



Building a PEER TA Network State by State



**Welfare Peer TA Webinar:
Overcoming Domestic Violence as a Barrier to Employment through TANF Partnerships**

**Moderator: David Camporeale
October 13, 2010**

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for standing by. Welcome to “Overcoming Domestic Violence as a Barrier to Employment Through TANF” conference call.

During the presentation all participants will be in a listen-only mode. Afterwards we will conduct a question and answer session.

At that time if you have a question, you may press 1 followed by the 4 on your telephone. If at any time during the conference you need to reach an operator, you may press Star Zero.

As a reminder this conference is being recorded Wednesday, October 13, 2010. I would now like to turn the conference over to David Camporeale. Please go ahead, sir.

David Camporeale: Good afternoon and welcome, everyone, to the Welfare Peer TA Network Webinar. I am David Camporeale, and I’m the Federal Project Officer for the Welfare Peer TA Network and your moderator today.

As everyone on this phone knows, domestic violence is an issue that affects a large number of TANF participants and presents unique barriers to self-sufficiency.

It's estimated that about half of all women who receive TANF benefits have at some point in their lives experienced some form of domestic violence.

Because of this statistic and its implications and the huge importance of the issue, the Welfare Peer TA Network has developed this Webinar for both TANF and domestic violence professionals.

We have several learning objectives today: to give TANF agencies an overview of existing models, to raise awareness, and to encourage collaboration between TANF agencies and the domestic violence community.

We have four presenters today, and each will address various components of collaboration and partnership between the two fields.

After the presenters have given their presentations we will provide time for questions and answers, and we'll conclude the Webinar with a poll to assess whether or not the Webinar met its objectives.

At any time during the presentations you can submit questions by clicking on the Q&A box at the top of your screen and by typing in and submitting questions in the box that appears.

We'll try to address as many of the questions as possible at the end. And we'll allow for questions over the phone as well, if time permits.

Our first presenters are Dr. Marylouise Kelley and Anne Menard. Dr. Marylouise Kelley is the Director of the Family Violence Prevention Services Program within the Family and Youth Services Bureau.

Dr. Kelley is going to provide us with an overview of the Family Violence Prevention Services Program and the grants that the program offers to State and local programs.

Anne Menard is the Director of the National Resource Center on domestic violence and will discuss the center, its work, and a recent report on TANF and the services that it provides to family violence victims. So without further ado: Dr. Kelley.

Dr. Marylouise Kelley: Well, thank you. And welcome, everyone, and I'd like to thank you for taking the time this afternoon to join this Webinar and to celebrate with us Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

The theme of Domestic Violence Awareness Month is to mourn, to celebrate, and connect. We mourn those that have been lost to domestic violence, to celebrate those who are surviving, and to connect both to help survivors connect to the support they need but also for those of us who work in human services and domestic violence advocacy to connect so that we can do our best to support domestic violence survivors.

I am with the Family Violence Prevention Services program which falls in the Family News Services Bureau in ACF in the Administration for Children and Families.

Being here in ACF the human services side of the department gives us the opportunity to partner on a range of programs that support economic and social well-being for families.

So in addition to reaching across and working in partnership with OSA, we're able to work on TANF. We work with Office of the Head Start, Office of

Child Support, and others to try to reach out to ensure that people working in all of those areas have the ability to recognize domestic violence, to respond in a way that's supportive and removes barriers for survivors and to refer and connect again to those local resources that are available in every community around the country.

As was mentioned, up to about 56% of TANF recipients report that they are past or current domestic violence victims. And we know not everybody likes to disclose that.

We also know that low income households experience higher rates of domestic violence. And so that means that people in TANF offices around this country are working with victims of domestic violence to a great extent and that recognizing that and responding with support for the unique challenges that domestic violence survivors face can really help to remove some of those significant and economic barriers that they face to achieving safety.

I'm going to tell you a little bit about the Family Violence Prevention Services Program because it is one of those federal programs, the first federal program since 1984. It has supported that network of services around the country and currently supports 1675 domestic violence programs around the country to provide both shelter and nonresidential services, some legal services, advocacy, help in courts, work with children--so a range of services.

That means that in almost every community in this country there's a domestic violence program that's available to provide emergency response and also to work with those in TANF offices and work with survivors around that whole range of needs.

Domestic violence response is very holistic. And programs work on what we call economic advocacy as well as legal and other sorts of advocacy.

The domestic violence programs last year served over 1.2 million adults and children, 22% in shelters. But many people are served without ever coming in to a shelter. And that service is always available.

Over 7 million bed nights of shelter were provided. But in addition nearly 3 million people received crisis or our hotline response when they needed help.

You'll see that children are served. And nearly half of those served in domestic violence shelters in the country are children.

And, in addition, these programs also reached out to 1.6 million youths in an effort to prevent domestic violence.

The other portion of the SPSA program—as we call it for short—are q some of the efforts at the State and national level.

And these are important because anyone who may need to help a victim of domestic violence needs to be aware of resources like the National Domestic Violence Hotline.

That is a way to connect victims to a supportive advocate who can talk with them about their situation and the options they may wish to consider.

