

LIGHTLY EDITED FILE

National Alliance for Safe Housing

Zoom Meeting

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CART Provided by Megan Stumm, RPR

>> Suzanne: Hello, everybody.

Good morning and good afternoon, depending on where you are.

We're going to wait just one more minute to let folks sign in and then we'll begin.

>> Suzanne: Okay!

Well, I think we have a critical mass and we've got a lot to talk about today, so I'm excited to help get this webinar started.

My name is Suzanne Marcus, I'm with the National Alliance for Safe Housing and I'm joined by my colleague Kris Billhardt, also from NASH.

I'd like to welcome everyone to the first two webinars in our series exploring the unique value and strengths alongside the challenges to co-location and co-working models to increase access for survivors within systems so that they so often have to engage, including housing, child welfare, social services, and the like.

Jenny, slide two, please.

This webinar is part of NASH's work -- excuse me.

One thing I wanted to mention.

Jenny, could you go back?

I'm sorry.

I wanted to mention this is one of two webinars.

So this week we're going to be talking about co-location and co-working to increase access for survivors in a variety of different systems.

Next week we're going to be doing a deep dive into domestic violence/sexual assault advocates working within homeless housing settings and vice versa.

So please join us next week if you'd like to explore more deeply what this model looks like within the housing/homeless context.

Okay.

Next slide.

Thank you.

So this webinar is part of our work with the Domestic Violence and Housing Technical Assistance -- technical assistance consortium, which is an unprecedented partnership between the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Justice, and the

Department of Housing and Urban Development.

That brings together us, the National Alliance for Safe Housing, along with other technical assistance providers such as the Collaborative Solutions, the National Network to End Domestic Violence, the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, the National

4

Sexual Violence Resource Center, and the Corporation for Supportive Housing.

We coordinate our efforts through the consortium to provide technical assistance and training at this important intersection of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and homelessness and housing.

Next slide, please.

So five years ago in a national safe housing needs assessment we learned that a relatively small amount of organizations use co-location models to increase survivor access to housing, but all of those who did reported that their co-location practice greatly assisted survivors with their housing needs.

And we suspect that over the years, more and more partnerships have emerged, and today NASH in partnership with the National Network to End Domestic

Violence is excited to explore further some of these cross-sector co-location models in conversation with our panelists from the Oregon Department of Human Services, co-located advocacy program, the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and the Oklahoma City Homeless Alliance Palomar Family Justice Center housing navigator program.

Next slide, please.

5

So today the webinar will explore what makes for successful co-location, co-working partnerships, including bridging cultural differences across the fields, addressing confidentiality considerations and ensuring the clear delineation of roles while working on-site together.

Panelists will also provide insight on how such partnerships should be structured, how they improve survivors' experiences, increase racial and gender equity, and how they can contribute to survivors' access to safe housing options.

Next slide.

So we'll begin with discussing the intersection of domestic violence and sexual assault, homeless/housing, race and equity and the impact of COVID-19.

We'll introduce our wonderful panel, and then have a panel discussion around these various dynamics around co-location and co-advocacy.

And hope to have enough time to answer questions from our participants.

Next slide, please.

So in order to set the context for discussing the potential for how these co-location and co-working partnerships can address race and gender inequity within the systems that they exist, we need to

6

highlight how DVSA, homeless/housing, race inequity and the impact of COVID-19 are all interconnected.

Next slide, please.

So we'd like to share this info graphic that our partners at the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence developed to illustrate these intersections.

[video playing]

>> Homelessness is an issue that far too many people face.

People of color, specifically Black people, other persons of color, and Indigenous people experience homelessness in a dramatically different way than their white counterparts.

People who hold multiple identities, such as those who live at the intersections of disability, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and more, experience compounded barriers that further homelessness and housing instability.

A recent study found that 66% of people experiencing homelessness were Black while 28% were white.

Black individuals are only 13% of the U.S. general population compared to 74% of those who are white.

Rates of homelessness within Native communities are 3 to 8 times higher than that of the general population.

In total, 78% of people experiencing homelessness

7

identified as people of color.

This overrepresentation of Indigenous, Black, and other people of color experiencing homelessness cannot be explained by poverty or identity alone.

Structural racism, historical policies, institutional practices, and cultural narratives that perpetuate racial inequity put people of color at a disadvantage in obtaining safe and affordable housing.

Statistically women of color are much more likely to experience domestic and sexual violence and survivors often face network impoverishment.

Network impoverishment occurs when the addition of a financially distressed household member places an extra strain on family resources.

Oftentimes we tell a survivor experiencing homelessness to go to a relative or friend's house, however, network impoverishment can cause immense burdens on the existing limited finances and available support from that network.

Racial disparities arise at every juncture, from the legal system to housing to health care to child welfare to public benefits.

Understanding the intersections between domestic and sexual violence, racism and homelessness and applying an equity, survivor-centered lens in our work is the

8

only pathway to stability, safe housing, and healing for all survivors.

If we want to address racial inequity, we have to acknowledge it, learn about it, and talk about it so we can do more about it together.

To learn more, visit safehousingpartnerships.org.

>> Suzanne: Thank you.

Next slide.

Thank you so much.

So this disparate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color is not surprising, given all that we heard from this info graphic and all that we know about the linkages between access to safe, stable housing, safety, and wellness.

Next slide, please.

And due to the historical racial discrimination and red-lining and housing policies, poor communities of color live in disproportionately segregated neighborhoods with less investments and food and medical resources, and this is particularly isolating for people of color living in rural communities. So social justice movements often include both bold actions by activists outside systems, coupled with critical interventions from within.

9

And so now I'll hand it over to Kris Billhardt who will facilitate a discussion highlighting co-location models for system interventions from within.

>> Kris Billhardt: Thanks, Suzanne.

And welcome, everybody.

I have the distinct pleasure of starting us off by

sharing just brief introductions to each of our wonderful panelists.

This is going to be a great discussion today.

First we have Amber Harchuk, she coordinates the three domestic violence programs within the Oregon Department of Human Services Self-Sufficiency Programs.

Previously to joining DHS eight years ago, she worked as a domestic and sexual violence advocate, developed and trained leadership programs for youth and worked in a management position at Central Michigan University.

Amber believes that community collaboration enhances relationships and increases support for survivors.

So welcome, Amber.

Next we have Norma Obrist.

She's the director of services at Tides of Change in Tillamook, Oregon.

