



Building a PEER TA Network State by State

Domestic Violence and TANF Partnership in Indian Country Webinar

Moderator: Al Fleming

June 27, 2011

2:00 p.m. EST

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the Domestic Violence and TANF Partnership in Indian Country webinar. During the presentation all participants will be in listen-only mode. After the presentations are complete, we will conduct a question-and-answer session. At that time, if you have a question please press "1" followed by "4" on your telephone.

If you need to reach an operator at any time please press "star 0". As a reminder, this conference is being recorded on Monday, June 27, 2011.

Now, I would like to turn the conference over to Al Fleming.

Al Fleming: Thank you. Good afternoon. I am Al Fleming from the Office of Family Assistance, and I would like to welcome all of you to the Welfare Peer TA Network webinar entitled "Domestic Violence and TANF Partnerships in Indian Country."

As many of you are aware, domestic violence is an issue that affects a disproportionately large number of native women. Therefore, it has far-reaching effects for Tribal TANF agencies.

According to the United States Department of Justice, native women experience the highest rate of violence of any group in the United States. Because of these statistics and their implications, the Welfare Peer TA Network developed this webinar for both Tribal TANF and domestic violence professionals.

We have presenters providing us with an overview of three different programs in Indian country. We also have presenters who will address various components of collaborations and partnerships between TANF Tribal programs and domestic violence professionals.

I will introduce the presenters as we go through the webinar today. After they have completed their presentations we will allow time for questions and answers, and we will conclude the webinar with a poll to assess whether the webinar met your needs.

At this time I am going to turn this over to Sarah Hogan, who will explain how to ask questions through Live Meeting.

Sarah Hogan: Thank you, Al, and good afternoon everyone. I would like to direct your attention to the demonstrations slide currently displayed on your screen. You should find the question-and-answers pane designated by the letters Q and A located at the top of your screen.

You can either click on that portion of the menu bar to open the pane or you can open and then drag the pane off of the menu bar to display it as a stand-alone box.

To ask a question this afternoon we request that you type your question into the thin box here, which is at the top of your screen, and then click the “Ask” button. You will automatically receive a reply thanking you for your question and letting you know that your question has been forwarded to the facilitator.

This automatic reply allows us to free up your question-and-answer pane, which then enables you to ask another question if you choose.

Thank you, and now back to you, Al.

Al Fleming: Thank you, Sarah. Our first presenters are Dr. Marylouise Kelley and Anne Menard. Dr. Kelley is the Director of the Family Violence Prevention Service Program within the Family and Youth Service Bureau, Administration for Children and Families.

Dr. Kelley will provide a quick overview of the Family Violence Prevention Service Program and the grants that the program offers to State and local programs.

Anne Menard is Director of the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence. She will briefly discuss the center, its work, and provide a recent report on TANF and the services it provides for families or violence victims. Dr. Kelley?

Marylouise Kelley: Thank you Al. It is my privilege to welcome everybody to this webinar today. We have callers from all over the country and I am so glad that the Welfare Peer TA Network arranged this call.

I will first provide a quick introduction to the Family Violence Prevention Service Program, commonly known as the FVPSA Program, and then I will turn this over to some of the expert training and technical assistance providers who are on the phone, as well as some Tribal programs that will discuss their work implementing domestic violence responses in TANF programs.

The FVPSA program has been a cornerstone of the nation's response to domestic violence since 1984. Its purpose is to assist States, Tribes, and Territories in establishing domestic violence programs at the local, Tribal, and

State level and provide national training and technical assistance, including a national domestic violence hotline.

FVPSA reaches that whole network of domestic violence programs around the country. The State domestic violence and local programs have reached nearly 2,500 programs around the country in the past year, and through those programs it has served more than 1.2 million adults and children.

The services they provide include 3.3 million bed nights of shelter for victims of domestic violence and their children, but also a large number of services are provided through non-residential programs in the communities.

FVPSA sets aside 10 percent of its funding each year to support Tribal programs. Last year, that amount was \$13 million and it reached 204 Native American Tribes and Alaska native villages through 153 different domestic violence programs.

These Tribal programs were able to provide services to more than 5,000 victims of domestic violence who came to a shelter and over 16,000 people who received non-residential services. You can also see that they reached nearly 6,000 children through those non-residential services.

We understand that most domestic violence survivors never search out a domestic violence program. At times, domestic violence is not their primary issue. Many victims of domestic violence really need economic assistance and support and they may turn to TANF programs or other human service programs for help.

We think it is critically important that every door that a domestic violence victim walks through is a welcoming one, and that people behind those doors

have the capacity to respond and recognize domestic violence if it is affecting the people they serve, to respond in a supportive and confidential way, and to have the information they need to refer people to solid resources that can help that victim.

We hope that through the FVPSA that reaches many tribes, those services are available and we are really encouraged by the interest in ensuring that TANF staff and TANF agencies have the capacity to serve victims of domestic violence.

I will now turn this over to Anne Menard, who will talk a little bit more about the options in TANF agencies for serving victims of domestic violence.