For people who want confidential help and may not even want to go to their local program for help it's a way to reach out anonymously and to seek help and to be connected to the resources they might need to respond to their situation.

Twenty-two thousand calls are answered every month by the National Domestic Violence Hotline, and it's a number that we hope everybody has handy.

In addition, we support the work of State domestic violence coalitions in each State and in the territories.

The slide includes a link where you can find the contact for your State domestic violence coalition. We offer this because when you talk about partnering State level connections with the State domestic violence coalition and TANF agencies, it is a great place to start.

Coalitions serve as a means of support for all of the domestic violence programs in the state. They have member programs who receive training and technical assistance.

And very often the State coalitions will work at resolving policy issues or help to advocate on behalf of victims of domestic violence around policies that are supportive of them.

And finally the SPSA program also supports a network of national resource centers in culturally specific institutes that really focus in on those tough issues, some of the national training and technical assistance that's required, specialized responses that may be more appropriate and culturally relevant for culturally specific communities.

This network of resource centers includes our National Resource Center on Domestic Violence. And you'll be hearing from them in just a moment.

As part of the resource centers and training technical assistance that we support in this past year, we have asked the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence and Anne Menard who'll be speaking in just a minute to enhance the work that they've been doing for years to connect TANF offices to help with implementation of a family violence option, to provide training in Webinars like these, and in conferences around the country.

Last year we engaged in a technical assistance project with the goals of enhancing the use of TANF funds to meet the safety and self-sufficiency needs of domestic violence survivors and also to improve the capacity of TANF and child support offices and other benefits programs to really use best practices in responding to victims of domestic violence and their families.

Anne Menard has been working on this issue since the welfare reform days and has been a real leader in terms of policy around addressing domestic violence through then welfare and now TANF programs.

I'd like to ask Anne to begin with her section of the training.

Anne Menard: Thanks, Marylouise. Again this is Anne Menard. I'm the Director of the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence.

I'm very pleased to be here with all my co-presenters as well as all of you Webinar participants who took time out of your day today.

I want to start by just making sure we are all understanding some of the terms that we'll be using.

So when we say domestic violence what do we mean? Domestic violence is best understood as a pattern of abuse and course of behaviors. It includes

physical, sexual, and psychological abuse, as well as economic coercion used against an intimate partner. It often involves the use of a combination of tactics aimed at establishing control of one partner over the other.

So, we're not talking about a singular act of violence or abuse but more typically a pattern of abuse that leaves the partner afraid, intimidated often isolated, too often seriously injured and even dead.

And, as I think you've probably already picked up, we're not just talking about physical violence. If you're just looking for black eyes or visible injuries you're really going to miss a lot of what is domestic violence.

So we're also talking about stalking and threats to kidnap, kill, or otherwise harm not just the individual but family or friends or damage property.

A threat to commit suicide—if you leave me I'll kill myself—is also something we see as part of a pattern of attempting to control another person.

Use of degrading or coercive language, which can also include controlling access to food or sleep and withholding access to money, credit cards, or medical care, including sabotaging employment, or school certainly comes into play within the TANF context.

And isolating the victim as we've said, denying contact with friends or family, the very people who could offer support and information that might help someone more easily leave the relationship or combat the violence.

So what do we know? We know a lot. And we're continuing to learn more every day. To help us understand the incidence and prevalence of violence in intimate relationships, the National Institute of Justice and the Centers for

Disease Control and Prevention jointly sponsored the National Violence Against Women Survey.

The survey was conducted from 1995 to 1996 and involved a sample of 8000 women and 8000 men and collected data on women's and men's experiences with violent victimization.

There are a couple of key findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey and you can see them on this slide.

Nearly one in four women are beaten or raped by a partner during adulthood. Each year approximately 2.3 million people—disproportionately women—are raped and/or physically assaulted by a current or former spouse, boyfriend, or girlfriend.

We also know a lot from the Bureau of Justice statistics and various reports through the years. But the one I want to particularly focus on is what we know about homicide, domestic homicides.

Every day in this country an average of three women are killed by a current or former intimate partner.

So we're talking about a problem that affects lots of people in very serious ways again, just giving you some of the key statistics.

But what we also know is that there are other things that are important in terms of responding to domestic violence within the TANF context.

We know for example that leaving an abusive relationship does not guarantee the reduction or elimination of violence or risk. And, in fact, leaving may create new risks or increase existing ones.

It's not uncommon to hear that threats to kidnap children or harm family or friends often increase after someone has indicated—a victim has indicated that they're leaving the relationship or separated or filed for divorce.

The rates of serious—the rates and seriousness of physical abuse—increased during periods of separation or divorce.

Research and experience also tell us that while domestic violence occurs in all social groups and really does cut across age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or economic circumstances—all groups defined by those characteristics—poor women experience violence by their partners at higher rates partly because they have fewer options.

We also know that poverty and domestic violence exacerbate each other. Poverty makes escaping domestic violence more difficult.

And domestic violence and the economic sabotage and isolation and physical and emotional damage inflicted often makes a climb out of poverty even more difficult.

So access to independent economic resources including welfare is central to abused women's decisionmaking and the safety planning that they engage in.

In fact women with abusive partners often use welfare as a bridge out of these relationships. And that was true prior—that was true when we had aid to families of dependent children.

