

## Preventing Intergenerational Transmission of Domestic Violence in TANF Families Webinar

**Damon Waters:** Good afternoon. Thank you everyone for joining us. My name is Damon Waters calling from the Office of Family Assistance. Thank you for joining our webinar, "Preventing Intergenerational Transmission of Domestic Violence in TANF Families." We're very happy to have you and this wonderful panel of expert presenters to discuss the important topic with you today.

My name is Damon Waters, like I said, and we welcome you to this webinar. This facilitated webinar explores promising practices and programs from TANF programs and contractors that have been effective in addressing domestic violence using an intergenerational approach. Webinar participants will be provided with an overview of program areas that have been shown to be effective in addressing the needs of survivors and children who have experienced domestic violence. The webinar will also explore methods of preventing the intergenerational transmission of domestic violence.

We are looking forward to hearing about innovative and promising practices and programs implemented by current TANF programs that use intergenerational approaches to assist families experiencing domestic violence. We look forward to hearing about methods that are used to prevent children who are experiencing domestic violence from becoming batterers or victims of domestic violence, and we're interested in hearing some more about some of the approaches that promote economic empowerment to assist individuals experiencing domestic violence.

We are pleased to have three dynamic presenters who will be leading our conversation today about addressing domestic violence using an intergenerational approach to prevent the transmission of DV. Throughout the presentation, you will have an opportunity to ask questions through the Q&A box in the bottom left corner of your screen. We encourage you to ask questions. And, if your question is for a specific presenter or program, please be sure to specify that. If we do not get to everyone's question, we will provide a Q&A that will appear on the PeerTA website, along with a transcript and audio recording of today's webinar.

During the webinar, there will also be a series of polling questions that will appear on your screen. Please take some time and answer each by clicking on the radio button next to the selected response. Doing so will not only help us guide the discussion, but will also share additional information that may inform our practices.

We will first hear from Chelle Hanson. Chelle has been with Catholic Charities Harbor House for four-and-a-half years. She started out as the third-shift weekend lead office staff, where she was responsible for handling crisis calls and the safety and needs of clients in the shelter during her shift. After approximately six months, she moved to the SAFE Project as a case manager. She has been with the Project since its beginning in 2012. She was a case manager for the SAFE Project for approximately three-and-a-half years before being promoted to project coordinator. Since beginning her current position, she has been fortunate enough to have radio and television media spots to highlight domestic violence issues and has been instrumental in the

publishing of the SAFE Project bimonthly newsletter. She is currently working toward a Bachelor of Science in criminal justice.

We will then hear from Rocio Garcia. Rocio began her tenure as a Community Education and Outreach Coordinator of the Violence Interruption Program, or VIP, in July 2015. In October 2016, Senator Jeffrey D. Klein recognized her for her work as a domestic violence community activist within the Bronx. Ms. Garcia has been in the social service field for nearly 10 years, where she has worked in the capacity of a caseworker, supervisor, as well as data and quality manager.

Finally, we will hear from Valina Jackson. Valina has over 30 years of experience in the human development field. Her many roles have included teacher, counselor, workshop facilitator, manager, and chief executive. Her keen administrative and program development skills have shaped a number of employment and training and workforce development professional image programs for a diverse cross section of adults and young people. Ms. Jackson currently serves as Chief Operating Officer of the Brookview House, which provides a wide gamut of supportive services to homeless families as they forge their way toward economic self-sufficiency.

I will now turn things over to Chelle with our first presentation.

**Chelle Hanson:** Thank you so much.

I wanted to talk about my project a little bit, and I think you guys have the PowerPoint right there. We started this project about four years ago with the idea that we wanted to help men and women leave their domestic violence situations, or kind of recover from those if they've been away from them through a few things.

We wanted to move or help provide safety. We wanted to help advocate for them, whether it be with DCF or with the court systems or other systems that they might be involved in. We wanted to help them with their finances, either to gain control or to learn how to handle finances if they've been a victim of financial abuse and they weren't able to handle those things before. And lastly, we wanted to help them with employment, be that being employed for the first time or looking to put themselves back into the workforce, or even looking to better their employment situation so they could become economically independent.

The next slide there just says who we are. I'm having trouble getting it to change, sorry. There we go.

We are a collaborative effort between DCF here in Kansas and Catholic Charities Harbor House, working to reduce employment barriers of survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault – again, with the ultimate goal of having those survivors become economically independent.

Just a little bit of information about who we serve. We are interested in helping people not continue this through the generations and becoming economically self-sufficient, so we do help those that are in poverty. We will help men or women. They can have children or not children; that doesn't really matter because we know that domestic violence can cross all the lines.

Survivors, as DCF defines those domestic violence survivors in the state of Kansas, and in the state of Kansas DCF says that that's intimate partner violence. It can be a same-sex couple, an opposite-sex couple. It can be a living together couple or a married couple, as long as they were an intimate partner couple. They must either be on Cash Assistance at the time that we receive them, or they can come to us through a healthy relationships class, as long as they meet those state guidelines for 100% poverty. And, they must live in 1 of the 25 counties that the Catholic Diocese of Wichita serves here in Kansas.

