe you don't need to do that. But that's where you get the truth. It will really be lipservice or appeasement, they know it's not rainbows and butterflies just like we do. But they will say what it looks like in practice. They can name what they need to do a good job. They can give you specific reasons why a practice is not working. What needs to change. So that being said, there is different strategies that need to happen. I think it can, it needs to be separate strategies between decision-makers and the front-line workers. But also ensuring then what you are hearing from the front-line workers, you are bringing forward as

Praxis International –
Blueprint for Safety

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.

your knowledge, you are bringing forward to the decision maker saying check out this part of the policy. I don't know how it's really working in practice. We are not also having to callout the individuals that were receiving that information.

>> That makes a lot of sense to me. I know doing Blueprint work, utilizing some of those different tactics. Having the time and space where you can hear from those doing the work, like first responders in the field, and the higher-ups. The different dynamics there. I thought focus groups of practitioners helped with that, building and what you can hear. I wanted to ask about a time you may have felt pressured to agree to something that you didn't believe was in the best interest of survivors. And what was that like, when you come to that point where there's a moment of disagreement, how you push on that. How do you make sure, if you convey I don't think it's in the best interest of survivors, that your partners are not going to respect you are put up with it.

>> Totally, I have a lot of examples. Just to name one since we are on a time limit. Yes, that tends to always, a hint of that is always there. I gets important for us as advocates to really check in with ourselves, to check in and do this like urge, a surface check . like am I trying to be pressured here, what is this about, do I agree, how will it affect women. We always have to do that. The best interest of the survivors. Sometimes it happened so seamlessly, where all of a sudden, you might've talk for 10 minutes and you're like wait a minute. It comes together for you in that moment where it wasn't so obvious in the beginning. Here is my example.

>> In Minnesota, enhancement law changed where you have a domestic conviction, the next time you commit a domestic crime within 10 years, it can then be charged as a misdemeanor. There enhancement laws for domestic crimes here. The practice began where prosecution request a welfare check from law enforcement. It was like check on the safety of the victim, so on and so forth, and it made sense from an advocates perspective. You are great, you are concerned, that is awesome. After a short period of time, these welfare checks, I'm using air quotes that you cannot see, it became a quote code for catching the offender at the home,

Praxis International –
Blueprint for Safety

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.

with a no contact order. Though it was posed as something that was a great practice, victim centered approach, it really wasn't. It really was used for way for prosecution to help them obtain plea agreements. And so what we found happening then was a welfare check and the abuser is there. And oh, a violation of a criminal court order, no contact order. And guess what there is some negotiation where you can plead guilty to the violation of the order and we will go ahead and dismiss the underlying domestic assault case. It became a negotiation tool.

>> Pressure was coming from prosecution and law enforcement, trying to convince advocates it was based on making sure the victim was safe. A way to continuously engage and hold the offender accountable for abuse. They used the risk and danger assessment in the blueprint to support their argument. It was quite intense. Quite frankly, you know like I said after a little bit of time we realized, we refused, we did not agree to this. One of the things I did, I checked it out. I said okay here is the deal, I will facilitate some focus groups of women who have lived experiences regarding the impact, both positive and negative, of these type of orders and who had violations of the orders. So we did that. We also looked at data and requested data from the local police department got them used -- domestic abuse data. We pulled from the police, probation, all of the violations of what these contact orders look like. What we found, women at the end of the day, okay, the focus groups from surveys, said you know what, the violation of a domestic abuse no contact order, that conviction, the plea negotiation, absolutely did not reflect an accurate history of domestic abuse. It did not reflect the harm this particular person did to them. Rather it showed a crime of not listening to the court. And so as a result we brought this information forward, we challenged it, we talked about different ways to connect and engage with women, and a part of that was listening to victim survivors wishes if they want the criminal domestic abuse no contact order to be issued anyway. It has been heard, it is long. A long process. And we all know that change happens slowly. Very slowly. However, since this came about, especially the last four years, there has been a lot of work around how to make the process better, which includes pretty much eliminating these guys to welfare checks to the check someone violating an order with the underlying case. It is not a go to

This project is supported by grant #2015-TA-AX-K032 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the U. S. Department of Justice.

Praxis International –
Blueprint for Safety

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.

means anymore. That's what we wanted . the best way that impacted that was literally Golding, going and looking at the data, doing analysis of the data and bringing that forward. What can you argue with there, this is the real experiences of those who are protecting and this is what they are telling you did there wasn't much argument after that. That was one example and I hope it was clear enough.

>> It was clear. I was curious if you noticed at all, a difference in the arrest happening during welfare's like since you were able to bring your attention to it. Do they still make the assist arrest of someone is there. Are they overlooking that now. Do you have a sense? Of what is developing. If the person under the no contact order is present?