Those of us that work in shelters 25 years ago knew that that was, that AFDC functioned as a bridge. And certainly TANF continues to function as a bridge out of these relationships where there's been economic dependence on the person that's abusing you.

Numerous studies as both Marylouise and David mention have found that between 40% and 60% of current welfare recipients have experienced domestic violence at some point in their lives.

Up to 25% report that abuse is a current problem. So again this—there's a very clear connection to the work that you all do and TANF program and domestic violence.

To learn more about the needs and experiences of domestic violence survivors who turn to shelters for help, the kinds of domestic violence shelters of Marylouise's program, the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act funds a survey or study called "Meeting Survivors Needs, A Multistate Study of Domestic Violence Shelter Experiences." The survey is funded through the Family Violence Prevention and Services Program and by the National Institutes of Justice and is conducted by the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence and the University of Connecticut School of Social Work. In 2008 in eight states, 3400 shelter residents were surveyed, and it was found that 93% , a vast majority of these survivors, reported needing help with economic issues including housing, job training, transportation, education, and assistance managing money.

So addition to those things that we've known for many, many years is that survivors look to domestic violence programs for legal assistance, assistance working with counseling for themselves and their children.

What we're now capturing more clearly I think is the continued importance of economic advocacy and economic issues in the lives of domestic violence victims.

Finally, we know—and this is also important again as we think about identifying and responding to domestic violence victims—domestic violence victims' circumstances risks and resources will be different and may change as the tactics used by an abusive partner change.

One example I use to help illustrate this is a victim may have a safety plan in place that responds to the fact that her abusive partner owns a gun. There's a gun in the house.

That plan will change when he's arrested either because of a call, her call to the police or neighbors call to the police, he gets arrested, and his gun is taken away as part of the response by the law enforcement, and the issuance of a protection order.

And now he's really mad. And so her plan—the safety plan that victims develop are basically responses to the tactics of their abusive partner is using. So as those tactics change, safety plans change. That is sometimes really—sometimes confusing for folks who are working with victims that don't fully account for the fact that abuse is a dynamic process and their individual response to that changes.

I've been asked to talk to review the findings from a report a national survey conducted in late 2009 by the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence and Legal Momentum of a Partner and that were included in a 2010

report that was called Not Enough, What TANF Offers Family Violence Victims.

I'm hoping that many of you have already seen the report. If you have not, a copy can be found on our Web site, the Violence Against Women Net, vawnet.org. And you can search under the search function for Not Enough and get a copy of the report.

There's lots of information that I think informs the kind of technical assistance and support [provided], what we know, what we still need to learn more about.

This survey as I said was conducted in the fall of 2009. There were over 600 respondents from all 50 states and DC, majority of those responding work directly with domestic violence programs and work directly with survivors.

We also had staff of legal aid or other antipoverty programs, and there were also some TANF child support agency staff who responded.

So it was a pretty broad, broad reach. There were three key findings. One is that TANF is important to domestic violence victims.

Now 96% of the respondents were very clear on that point and I'm going to use some—we got a lot of qualitative—we gave the opportunity for people to comment in addition to check boxes and so we got a lot of qualitative information. I'm going to be sharing some of that as well.

So one of the respondents to the survey said I have worked with many survivors who would never have left their abusive situation without TANF.

For many, TANF is literally an economic bridge out of an abusive relationship as I said earlier. So that's the first finding, TANF is a critical, again, economic bridge.

The second finding is that TANF can make a difference. When it works well it makes an incredibly positive difference.

And again, as one respondent indicated when the victim gets a case manager who knows the system and family violence, it works well. They advocate for her and help her through the system instead of creating barriers.

We recently had a victim facing lethal danger who needed to get safely to another state. The victim got her grant quickly and was able to get safely out.

When our agencies work well together, we are able to save lives. So again, we got a lot of those comments that said when it works it—it literally saves lives when the —TANF and domestic violence advocacy response is collaborative and works well.

But we also heard a lot. The third finding is that it's not working well in a lot of places. Unfortunately, the survey found that there are lots of consequences, there are lots of problems, and that these also have consequences. And I'll be talking about those because they're very, I think, instructive.

So as again, when TANF works well, what does it look like, the kinds of things that people mentioned as being strengths in those systems that they saw as working in the interest of victims?

The collaboration between domestic violence and TANF and child support agencies—we're going to hear about that type of collaboration in just a few minutes.

When trained responders, TANF workers, child support workers, and others who are responding had received domestic violence training that was really specialized to them, there was a flexibility in the use of TANF funds.

There were streamlined processes, particularly when there was danger presented, when there were safety risks presented, that that system responded [well.] Benefits were provided to immigrant victims consistent with policy that establishes domestic violence services as emergency services that should be provided regardless of legal status.

When TANF doesn't work well for victims there were a couple things that weren't happening. And these were the most frequently mentioned:

That application process creates barriers. People talked about endless busy signals, circular referral system—too many hoops. Some of these clearly related to limited resources. And I want to acknowledge that of many TANF programs.

But others seemed to relate more to lack of training or were inconsistent from one worker to another who was suggesting some different [programs].