Anne Menard:

Hello. Thank you, Marylouise. This is Anne Menard. I am the Director of the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence. We are one of the national technical assistance providers funded by the VFSPA office that Marylouise just described.

We probably have the broadest reach in providing comprehensive and individualized technical assistance, training, and resource development to support domestic violence intervention and prevention across the country.

We work in partnership with other technical assistance providers funded by the VFSPA office at HHS, as well as those provided through the Office on Violence Against Women at the Department of Justice, including partnerships with some of the expert presenters here today.

I was asked to focus on and provide some contextual information related to a national survey that we conducted in late 2009 with the Legal Momentum. It is called "Not Enough" and it describes the services TANF offers to family

violence victims. A copy of this report can be found at www.VAWnet.org, which is our Centers for Disease Control-funded sensitive online resource center.

The website contains a lot of information about many things—violence and sexual assault, for example—and we strongly encourage you to visit the visit.

The survey drew responses from more than 600 respondents, including individuals from offices in Washington, DC. It did include some native advocates and those serving victims living in Indian Country, although this should be viewed as a broad response to a broad reflection on people's experiences.

The majority of the respondents worked domestic violence or dual domestic violence programs. There were also responses from legal aid and other anti-poverty programs and some TANF and child support agencies.

As you can see, 82 percent of the respondents provide direct services to victims. So they really were reflecting the experiences of the victims in their areas.

The key results were important. Ninety-six percent of the respondents felt that TANF is an important resource for domestic violence victims. TANF can have a significant impact when it works well. That was an overwhelming conclusion of the respondents. TANF can also have a significant impact when it does *not* work well. I think both of these are important findings.

There are a couple of key results I want to quickly go through with you. Again, just as background on the Tribal TANF— you will get more specific information later in the webinar—what the respondents meant when they said

that TANF works well for victims they were describing when collaborations between domestic violence and TANF and child support agencies were strong.

This means that when there were trained responders, where people within the TANF and child support agencies knew about domestic violence and were prepared and confident to provide responses that were helpful, TANF works well. It also worked well where TANF agencies had figured out how to use TANF funds available to them in flexible ways and to be responsive to the range of circumstances that victims brought through their doors.

It worked well when the process of applying for TANF and child support, and particularly the process of securing any protections that might be available or services, were streamlined. Less relevant was that benefits for immigrant victims were available.

Here are some key results of what made things difficult or not helpful for victims of domestic violence who were reaching out to the TANF program. I do not think these will necessarily be a surprise to many of you.

In some cases, they found that the application process itself created barriers to someone disclosing domestic violence or receiving the services they needed. In many areas of the country, respondents felt the benefits were too low and often delayed, which created increased danger but also compromised the ability to secure economic stability for their families.

Screening for domestic violence was often seen as inconsistent and ineffective. Notification of family violence waivers or other accommodations and services were often ineffective or not clear to victims or not provided at all. Disclosures—many of the respondents felt that disclosures of domestic violence did not necessarily lead to necessary help. It did not open the door

for the kinds of assistance that a victim really needed to secure both safety and self-sufficiency.

There were some responses that the respondents felt made things worse and less safe, requiring a victim to return to a dangerous home to secure documents when no other options were available. In some cases, a victim who disclosed sexual abuse was required to have further contact with the person who raped them.

Obviously, these types of responses were very troubling.

Child support enforcement was also seen as inconsistent in addressing safety and financial concerns. What we know from domestic violence victims across the board is that many of them would like to have child support orders enforced, if it can be done safely. That is the key. I think these responses indicated that often the safety measures that could make child support enforcement a helpful process were not in place.

There were a number of recommendations for making TANF more effective. I think you will hear some of these echoed in the presentations coming up. Combining strong employment services with TANF was seen as very helpful. Child care continues to be a huge barrier to domestic violence victims who are moving to greater economic security.

It was critically important that domestic violence training be provided to child support and TANF workers. The workers also indicated that this was a need and an important part of any kind of effective response.

Some victims need help relocating. What they really need to do is move to a place where they have family or where there is more of an opportunity to be safe. That was seen as an important service when it was offered.

Transportation continues to be a key issue, and I am sure you will hear that echoed throughout the webinar.

Clear and consistent, well-administered family violence screening was viewed as an important part of effective response, as was increasing TANF's benefit levels. I know that is a challenging thing to recommend in these times of economic pressures, but it was seen as important.

Some other recommendations that came up in various parts of the country included combining mental health and substance abuse and trauma services—making them more available and more consistently available to domestic violence victims.

Several people saw on-site advocates and TANF workers in partnership as an important recommendation. Several respondents identified the need—before a family is sanctioned to screen for domestic violence—to make sure that domestic violence is not the reason for non-compliance with whatever provision of the TANF program the family is having difficulty with.

We provide this information as a backdrop to the discussion we have now, which is more TANF-specific. Thanks very much. Al, I am turning it back to you.

Al Fleming:

Thank you, Dr. Kelley and Ms. Menard. Now we are going to hear from Bonnie Clairmont, a Victim Advocacy Program Specialist at the Tribal Law and Policy Institute. She will provide a general overview of domestic violence within Tribal country and the policies created around domestic violence.