>> Yes, a couple of things. For one, we will not support, we have a program where an advocate goes out with a police officer or Sergeant. And we will not, we will not respond to welfare checks unless we truly believe it should be a welfare check, we meaning the advocates ourselves. If they bring something forward which is minimized greatly, then we are very skeptical about it. In another change the local police department said they would not do that anymore. The family violence unit does its own investigation within the department got they refused to have an investigator and an officer in the unit to just go out on prosecution requested welfare checks. Instead they have to do what they would normally do and make a reason. It has changed significantly in that way. And it also has minimized, a couple of things, another thing is there are not as many domestic abuse no contact orders being ordered against victims wishes did that as part of the whole thing. And there has been a challenge especially for prosecution to move forward prosecuting the underlying case. You know. Not having it just be about the violation of a domestic abuse no contact order and if it is, if that's the best means to go forward, engaging with the victim on those crimes to really get a sense of what they hold for. So victim engagement went up in a more positive way, truly being victim centered. And the relationship between advocates and prosecution, especially in this has grown. We call the amount, they challenged it. We challenged them back and we brought data

Praxis International –
Blueprint for Safety

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.

and fax. They heard and listened and now there is a rebuilding from that enhanced kind of respect for each other. And we are able to work through that.

>> One of the questions before I move forward, is that you have referred to, kind of talking about the work you are doing, what it made me wonder was, you do a lot in singularly as a blueprint coordinator but you have referred to we or us like we challenged them. I was wondering I guess what that is and what your support is that allows you, to say these things and hold strong to these things when you are challenging the system or practitioners. What is the we that is supporting you?

>> Thank you. For acknowledging that. Asking me about that. I didn't realize that's what we were saying. That is a good thing because when I say we and us, I am talking about advocates. I am talking about me. I am talking about all of the advocates within my agency. For direct service advocates here. Challenging the systems advocacy also as well as a whole like movement. What I was saying before hand, what gets me going and gets me filled up is I myself am just a little itty bitty piece of this huge giant movement. I feel strong. I feel like almost invincible and untouchable because wherever I go as an individual advocate I have surrounded around me, I have all of these advocates, early reformers, current reformers, next-generation, future ones . when I say us I am talking from all advocates, my sister advocates in my agency and all of the advocates everywhere doing this work every single day. That gives me power and confidence, it makes me feel like I can be the only advocate in the room and I will be dang sure that I am heard and I stand out and I'm speaking on behalf of every single battered women and their children and every single advocate.

>> Yes, was there ever a time when you made it your organizational high arche to back you up to back you up. Like have there been times where you are carrying that collective straight with you but it wasn't enough and you needed to turn to like your ED or your somebody that was within your advocacy organization to like come to that site with you, to back you up?

Praxis International –
Blueprint for Safety

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.

>> Definitely. And that is the piece of it where it is part of the strategy right. I think that individually, advocates, direct line advocates should be able to challenge and do the reform work and system advocacy individually as part of each of our jobs. When there's an issue with that they need to get help from a leader. I am no different in that. The one I would go to is literally the executive director of my agency. And that is happened, strategizing, problem-solving, what will we do about this issue. And like we are going to call a meeting. I will bring my highest decision-maker within my agency, my boss. And the two of us will go to meet with whomever highest decision-maker within that agency, and whomever their second or whoever else they bring. And then you have literally in the room, more like equality sitting in the room. Even though I am perfectly fine as an individual, helping an advocate that lives here, works here, challenging the chief of police on their own. It is different, different communication, received differently when you bring your own head of your agency did again, it strategy. I don't think that should because for every single challenge at all. That would almost be inappropriate. But you need to be methodical, thoughtful, with your highest leader or whatever, for me my boss, Executive Director. To figure out when is the best time to call on that. That is the thing about advocacy. We also, part of our job and what we do all the time, figuring out what kind of advocacy is needed and who in fact will be the best person in the agency to take it up. That is all part of that. You're absolutely right, definitely something I have had to do and will continue to do when I need to do it, for sure.

>> Awesome. So you mentioned a lot of times, in today's presentation, strategizing and strategy being needed. I wanted to give you the opportunity as we are coming to the end of the webinar today, to summarize the key strategies that you really have found helpful in doing the system reform work. And again, I will ask if anybody has questions. We have about 10 minutes left together. Please share any questions you might want Bree to answer . Can you summarize those strategies for us?

Praxis International –
Blueprint for Safety

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.