Benefits were identified as too low and often delayed. Screening for domestic violence was identified as often inconsistent or ineffective.

Notification of the family violence or waivers or accommodations or services was also nonexistent or not communicated effectively.

Disclosures of domestic violence on the part of victims did not necessarily lead to help that was responsive to the domestic violence issues that were raised.

Some responses also, I mean worse, the most worse, I think the most problematic, were that some responses made things worse for the victim, in other words less safe.

There were information provided about—workers who required a pregnant victim of rape, in other words someone a woman who had become pregnant as a result of rape—to obtain information from the rapist before that would be acknowledged or to return home to a dangerous home to secure documents to prove the violence.

Some respondents also reported mishandling of confidential information including sharing private information about the abuse with the applicant's abusive partner or disclosing a shelter location that was otherwise confidential.

One respondent put it this way. Victims feel lost confused and frustrated with the system. And it gets to the point where going back to the abuser is easier than dealing with the system.

Another said these systems may work for some clients and not others. The outcome may unfortunately depend on the worker who gets the case.

And we heard that a lot that there was inconsistency within offices which again suggests that training may make a difference or that procedures are communicated more clearly.

We asked what would make TANF more effective? And these are the things that the survey ranked most frequently mentioned: more robust and effective employment services, childcare assistance.

Now some of these, the first two for example, are things that would probably help all low income families. They're not specific to domestic violence victims but having them available and be offered in ways that domestic violence victims, someone with safety concerns, can readily access is what I think people were saying is particularly important but also clearly domestic violence training for child support and TANF workers.

And a number of people commented on training that specifically spoke to the role that TANF workers or child support workers play in the course a victim seeking services from those agencies, not the kind of generic training or training that might be given to police. So again, training that really was focused on the particular roles that TANF workers and child support workers can play and should be playing in this as partners in responding to domestic violence.

Relocation assistance was identified obviously by many respondents in some cases both to assist as a supplemental assistance to TANF, but, in some cases, also to actually help someone leave TANF more quickly or even avoid having to go on TANF if they can get to a safe location or get to relocate to the place where their family and their support system is and to be safe.

Transportation was identified as a key issue. And that again cuts across, or certainly is an issue, for, I think, all poor families and particularly in rural areas.

Improving family violence screening. And that by improving, people meant enhancing the consistency and the sensitivity with which domestic violence issues are explored and then accounted for, assessed for, what is the meaning.

Someone has just told us that domestic violence is an issue in her life. What does that mean in terms of what we can do? And increase TANF benefit levels.

Here there are a range of other recommendations. And again, I think some of these you are looking at and going it would be nice to be able to do these things, we don't have the resources to do them.

And I think that's our joint challenge. That's our collaborative challenge. How do we continue to move forward and integrate response to domestic violence into the work of both TANF and child support agencies and not have it be seen as something on top of already very full caseloads.

But, , and as you're looking at this list, I want to close with another comment provided by a survey respondent that I think illustrates that although still too few and far between, when an effort is made to help it is a tremendous—it has a tremendously positive impact. And this again is a respondent who talked about a case in which she was involved.

I had a case where a client showed up for an interview, was referred to me and she—this was a domestic violence advocate—picked up four children and was helped to flee all in six hours.

She literally didn't have diapers or a bottle even. She was given transportation vouchers, clothing vouchers, diaper vouchers.

Then TANF put her in a hotel in a new community and helped her get into shelter there. It was incredible to see them all come together and take action.

Overall she, the victim, left knowing that there are people who care and will pull out all the stops to keep her and her children safe.

Again I wanted to end on a positive story because I think this work is hard, the work that the TANF workers and child support workers do is hard.

The work that domestic violence advocates do is hard. This is a complex issue. And it really requires all our best thinking, energy, and commitment, to figure out how to do this right.

I think that the Not Enough study gave us some really clear guidance about where there are still practices that are problematic practices that can be improved and also point to areas where more support can be provided to the field to help more programs that want to enhance their response to domestic violence do that more readily.

So I'm going to stop now, and I'll turn it back over to David.

David Camporeale: Thank you so much Anne and Marylouise for that excellent national perspective on this sobering but also hopeful issue.

Next and certainly not least we'll hear from Mary Roberto and Ruth Glenn both from Colorado Department of Human Services, which has developed a very successful partnership between its TANF agency and domestic violence professionals in the community and to hopefully help illustrate for any of our attendees who are out there in the field about how they could take the

excellent high level information presented and use it in their local communities. So without further ado, Mary and Ruth.

Ruth Glenn: Great, thank you. This is Ruth Glenn, Director of the Domestic Violence Program with the Department of Human Services and with me is?

Mary Roberto: Mary Roberto. I'm a Section Manager with the Colorado Works Program.

Ruth Glenn: As David said we want to provide a brief overview of some of the strategies and models that we've used here in Colorado to address some of the needs and deficiencies and successes that Anne has outlined in the presentation that she just provided.

We feel very fortunate here in Colorado. In some ways we have been forced to collaborate in the beginning. But it certainly has worked out in the past two years as a very successful collaboration. And we'll talk a little bit more about that as we walk through the presentation.