On the next slide, this just kind of details some of the services that we do offer. First, when we start with them, we want to do safety planning. Whether they're still in that home, whether they've left the home, or whether they're just living with the trauma that domestic violence has caused, we want to offer an individual safety plan for each one of them and their children, if they have children, based just on kind of where their life is at right now.

Then, to promote the self-sufficiency, the financial portion, we do offer career and employment services. We'll start with finding out where they've been – if they've been employed recently, if they're needing to be employed for the first time, what their educational background is. Then we'll move on to some resume building and some interviewing skills, maybe even some training if they need to finish their high school diploma or if they need to get into college or if they need to get certificates to further the employment opportunities and make them more employable.

On the next slide here, some more services that we offer. Going along with helping to ensure that we don't carry this from one generation to another, we do present them with domestic violence and child abuse education: How is this affecting your children? How is this carried from one generation to another? We really want to educate on what domestic violence is and how this does carry from one to another and how this is not what healthy relationships look like. We definitely want to help with breaking that cycle of domestic violence through education.

We also do some financial literacy with them. I know there are several of them listed there, but we'll really kind of meet that client where they're at. What kind of financial empowerment have they had before? Have they been allowed to control the finance, or have they been allowed to work? We'll move in the direction that client feels most comfortable with, so that they really can gain control of their finances and not have to go back to an abuser because they don't know how to handle the finances or because they don't know how to become employed.

The next slide here, we help with medical and psychosocial services. We know that domestic violence, oftentimes they're not allowed to see health professionals because they might tell somebody about a situation. So, we want to get them back in touch and make sure that they're physically safe, that they're mentally safe, to be able to be employed, and so that once they obtain that employment that they're not losing that job for some of those issues.

Healthy relationship education and conflict resolution – we go through that with them so that they can really learn what the danger signs are in a relationship, what some of those communication danger signs are, and how to handle conflict with their children. We talk about conflict with other adults too, but not in the sense that they could have prevented any of the

domestic violence from happening, but how to be healthy in relationships moving forward and how to handle the conflict with kids and with other adults in a non-violent manner.

We do also offer them parenting education. We realize that it can be super hard to parent once they've been through this kind of relationship or once they're having kids with a violent partner. And kids have a lot of questions that we maybe don't know how to answer, so we want to give them some parenting education. We also present with the five languages of love for children, because each child can be very different, and it can be a different situation of maybe this child wants to have hugs and affection, and this other child isn't really kind of wanting to feel loved that way – they want more of recognition and things. So we help them identify how each one of their children wants to be loved so that they can carry on that positive parenting with those children.

On the next slide, I know it's not here right now – it will be later – is just my contact information. So, we'll have that up later on. And, certainly, if anybody has questions about the program that I work for, I'm happy to answer those. I think we're going to have questions and answers later in the webinar.

**Damon Waters:** Thank you, Chelle.

So, we will ask our first polling question, and I see people have already jumped into it: "I feel equipped to assist a TANF recipient with domestic violence challenges."

Still a few more seconds for that one, and then we'll throw up our second polling question because I actually missed this doing the first one.

[Pause for responses]

We'll go ahead to our second polling question before we bring on our next presenter. For all of our participants: "I'm aware of the state domestic violence coalition in my state." "A" for yes, and we have worked together in the past; or, "B," yes, but we have not worked together in the past; or "No." We'll take a couple of seconds on that one.

[Pause for responses]

I would like to welcome Rocio Garcia from Violence Interruption Program, Incorporated.

Rocio?

**Rocio Garcia:** Good afternoon. I'm Rocio Garcia from Violence Intervention Program, VIP. Basically, we have been around since 1984. We started as a small project in order to address and end domestic violence in East Harlem and Manhattan. Ever since then, our history has expanded, and our mission continues to be to lead Latina survivors of domestic violence to safety and empower them to live in a violence-free life.

We do this based on certain approaches – grassroots community, as well as making sure that we service the family of the whole – the children, family, men/women as well.

In 1984, again, we established as a domestic violence project. Then, in 1988, we opened Morivivi, which is a domestic violence shelter that houses currently 51 families in scattered sites – families, children, as well as men who are affected by domestic violence. In 2001, we opened the non-residential office in the Bronx. And, at this point in 2016, we have three offices – one in the Bronx, one in Manhattan, and one in Queens, and we service over 600 families on a yearly basis.

We provide services such as counseling, economic empowerment. I'll talk more about economic empowerment because we realize that domestic violence affects everyone differently. Oftentimes, these survivors that are being affected by domestic violence are being controlled to the point that they're unable to manage a checkbook and/or their checking account.

In 2005, we opened Casa Sandra, which was the only transitional housing program at the time to serve DV survivors. It was a big deal because it continues to be operating now, and it houses 15 families. This was the dream of our first Deputy Director, as well as the first Program Director, to ensure that families, once they are removed or are finished with their time in the emergency shelter – which usually is 180 days in New York – they are not going back to the abuser and/or have to go back to that situation.

In Casa Sandra, what we do is we ensure that the families are there for two years and learning things from going back to the basics. The main thing was the idea of economic empowerment and helping everyone – regardless of where they're coming from, immigration status – get on their feet.

Then we also have the most important thing, which is our hotline that is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It's live operated. Anyone can reach the hotline at any given time in order to receive counseling and other supportive services that our agency uses. At this point, our programs contain the hotline, the communication and outreach department. Our job is to go out into the community, educate everyone, and ensure that people are aware of how domestic violence affects society or families, children, youth, and so on.