Bonnie Clairmont: Hello, good afternoon everyone. I am with the Tribal Law and Policy Institute. Just quickly, we provide training and technical assistance for Tribes that receive Federal funds and also have programs that address the needs of battered women and native women who have been sexually assaulted.

So, if there is a need for any training and technical assistance feel free to contact us.

Here is a slide on statistics. As our moderator said, the incidence of violence against native women is very high in Indian Country. Native women are often the most physically assaulted and battered, sexually assaulted, and stalked. I think the stalking statistic in particular is pretty relevant. We tend to think the violence will end once the woman really leaves the relationship, but oftentimes it does not end there in cases where batterers continue to stalk their partner and harass and threaten them.

That statistic is very relevant to our discussion of how we provide services and hold women, keep them safe, and make batterers accountable.

The question is often asked, "Then why do women stay?" I think the more appropriate question is, "Why does he batter her?" We need to address that in our training programs and also be prepared to respond appropriately in terms of holding batterers accountable and to keep women and their children safe from him. The reason why he batters is the need for power and control.

Leaving does not necessarily guarantee her safety. Oftentimes, leaving only increases the volatility of the situation because he is losing control over her and oftentimes the violence will escalate at that point and become very dangerous for her.

This is the time where she is trying to seek some economic independence and autonomy and in the process of trying to achieve this, he is stalking her and trying to maintain control.

The impact of his violence definitely will impact the children because they often witness the violence. They hear the violent comments, the name calling, the put-downs, and the threats. The children can be physically assaulted as well. They may attempt to intervene to try and protect Mom and may have some feelings that they were not able to protect her from the violence. But even the male children will continue the abuse by mocking Dad and the violence that he perpetrates against Mom.

This definitely impacts Mom and her ability to parent, even after leaving the batterer. She runs into all sorts of problems even after leaving. If she decides to stay, she could be charged with failure to protect and this is something that we want Tribes to look at—to look at this language and these kinds of statutes.

Women have many legitimate reasons for staying in the relationship and one of them happens to be that they are concerned about being charged with failure to protect. They undergo severance of parental rights. He threatens her and says, “Well I am going to report you for this and that and for neglecting and not being a good mother.”

The batterer also may use the children as weapons against their partner and threaten to take the child away from the mother. The non-native mother may fear the native partner will use the Indian Child Welfare Act as a means to take the children.

This next screen has different colors, as you see. Each color represents a system that Mom, the battered woman, must navigate in order to obtain services from the time she leaves and goes into a shelter. There is a particular color for that—it's pink. The additional services she may need, such as housing and so forth, are in yellow.

The family court proceedings are in green. All of the expectations placed on her are in purple. You can see all the different systems that she has to navigate in order to receive services after leaving and it can be very, very complex. The TANF requirements that she must also meet in order to obtain financial assistance are also contained within that.

How do we better understand this woman's situation? It is really important that we look at how these services designed to help women can also become barriers. We need to continue to challenge ourselves to look at how we can remove the barriers when we are able to and ease the accessibility for battered women to access all these different services.

We also have to consider how safety is provided within those services, as Anne said. In many instances, everything is set into motion once 9-1-1 is called.

Our responsibility to every family is to ask what can we say or do to help restore the financial needs of the battered mother and her children. We have to continue to ask how do the children benefit by what we are doing, by this policy, by our rules and regulations, by our paperwork, the intake forms, the questions, insofar as how does the battered woman benefit?

We also have to ask how batterers benefit. How will this restore your community to balance in the teachings of our ancestors? I believe that women

are the center of a family and of the nation—that if they are strong and healthy, the family, and also the nation, will be strong and healthy. So it really is an investment on our part to restore that kind of strength and health and well-being to the mother.

There are many life-generated risks, of course, in terms of achieving some economic justice and autonomy and safety, and independence, such as child care and battered women in shelters and concerns for their safety and transportation.

Transportation is a huge issue for many women. They do not have reliable transportation. For the most part, there is no public transit on reservations. Also, there is the lack of a support system. Many Tribal nations have biased attitudes about why domestic violence happens, and there is a great need for community awareness surrounding this issue.

There are also a lot of batterer-generated risks to helping the woman achieve her economic freedom. He doesn't want her to be free and to achieve that kind of independence. He wants her to remain dependent upon him, even though oftentimes the batterer is unemployed and not contributing to the good of the family.

But yet, when she tries to step out and achieve he will make it difficult for her by all of these different actions and creating more challenges for her. Even the simple fact of not paying a bill he is supposed to pay can impose additional challenges on her as she tries to become self-sufficient.

Achieving economic justice and security is dependent upon many things for women. The availability of child support—child support enforcement just needs to become a lot tighter and more aggressive.

Many batterers aren't paying their child support. They are very transient and move around a lot, especially during the summer months, and there needs to be stronger enforcement. Child care is a great need for women to help them achieve that economic freedom and opportunities to attain a job that pays a living wage.