Yes, 14 years, including as a bilingual advocate and a co-located advocate at the Oregon DHS for about 7

10

years.

Norma has deep experience assisting survivors and working with the Latinx community.

One of her passions is to connect people with immigration legal services that can help them with

visas in VAWA cases.

Now, moving over to our Washington contingent, Washington state, we've got Leigh Hoffheimer who is an activist, who has been an activist and advocate for 30 years.

She's been working for the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, which we call WSCADV, for 25 years.

As a reproductive justice advocate Leigh fosters pragmatic approaches that remove barriers to survivors and access to excellent reproductive health services, health equity and housing justice and working towards a future that supports all kinds of families to live freely without violence.

Joining, continuing in the Washington state contingent we've got Daniela Aguilar.

She's been on the YWCA Yakima team in Yakima, Washington, for 7 years.

-- housing assistance and offsite crisis support.

Now she's working in the agency's prevention and

11

education program and she seeks to make change addressing the root causes of violence, shifting the culture of conversations and promoting healthy

relationships among all people in the Yakima County and surrounding communities.

Dani is a proud first generation student who was her high school class valedictorian and completed her undergraduate degree from Washington State University. Okay.

Let's move to Oklahoma.

From Oklahoma, we have Jessica Bishop, who received her MSW degree from the University of Oklahoma.

As a student she was part of a team that helped develop victim centered sexual assault interview tools for police in Thailand.

She has worked as a permanency planning specialist, behavioral health case manager, and in 2019 she joined the staff of the Homeless Alliance to serve as the Palomar housing navigator.

Let me go back to Washington state for just a moment.

I misordered my bios on my sheet of paper here.

Katrina Salisbury is also with the Washington state contingent.

She's a parent advocator with Catholic Charities in Washington.

She's one of the original members in the home visiting

program part of the innovative partnership between YWCA Yakima and parents and teachers program.

She has a depth of experience with partnerships and supports families experiencing domestic violence.

So that is a lot of people and a lot of expertise that we have here today.

We're going to move to the questions for the panel now and we'll start with -- we'll start with the slide that's up right now.

Oregon Department of Human Services, co-located advocacy program.

So I'm wondering if we can hear from Amber and Norma.

What is your co-working or co-location project look like?

And what motivated you to enact it?

>> Amber: Thank you, Kris.

Hello, everyone.

Again, my name's Amber Harchuk with the Oregon Department of Human Services.

And our co-location model is co-locating domestic violence sexual assault advocates in all of our Oregon Department of Human Services self-sufficiency and child welfare offices.

I know we all call that a little bit different so our self-sufficiency is program benefits like our food stamps, the cash assistance program, and temporary assistance for domestic violence survivors program, which I'll touch on a little bit as we talk about this co-location model.

And in our child welfare or child protective services offices.

And so we have our advocates co-located within all of these offices to really support survivors as they're working through both of those systems.

Accessing benefits that are needed for their safety as well as when they're working with child protective services and what that looks like for their case, their situation, and providing that essential support.

Through that program we started it, it was started really as a need.

We saw the need where there's so many cases that have -- where domestic violence survivors are working with us in so many capacities and bringing in the expertise and the support, specifically for survivors.

In addition, they're completely confidential and we'll touch on that a little bit.

Our advocates have a lot of privilege, they're not

mandatory reporters and that helps significantly when

working in a state system where everyone is a mandatory reporter.

We're excited to talk about that today.

Norma, did you have anything that you wanted to add on the program as well?

>> Norma: So, thank you, Amber.

My name is Norma Obrist and I am the director of services at Tides of Change here in Tillamook, Oregon. One of the things that, Amber, I think you explain it very well, I had the honor to be the co-located advocate for about 7 years, so, you know, I was the advocate co-located at Department of Human Services and being able to assist people in having this co-location, this program I think has been great because we've been able to assist people and instead of having them go to different agencies, they can just come in and receive the same services, and any services related to domestic violence or sexual assault going on.

So it's been great having this co-location, and I'm currently supervising the disposition of the co-located advocate, so it's been great.

>> Kris Billhardt: Okay, thanks.

And we'll get into more details as we move into some of the questions.

Let's move on to the next program, Jenny.

Let's go to WSCADV, the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, home visitor partnership. And I'm going to ask you, Leigh and Dani and Katrina to kind of give us an overview of your partnership and what motivated you to get it started.

>> Leigh: Good morning, everyone.

Thank you for having us.

Thank you, Kris.

So, you know, we all know so many of us that when we listen to what survivors tell us helps most.

It's freedom to make their own choices about their lives and their families.

We know that housing is often the number one thing people are talking to us about, and the choice to stay in their own communities.

And when WSCADV and myself personally learned about the work of community based home visitors, hiring folks from their communities to work in their communities, we really learned about the incredible relationships and

creative ways that home visitors support families and we saw them as like very natural collaborators with or bridges to domestic violence advocacy services in the same community.

16

And we really saw home visitors as like community

prevention leaders and they were listening to what survivors told them that they needed most.

And, you know, WSCADV got, one of the things that also helped with establishing this partnership is we got early support from our department of children youth and families which contracts with home visiting programs in Washington.

They said, yeah, we'll give you a little money to try to facilitate this deeper relationship between community based home visiting programs and mobile community based advocacy programs, like parents and teachers of Catholic Charities and the YWCA of Yakima who are working in Latinx community with bilingual, bicultural Latinx advocates and home visitors.

These advocates and home visitors were mobile before the term mobile existed.

Meaning that this was and is how the relationship building and advocacy always happened, and the Latinx

communities in Yakima and by including the DV housing first flexible financial assistance initiative as part of this partnership for home visiting families it, didn't matter if folks were staying together it. Didn't matter if folks were undocumented. It didn't matter that folks didn't want to go to the YWCA to meet an advocate in person.

17

These advocates and home visitors were stabilizing well being where families were and the innovative partnership helped families get what they want and needed and follows what they said helps most, even with our covid restrictions.

So I'm going to pass it to Dani now.

>> Dani: Hello, everyone.

So once again, my name's Daniela Aguilar, I'm doing community outreach and education, here with the Y WCA Yakima.

Thank you, Leigh for sharing the overall vision and goal of how this innovative partnership really started. And I think it really began with having that relationship conversation where we all first met and really talked about our roles, what was this work going to look like, what were the impacts and effects that we

wanted to kind of present to our victims and families that we were mutually working with already in a small community such as Yakima county and understanding that the population here in the county is very much a high percentage of non-English speakers and non-U.S. citizens so we knew that those barriers needed to be eliminated, right?