Then we have two residential programs, as I stated – Morivivi, Casa Sandra. Then the non-residential programs that are in the Bronx, Manhattan, and Queens. With La Voz, going back to the fact that VIP started as a Latina organization, La Voz means voice. And, as we know, oftentimes people that are being abused, domestic violence, whether physically or emotionally, lose their voice. So, our biggest priority is to provide them with that voice and help them understand that they're able to come out of the situation. This is why we make sure that we're out there – grassroots – because 80% of the people that we serve are undocumented.

We are specializing in serving those that are unseen, that are not there. We build community, collaborating. For example, in 2015, we were able to secure free medical assistance for the women that are in these domestic violence situations. Oftentimes, their needs are going unmet because they are not able to take care of themselves. So, a lot of the issues that they might have – whether HIV, medical issues, getting Pap smear, and things of that nature – are also important for us at VIP.

The Adelante Mujer Project, which is Women Moving Forward, allows the post-crisis survivors to participate and become mentors in their community and train them in order to do public speaking, as well as leadership building, domestic violence 101, team building, and advocacy, in order to allow them to get that power back.

Then again, community outreach continues to be a big thing in VIP as a whole, not just in the domestic violence portion, but also making sure that we're meeting the children, the youth, and everyone.

Coalition building and organizing – VIP is one of the organizers and one of the founders of the Brides' March. It's in its 16th year, and we basically go to the streets in the Bronx, Manhattan, and Queens to denounce domestic violence on September 26, in memory of Gladys Ricart, who was murdered by her abusive ex-boyfriend on what would have been her wedding day in front of her family. So, we make sure that things of that nature are in the forefront in the city that we serve, and that everyone that is involved in a situation of domestic violence understands that there are resources out there in order to better assist them.

We also started this year with Denim Day, which is a demonstration in order to once again empower and assist those survivors of domestic violence, as well as sexual assault. We go into the streets of the Bronx, of Queens, and Manhattan and include community, and make sure that people are aware that they're able to come out and speak out against sexual assault/domestic violence, making sure that this happens ongoingly.

We have the Shine the Light event, which is something that has been started since 2014, where organizations from Manhattan, including the District Attorney's Office, join us and make sure that where they're denouncing domestic violence all around. Lately, we've realized that children and youth need to be involved in order to break the cycle of domestic violence, because a lot of the Latinas, or a lot of the community that we serve, are undocumented. They don't speak English; they go under the radar, and this is one of the reasons why they stay, because they're being abused and they're afraid that they will lose their children.

Coercion is utilized a lot in order to ensure that they stay in their relationship. So, we have been starting certain things such as bullying, social media, respectful sexuality, in order to at least educate the younger community and make sure that they are aware of what is acceptable in a sense and address life of domestic violence.

A lot of times the parents believe that the children are not aware of what's going on in their home, that domestic violence is something that is happening behind closed doors and is only happening between mom and dad. However, we've realized that it's also affecting the children as a whole.

Again, our bilingual hotline – the number is 1-800-664-5880. Aside from answering phone calls, we make sure that we provide crisis intervention, counseling, safety planning, etc. We answered about 10,000 phone calls last year, just of people that needed the service at the moment.

The residential program, once again, consenting to provide both essential services for families so that families don't feel that when they do make the decision to leave that they have to be in the streets, or that there's nothing else there that will allow them to get out of the situation.

And then we have the non-residential programs. I would like to touch a little bit on that because we meet clients where that at, in the sense that if you're not ready to come into a shelter, if you're not ready to leave the abuser, we will work with you from your home, safety planning, etc. You could come in to our Women Empowerment; you could come into all of these other events that are happening – work groups, counseling sessions – along with your children, in order to better understand what domestic violence is doing to you and your family.

Client profiles – most of the people that we serviced were Latina. Once again, although the Violence Intervention services everyone, the main people that come to us, because of the culturally competent services that we are offering, are the Latina post-crisis survivors that do not speak the language, that just got here from another country, etc.

Economic abuse in that population specifically is a big deal, and it's not recognized in New York State as a law. So, if someone is being economically abused, whether the abuser is opening a credit card and other things in their name, that's not happening in the sense that it's not being recognized. So, it's just not happening; it's not a form of abuse.

So, in order for us to make sure that we provide these services, we make it a holistic approach. In 2009, that's when we started with our economic empowerment portion. And, we assist women in better understanding – through work group and one-on-one counseling sessions and community events – about how to manage a bank account, how to be successful in the workplace. We also give people incentives for opening bank accounts and keeping them open and managing a checkbook for about three months.

We also take them out in order for healthy eating, shopping, and things of that nature to better manage to their budget. Other things that we're doing with Manos de Esperanza, or Hands of Hope, is that we are doing workshops of 10 to 15 women and teaching them a different craft that could become marketable in the future for them to survive once they're to leave VIP.

As we all know, domestic violence is a pattern of behavior used to assert power and control by one family member. So, we make sure that this is something that the children, the youth, the men, the women, and people that we serve understand because our goal, once again, is to lead them to safety and for them to prevent this from continuing to happen.

Thank you so much.

**Damon Waters:** Thank you, Rocio.

We will move on to our third polling question before we have our third presenter.