I know many battered women who, in order to meet employment requirements, take jobs that really are not going to produce that. They aren't going to produce a living wage for a family of two or three, or much less, four or five.

So there needs to be those kinds of opportunities, as well. Accessing resources and helping them develop life skills are also important, and I will talk about those in a minute.

I think that we have made some progress in Tribal communities on developing strategies for improving services, but I think we still have a long way to go in working in collaboration and improving services and creating greater accessibility for women who are obtaining TANF in order to meet the rules to receive the assistance.

It takes collaboration, and child support enforcement is really desperately needed. Fathers need to be held responsible for their economic obligations.

College applications and financial aid are also important and should be readily accessible to women—even assistance in helping them complete these forms because many of them can be very complex and challenging for many women.

Employment-seeking skills, interview techniques, even if there is a way to help her get clothing for interviews—these things would help her understand what employers are looking for. They may not have the economic means to buy clothes so having the appropriate clothing to wear to interviews is important.

Housing advocacy, working with Tribal housing authorities to prioritize housing needs for battered women, I believe, is really important, as well. Many women end up living with other people and other relatives, and those situations aren't the safest. Prioritizing them in the Tribal housing programs is very important.

Economic advocacy with Tribal leadership programs to leverage and direct more resources is essential. Our Tribal leadership really needs to have a good understanding of the needs of battered women and really direct more resources towards helping them achieve their economic freedom and autonomy.

Many different things are happening in Tribal communities. There are some really good resources that can be tapped to help native women in this situation, and I just mentioned a few of them. But, overall, I would really like to see battered women be given priority for many of these resources because their situations are desperate, especially when children are involved.

Child care costs would also be a really good resource. But again, that has to be developed and within a realm of safety as a priority for women and the children because oftentimes women are terrified that the batterer will kidnap the children—even in the visitation exchanges that take place. Sometimes this happens and it just creates another barrier for women trying to achieve

economic independence, because they are afraid they will lose their children one way or another.

Many battered women have great ability and talent in arts and crafts. If there is an opportunity for them to sell their work in order to make extra money, it would be very beneficial. I know a lot of women who have made and sold things to save up money to buy a car. It may be an old clunker car but it has wheels and it gets them places. So things like that are really important. Accessibility to mechanics also would be a very good resource.

There are many creative things that can be done to help women as they try to find a way out of the battering situation.

Advocacy is an important part of developing a coordinated community response. I believe every battered woman should have an advocate. This slide provides one of the definitions we have developed for the role of an advocate. It is really relevant, especially in helping battered women regain control of their life. That's really it in a nutshell.

What makes an effective intervention? Much of this is tied to training so that every intervener is aware of the dynamics of battering and what women and children experience in the violent relationship and also after they leave. A coordinated community response is also important.

Accountability for stopping the behavior rests solely on the batterer. Sometimes we put a lot of burden on the woman's shoulders for stopping the battering or getting out of that situation. Yet again, we do not often ask the question, "Why does he batter, and how can we hold him more accountable for that and also for his responsibility to provide the basic needs for the children?"

Some battered women don't want to have any more to do with the batterer and there should be some measures taken to help her in that situation.

This requires a lot of cross-disciplined communication, collaboration, and coordination. I provided just a few examples of the types of collaboration that I believe are desperately needed. Training for these interveners is also very important.

Al Fleming: Thank you, Bonnie, for that information as we look at advocacy and the supports across the disciplines of collaborations in helping individuals of domestic violence.

Now we are going to hear from Tina Olson, a Project Coordinator at the Mending the Sacred Hoop Technical Assistance Program in Minnesota. She will discuss training, technical assistance, and work undertaken on policies and procedures, and domestic violence program development in relation to Tribal TANF programs.

Tina Olson: Good afternoon, everybody. My name is Tina Olson and I work for Mending the Sacred Hoop. We are housed in Duluth, Minnesota. We have been doing this for 20-plus years. One of the most important things, I think, when you are starting to provide programs or trying to develop a response from battered women is to have a guiding philosophy.

The vast majority of those victimized by domestic violence and sexual assault are female. This is a philosophy that we operate out of our program. I understand this is a very complicated area and some people may think they are

a male victim. There are male victims, but we believe the vast majority of them are female.

Violence must be framed in an historical context. What I mean by that is you have to look at the image or the status of American Indian and Alaska native women today. In our history we have enjoyed matters of respect and equality.

If you look later on and we talk about the theories and look at the status of women and the supports for battering, you will come to understand what I mean by the status of women.

We believe women and children are vulnerable to violence because of their unequal status in society. Our program also operates on the philosophy that all forms of oppression, including racism, classism, heterosexualism, and ageism perpetuate both individual and institutional acts of violence.

In order to be successful in any form of response or programming for battered women you have to operate from a common framework of understanding. There are a number of theories of recognizing and identifying domestic violence. There is the family conflict theory, an individual pathology theory, and the cycle of violence theory.

Our organization—and this is one of the most powerful and popular theories—comes from the power and control theory that puts domestic violence in a social context and looking at violence in relationships as a result of learned social behaviors that are rooted in many institutions and reinforce this cultural values.