We wanted to make sure that we can present a partnership with a program that was already doing the

18

education piece to an advocacy program such as the YWCA where we work with survivors and they are the driving individual in that vehicle, driving whatever needs they have.

So having this innovative partnership with parents as teachers just really gave us a really new lens to the whole, the whole shared goals that us and advocates and home visitors have for victims of domestic violence and those that were experiencing unhealthy situations in their homes.

So that was really a really, what's the word I'm looking for?

Really amazing and beautiful relationship that we built with our home visitors because we got to connect, we

got to get to know them, and it gave us a really important view of not just having a number that we can give a survivor to call for this education program, but really a face and a name to a home visitor that we know the role and we knew how they would respect their confidentiality.

And allow them to kind of drive those services if they wanted to be part of this YWCA partnership.

So I want to just pass this onto Katrina and just kind of have that insight as a home visitor.

>> Katrina: Great.

19

Thank you so much.

My name is Katrina Salisbury and I'm the parent educator with Catholic Charities serving central Washington.

And I -- this experience has been definitely fundamentally changed a lot of my perception of how we serve families and how we can partner with other agencies.

One of the main things as we got this started when we go into the situation I thought advocates, they're completely different from what we do.

And I kind of went into it thinking how is this going

to work?

You know, a little bit of anxiety and fear around it, like because we're so protective of our families that we serve for, you know, years, and specifically our undocumented families, there is fear for them even coming into our services.

And so going into this there was this, just this -- it was a real vulnerability for us to walk into this situation and like are we going to be able to build a team that's the right fit for families and our programs.

And so one of the things that we established very early in the beginning when we all get together and shared a

20

meal together.

And we started to listen to each other and dialogue and I think there was a level of I think humility and teachability with all of the staff.

We just kind of went in and just I really believe the best about each other and said, okay, what do you have to bring to the people and what do we have to bring to the table?

And how can we create a partnership in this situation.

And so we really started to establish shared values and

just saw a lot of what each agency brought to the table what, each person brought to the table, and so having that as the established really started to see ways that we could start to serve families and really meet them where they're at.

So I think in the relationship from a home visitor to a family, it's a very intimate relationship.

It's something that we weren't sure was going to be comfortable bringing an advocate into the situation, but it turns out that was completely unfounded because the work that the advocates brought to the table and brought us -- it brought another resource, another person to come alongside of us in areas that we need today grow as home visitors and areas that we maybe didn't see that we had the ability to use other

21

resources to support families, specifically our undocumented families.

And so one of the things that I want to speak to definitely that in my work and my team as well, one of the things that stuck with us that is drilled completely into our minds that has changed the way that we do work is that survivors are the best experts of their lives.

And I think in the past because we come from an education perspective it's like we kind of are, you know, coming in, want to support the families but it's an education based thing and so often, you know, we -- about child development so we give them that information.

But once we had that perspective of knowing not just survivors are their best experts but people are the best experts of their own lives.

It really changed the way we engaged with families. And so this definitely was a growth experience but growth of the best kind, so.

Yeah.

>> Kris Billhardt: Thank you, Katrina.

You're already getting into some of the many benefits between these new partnerships.

Thank you very much, Washington.

22

And we've got one more slide that this project wanted to have us see.

And you can move to the next slide, please.

Home is where the advocacy is.

That's beautiful.

Thank you.

Okay.

At OK, Oklahoma, where we'll hear from Jessica Bishop. Jessica, can you share an overview of your partnership and what motivated you and your organization to enact it?

>> Jessica: Sure.

Is he this is the brainchild of Megan Mueller, she was our director of community capacity building and she has since been promoted and I, forgive me, do not know what her current title is.

In any case, Megan about two and a half years ago she was getting a lot of just kind of direct referrals from our client service director here at Palomar and so she figured maybe I'll go do office hours over there and quickly realized that weekly office hours weren't going to fill this gap and that we needed a program.

She did some digging, we got private funding from one of the family foundations here in the city, got enough

23

to fund my full-time housing navigator position and we've been using our ESG grant to provide client services and financial support and those sort of things.

And so about a month ago we have another part-time housing navigator who will go full time in May so our project is growing.

And it's really seeing that clients are presenting at Palomar and they are experiencing homelessness at the Family Justice Center, they're not making it to our shelter and it's difficult to get connected into housing support services especially because although we are category 4 -- so we count -- our population is experiencing homelessness under category 4, for a lot of other programs they're not experiencing the level of chronicity but through our relationship with the Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency we're able to use a homeless preference towards getting them section 8 vouchers, we're able to use rapid rehousing funds to provide that two, maybe three-month rent support and then the Family Justice Center is linking us to all these other great DV/SA specific supports whether that's classes, whether that is safety planning, whether that's visits, lots of other programs that we have here that are able to do the things that we're

24

not.

And my mind is so bent from hearing everyone talk from

the other end and I'm the only housing guide. So it's really cool being over here and just being able to reach clients in a trauma informed environment. Our day shelter over at the Homeless Alliance is low barriers, we help you because you bleed red, there's all sorts of folks over there and that can be triggering for clients and having an environment that's conducive to healing and recovery and really pushing towards that level of resilience related to trauma is exciting.

I mentioned the other programs really run off a level of chronicity, whereas over here we don't run off of that and in many ways I see our program as a prevention program because if we're not going to the shelter and if we're not going from family member to family member and not having all of those moves there's fewer episodes that can be traumatic for kiddos, that can be traumatic for survivors, and so I really love being able to have that permanent housing support.

If it's a barrier in my state, it is everywhere, there's no beds, emergency shelter is so difficult to access, and so being able to link clients to permanent housing more rapidly because the Family Justice Center

to promote the necessary supports to promote the housing first is just really, really rewarding. I'll probably start repeating myself here, and I'm sure there will be a an opportunity to get into all that jazz in a minute.

We've been here a little over a year and it's thanks to our director seeing the need.

>> Kris Billhardt: That's great.

Thank you, Jessica, you talked about having two resources at your fingertips.

>> Jessica: They're both big umbrellas.

>> Kris Billhardt: I'm sure that shortcuts things for survivors and expedites the process that he might normally go through in an environment that feels safe for them.

That's great.

Okay.

Thanks.

All right.

Now we've got some overviews of these three different programs.

We're going to dig in a little bit deeper and move to the panelist questions.