"We have taken steps to prevent the intergenerational transmission of domestic violence so that children do not become batterers or victims of domestic violence." We ask that our participants provide their responses to that question.

[Pause for responses]

Again, the question is: "We have taken steps to prevent the intergenerational transmission of domestic violence so that children do not become batterers or victims of DV." We'll give that a couple of seconds.

[Pause for responses]

OK, and Valina Jackson from the Brookview House will have the final presentation before we move into a Q&A session. Again, if you have questions, please submit them through the question and answer box on the bottom of your screen. We'll have good time for a lot of questions and answers, and we hope that you'll start trickling those in. So, I will turn things over to Valina.

**Valina Jackson:** I don't know how that happened. Can I get my slides, please?

Well, while the technical assistance is going on and my slides come back – OK, here we go.

I just want to talk about Brookview's mission. We are now 26 years old, and our mission has stayed the same: to help women and children experiencing homelessness and those at risk to develop the skills necessary to break the cycle of homelessness and poverty. I will start also by saying that all of our families are referred by the Department of Housing and Community Development, which is our Massachusetts Welfare Office.

Our next slide gives you a snapshot of our families. Ninety-four percent of our families eventually admit to domestic violence once they have taken the first part of the class, where we define all the kinds of domestic violence. I'm glad Rocio highlighted that in her presentation about the financial abuse as well. When they come in, about 54% say, "Yeah, you know, I've had something happen." But, by the time they realize all the definitions of it, it's very, very high.

We provide services to people who live in the surrounding area. Their children attend our programs. Sometimes the moms come in and take advantage of our services as well. We like to be a hub within the community we serve.

We also know that homelessness is traumatizing. Domestic violence adds to the trauma. So, we work with families and children to remediate the effects of this trauma. The children have been moved from place to place to place while they're very, very young. Many are witnesses to domestic violence. Many of the women are rendered homeless due to domestic violence, and so we try to make sure that we address the whole person within the whole family with our services, which I'll be going into a little later.

Another snapshot of our family is educational attainment, which is key to financial stability. All of you know that it is difficult to very closely replicate the national data. Lack of educational attainment leads to limited employment opportunities, and when you add that English is not the first language in the home and the instability that ensues, you can see that this gives families very limited options, very low income, lack of or no housing opportunities, and then lack of

choices. This increases the chance for domestic violence to occur because the woman does not have a choice in where she can move, go, work, to sustain her family.

The common barriers that we work against – as you can see, all the things I just mentioned: limited work experience, DV, poor mental health, alcohol, substance abuse, poor credit/CORIs, and then also the trauma itself. We use case management. We also have our workshops that we run in the evening. The workshops cover housing. We know that good tenant skills and knowing your rights as a tenant will help to increase your chances of housing ability.

We also have what we call our Safety Network workshop, which is really a domestic violence workshop. Brookview House was very fortunate to have four years of a Department of Justice program contract, where we provided specific services to our survivors of domestic violence who are living in transitional housing. We were able to develop some really strong core competencies around that.

We also cover financial literacy, all the things that Rocio mentioned in her presentation; I don't want to be redundant. This is so important in knowing how to use financial services and financial products. We have therapeutic services – group and individual – for our adults and our children. We have set up a clinical program where we utilize graduate accountants, psychology students, from the various universities and colleges in the Boston area. They come in and do a year of service at Brookview House providing holistic and non-traditional therapy, including expressive therapy, play therapy, yoga, meditation. We also have something that helps the family to bond and develop nurturing skills with something we call Family Fun Night. That could be anything from karaoke to Jeopardy to making muffins and watching a movie. It's really just good fun, but the whole idea is to help our families to come closer and closer through all of what they're going through.

We have outcomes, and we're very proud of our outcomes. Ninety-two percent of the moms who complete our program maintain housing long term. We survey five years after they've been placed, and we find that 92% of the moms are still in housing, still in stabilized housing. We are so proud of that.

Then, also, 88% of our youth who participate in our programs complete high school. Now, the national data indicates only 25% of homeless youth finish high school. So, we think we're doing a good thing at Brookview House because without intervention, 75% will drop out of school permanently, 53% will drop out of elementary or middle school for an indefinite period of time, and 32% will repeat a grade. We can see that our interventions have a strong impact on the outcomes of our families, and the more stabilization our families have, the better.

This particular slide refers to all the kinds of things we want to increase. These are the traits that we want to increase while the women are at Brookview House. You can see: self-esteem, education, leadership, communication skills, resilience, coping strategies and confidence, problem-solving skills. All of our programs are intentional. They're trauma-informed; they're focused on educational, social, and emotional support. They all go together, as you can see how these bubbles all link up in this particular graphic to show how each one is dependent on

the other. We feel it doesn't make any sense to teach life skills if you're not going to teach communication skills and then have opportunities for leadership skills.

Many of the women participate in our programming in a number of ways – by doing internships in our program themselves, being volunteers in our program. Eventually, they step out in the community and do volunteer activities, and eventually, they get a job, and then eventually they are moving on. We like that; we like that ladder approach, where they can move on and upward as they're involved in our program. And, we provide the support for them all along the way.