The definition is that domestic violence is a pattern of assaultive, coercive, abusive behaviors to gain compliance with a partner. On the outside of what

you see on the screen is the power and control wheel. That is the extreme of domestic violence—physical violence and sexual violence.

But there are a lot of other tactics based on a belief system that batterers use against women—using intimidation. I am sure that many of you are familiar with using male privilege and economic abuse. Not all situations of domestic violence are visible at the time. They are subtle, but they can be just as devastating and brutal.

I am going to give you an example right now. We have several videos you can view on YouTube. This one is called “About Last Night.” We use these videos in some of our education classes. This one is a case scenario of a couple who went out last night and when he gets up in the morning he kind of sheepishly comes into the kitchen—these are very subtle little examples—and tries to talk to her about last night.

That is why it’s titled “About Last Night.” Boy, he just had a good time last night and he can obviously tell from the onset that she did not. Basically, the video is about him getting angry at her for talking to other men at the party. It is the same thing you see in an interview, as in “Aren’t I good enough?”

He raped her last night. He had sex with her and she said no, so he raped her. The video takes two different looks at his intent, what he was doing, why he did it, and how she felt.

He justifies his behavior. She says, “I told you not to do that, that I didn't like that,” so you can tell this is not the first time this has happened.

The next slide asks participants about their observation of the video. I am sorry you couldn’t hear the video, but we ask how did you feel or relate to the

video? What were some safety concerns for this woman? What are the challenges of confidentiality for the victim?

Did you recognize or understand that something deeper had happened? Did you identify that, in fact, she was raped? Part of why we ask these questions is that we travel around the country providing site trainings. We showed this at an in-service with staff at one organization and I was surprised to hear one of the participants in the training say, “Well, the woman needs to learn to be more assertive and just say no or...”

But she had said no already and I was surprised by that sort of mentality and thinking. The comment was made in a house setting, and it was not just a frontline worker, it was an administrator who said that. That was a little bit uncomfortable. We worked through it, but it was just one example of showing different forms of battering behavior.

There is a continuum to safety planning. One end of the continuum is imminent physical violence. If she is not ready to leave, how does she keep herself safe? Does she know where all the weapons are in the house? Does she have someone to call? If a fight starts, does she try to avoid being caught in the kitchen or the bathroom or a place where it's dangerous or she can get locked in?

A battered woman needs to plan an escape route and tell her children how to call for help. Work out a code with a neighbor. Many times battered women will not leave for a number of reasons. So how do they keep themselves safe? There are a variety of ways to create safety planning.

Deciding to leave the batterer—I am sure most of the participants know that this is the most dangerous time for a woman, as a batterer loses control over

her and typically escalates the tactics. So what does she do then? How does she create some safety for herself?

Does she have a relative she can trust or a friend or a program she can leave copies of birth certificates for? Did she gather documents? Is she ready to leave? What if a batterer knows about her plan? Does that make it more dangerous for her? The safety planning will look very different for her.

Barriers to confidentiality are an issue. When I was first asked to do this presentation one of our staff asked me to talk about confidentiality, which I am sure most people on the phone know is a difficult thing to do if you are in the Tribal communities.

People know pretty much right away. It is called the Indian telegraph. I don't mean to be rude or use some old stereotype language, but it is still called that. People in the community know what's going on. It is very difficult to keep confidentiality. It's not impossible. It's not that it can't be kept, but it's difficult to do.

Many rural communities use scanners to find out every time the cops are called somewhere or to find out what is going on. In a lot of Tribal communities, close communities, whether you are in a little village in Alaska or a reservation, you are related in some way to each other, if not closely related, distantly related, and that can be problematic.

We used to have the storytelling and the positive teaching method. But now it has become more gossip and can be hurtful to battered women. Battered women know this, so they may not necessarily trust to go to anybody or any place. Ensuring that her information can be kept confidential and there won't be gossip will build some trust.

Privacy and location of programs is very important. TANF has some entry where there's some privacy to it. This is important because even in small communities, when people know you are going to a certain building, they know you are going there for a certain service. With TANF they may not know.

Strategies for ensuring confidentiality. There has to be a concerted effort of respect for the safety of women in the community, and it has to be consistent in every gathering you have, every poster you have, and how you greet each other. It has to permeate the entire community because we can't really provide respect if we don't talk about it all the time.

Leadership has to be a role model. As administrators, supervisors, or coordinators we need to be good role models for ensuring somebody's confidentiality. We can never talk about this as advocates or staff workers, but when you enter a lunchroom sometimes these advocates are discussing a woman's case when they really shouldn't be.

Even confidentiality between advocates has to be upheld. You don't know if this other person knows her.

This does not require a written safety plan. I am not saying you should not have a safety plan, but if you have a written safety plan and you are in the home it can be used against you if your batterer finds it. So practice and keep that in your head and have some consistency about what you want to do.

For TANF programs, I have seen written safety plans that have been just a couple pages long and those that are seven pages long. I don't remember if it was Anne Menard or Bonnie who said that there will be times when a TANF

program will consider the safety plan to file an order for protection, or to file charges.