The first question that I have I would like to direct to Amber and Norma with the Oregon program, the

co-location at DHS.

So the first question is what makes co-location of all the strategies you could use to, you know, fill this gap or meet this need, what makes it different from other strategies?

And what are some of its unique benefits?

And that could be for survivors, for the CPS workers or DHS workers, and advocates.

What makes it different, and what are some of the unique benefits?

Amber or Norma.

>> Amber: Thank you so much, Kris.

I can share some of the perspectives that we have as our Oregon Department of Human Services staff and Norma who's been a co-located advocate for many years can share some of the advocacy benefits.

I think one of the things that makes this so different is really the, it's a mutual benefit and I like to think three ways.

One, the survivor benefits greatly from this.

I think that our advocates also benefit from this and I think that our staff benefit incredibly from our co-location model.

Really thinking about how we interact with our survivors, our advocates are our domestic violence

experts.

They bring in a lens that we do not have, and when you're talking about looking at child protective services, looking at giving assistance in that capacity it's such a personal experience for the individuals engaged, it's also such a, it can be a traumatizing experience regardless of the outcome, right?

I mean, that's, you're talking about something that's most close and most personal and then you're bringing in your most personal relationship.

Our advocates give that lens first to our workers as well as the survivors.

So our staff have education that they're getting on a continual basis, our advocates provide training for our staff, really work with us.

We have in our self-sufficiency programs as well, I mentioned it earlier the temporary assistance for domestic violence survivors grant or TA DVS, much shorter to say, so I'll say that throughout, TA DVS is a \$1,200 financial support for survivors of domestic violence.

Which is often used for housing, and so we'll talk about what that, where that connection lies as well. And so our advocates support both in the child protective services, child welfare and in accessing

services and supports.

So they're training our staff on how we can best support survivors.

We also recognize how disproportionately our cases are impacted.

I wanted to share briefly, not long, but a little bit of data just to recognize in our child welfare systems, in our 2019 data shows that while Black and African American children are 3.8% of Oregon's population, they're 4.5% victims of child abuse.

And our American Indian or Alaskan Native children are 1.6% of our population but 2.9% victims of child abuse in our systems.

And we recognize that disproportionally and I think that's what makes co-location unique.

We're bringing in experts, the advocates that can really provide a helpful lens and help walk and teach us through each of these situations and how we can better support survivors.

I'm going to put the link to that data in the chat as well in case you're interested in looking at that and I will turn it to Norma to speak too for the benefits for the advocate side.

>> Norma: Thank you, Amber.

I think you just said it very well.

29

So I think being co-located and having these services the at Oregon department of human of human services is very, very beneficial for all parties involved, not only the survivors but to the Oregon Department of Human Services staff and to the advocates because they, this co-location allows us to be able to offer our services and instead of having the survivor go to different agencies to seek the services that they need, they just kind of have them all in one stop kind of thing.

And being able to have an advocate that is a confidential advocate that they can really talk to the advocate about everything really going on is a great way to really be able to safety plan accordingly with whatever's going on with their situation without the fear of being, you know, or speaking with a person who might be a mandatory reporter.

So they have that, the peace of mind that basically they can really tell us anything they want and nobody needs to know, you know.

It's going to stay confidential.

So it's very important, again, when it comes to safety planning for the safety of all survivors and the people that we serve.

For I would say one of the benefits for, you know,

30

Oregon Department of Human Services and not only self-sufficiency program but child welfare, it's that we're not asking them, you know, to become experts in domestic violence or sexual assault, we just want them to be able to make that connection to an advocate when, you know, abuse is being disclosed or when they believe there's something going on, it's always a great way to say here's a confidential advocate in and making that referral, making that connection.

And obviously for us, for advocates, I think, you know, it's a great collaboration because that allow us to be able to do our services and be able to have a place that is safe and it's confidential, it's a great thing and that allow us to be able to provide the services that we do.

>> Kris Billhardt: Thanks, Norma.

And I'm going to ask you to address, if you can, any further the issue that Amber raised, which is the overrepresentation of communities of color in the child welfare system.

And from your experience in 7 years as an advocate and now kind of overseeing the project for Tides of Change, how have you seen that on-site advocacy change the way survivors experience the child welfare system, which can feel very scary and all those other adjectives that

31

Amber used earlier.

And so especially for survivors from communities of color, how does on-site domestic violence and sexual violence advocacy change the way that they might experience the child welfare system?

>> Norma: Thank you, Kris.

So, yes, my experience working as the co-located advocate, also being for a very long time I was the only bilingual advocate in our agency.

Right now we are so lucky to have four bilingual, bicultural advocates, so I'm very excited about that. That's been a work in progress that, you know, we've

been working towards and now we have that so it's very, very amazing.

My experience has been especially I would say with the Latinx and the Hispanic community we have seen an increase even last year, we actually saw our services went up from 18% to 24% of the people that we serve that they identified as being Hispanic or English not being their primary language.

So it's just been really amazing to be able to, you know, have this collaboration where we can be part of, you know, the healing, the process, the, you know, helping survivors get connected with services.

32

Just like you mentioned, Kris, you know, especially for people in that -- you know, they identify as Hispanic or communities of color.

The Oregon Department of Human Services, you know, it can be a very scary system.

They identified that agency as a government agency that a lot of times there's a lot of fear, you know, going there to applying for services or to, you know, really be able to tell their story and what's really going on. There's also that fear of being turned in to child welfare.

So having someone by their side that can, you know, help them navigate the system, speak their language, get them connected to the services that they need and also, you know, assisting them in trauma informed way, it's very essential for a successful resolution in whatever is going on in their situation.

>> Kris Billhardt: Great.

Thank you, Norma.

Let's move to the Washington State program for the next couple of moments.

Leigh, there are often cultural differences between domestic and sexual violence, the DSV advocacy world and the culture surrounding that, and the culture of other disciplines, and that's one of the things that I

33

think we have to kind of figure out how to navigate when we're doing these deep partnerships because working together can be challenging because we're coming from different perspectives.

Can you share what you did in this project in the early stages to build relationships and to begin bridging these differences?

>> Leigh: Thanks, Kris.

I'd just like to say I loved when Katrina said, oh, who are these people?

Are we going to let them get anywhere near our families?

I think that's a really honest response and I think advocates probably feel the same way, like do people really know what they're talking about here.

One of the things we were able to do, this is all pre-covid so we were lucky in the time we started, we were able to bring as many advocates from the YWCA with decision makers and many home visitors from Katrina's office and again decision makers to spend a day together and we shared a meal.