As you can see, we start off with our base: case management, behavioral health, prevention and stabilization, our youth programs, which are very integral to the success of our program. We have an afterschool program for our school-aged children, and we also have a teen program. We saw in our community that a lot of folks had preschool programs, and we found out that the school-aged youngsters did not have any place to go in the afternoon, so we decided to build one. We are enjoying two sites for our programming. We are fully licensed by the Department of Early Education and Care, sometimes called DECE – they change their acronym. Anyway, the whole idea is that they are licensed by the state, and we look at it as a way out of poverty and homelessness.

If you look on the lower box on that foundation, those bricks there, you'll see the lowest one on the right. This is apartment-style living. That is one of the unique components of Brookview House. We have our families in apartments, not congregate rooms. We believe the best way to learn to live in an apartment is to live in an apartment. By that, they learn how to develop all their tenancy skills, live in a community, problem solve in a community, and to build their confidence and governance skills as well. This helps them develop independence and self-esteem. And, also, because they have leadership responsibilities, they become an integral part of a safer, healthier, and thriving community.

I have a quick case study. This is about – not her real name – Mariana. She was a mom of two children. She had a long history of depression and suicidality. She was born in P.R. Her mom was bipolar. She was abandoned at age seven. You can look at the rest. She moved to Massachusetts with an aunt and uncle, had to move out for overcrowded living conditions.

She lived in a Welfare motel for two months before she came to live at Brookview House. She was in an abusive relationship. One Christmas, she attempted suicide. We called a therapist and we also called the BEST Team. She was admitted to the hospital. They adjusted her meds. Her suicide attempt included swallowing pills. Post hospitalization, she returned to Brookview House and continued to meet with the therapist. Then one day, in the midst of all the support she was receiving, she decided to move to Philadelphia to reunite with her biological father.

You must be asking, why this case? I use this case because the work is difficult. It's difficult. As you can see, being in an abusive relationship can be the centerpiece of a number of problems going on in a young woman's life trying to raise small children. This work needs resources, and the models need to be replicated across the country. And I'm glad we're having this chance to talk to so many folks today.

As you can see, her primary team consisted of a case manager, the Brookview clinician, case conferences with clinicians, youth services, adult services. She had an assessment; we were doing goal-setting. Her case managers were always present at her case conferences. Her clinician provided individual services and how to address her hesitation regarding meds, helping to learn to advocate for herself, all those things. However, our outcomes are not always successful, despite our robust interventions.

The good news is this – the suicide attempts were unsuccessful. She's with family, we hope, and will find the resources she needs, and she moved away from her abuser.

I want to thank you for listening today about some of the things that we use to help our families through these rough times. I just want to highlight by saying that our services are for the adults *and* the children in our families, and we believe family homeless can be solved. We believe that the accompanying difficulties around case domestic violence and not being able to handle financial issues and lack of education – we believe that this is not a silver bullet. It's just a combination of many, many things that we have to apply in a particular program. It's a multipronged approach, and I think as long as we look at it that way – look at our families, look at our demographics, and design particular programs that are germane to their needs – I think we can be successful.

Thank you very much for listening today.

**Damon Waters:** Thank you, Valina.

We have one more poll question before we jump into our Q&A. We have quite a few questions that have already come in, but we want to ask one more poll question: "I'm knowledgeable of the family violence option in my state that allows for greater flexibility in waiving requirements and providing services to survivors of domestic violence who need TANF assistance."

Again: "I'm knowledgeable of the family violence option in my state that allows for greater flexibility in waiving requirements and providing services to survivors of domestic violence who need TANF assistance." You can answer that on the right side of your screen. We'll take a few more seconds to get responses for that one.

[Pause for responses]

So we will jump into our Q&A, and pretty much all of these questions are for all of our presenters. So, any responses that you may want to give, we'll just go in the order of the people that you did when you presented.

Our first question is: "Can you discuss in more detail any activities that you specifically use in your programs when you're working with a client's child?" So, looking through that intergenerational lens, are there specific activities that you do when addressing DV with your client's child?

**Valina Jackson:** I don't mind answering that question. This is Valina.

**Damon Waters:** Go ahead.

**Valina Jackson:** As I said, we have a licensed afterschool program, and the focus is on academics and behavior. We work with our children to make sure that they learn how to resolve conflict in a nonviolent way. We use things called "redirection." We also have a technique we call "tribal," where the children sit down and sit in a circle and discuss what has happened and figure out alternative ways to solve it.

We also try to model the behavior in front of our children when it comes to conflict, so that they are not repeating the *violent* responses to conflict that they may have witnessed.

**Damon Waters:** Thanks, Valina.

Chelle or Rocio?

**Chelle Hanson:** This is Chelle. We actually are an outreach program, so we work with the parents through that parenting and through the Healthy Relationships class, so we don't work directly with the children.

**Damon Waters:** Rocio, anything you want to add? You might be on mute.

**Rocio Garcia:** And as far as the community is concerned, when we do the outreach, we speak to children in either community centers or schools regarding domestic violence, healthy relationships, and oftentimes get their feedback, as well as ask questions, for understanding, and for them to also rate the services that we're providing and involve them and ensuring that they understand what domestic violence is, how it affects the community, and how it could also affect them.

**Damon Waters:** Rocio, we're going to have to have you repeat that because I think the beginning of your response was cut off.