That isn't really a good thing to do. It is not in the best interests of a battered woman, so don't require them to do that. Be flexible in your safety plan because you are trying to build some trust with her.

For Tribal communities, use your sovereign status. Create statutory privileges in your communications. You have statutes that you can do that. Tribal judges can have the ability and the authority to issue opinion. Look to your own common law or court decisions to see if any types of privileges are currently written in your own codes.

The family violence option. I did some research last week in preparation for this training and I found there were many different varieties of options for women to access in TANF. But the greatest barrier was that women were not informed that they had these options. If they had been informed they might have taken advantage of them.

If you identify applicants who are abuse victims how are you going to protect their confidentiality? Refer abuse victims to domestic violence supportive services. Make sure you have a list of supportive services. Who are they? Are they helpful?

Waive TANF requirements that applicants currently cannot meet because of abuse, especially employment. A number of statistics show that women lose their jobs because of their batterers.

You can Google it and probably find that 76 percent of battered women have taken time off or have lost their jobs because of domestic violence situations.

Departments that manage TANF influence policies and procedures— education versus social services. Provide education for our women. I heard Bonnie talk earlier about employment and how employment is a lifeline for battered women. Employment is their freedom.

Annual training on domestic violence and sexual assault, and sexual violence affecting women. Some programs don't have annual training. Training may be an option, but I think most TANF programs, if not all, should have annual training on these issues.

Annual training on a common framework of domestic violence. Many different programs and organizations conduct training on domestic violence, but be careful about who you choose and evaluate the training periodically for any unintended consequences. Create an evaluation tool to see if you are moving forward or going backward.

Examine your protocol for employing women. What does it look like? At what stage? Review complaints or grievances on confidentially. Review denials of waivers. In the state of California, I think, 76 percent of women who applied for the family violence option were denied waivers, but my search did not say why they were denied. I thought that was a pretty high number.

Most of what I have talked about today, especially written material for safety planning and confidentiality, can be accessed on our resource page at our Web site, www.mshoop.org. If you click on resources, several manuals come up and you can download them for free. The introductory manual has most of what I have talked about here, but there are other manuals available too.

You can also contact us at our Web site and request any information. If the information is not on our Web site, we will find it for you. Thank you for listening.

Al Fleming: Thank you, Tina, for those salient program strategies around DV protocols and program options.

Next we will hear from Bernie LaSarte, the Program Manager at Stop Violence and a victim advocate for domestic violence. Bernie will cover an overview of the program and the ways that connects with domestic violence services.

Bernie LaSarte: Thank you, Al. I will be talking about partnerships between our particular program, which is a dual domestic violence and sexual assault, and our TANF program for the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. I will probably repeat or reconfirm some of the issues that Tina presented in her presentation.

The challenges we have here, of course, are funding. Most of our Tribal programs are federally funded and, as anybody knows, when you have funding from an outside source you have to abide by those guidelines, which is a challenge in itself.

Staffing is a major issue for us. Initially, when I first began this program back in 2004, I was the only staff person and our TANF staff consisted of just one person as well. There was just the two of us trying to tend two separate departments and the number of clients we have is phenomenal.

Limited resources—by this I mean the lack of office space. Our reservation has a social services department, but it is located in three or four different places. TANF is up on the hill with the main building and the domestic

violence and sexual assault program is down the road a ways. Our food distribution is 6, 7 miles away. So that certainly created a challenge for us.

Acceptance that domestic violence and sexual assault really do occur. That was probably one of the things I first learned when I took this position. I am Coeur d'Alene Tribal. I grew up here. I went to high school here, but I went off to nursing school and worked elsewhere. I was gone from the reservation for many, many years.

When I came back I realized that one of the major issues my people faced was denial. Denial that domestic violence was occurring and denying that sexual assault was occurring. That was actually a major issue I had to deal with right away.

Remote rural communities. We are clear up here in Northern Idaho and the nearest city is Coeur d'Alene, which is about 30 miles away, depending on where you are on the reservation.

Tribal territorial issues. Tribes are well-noted for this. They are not very forward in sharing information with the outside community. They don't ask for assistance from outside communities. I know that is not just an issue for the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, but for various Tribes nationwide.

Lack of anonymity. Because we are so remote and, as Tina said previously, everybody knows everybody else's business. And, yes, a good number of people here have those scanners. So everybody knows what is going on. For sure, if people see somebody's car in my program here, they know they are here for a reason so that's an issue we have here.

Confidentiality—because of all of the above does create issues for us.

Ways I have found to overcome some of these challenges. The first thing was to set priorities and goals for the domestic violence program. When I first took over this position it was just a domestic violence program per se, although I saw sexual assault victims from day one as well.

I had to set goals for this program. What did I want to accomplish? How was I going to go about it? What was the most important? I had to write these up so I could check them off as I did them.

Some of the goals are ongoing, still. I came in here as a nurse so I still think as a nurse. Setting goals and priorities is one of my little quirks. Think outside the box. Expand. How can you get what you need? You may not have all of the resources but you want to provide the best possible service to clients. So how can I accomplish that? What can I do? Does that mean collaborating with the outside community? Well, maybe so. One thing I did was to certainly market my program not just within the Department of Social Services but to the other Tribal departments as well.