And so -- we shared lunch together.

So the first half of the day was really around building connection and, you know, it was kind of a happy

34

accident, instead of going around and just saying your name and how long you've been at a place, we had people get up and have to share e-mail and what brought them to their work and because they're all from the same county and city people are like, oh, you went to the same community college, oh, I know this person.

And we let that go just as long as it went.

'Til everybody exchanged.

So you really had an opportunity to like know who to call, who you had a little connection with that started already.

And sometimes that can take a really long time for that to happen.

So that was like as I like to say a happy accident that we stumbled upon.

Do that again.

Then the first half of the day was really about like what's a day in the life of a home visitor, including they brought stuff to show us about how to make a toy for a baby out of what you just have in your house, to what is a day in the life of an advocate.

So asking some of those questions in.

The afternoon we had built this agenda together, the advocacy program and the home visitor program, which was the other thing, the coalition didn't decide, the

35

coalition like convened space and time to bring people together and helped facilitate them talking to each other but we were like, okay, what are the sticky -- what do you already know are going to be some of the sticky places.

Let's just get right to it.

So confidentiality process, documentation because in Washington state everyone's deputized to be a mandatory reporter.

So like separating child records from adult records.

What is it like when you call the DV program, like literally what does the advocate say.

Literally if I say I'm a home visitor are you going to say thank you so much for calling but let me talk to the person who needs help and I'll talk to you later.

How can we help bridge that, what would that look like?

And everybody had a chance to kind of work on sticky issues together and then before people left we had the decision makers, we said please bring your calendars, make the next time, two or three times they were going to get together to keep like talking about what's working, what's not working, because we really wanted this to be beyond, hey, here's a brochure and a phone number and another place to call and we'll show up at the same kind of human resources round table that we

36

all participate in.

We were really trying to find ways to say actually we think you all really had have some shared values where

you walk alongside families and advocates can learn from home visitors about like how to continue to work with a family when the person causing harm is a part of that conversation, and home visitors have the advantage of advocates knowing how to like navigate systems that are not doing what they're supposed to do for families and like how do you do that with the lens of thinking about confidentiality say, safer planning and what would it look like if we have a joint visit.

What about safety, happens if the person causing harm shows up and it's back to that basic, you forget about, well, you talk to the survivor and work out a plan.

You're not the domestic violence advocate, you're there doing a lovely parent education model around, you know, reach with your baby or educate with a book.

So Dani and Katrina could speak more to that, but like that -- so what we really are saying is like you got to put the time in beyond showing up at the same committee meeting.

You really have to put time in for as much the team to know each other and to be able to like air some of

those very practical real questions right out front and

then spent that time going forward.

And like, you know, part of the incentive of us getting together frankly was the DV housing first flexible funding assistance.

We've got people who are out in the community but like, oh, this is really unrestrictive money to help support families in stabilized housing.

So that was part of the incentive of getting people to -- getting home visitors to come and talk to us but it was also the incentive for advocates in the sense of like, oh, these folks in our backyard and I don't really know what they're doing.

>> Katrina: I just want to add to that, Leigh.

I think when we talk about safer planning for our families, when we're talking about setting, you know, these spaces for Europe families, this is that first step.

When we are creating these relationships with other agencies, with advocates, that that's that first step, that's safer planning because then they know, oh, this educator that I've been working with trusts this agency and it's not this -- weird kind of creepy, YWCA, there's a lot of families that react to that, it's a trigger to some families to be honest, like what does

this say about me if I'm getting these services.

But this partnership allowed us to remove that barrier for families and see it's not about you leaving your partner, it's not about you doing this, it's about how do we create a safer space and how do we support, our agency support that family to do that.

And I think too in the past prior to this, we would, when we did referrals to the YWCA and things like that it felt as if we were just handing them off, like it was just a hand-off, like, oh, here's that resource. But now it's completely different, it's not just us giving them a resource it's like both of us are I guess both of our agencies coming together to create space and give the resources that families need.

It's very different, that dynamic has completely changed I think for definitely on the home visitor side and for our agency, so.

>> Kris Billhardt: Thanks, Katrina.

Dani, do you have something to add about the unique ways that this project has helped survivors?

>> Dani: --

>> Kris Billhardt: Particularly survivors of color, Latinx survivors that you've been working with really

closely.

>> Dani: Definitely echoing what Katrina has shared.

And going back to the -- being the expert.

And really acknowledging when we came in together that we have some column barrier that's a lot of our mutual families were having as far as getting connected to services.

That being if it was location, if it was not having access to transportation or coming into an office that maybe they wanted to talk to someone, we were able to be that bridge, right, within that connection of the advocate and home visitor to allow the survivor to make those choices for themselves.

Again, building that autonomy in most of our DV cases, an individual loses.

So just kind of adding that into it, right.

And like usually whatever is needed we are able to now say yes to things that we need at home, and if it's your choice to stay at home we want to make sure we can create that safe plan that you can stay home, keep your house, your kids have services, you guys have a support system and even modeling whatever you want me to play as a role when I come in, connected with home visitor,

like my first time that I went to a home visit I was just that lady that was bringing in a brochure and diapers.

So I wasn't coming in with a label or an ID that said I'm a domestic violence advocate.

I came in just to kind of jump in to her curriculum that she was having for that mourning as healthy relationships, and, yes, maybe the partner wasn't home but it was still a way to make that connection within that parent, without me coming in with the label as an advocate.

So a safe space that was nonjudgmental or really focusing on what are those goals and the needs that the parent has in the home.

>> Leigh: And, Kris, if I could just add a tiny bit because I always say Katrina and Dani do this work without even -- I want to state the obvious.

They're speaking in a language that everyone's more comfortable with, someone's first language.

They're, in Yakima county and Yakima city we have ICE raids, they're not taking people places where they don't feel comfortable or word like who's going to see me coming or going.

Like that bicultural bilingual connection, of course you're just doing it, I'm just going to name the obvious, like that makes a huge difference in supporting survivors in the communities they choose to be in to answer your question directly, that that's

like part of the secrets -- not so secret sauce that happening.

>> Kris Billhardt: That's right.

And I think in both of these programs that we've heard from so far, and we'll get to Jessica in a second, connecting survivors to services who wouldn't necessarily pursue the traditional routes to seeking advocacy services.

So, you know, you keep using the phrase "happy accident."