The four models that came to mind for us when we were reviewing the issues around eliminating barriers for TANF and domestic violence victim-survivors were the models that we have in place currently in Colorado which are the Family Violence Options, the Collocation Project, TANF funding, and some of the elements of that that have assisted in our collaboration.

And then, certainly, last but not least, is the promoting responsible fatherhood. And we'll explain that in a bit more detail later because I'm sure most of you are asking well how does that work? But it's a really unique and creative approach to dealing with domestic violence victims and TANF.

So the first one that we'll cover (and Mary and I are going to tag team a bit) is the family violence option and specifically the training.

But just so you know, we have a State rule in that we adopted the family violence waiver and options here in Colorado. We developed a State rule that insisted that we have protocols on how to address victim-survivors who are presenting and requiring and asking for TANF.

And, out of those rules, training was developed. And we are now currently delivering training very frequently to TANF workers statewide.

Initially we had worked with consultants and other entities to deliver that training. But after further assessment and continual review of the training, Colorado Works and State domestic violence program got together and determined that probably the best delivery because of our collaboration was for that to come from the State domestic violence program. In other words, to really ensure that we were delivering the most accurate and available information to TANF workers so that they can provide the most comprehensive and immediate services to domestic violence victims, those survivors who are seeking TANF services.

Mary Roberto: And just to add a little bit to what Ruth just said—this is Mary Roberto—I think this is one of the ways that we have just began to look at how our collaboration evolves from I think it was 2000 or 2001 when we actually elected the FVO.

And Ruth said we were somewhat forced to get together and talk about the issue of course.

But what came together as a result is not just a collaboration between TANF and the domestic violence program but also input from child welfare and other cross-cutting issues as they relates to domestic violence and child support.

So we all really got together and started talking about the issue itself and how one person in the TANF office may be involved in all these different programs, and what's the best plan, and who can facilitate the best plan as opposed to just a plan or four of five different plans.

Ruth Glenn: And given that we felt pretty confident that we're increasing and continuing to provide the best that we can in the way of domestic violence service delivery for those TANF workers who are responding to domestic violence victims seeking TANF services.

So it's that trickle down that we're hoping that we're demonstrating on the family violence option at the State level for county and TANF workers to be able to do a better job for victims and survivors.

The next model that we wanted to talk about is the collocation project. The collocation project is still in its infancy. We just completed year one of the pilot project for having DV [domestic violence] advocates in TANF offices.

There as Anne mentioned in her presentation there is a need to provide some specific services for victims and survivors who present in TANF offices. So we were hoping that the advocates would be able to do that.

And really most importantly was doing the cross-training and referrals. And a lot of learning on our behalf—and we'll talk a little bit more about that later—was that there really is a need for cross-training.

So not only can advocates provide the advocacy or immediate access for victims and survivors, but really also understand how TANF works and what are some of the barriers, and what are the policies and procedures that can prevent TANF workers from responding as appropriately as possible and then also how to help victims and survivors navigate the system.

We are very pleased that the collocation project is now being renewed for two more years. And it's real creative use of TANF funds that were available through a Statewide strategic use fund that we have here in Colorado. And I'll let Mary explain a little bit more about the SPSA funding and how it's supporting this collocation project.

Mary Roberto: A few years ago we put together, through some extra TANF dollars that we had at that time, some opportunities for local and State agencies to apply for funds for demonstration projects like this with TANF dollars.

And luckily, we had the opportunity to put this together. And I think how many counties?

Ruth Glenn: We're doing five sites and ten counties.

Mary Roberto: Ten.

Ruth Glenn: We cover ten counties.

Mary Roberto: Yes, and that's a pretty big area in Colorado. So we are putting together the elements that work and replicating them throughout the state. We learn that the sites get to talk to the other counties about working and some of the strengths and weaknesses in the programs and the processes.

Ruth Glenn: Okay, thank you Mary.

Next is really talking about TANF funding in general and how it supports some of the initiatives or strategies that we use here in Colorado to address domestic violence.

And first and foremost is that we get a very small or small block grant from TANF Colorado Works to support the domestic violence programs which goes along with the SPSA funding that Marylouise spoke of earlier and really is targeted to the TANF eligible victim-survivor population of those local DV programs.

So we get the money at the State domestic violence program. That money gets passed through to the local domestic violence programs that we're already funding but with a specific target to those that are TANF eligible.

The other two elements of the TANF funding that I thought was more important to mention were the collocation project. I think that that's a really key and creative use of TANF funding to ensure that we have the ability to provide those direct services to victims and survivors.

And then also continue to figure out ways of developing more replication across the State so that it's not just confined to a pilot project but it gives us those couple of years to assess how the project is doing and then also figure out ways of how to replicate that into the future. And it just doesn't stop. It continues to grow and really addresses those areas that Anne had outlined.

And then always the FVO training, the Family Violence Option training, part of our collaboration and coordination is that we don't have a lot of capacity and resources in the State domestic violence program.

So what we've done is we've worked with Colorado Works. And Colorado Works has supported the State domestic violence program conducting that training which [may be] as simple as providing the supplies to helping us arrange for site locations, evaluations and those types of things.

So basically what it boils down to is for the Family Violence Option training is that the State domestic violence program provides the personnel. And then for the most part TANF covers everything else to ensure that that training happens.