I had to market to housing, the police, the court, and Indian Child Welfare. So I had to go outside of my little office. I had to go to Tribal council and I have been to Tribal council very often requesting many different things. I went out to the community. I was out there at every pow-wow, every Tribal function, and every non-native function here in the community. I had awareness tables set up everywhere. We also do various community awareness trainings. We get into the schools. I tried to get into the schools right away because that is really going to diminish incidences of domestic violence and sexual assault. If we can get to those young, primary school children and begin awareness teaching there, I think that's the only way we are going to see down the line maybe decreased incidences of violence against women.

Keep focused. I have to keep focused on my programs, goals, and priorities. I have a mission statement. What is that statement? What does that statement say? Again, I am a nurse so my focus when I was working in the ER was, of course, the patient. Well my focus working here is on my client's safety and what I wanted to accomplish as far as my program's goals. The priority goal is client safety.

Maintain a sense of professionalism. I think knowing your community and the culture that you serve is extremely important. I was lucky in the sense that I did grow up here, I graduated from high school here so a lot of the people were still here when I came back. We were all just many years older, but I knew the culture and I think that's very, very important.

Challenges to confidentiality. I am going to probably reiterate what Tina stated earlier. Most reservations are pretty small and in pretty remote areas and certainly the Coeur d'Alene Tribe is. Everyone knows everybody else. Many of us are related in some fashion. Many of us were childhood friends. There are many people out there that I was up at the boarding school with. We were in the 5th grade in boarding school. Although they may not be my family, they are a childhood friend so there is that relationship. Most Tribes try to employ mostly native people and of course a challenge is the Tribe's own culture and values.

Ways to overcome some of these confidentiality challenges. Education and signed agreements, of course, from all employees. That certainly occurs when Tribal employees begin their orientation process with the Tribe. They do have to sign a confidentiality agreement and it is certainly something that is reinforced when they get to their separate departments. Clients in both TANF and domestic violence have their own program-specific releases of

information. So when I refer my clients up to TANF, they actually have to sign another release because many of mine are because I may have advocate on their behalf with the court system, or go to the emergency room with them, or talk to housing on their behalf. So we have our own specific releases that clients sign.

Determine how you are going to communicate. What will be the safest for your departments? Maybe you have your own particular forms. Are we going to use the interoffice mail using confidentiality envelopes? We certainly have those here. Are we going to correspond by the postal system, e-mail, or the phone? I use a coding system with TANF as well as with our finance department. I don't know the exact number they employ, but there are quite a few down there and they may be relatives of the perpetrator whose victim I am assisting. So I developed this coding system and I have the code that's locked up in my office so we know who it is on this end but finance does not. It is the same way with TANF. We developed this coding system just so they know who it is and I know who it is.

Determine your program's needs for documentation and try to limit documentation if you can, especially on domestic violence and/or sexual assault programs because that documentation may be used against our clients at some point down the road. TANF, I think, requires a lot more documentation than we do here in this program.

Again, be a good role model. Practice what you preach. Those were famous last words of my mother—practice what you preach. If I maintain professionalism and confidentiality, and I reinforce and encourage my staff to do the same, then I think that is being a good role model. We have regular coordinated community response quarterly team meetings and we have probably 10 to 15 members—we used to have a few more—from various

Tribal departments that attend these meetings. We discuss policies for the offender program, the transitional housing program, and counseling. We discuss many different things at these meetings. It is a good way to find out what is happening in the other departments as well as them finding out what we are doing and what some of the requirements are for my program or a TANF program. Sometimes we case manage without discussing names. We might case manage how we could have better provided services or what we could do better in the future. These meetings have been going on every three months since probably 2005, when I first received the rule grant for the offender program.

The TANF program is probably the number one—as well as the court program—that I refer clients to. My program has the ability to provide emergency shelter. Although we don't have a shelter, I do have access to the Tribe's casino hotel and they have given me a cut rate to house my victims. As you all know, many of our DV clients may want to leave and may need further assistance because the perpetrator was the breadwinner in the family. So I do have access. I manage two transitional housing units so we are able to house those victims rent-free for six months and that includes their utilities as well. So we case manage on a regular basis while they are in the transitional housing unit. If they need job employment assistance, we can assist them with that. We can assist with transportation if they need to go for an interview. It is a time for them to get their bearings, find a direction they want to take, hopefully get a job, and put some money aside so they can get more permanent housing. This is the form we use. It is our communication between this program and our Tribe's TANF program.

Ways to market your program. This really needs to be done in Tribal departments. By definition, of course, marketing is trying to sell something. In this case, you have to market your program. Since I recognized that denial

was a major factor that my Tribal people had and didn't want to admit to, I had to get out there and bring more awareness to the issue. I had to find ways for them to recognize that maybe we had a problem here. I am out there continuously every single day. I am at Tribal council meetings. I don't think there's a place that does not have a brochure or a poster here. We are out there. Even the men's bathrooms might have posters or brochures. You will see something with our label on it.