Hi, here I am, and I'm a DV advocate and I have a whole host of things we can talk about and resources we can share with you that you didn't even know were going to be in this setting that we're in.

So that's -- and I love that phrase, being a bridge, being the bridge, that's a theme we're hearing across programs as well.

Okay.

Let's see.

Let's move to Jessica.

Jessica, what do you see are the benefits and the challenges, we talked a little bit about different culture when's two systems are working together in this deep kind of way.

What are some of the challenges and the benefits of

42

working as an embedded housing advocate within DV programs?

And if you can speak too to how your participation in case conferencing and co-advocacy really help increase access to housing for survivors, just by being there.

>> Jessica: Okay, yeah, sure.

So we started our pilot in about August of last year, so right when we started to fly, covid happened, right. And so I think our challenges are a lot of the same things you guys have expressed of like we all see through different lenses, understanding what you do and what you do, Family Justice Center has so many different providers in it and when covid happened we're all changing our processes and so it seems that we're always kind of updating what thing look like in each of our programs.

Some folks are virtual, some folks are here or there. So that is a little bit of a challenge but I don't think that that's necessarily super specific.

I mean it, comes with the territory but it is so much more intense because of covid.

But there's always hope and I'll address that in the next thing.

In one of these other questions.

What's really, really cool that I want to tell you

43

about is the coordinated case management meetings I participate in, this is standard over at the big house at the homeless alliance, a lot of providers in housing we do -- COCs, I am sorry, I'm doing the acronyms, in any case there are big housing groups or regional organizers that help direct the emergency service grant funding that we utilize.

So in each community you'll have someone like us, the homeless alliance, and we use a co-located model as well and so we have many many partners at the homeless alliance.

And so once a week, once every other week we get together for coordinated case management meetings for different populations, whether that's single adults,

families, youth, things like that.

So we get together and it will be -- I go to families a lot and so I see a lot of other advocates, I see folks from schools, I see mental health workers, street outreach folks, and so we're all getting together to see where our clients are interfacing at and so that what that really, really helps us do is to make sure clients are accessing the most readily accessible program with the shortest wait list that's going to provide them with the most support, making sure we're getting started and not duplicating exerts services.

44

I mentioned at families I see a person that works with positive tomorrows, and I've been working with a homeless person for, gosh, almost two months ago, y'all.

She said so and so came in and we're starting services. It sounded like her and her kiddos would be a better fit for the program.

How long would it have taken for us to figure that out, you know?

So it is just really, really great to be able to participate in those meetings at the homeless alliance, they're on Zoom now but otherwise they're back at the

homeless alliance and now we're using a similar thing at Palomar, Thursdays here when I'm done with this, I'll do the same thing, coordinated case management with Palomar but it will be with me and our poly victimize case managers and we'll collaborate and make sure clients are being linked up and supported holistically.

So it's really, really exciting stuff to be a part of this and it provides that weekly opportunity which is essential for this population, we believe, just to make sure that we're collaborating.

Yeah.

I think I'll probably start repeating myself if I don't

45

stop now.

>> Kris Billhardt: Can I ask you, though, Jessica, how do you deal with the confidentiality issues when you're working with survivors in case conferencing settings.

>> Jessica: Sure, so clients come into Palomar, they sign an overall release that releases any information to partners.

However for the homeless alliance when I take it back to the big house when clients are referred to me or any of our other programs we have a journey home multi

party release, it's a big release, it's a biggun, and it allows us just to share the demographics and so when what it sounds like is just like that, hey, I've got Jessica Bishop, she came in today and her and her kids are going to get things started with us.

We're going this route.

Something real general, right just to say we're starting services.

That allows our compliance specialist to check the computer, see if they're linked in anywhere else maybe we're not noticing here and really make sure we're wrapping around and catching any gap.

>> Kris Billhardt: Mm-hmm.

>> Jessica: Does that answer your question?

46

>> Kris Billhardt: Yeah, so you get releases and participants know where their information is going.

>> Jessica: Yeah, and either way, whichever way the bridge goes the Family Justice Center really has so many partners so I'm covered, I don't run into that barrier of I'm sorry, we can't confirm or deny services.

It happens when I call the shelter but that's because

they're not partners in the Family Justice Center.

So that doesn't happen to me anymore.

Remember working for DHS when you're the big bad state and I'm child welfare and I can call and I'm just trying to help.

And you're like are you kidding me?

Not here.

I'm telling you, dreams come true, guys.

These collaborations and bridges are magic really.

>> Kris Billhardt: Those are things that really have to be crafted in the beginning of the relationship, you really have to talk that stuff through so that there aren't any surprises so you can do informed consent with participants.

>> Jessica: I really feel my position at the Family Justice Center is essential.

If I were working at the YWCA shelter, for example, I

47

wouldn't be so well connect today all of these other resources.

Here I'm still connected to the Y but connected to so much more because the Family Justice Center mod jell a one stop shop.

I'm connected to so many housing specific resources

because the same thing, homeless alliance is designed to be a one stop shop.

We've got the shelter, we've got advocates, we've got case managers, all of that back at the house.

>> Kris Billhardt: The big house as you said.

>> Jessica: Yeah, that's what I call it and everybody's like I don't think that's what you're supposed to be calling it, Jessica.

>>

>> Kris Billhardt: Can I ask a little bit the training opportunities with these collaborations?

You're talking about multiple deep partnerships and access to different systems and resources that you have in the spot that you're in.

What does that do in terms of enhanced training opportunities?

>> Jessica: Yeah.

So part of what makes our partner model so successful

is that we are so easily, we can collaborate so easily with other folks in the community.

And that is through this maybe 20, 30-minute training that our compliance specialist Tara respectfully

everyone will do.

She'll link up with case managers another agency and she will provide them with a training that describes how to fulfill check requests that allow them to access our emergency service grants.

We have a number of ES Gs for different populations and things.

If you, so what happens is they're able to fulfill a check request.

I would be able to do they're able to do and although they're not necessarily one of the housing providers, they're one of our partners.

And so what that would look like is let's say our communal community mental health center, working services for so long, ready to go into housing, you're not the hope worker who's been working with them for so long isn't going to do a referral and have them gear up with somebody else.

You just, you've taken our training with tara, you're able to send the check request almost as though you're an internal partner although you're external and you're

49

not directly affiliated with us.

That would look like the person going to the

coordinated case management meeting, say I'm checking in with somebody, I'll health care income a couple of months.

You're sending an e-mail or linking up in CCM meetings and giving them a heads-up.