Is there anything you want to add to TANF funding?

Mary Roberto: Yes, just that more recently the use of the TANF emergency fund assisted us in helping victims as well as other individuals who were in poverty through nonrecurring short-term benefits.

So the Colorado counties were encouraged to spend. That's how we draw down the ARRA dollars through the emergency fund.

So there was sort of a push and a benefit to assisting individuals into temporary housing that needed it and also into employment. So those were the two programs that we sort of concentrated on with the TANF emergency fund.

And then, probably a year or two [later] they increased the benefits to all clients in Colorado (where a) 5% in a Senate bill that was passed here in the state.

So that was an obvious assistance to victims and survivors but also to the population in general, which was I think something that Anne alluded to.

Those benefits are a bridge, and we have to continue to look at that not just ongoing, but also what we can do to help relocation and things like that that aren't a recurrent benefit.

Ruth Glenn: Thank you.

And now the next model that we'll talk about is really the promoting responsible fatherhood community access grant. This grant was acquired by Colorado Works approximately four years ago.

As part of that grant—for those of you who aren't aware—part of that grant required that the local programs collaborate with domestic violence programs. As you can imagine, this presented a real challenge.

But as I stated earlier, it also kind of forced our hand here at the State level around collaboration.

And I know forced is a strong term but it really helped us to identify that we needed to be able to coordinate and collaborate at the State level in order to ask the local programs, the domestic violence community, and the fatherhood community to collaborate.

As part of the collaboration they were requested (the fatherhood programs were required) to develop protocols and screening instruments.

So the way that we approached that is that we did a lot of work at the State level. Anne Menard was involved in that and I believe Marylouise, to some degree, was involved in that, and really how to best address the issues for fatherhood programs that may have to provide a response to domestic violence vendors and/or victims and really beginning with the kind of domestic violence 101 and then carrying them through how to intervene and how to address the issues within their own individual programs.

I must say it was an adventure. We had some great stuff come out of that and we'll talk more about that.

But it really enabled us to have this collaboration at State level with the fatherhood program. And then certainly the DV programs at a local level to some degree are collaborating with the local fatherhood programs to some degree.

And from our perspective when we go back to that overall statistic in regards to how many victim-survivors access TANF, we're very much aware that there are many cross-intersecting issues and clients that may be seen in the fatherhood program as well as the DV programs which are receiving TANF or may be receiving TANF.

Was there anything you wanted to add on that?

Mary Roberto: I would be remiss if I did not at least speak to the Colorado Men Against Domestic Violence.

As part of the fatherhood work that's occurred in Colorado and the collaboration at the State and local level with the domestic violence

community and the State domestic violence program, the Colorado Man Against Domestic Violence was born.

The group has been in existence about a year, year and a half. And they really are addressing how men can best speak to the issue of domestic violence and do it in a Statewide way and in way that is best for victims and survivors but also addressing any issues that may come up. In regard to vendors, the group is really involved in local activities, really involved in awareness activities and continuing to grow and do some strategic work themselves about men being involved in the issue of domestic violence, preventing domestic violence.

We want to talk quickly about what we see as some of our successes. And when we say successes, we say that literally, because there's always something that can be added or done differently or whatever.

But I think when we looked at our successes and as we were preparing for this Webinar today, we looked at the whole idea that we are doing more and more cross-training and educating personnel who intervene in the lives of domestic violence, victims and survivors who were also accessing TANF.

Certainly at the local level and certainly at the State level, Mary and I could both speak to many conversations that we've had or many trainings that we've done even at the State level so that our folks understand how they can best prevent and intervene and provide crisis support and that kind of thing to victims and survivors.

And then the collaborations that have been developed are really quite remarkable. And they are not just a result of the collocation project. And they certainly aren't just as a result of the local fatherhood and DV programs collaborations.

But they really also stem from what Mary said, which is that as we do this work, we certainly find the opportunities and the need to talk with child welfare, to talk to aging and adult, to talk to child support enforcement.

So they—those connections have done nothing but enhance the collaborations between the DV community and the TANF work.

And then as you've seen, just really being creative and thoughtful about how to best use TANF funds to further that support to DV victims and survivors.

As you can tell by the presentation that [support] does not always need to or can result in a direct service. It really is more about a strategic approach to making sure that we can do the best for victims and survivors.

And then one of the biggest elements that seems to have come out of this and continues to grow by the way is the development of standards—standard policies and procedures and rules and approaches and practices throughout TANF casework, throughout DV program work, throughout fatherhood program work, and moving toward a standard so that everyone has the same definition, the same approach, the same philosophy about how to best support victims and survivors.

Ruth Glenn: Great, did you wanted to talk to that Mary? Okay.

Mary Roberto: That's my long-winded contribution.

Ruth Glenn: And then the lessons learned, I'll just run through the list really quickly.

Keep needs of victims and survivors first. Oftentimes we get involved in the work and we forget what it might be and who our true customer is, who our bottom-line customer is.

We must continue to have the difficult conversations. I think Mary can certainly speak to this, but—and so can Anne who's involved in a couple of other State initiatives—that you've got to just be willing to have a difficult conversation.