**Rocio Garcia:** Oh, I'm sorry. Basically with the Violence Intervention Program, we do work with children. We have counseling for the parents and the children in order to address what's going on and what have they witnessed and the type of domestic violence.

And as far as the community education portion of it, we go into community centers, to schools, to provide an interactive curriculum and have the children tell us what we're doing, what they're understanding, and how to correct their understanding of domestic violence or our deliverables of what's going on – whether it will be bullying, verbal violence, and things of that nature.

We also include the children, as you saw in some of the slides, in some of the marches that we do in order for them to get a perspective of what domestic violence is and how it's affected the family and society as a whole.

**Damon Waters:** Thank you.

For all of you: "What is the greatest challenge in preventing the intergenerational transmission of violence, working with your families – making sure that it doesn't go from the one generation to the next?"

**Chelle Hanson:** This is Chelle. I think our biggest challenge is that the parents aren't recognizing the children are affected by this. So, they don't kind of get engaged when it's time to talk about how this can move from their relationships to their children's relationships because we all kind of want to believe that it doesn't affect our children and that our children aren't seeing it. So that's kind of the biggest challenge that we have, is kind of getting parents to accept that this is affecting their children and that we do need to address it.

**Damon Waters:** Thank you.

**Rocio Garcia:** For us at VIP, it's kind of changing the culture and understanding. Since we're dealing with Latinas, oftentimes they believe that domestic violence is something that has to continue "because my grandmother went through it," or the great grandmother, etc., and not understanding that this upsets the children and upsets the way things are happening.

Oftentimes, many of our clients come from other countries, and they don't trust the police as a system. So it's also educating, changing, and helping them acculturate and change their cultural beliefs and to understand that domestic violence is not something that is acceptable or something that should continue to happen to them and/or to their children.

**Damon Waters:** Thank you.

**Valina Jackson:** I think a big part of it does center around the cultural beliefs. Our population is almost split in half, African American and Latina. Many times, many of the discussions are around how domestic violence is viewed and how it's sometimes even incorporated into the family fabric in terms of tolerance. So, we often see aggressive behaviors among the small boys, and the same thing with the girls bullying, and we have special programs for them.

For the girls, we have a tea party setting, where they learn to talk to each other and treat each other nicely. For the teens, we also have a dating violence prevention program, where the teens themselves get to develop a curriculum around dating violence and present it to other teens at other schools in other community settings. We thought that was pretty effective because they then became the teachers of the information.

**Damon Waters:** Thank you all. We just got a question that came in: "Can any of you talk about any specific evidence-based programs or curriculums that you may be using with your populations?" It really sounds like all three programs have a very specific type of population or specific people in their population. Are there any formal evidence-based practices or curriculums that you're using around intergenerational cycles of violence prevention?

**Valina Jackson:** I have to say, to be honest, I have samples from many different sources. When we were involved with the DOJ project, they had a lot of good material; you can still go online and find it. We have information that was part of Brookview House archives for quite some time; we've updated that. We've witnessed best practices because we were able to go to a number of conferences across the country during that time and really witness what other people were doing and sort of incorporate those things into our work.

Like I always say, it's never one size fits all or a silver bullet. It's really knowing your specific population and researching materials, curriculum, activities that speak to your families. I think that's what makes some of what we do most successful.

**Damon Waters:** Thank you, Valina.

**Chelle Hanson:** This is Chelle. We use the Within My Reach curriculum by PREP, Inc. It's not designed specifically to prevent domestic violence, but it is designed to teach somebody what a healthy relationship is and what it's not. There is a small section about domestic violence in there, but we do have domestic violence-trained advocates that teach this curriculum. This curriculum has been – it's the product of, I believe, 20 years of research with people in relationships and seeing what speaks to a healthy relationship so that we can pass those skills on to our clients, so that they are able to recognize what domestic violence is much sooner in the relationship and how to expect a better relationship for themselves.

**Damon Waters:** Thank you.

**Valina Jackson:** I'd like to add one last thing. This is Valina speaking.

**Damon Waters:** OK, go ahead.

**Valina Jackson:** We have found it to be very useful, very successful, to bring in survivors of domestic violence, women of color – many of them are authors in their own right, they've written about their story – and have them come in and speak to our women. That has been so powerful. I really can't tell you what an impact it has on the women who are there to see someone who looks like them talk about their story, and talk about how they had to overcome very similar circumstances. I think that is a technique, not necessarily a curriculum, but a technique that can be used to really buoy the effectiveness of your programming.

**Rocio Garcia:** This is Rocio from VIP. Some of the stuff that we use in order to address the teenagers is the Peace Over Violence curriculum. It's called, "In Touch with Teens: A Relationship Violence Curriculum for Youth Ages 12-19."

The other things, as some of my colleagues mentioned, is also based on the women that come out and are post-graduate survivors and are coming out and assisting us, helping the community understand. I believe that, although we're providers, I could sit here and talk 'til my face is blue, but I haven't experienced domestic violence. Oftentimes, people are not going to understand and/or benefit from my perspective.

Moreover, we have partnerships with all other organizations in the community, all other domestic violence organizations, in order to work and collaborate and ensure that if we're unable to service that survivor, that child, that those services are there. Not mainly evidence-based, because we believe here at VIP that no two victims, no two survivors, are the same; they are in unique, different situations. So, it's not a one-size-fits-all approach. It's mostly what's going on – how can we assist you today – because the needs that the survivor might have today will differ based what's going on in her life or his life tomorrow.