We also have a radio station. It is not completely operational yet, but we do have a Tribal internet—what's called a Rescast—and it is a radio station available to all Tribal departments and all Tribal employees on the Tribe's Internet. I advertise on there a lot. I also make presentations on issues such as sexual assault, or it might be sexting that is occurring in the schools, or domestic violence.

I use the Tribal newspaper all the time. This program also has a newsletter that began at the beginning of this year. So every other month we put out a Tribal newspaper. We set up tables at pow-wows everywhere. There are two big pow-wows that occur here on the Coeur d'Alene reservation. One of them is the casino's annual pow-wow and the national one occurs up in Post Falls. People come from all over and from Canada to attend these pow-wows. I set tables everywhere—at school community functions, Tribal functions. I probably put up close to 10 tables a year.

Good customer service. That is a big seller. If you treat people with respect, they will return that to you.

Outreach to the surrounding community. As I asked earlier, do I need to solicit assistance from outside communities in order to provide my clients with better services? Yes, I do. I collaborate with local programs—DV

programs and hospitals outside of the Tribal boundaries. I even collaborate with the Idaho coalition, which is down in Southern Idaho, and local non-Tribal communities such as some of the churches. I collaborate if they want me to do a presentation for them, so I try to maximize. I call this thinking outside of the box because there is a possibility of more improved service if I reach out and that is what I have done. I promote collaborative efforts with other Tribal departments and Tribal council. I have gone before Tribal council and requested funds to help pay for the meals at my annual sexual assault conferences. I may not have the funding to provide the meals and I know that if you want to get people to attend things, you have to feed them. I have received a lot of support from almost all Tribal departments—most certainly from our Tribal council and the local community.

Al Fleming:

Thank you, Bernie. I would like to thank all of our speakers for sharing their resources and knowledge about domestic violence. You have shared some of the best practices around to help Tribal programs build their programs to meet the challenges of their customers and the issues surrounding domestic violence and the implications that has on your customers.

At this time I am going to open it up to Stephanie Barr, who will walk us through the question and answer sessions. We have a couple of minutes left before the close of the webinar.

Stephanie Barr:

We can start with the questions we received over the live meeting. The first two refer to whether the presentation materials will be made available to everyone. Yes, we will make sure the PowerPoint presentations, the audio recording, and the transcript are posted to the Welfare Peer TA Network at peerta.acf.hhs.gov.

We have another question that came in during Bernie's presentation, asking, "Who or what provides the funding for the transitional housing provided?"

Bernie LaSarte: The Coeur d'Alene tribe gets their transitional housing funds from the Office of Violence Against Women Program under the Department of Justice. It is a 2-year grant that provides transitional housing. One of the issues I found here is that even if I did put up an emergency shelter I don't know how safe it truthfully would be. I would have concerns if I wasn't watching it 24 hours a day. I don't think it would keep any of the perpetrators out, so it's actually safer for us to use hotel shelter. At least there is surveillance out there. My transitional house is a unit right up the street from our office and it's monitored so we can keep a very close eye on it.

Stephanie Barr: We have another question. "What do TANF programs do when they are working with the domestic violence programs and allow TANF for the domestic violence victim to receive TANF payments, yet the victim does not follow through after the initial 90 days for no requirement of work participation?"

Can any of the speakers address this question?

Bernie LaSarte: I am not 100 percent sure what TANF guidelines are. I know they have specific guidelines, and we certainly have our share that do not comply on the TANF side. I think this is where both programs really come together and try to engage that victim. We have support groups. All they have to do is come in and just talk to me. I do have a counselor. Sometimes they may need counseling. This is something that both TANF and my department try to wrap around because it may not be just compliance. There's a reason for that non-compliance. Is it because of transportation? Is it they don't have child care? I think case managing would be a real priority in these specific cases, but sometimes that doesn't always work either. I don't think there's a 100 percent

completely accurate answer. I wish there was, but I just don't think there is. But we certainly try and wrap around our services for these specific clients.

Dana Eisenberg: We are now going to begin the poll. I will read the questions and you indicate the answer that best matches your response. Our first question: My organization partners with local domestic violence organizations.

Question two: Currently there are challenges in providing domestic violence services in my community.

Question three: The presenters had valuable information to share.

Question four: The webinar ran smoothly.

Question five: I have a better understanding of the resources available to Tribal TANF agencies to help create partnerships and train staff concerning domestic violence.

Next question: I learned about existing models for partnership to serve individuals and children escaping domestic violence who access Tribal TANF programs.

Now our final question: I learned about culturally appropriate ways of handling domestic violence when working in a Tribal TANF agency and/or when working with natives.

That concludes our polling. Al, I'll turn it over to you for any last comments.

Al Fleming: I would like to thank all of our callers from around the country as well as our presenters for joining us today on this important topic—domestic violence and

TANF partnerships in Indian country. We hope that you have all learned something and will apply the strategies that have been presented today. Thank you and have a good day.

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen that concludes the conference call for today. We thank you for your participation and ask that you please disconnect your line.

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