>> Happy to. The first one, here on the screen is this healthy skepticism. I have tried to thread that through my conversation today. Really what I mean by that, regardless we have to as advocates, always need to have a skepticism when working with the system. I want to be clear it's not the same as pessimism, it skepticism. Constantly being skeptical or having reservations. Maybe addressing doubts, not being convinced about things you are hearing, seeing or doing . as a quickie example I will say, there was a little while ago and agency locally that shared their numbers about domestic abuse cases. It was low. Like a celebration for them. Like a we are doing great work, the domestic violence numbers are down. Everyone is celebrating around me and as an advocate I had this healthy, many because I am knowledgeable and is part of my expertise, I am taking it again, this skepticism, I'm not totally convinced it's a good thing, I don't know if those numbers are right. We get all the referrals . and they are saying they are less busy. But then it's addressing the doubt right, bringing it forward and saying you say your numbers are down. One of our concerns is if you are making impact, the numbers should be up as more people are feeling they can trust you. That's what I mean about healthy skepticism. Taking sure it's constantly there did not just accepting the rainbows and butterflies like they say . here is the success and was saying all right way to go. No, always thinking through the impact of whatever they define a success and checking it out with your own reality as an advocate within an agency. Another strategy I use, making sure we are arming ourselves with knowledge. Knowledge, knowledge, knowledge . we as advocates are responsible for knowing our history, and knowing the history of whatever the issue is in front of you. I just spoke about the welfare checks. And it's my responsibility to make sure that I don't forget the information but it's also passed on in the agency so in a year or two, or 10, when this is reintroduced and used again. Doing welfare checks on victims, to make sure the history is brought to the table to reform, inform a robust discussion about that particular thing. We need to arm ourselves with credibility. What I mean by that, our credibility as advocates is specifically tied to what we know really, really happened and occurs, and ongoing abusive relationships. Right. We have and know the real lived experiences working with hundreds and thousands of victim survivors.

This project is supported by grant #2015-TA-AX-K032 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the U. S. Department of Justice.

Praxis International –
Blueprint for Safety

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.

We are at the table, we are credible, we need to leave, we know it and believe it, speak to it . to make ourselves credible. And finally one of the strategies I use is the skill, it comes from a kind of dialectical behavioral therapy thing. It's called the G.I.V.E. skill . it's something that has worked for me and I want to share it with everyone. The skill of G.I.V.E. is an acronym that means gentle, interested, validate , easy manner. What that means to me, when there is an issue, I am trying to create a relationship. Or I am trying to renegotiate a relationship. Or even, fix a relationship. I always start with, I want to start with approaching the conversation with gentleness. Meaning here I am. I will not approach harshly or be judgmental, my approach is gentle. Hello, thank you for meeting with me. The truth of the matter is, you will get more bees with honey right. Then I, interested. What I said earlier about being curious, being interested is when you start interviewing the person or people you're trying to build a relationship with or create one, seeking clarity about understanding what is going on, seek clarity by asking questions, search for understanding . be interested in their point of view. Even if you're not interested in their point of view, you have to act like it. Almost faking it . but the point is using this skill, you will learn more, you will get more information. You will be opening up this relationship where they will see you as somebody they will risk having a relationship with. V is validate. That is validating what you can if you can. Things like after I have interviewed say the patrol cops, and they are saying something. It's okay for me to say you know what I think I see your point. To me it may appear to be whatever, whatever. Or what you have been doing with me. I think I heard you say, or what I heard you say is. You are validating maybe what they shared and their experience. But you're also leveraging, a useful way to leverage a relationship. All you are doing is acknowledging and validating their point of view, it doesn't mean you agree . then you move into a more of a easy manner. You offer up maybe the information on what they have to say. Their point of view maybe I don't feel like our police reports go into details about horrible violence. This abuse going on I don't feel like that is something that should be shared, victims story. An advocate shouldn't have it . and you say I know what you are saying, I understand that. Probably one of the low, worst days of their

Praxis International –
Blueprint for Safety

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.

life . and what I want to share with you, the statute in Minnesota of etc., says as domestic abuse advocates we can have that information because we come with experience and knowledge that says we can handle the information, but also that we will retrieve that information secretly and it will allow us to connect with the victim. The domestic abuse advocate are protective factors for battered women. So it doesn't have to go right away into a back-and-forth argument, which can happen. This skill isn't appropriate in every situation but it can be appropriate when you're trying to work things out . I know we are short on time.

>> Thank you Bree . I will let you finish your last couple of points. The let you share a final thought as we close. And maybe describe the last couple of strategies . I wanted to point out to everyone, I am not actually seeing it on my screen right now. I believe the PowerPoint slides should now be available. I see them now in the materials box. And also in the web link box there is a link to a survey monkey. Lisa look please fill out the survey. And I want to thank you Bree for your time and everything you shared . It is about 3:15 PM. What I will say, if you want to hear more from Bree , there is so much to learn from everything you have been sharing. You can share so many more lessons and things even from what you covered today, much of what you didn't get to . please contact us at Praxis . We will be happy to get you directly in touch with Duluth Model team. You can call or email us and we will get you in touch with her. I will also send out the recording for today. Thank you so much for your time Bree and everything you shared with us today.

>> Thank you so much. I enjoy this. And like you said if there are questions or connections to be made I am open to that. Thank you.

>> Thanks everyone