That allows more partners to access our funds and it also allows for my program specifically, I appreciate this because it allows a greater degree of transitional support.

After I have someone housed and they're no longer experiencing homelessness, I'm kind of obligated to take on a new client so for those additional three to maybe six months that they would potentially be eligible for more funding in our programs, their case manager can still link them to that although they're no longer working with their housing navigator.

There's a greater continuum of transitional support as well so the reach is greater, and it's more transitional, produces better outcomes, it's more sustainable.

>> Kris Billhardt: That's great.

And you talked about a specific training that allows people to access resources on behalf of survivors and

that's awesome.

And I think for my own experience with co-located programs, just the day to day cohabitation, if you will, with one another allows all kinds of natural opportunities to do cross training and learn more about what each other does and what is advocacy and what is parents as teachers program and all that kind of stuff that you learn just by spending time together.

So thanks for sharing that example.

>> Jessica: Also hotel requests too, anything where you've got to access our money, things that are really, really hard.

I say great, y'all, if you'll do this training material real quick you can fill this out and get things going. And the momentum is just so great and it allows me to be a broker of hope.

We're big about that around here.

>> Kris Billhardt: Broker of hope.

Yeah, really cuts through the bureaucracy that we see in a lot of systems when everybody knows how to access it and has the tools to do that.

Thank you.

I wanted to turn to, you know, your program, Jessica, is specific to housing because you're a housing navigator.

Amber and Norma, Leigh, Dani, and Bianca -- not Bianca, I'm so sorry, Katrina, you're not specifically focused on housing in the partnerships that you're doing.

And Leigh, you addressed this a little bit by talking about the flexible funding that's available, but anything more you can share with us about how even though your partnerships are not specifically focused on housing, how often do survivors safe housing issues come into focus and how does your project connect survivors to housing resources they might need.

>> Leigh: I guess -- you directed it to both of us but I'll start over here in Washington.

We've all seen the data that survivors say that affordable housing, safe affordable housing is one of the number one needs that they have.

And of course in Yakima county and with covid people have been even harder hit around needs around housing, so that to me may be the reason why somebody calls might be the reason -- may be the first priority that comes up but that opens that conversation, opens the door to more, and here I'd like to turn to like Dani or Katrina if you'd like to build from there.

>> Katrina: Yeah, I can just speak to it definitely,

yes, in Yakima county housing is a huge issue.

One of the things that I think with the flexible

funding that has been able to support some families, specifically if just really broke down some of the barriers that I think some up for families, so and I think it's like we have to look at it like in different layers, so one of the moms that I work with that received some funding had started out with her moving from California to Washington and so she had a license issue happen.

And then she ended up getting a ticket.

And then that ticket led to another ticket and then she didn't have insurance and so all of these barriers and money, what happens to her housing when she's not able to pay rent.

So we look at all of these things, with flexible funding it was one of those things we were able to assist her to be able to pay off that ticket, to be able to get her insurance so that those barriers weren't there so she was able to pay for her housing and so I think like when we are serving families it's one of those things that sometimes we don't see, sometimes families don't even tell us about these

things that are going on.

Sometimes they kind of hold it close to them and just when we were able to tell them, hey, we have these finances that we were able to partner with, it brings,

it takes away the barriers that and we're able to meet them where they're at and be able to create the systems for them to have safer families family situations.

So, yeah.

>> Kris Billhardt: That's a fantastic example.

Thank you, Katrina, for really emphasizing how things like a traffic ticket can really have a bearing on whether somebody can be in safe housing and maintain that.

So, and being able to listen to those little indicators and connect it back to that bigger issue is something it sounds like you all have gotten really adept at being able to do.

Thanks for that.

Dani, do you have anything to add to that?

How safe hugs comes into focus?

>> Dani: Yeah, I think with our conversation and when we have the approach of really gauging our home

visitors and understanding risk factors and maybe those controlling tactics that would happen in that home, we were able to get those gears together, right, the flexible financial assistance, being able to say yes instead of always feeling like we'd say no for little things even getting a little stool for mom that can now

reach her medication cabinet because abuser was always putting it on the top cabinet and she could not reach up there.

So going to her home and getting her that stool or providing one of our Hispanic moms a voucher for her to pay for an English class in one of the programs here in the city, and being able to have a gas voucher or a way to get there because she had limitation and there was financial controlling in the home.

So having to have that approach as it being survivor driven, her letting us know what those needs and that change for her to be able to promote stability in her home and also autonomy to make choices and having the advocate in the background be able to say, yes, we can definitely support you with that, and get that started, this is how we can do it, how do you feel about that. But still giving her that sense of autonomy, that right

to being able to make choices herself.

And feeling empowered that she could do that, and possibly eliminate that fear of not being able to make it on her own if she did decide to leave that abuser in the home.

Again, it definitely still felt like putting three gears together, survivor driven, trauma informed, engaging our community so our home visitors and

55

definitely working through that ability of having to provide that flexible funding.

Putting all those gears together and making sure it's for them, being promoted for their ability to stay home safe and the autonomy, so I'm going to repeat that all the time, but I think it was very important for them and meaningful to us to be able to do that.

>> Kris Billhardt: Great.

And repetition can be a good thing.

Thanks.

Norma and Amber, in the DH setting how often does safe housing issues come into focus and what are some of the ways that the advocacy, co-located advocacy program can help with that?

>> Amber: Thanks, Kris.

I see Norma kind of chuckle.

All the time I think is the answer.

The housing crisis and I don't use the term crisis lightly, it is, it's a housing crisis and a need.

And I think Leigh you said as well survivors come in and that's the first thing they're asking for is housing support.

I think it's three-fold.

56

Emergency, temporary, and then stable housing needs.

And for us often we have the TA DVS grant, that \$1,200 grant which is used most often when individuals are fleeing and so it's used for security deposits,

application, first month's rent, helping with those housing piece where's our advocates can help because we have \$1,200 which doesn't go very far any longer.

Housing costs are so high so you've got the emergency and temporary housing needs still that our advocates bring that conversation and walk with that survivor through their options.

Often they provide shelter, they do emergency hotel vouchers, we do emergency hotel vouchers as well so

really bringing in what resources do we have as a community to be able to support in this housing crisis. And in the child welfare side, often safe housing has a condition of their child safety plan.

Having that condition and the stress and the pressure around I've got to find something and it doesn't matter how nicely sometimes you can say it, if you're hearing a, we have the power inherently, we have the power because we're talking about your child.