**Damon Waters:** Thank you three, and definitely jumped into one of the other questions that we received. It sounds like each of the programs has a very integrated approach around building some sort of social capital or peer networks between former clients, current clients. Could you talk a little bit more about how you develop those networks of the clients? It seems like they do get a lot of benefit from engaging other clients and people who are going through similar experiences.

**Rocio Garcia:** This is Rocio again. With our post-crisis survivors, going back to the way the culture in the Latina community is seen, oftentimes because they are afraid to come out – they think they might be deported, etc. – our best referrals are those of word of mouth. So, having survivors come out with us when we do presentations or in their community, from the point of giving nail files with our hotline number or any information in order to ensure that people from certain communities that are not happy or unable to come out of the shadows with their assistance.

We also meet on a monthly basis with those post-crisis survivors, or promotores, in order to talk about what the expectations of the program are. We allow them to design the program based on their experience. We have other outside agencies. So, continuing to assist these promotores is what we do; it's our goal. For example, if one of the promotores needs assistance with obtaining a GED and things of that nature, we will have that speaker or that person from that school come in here. So, we're not only servicing those that are in crisis at the moment, but those that are also post-crisis survivors.

**Damon Waters:** Thank you. It sounded like Valina was trying to get in?

**Valina Jackson:** Yeah, thank you, Rocio, because those are some of the same things we do. We bring in alumni quite a bit to speak to our women. We also provide services many times long after people have moved on from the program, because new things are coming up in your life all the time.

This year we started what we call our "Graduate Network." These are women who have "graduated" from our program, have had permanent housing for quite some time, have moved on in the community. We ask them to come back and give back and also *receive* some of the resources that we are able to put together for them. We think that this is very successful because there's nothing like someone who has just gone through the same thing you've gone through to help you even listen to a conversation or discussion to address some of the fears and anxieties that might still be lingering around the situation.

So to that end, we believe that there's nothing like experience. It's a wonderful teacher, and if we can get more of our graduates to come back and be involved, well, that is definitely our goal now because we are structuring our program around that.

**Damon Waters:** Thank you. Chelle, did you have anything you wanted to add?

**Chelle Hanson:** I don't. Since we're solely an outreach program, we have to really protect that privacy. So, we don't have former clients interact with current clients.

**Damon Waters:** We have two more questions. The next one is: "In your opinion, how imperative do you believe it is for child support enforcement agencies to provide domestic violence services, education, and/or resources to their clients, especially since they deal with broken relationships?"

Again: "In your opinion, how imperative do you believe it is for child support enforcement agencies to provide domestic violence services to their clients when they're dealing with broken relationships?"

**Chelle Hanson:** This is Chelle. I'll go ahead and take a stab at this one. I think it's absolutely imperative – maybe not for them to offer the services themselves, but to offer some sort of education. We have children and women's lives being threatened over child support. We have threatened kidnappings over child support. So we really need to dig into – is it safe for us to pursue child support for this child, or is it going to put the child or the other parent in more danger if we try to pursue that child support? Sometimes things will be going OK, and the violence won't be there until the absent parent receives that letter saying that they have to pay child support, then it does put everybody back into danger.

So, as far as them offering the services themselves, I'm not sure that's so important as to them being at least educated in being able to recognize domestic violence and get them to the right support.

**Valina Jackson:** I'll go ahead because I won't be long. I have to agree with Chelle to a great degree because sometimes just some kind of movement on the abused side can cause recurrence of violence. I think that having programs – in Massachusetts, we have a program called Emerge, and having the partners referred to Emerge I think can be very helpful and very useful, but sometimes it can exacerbate a situation that was particularly calm for a while.

The fact of the matter is that abuse is going to go on to the next relationship. So at some point, there has to be an intervention. You have to return to your client – he's going to go to somebody else, he's going to be with somebody else. The idea is to teach a person *not* to abuse in a relationship – maybe not this relationship, the current one, but in the future, to let go of all the abusive traits because it ends up with somebody being maimed, shot, killed, or in jail. So, the outcomes aren't good if there is no intervention. So I think there should be an intervention, and programs like Emerge and others, I think, are very useful.

**Damon Waters:** Thank you. Rocio?

**Rocio Garcia:** I agree with both of my colleagues. I believe that when we're talking about Child Protective Services and all those additional services, that they need to be educated in what domestic violence is and what constitutes a domestic violence incident. I know specifically here in New York, we're having an issue with law enforcement as far as people from CPS. They don't seem to understand what's happening. We have an issue with language access; a lot of our survivors might be calling 911, but are not receiving the appropriate services. We also have, oftentimes, children being removed because there's a perception that domestic violence is happening.

This is why I believe it is very important for those that are servicing our community, outside from the domestic violence providers such as Child Protective Services and the Police Department, to be immersed and understand what steps are needed in order to address the matter and give it the benefit of the doubt that it needs. Oftentimes, what we do or a lot of people do is victim blaming. Why does she stay? Why is this happening? And it's not our job to do that. It's more our job to educate and service. Thank you.

**Damon Waters:** One last question that came in: "Could you go into a little bit of detail about your formal types of whole family assessment where you gauge the need, identify the DV challenges of the children and the parents given that identifying DV is often difficult?" So, is there a formal process that you go through when identifying the DV needs of your clients and their children?