There's certainly different philosophies or ideas about how we can best serve those cross clients. But you've just got to be willing to have a difficult conversation.

Always keep leveraging of resources in mind. Mary's probably much better at that than I am. But really being creative and thinking outside the box to leverage all the resources at your disposal, understand the barriers that exist for systems. There's policies, there's procedures—all of those kinds of things that do set up barriers.

Again, as Anne alluded to, that in our minds we know that what's probably not in the best interest of a particular case or individual on a case, but just needing to understand that and then helping people either traverse that barrier or figure out how we can stay within the barriers but provide the best service we can.

I think the biggest piece for me is to gain an understanding regarding commonalities. We—even though we have different missions or philosophies or those kinds of things—have so many things in common.

For instance, child welfare is about the best interest and safety of the child. Well so is domestic violence. Conversely, it's about the best interest and

safety of any victim of domestic violence. And how can we make sure that we are addressing things from that common space?

And then to understand that collaboration does not happen overnight.

Mary Roberto: And then just some recommendations to work together and create standards and procedures for both entities.

Just a quick example is when that when we first started doing the FVO training, there was a realization that we needed to come to some consistency and be willing and just be willing to continually look at what those standards and procedures are and make them fluid so you can work within an ever-changing environment, including program content and curriculums.

When you do TANF training you should talk about domestic violence and you should talk about those procedures. You should talk about the standards.

And, when DV advocates talk about TANF they should all have the same language and continue to talk. Don't be afraid to pick up the phone and call that person or that agency and say hey, we need to sit down and kind of figure this out. People are willing just as long as somebody instigates that. It's how it works.

Then again, continually assess the victim-survivor needs from the system. There are some best practices out there and there are needs. So make that a priority to continue to look.

And I'll hand it over to David so we can get some questions and answers to questions hopefully.

David Camporeale: Well thank you so much to all four of our presenters for their excellent presentations.

Just a reminder to people that you could click on the Q&A box at the top of your screen and then type in any questions you might have.

I would also, while people are doing that, just say that at the Welfare Peer TA Web site which you could all access by just typing in Welfare Peer TA in Google rather than me reading it in a long string, you could download these excellent presentations.

Or if you or your organization needs individualized assistance, I highly suggest that you put in a Welfare Peer TA request for help. And we would be happy to respond to that and to either help you ourselves or to point you in the direction of the people in your community that can help you.

We're here to do everything we can to provide you with the tools you need to better serve our clients.

So our first question is a good one. It's sort of for all of our presenters collectively.

What's the best way for a TANF agency or a DV agency to respond, if the client who's facing DV concerns does not qualify for TANF either because they don't have a child or because they don't—they're not inside the income thresholds for the State which are quite low in some places?

Anne Menard: Are we—this is Anne Menard. Are we all still live?

David Camporeale: You are. I hope any way. I actually want to know the answer to that as well.

Anne Menard: Well I mean I'll start and then I'd be interested...

David Camporeale: Yes.

Anne Menard: ...in Ruth and Mary's response or Marylouise's response.

I think that's going to vary from State to state. There are so many different kinds of resources that—a limited number of resources that are shrinking every day.

But I think one of the benefits of a collaboration is that it's more likely in a kind of collaborative, when there's been a collaborative relationship for you, for the TANF agency or the DV agency where whichever door this individual walks through to then identify what alternatives might exist in that community or within the State and what kind of resources can be brought to bear.

Is there a relocation fund that either the TANF agency might be aware of or that the DV agency might be aware of?

So I think in a situation like that, it's really about identifying what the options are and then figuring out who can help access those resources for the victim.

There are some grant programs that have been developed within the TANF DV community that are responsive to these kinds of emergency economic situations that victims find themselves in that the DV State coalition or the local DV program may know about. The national resource centers can also

sometimes help identify resources that might be appropriate given the circumstances, given the state.

David Camporeale: Okay. Did anyone else want to chime in or...

Mary Roberto: Just quickly. This is Mary Roberto. I think the question was about whether or not they have a child who's eligible or maybe they...

David Camporeale: Yes.

((Crosstalk))

Mary Roberto: ...they're not eligible themselves?

David Camporeale: The observation was essentially that the survey—there was only 5% of people who covered, TANF agencies, what not and that, sometimes people who are facing domestic violence aren't going to be eligible for TANF one way or another. So what do we do?

Woman: Yes.

Mary Roberto: I see.

David Camporeale: Yes.

Mary Roberto: Like Anne said, there are programs. And I think that sometimes we operate under maybe something that we think to be true that isn't true.

And one of those things that I found is that in TANF offices if an individual is ineligible, they may not be eligible for ongoing assistance payments or TANF

assistance payments. But most often, if they're not eligible for ongoing [assistance] they are eligible for a nonrecurrent short-term benefit.

Some of the eligibility requirements are—in Colorado would allow for us to help an individual who isn't eligible for assistance. But we could relocate them and things like that.

And also emergency services that are paid for through TANF, we don't look at things like whether or not they're lawfully present and things like that, because it is an emergency service.

So I would just encourage people to get educated on what TANF can do and hopefully get together and talk about that and what makes sense. But the collaboration is definitely important.

David Camporeale: Yes, I couldn't agree more. Similarly we just got another question. Are there any benefits for a client who does not qualify for TANF because they do not have a child, perhaps if they're an illegal immigrant or a noncustodial parent?

And I would actually just chime in and say that child only cases are a huge portion of the TANF overall caseload and that in most cases if the child is a citizen, there are services available for them. And if they're not citizens, then you have to sort of look elsewhere to nongovernment organizations or to other social service agencies.

We also have a question about child support enforcement which is a critical, critical piece of the survival strategy for many people.

Was child support enforcement part of the collaboration for Colorado? And if so, what role did it play? And if not, what role do you think it could play?

Ruth Glenn: I'll respond to that. This is Ruth Glenn. When we developed this project we did not do a great amount of collaboration with our child support enforcement. It was more out of a necessity to kind of move forward because we had the funds available.

And then secondly are child support enforcement looks a bit differently at the State level and the local level than it does for some other States.

And so that is not to say that it will not happen in the future. And particularly now that we're going to develop a best practice model and that kind of thing, it just was not an option for us at that time.

But if anyone is exploring that idea I would highly encourage that is one of the partners you bring in immediately.

Conversely, we were not able to collaborate with Child Protection Services either, which was a missing partner in this collocation project.

And again, I am hoping that as we move forward that not only can we invite those people to the table and begin to collaborate with them but that they can also use the model that we've developed out of this pilot to replicate their own collocation projects or certainly join with the TANF to make that happen.

David Camporeale: All right, I agree. Go ahead.

Anne Menard: I would — this is Anne. And I would say that we found lots of variation across the country in terms of the strength of the collaborations between

domestic violence programs and child support programs and the collaboration that includes both TANF child support and DV organizations. And, clearly, where there are strong collaborations that involve the three systems, they can certainly work to the benefit of victims getting a more holistic response to their needs.

What the research and experience tell us in the area of child support is that, well over 90% of domestic violence victims want child support if it can be enforced safely.

So again, it's not an issue of whether we can figure out how to proceed collecting child support in ways that don't place a victim in danger. And that danger will be different—the risks that a victim faces might be different for different victim.

David Camporeale: Yes. And I know that child support enforcement has policies in place to do those things. It's just a matter of the implementation issues—are they actually being implemented on the local level consistently?

So we have another question. What would be the best way to collaborate between DV centers and TANF offices if there are no funds available to provide a collocated DV advocate at the TANF office? That's a really critical question, I think, for a lot of people listening.

Woman: Right.

Ruth Glenn: Well I would like to speak to this and then I would certainly invite Mary and Anne and Marylouise to respond.

We did not have a fund initially. But we did do a great amount of collaboration with the local domestic violence programs through the FVO training. So what we did is when we would put on the FVO trainings for the TANF workers, we would invite the community domestic violence advocates to attend so that they would know what the TANF workers were getting in regards to training.

And then also we would use their evaluations to make sure that we were either addressing issues of domestic violence as appropriately as possible but also if they were community specific type things.

For instance, when we go to the northeastern plains and do an FVO training it's going to look a lot different for TANF workers and domestic violence advocates there then it might be for the mountains.

So we did a lot of that in the first couple of years. And I must tell you that it was really quite successful in that everyone felt like they were getting the same information and that collaborations were happening on the spot versus this collocation project. And I think that's what's helped our collocation project as well.

David Camporeale: Are there...

Anne Menard: Yes I think that's right. I would just—this is Anne and I would just add one quick thing.

Certainly, another model, that again seems to hold lots of promises, is when it's not possible because of resources to do a full-fledged collocation project.

Another alternative is to train, more deeply train, some TANF workers so that there's internal resources within the TANF office.

The expectation is not that every TANF worker becomes a DV expert or DV specialist but that there are resources within the agency so when domestic violence issues come up, there's more capacity to respond with the domestic violence programs as obvious backups. So that's another model that we've seen work quite well.

David Camporeale: Well, I'd like to be considerate to everyone. We're already 5 minutes over and so we're going to bring this Webinar to a close. But just to thank everybody and also to say to those questioners that we didn't get to, I will do my best to compile them and send them around to the panelists and do my best to get back to you.

And if we don't, I apologize. I would again encourage you to submit a question via the Welfare Peer TA Networks because I want to answer each of your important questions.

Now we just have a few very brief poll questions just to see what a good or bad job that we might have done. Do we have those up?

Ah, the presenters had valuable information to share?

Next question. The logistics of the Webinar ran smoothly?

Next question. I have a better understanding of resources available to TANF agencies to help create partnerships and train staff on domestic violence?

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

And I think - is that it or do we have one more? Oh one more. I learned how TANF agencies can make the workplace safer for TANF participants fleeing abuse?

Oh we have another one. I learned about strategies that I can use for creating a partnership between my TANF agency and local domestic violence community?

So, once again, I would just like to thank each of our presenters from the bottom of my heart for the important work that they do and to thank everybody who is on the line who took the time out of their busy, busy schedules to attend this domestic violence Webinar for all the important work that I know you do in your local communities.

I'm David Camporeale and thank you so much for attending today's Webinar.

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

END