**Valina Jackson:** Well, all of them go through a two-day assessment process as they come into the program. From that assessment process, we developed an individual service plan and also, on a smaller version, I guess you could say, services for children as well so they're incorporated into the larger service plan.

We ask a lot of questions a lot of different ways to try to get to, number one, their reason for homelessness. Usually, the answer kind of tells us which path to go down when they say a certain thing around eviction or overcrowding or whatever the case may be. We also ask for a copy of their credit history and their score because oftentimes women have been punished for the activities of their partner within their housing. So, the partner could be dealing drugs in an apartment, but the woman is who gets evicted. So, when we find those things out, then we know what course of action we have to take. So, it's really about the informed questioning by the case managers to do the assessment and then setting up a service plan for the entire family.

**Rocio Garcia:** This is Rocio. With us, it's a bit different. We have an intake process, where they will call the hotline and start setting up an appointment, whether it's to go to the non-residential and/or residential program. At that point, after working with the family – either the women or the men – for quite a while is that we understand and begin to unfold and find different things that are affecting them and for them to also understand domestic violence.

What we've noticed is a lot of the victims that come to our agency for assistance have been dealing with this through generations. So, oftentimes, they don't believe or feel that what their kids have gone through in the family is domestic violence because it's sort of the way of life or how they've been raised or this is what they're supposed to be doing.

With us, again, it's so intricate. It's so different because it's not a one-size-fits-all approach. We have victims that might call the hotline and spill everything right then and there. Then there are others that are so afraid, that will not even proceed with the call and give their needs. So, it's just a matter of, once again, making sure that they understand that the services are there for their benefit.

Then we also have times where survivors will come up to us following a presentation and tell us what happened to them 20 years ago, or what's happening now, and ask for assistance. This is

where we, once again, refer them to the hotline because those people are better able to deal with those issues at the moment. Then again, during counseling at the residential or non-residential program, they do one-on-one or sometimes groups.

Last year, we were in a group, and no one wanted to speak until everyone had started coming in. One of the ladies, one of the survivors at the end, indicated that this was the first time that she felt worthy and realized that she wasn't the only person going through this, that she wasn't the only one that had lived through this as a child. So, sometimes they are so hurt and traumatized that they don't see that that's an issue. Thank you.

**Chelle Hanson:** This is Chelle. My process is a little bit different even than either one of those. Since we work directly with DCF, they do what's called an orientation. That's something that anybody on Cash Assistance has to go through. So, we present at this orientation, and we just give like a brief six-question screening after we talk about what our services are, because we do want everybody to know what our services are. We run into a lot of people who just don't recognize that they're in a domestic violence relationship or that they have experienced that before.

So, we do give the assessment after we give a little bit of education about what domestic violence really is. At the end of that screening, they are supposed to write their name and their phone number and whether they want to be contacted or not. We do assure them that if they don't want to be contacted, no matter what they say on that screening, that we're not going to put their safety in jeopardy by making a phone call anyway. Then we will work with the career navigator at DCF to get them into services.

If they come into services some other way besides being involved with DCF, then they've already kind of self-identified, and we'll talk to them about what kinds of domestic violence were they experiencing and kind of where they're at. Are they just beginning the process, or are they kind of a little bit removed and they're just still dealing with the struggle to move on and trust again?

So again, just meeting them where they're at, letting them know that this program does exist. Like I think Rocio said before, it's kind of an ongoing thing, where the longer we're with a client, the more we learn about their trauma. So, we just try to meet them right where they're at in the beginning and address the things that they are disclosing, build that relationship, and build that trust so they will continue to feel more comfortable in disclosing that information to us so that we can help them as a whole moving forward.

**Damon Waters:** Great, thank you all. Well, that was our last question. I want to thank all of our presenters. It was a very informative webinar. We heard a lot of different discussions about preventing the intergenerational transmission of domestic violence, and we look forward to gathering more information from our presenters and posting them to the PeerTA website – some of their curriculums and some of the other resources that they use.

I would like to turn things over to Mr. Stephen Broyles, who will close us out with some last-minute housekeeping items. On behalf of the Office of Family Assistance, I want to thank

everyone for dialing in today. Please stay online so you can finish the assessment about the webinar so we can continue to improve our TA to the field.

Stephen?

**Stephen Broyles:** Thank you, Damon.

As he mentioned, if you could make sure you stay on the line because there will be poll questions that will be provided, an evaluation of the webinar. We'd like to thank everyone who participated in today's webinar.

Thank you again to our expert presenters.

We want to let you all know that a transcript and audio recording of this webinar will be available shortly on the PeerTA Network website at [www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov](http://www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov).

We'd also like to hear from you about future webinar topics, so please send us your ideas via the PeerTA website. Also, we ask that you please help us expand our network and reach a greater number of people by directing interested colleagues via local and state network agencies to our website – again, the PeerTA website. Technical assistance is also available via the PeerTA website. And, if you're interested in assistance in implementing anything that you heard today or the topics, please let us know via the PeerTA website.

We look forward to your participation on future webinars and we look forward to you, again, visiting the PeerTA website, again at [www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov](http://www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov). Thank you, and we'll give you time to complete the evaluation.