And so having an advocate walk alongside to say here's how we can get the housing support, often providing housing support, it comes up in almost I'd say probably

57

almost every person we talked to housing is a concern. Having this co-location model really give that's added support to something so crucial and needed for our basic living.

>> Kris Billhardt: Mm-hmm.

Mm-hmm.

Norma, in your 7 years as an advocate, co-located advocate, did you find yourself trying to access housing resources for survivors quite a bit?

>> Norma: Always.

[Laughter]

>> Norma: Like Amber said, you know, obviously when we're working with survivors, that is one of, you know, the safety concerns, their primary concern, not having a safe place to go if they're trying to leave their abusive partner, significant other and not having a safe place to go, not being able to afford it.

I mean, we see that often, we live in a very rural area that, you know, I'm sure the housing crisis, it's all over, not just in this county, so being able to find an affordable place, being, well, being able to find something available to begin with, it's really hard and finding an affordable place is also very hard.

And we see a lot of issue that's come into place when

58

it comes to housing.

For example, especially in community of color, if someone is undocumented, if someone, you know, obviously if they're undocumented they won't have the social security, they might not be able to access, you know, federal funding or some type of different programs, they might not qualify for.

A lot of times, you know, we also run into, you know, language being a barrier, so then not able to

communicate, not able to fill out applications, not being able to get on the waiting list and as advocates, you know, we assist people with navigating all these different barriers, all these different systems.

We assist people in, you know, filling out applications or translated when it's needed.

A lot of times one of the things that we started doing, you know, a little while ago instead of having the survivor, you know, let's say the survivor might have children, might have transportation issues, and instead of telling the survivor, hey, there are all of these different low income apartments, go to each and every single one of them to pick up applications to get on their waiting list, so instead of having the survivor to do all of that we're like, hey, here, we have all of the different applications from all the different

59

apartments.

You can have them all right now, we can help you fill them out.

We can help them, you know, turn the application in, e-mail it, fax it, whatever they would like to do.

So I think that's, you know, something that it's very helpful for survivors because we're not putting you

know, an extra errand, another barrier, another thing on their to-do list when they already have a lot going on.

Also another thing that I think is very important when it comes to housing is not only assisting them with all of the process, but preparing for, you know, for what's coming, for example, what I mean with that is that when we're working with a survivor in, you know, we like to talk about like housing like readiness.

You know, like if you were to apply, are you going to get denied, what's on your credit history, do you have your documentation, do you have social security cards, do you have birth certificates, you know, what's needed, and helping the survivor being able to kind of get things lined up so when their name comes up on the waiting list and we have a place ready for you that you're ready for your documentation I think is very important.

60

And especially when we have someone in our shelter that allows time to be preparing for all of that and if we believe there might be, you know, a possible denial like let's talk about the steps of how we can overcome that, how you can appeal that decision, and just kind

of being prepared to assist with whatever comes up.

>> Kris Billhardt: That's awesome.

Broker of hope and broker of resources.

Yeah.

It's amazing.

Okay.

This question may apply more to some of you than to others, but because you've got some, like Jessica, you already referred to your confidentiality processes and what you've worked out around that.

But I know that one of the difficult things can be especially in the early stages of a partnership like this is the enhanced confidentiality that VAWA requires of domestic and sexual violence advocates and how that can kind of put a damper sometimes on the spirit of partnership when you have to say I can't really tell you what the survivor is doing about that.

Because it is confidential, so anything that people can add about how you keep your adherence to confidentiality requirements that VAWA requires,

61

without shutting down that spirit of information exchange and open dialogue that is kind of part of a partnership?

Anyone?

>> Amber: I'd love to speak on this.

>> Kris Billhardt: Go, Amber!

>> Amber: This is one of my favorite topics which is a good thing because I talk about it often.

And I think that's how we really work through.

So our advocates in Oregon are not just confidential through VAWA but they also have privilege which means they're explicitly called out as not mandatory reporters.

Which you can imagine in a state of mandatory reporters can be a hard piece.

And so they can't really share any information with us without a release of information.

So we train to that to all of our staff, and it's a huge ask.

We have about 60 advocates co-located and we have 9,400 staff.

That is a small percentage of advocates in comparison to the of people they're working with.

So we really embed in all of our trainings about their

confidentiality and privilege and what that means and

use the shared goal of supporting the survivor.

Think of as a survivor there is no other place in the state you can go, law enforcement, doctors, your DHS worker, there is no one that you can talk to that isn't a mandatory reporter, that isn't going to report that information and share it except for your advocate.

So if you're in a home with your abusive partner and you need to safety plan for what happens in the middle of the night when I need to leave and I don't need to talk to someone to act on that, I just need to plan, an advocate is going to be there and be that support.

And we don't need that information, we have advocates that can have that information.

And so if there is something too our advocates can talk in hypotheticals and they practice that do and do it all the time.

Just tell me the information and I can respond to what you're telling me right now.

It doesn't matter if I'm working with the person or know them or not, I can still give you advocacy support and talk with you through that.

That also significantly helps going out for child welfare and protective services, let's say we go out, the advocate can come up with our child protective

services in a lot of cases, so support, if you need to talk to kiddo one on one as the worker, the advocate can work with mom or dad and talk with the parent about their safety plan and what is happening to really separate and give that time.

And it enhances, we show how advocates can enhance the work of what we're doing and take away some of that work to show some of those benefits.

>> Kris Billhardt: I think that's so very key, Amber, that there's an administrative emphasis on that and that it's not left up to the advocate to explain it and to tell CPS workers, well, no, I really can't because there's this law.

So taking advocates out of that position and making sure that that education goes out throughout the agency is really key.

>> Amber: I do want to add too, Kris, I echo that and I think our advocates still have to provide quite a bit.

>> Kris Billhardt: Sure.

>> Amber: And all those, it's continual training and conversation and we also have a one page that explains all of the laws of what our confidentiality is and we put our letterhead on top of it so that way it comes

from us and the advocates can say, well, this is your

information.

We also have a working together guide which I meant to drop in the chat so I will do that.

We created a guide that talks about the role of everyone, advocate, sufficient sufficiency and child welfare workers in-depth and talks about our confidentiality releases and we share that with all of our training materials as well so staff have multiple places they're getting it.

>> Kris Billhardt: I really encourage all of you attending today to check that out because it's a great comprehensive tool that any of you who are thinking about embarking on this kind of co-located partnership or deep partnerships it might be really helpful for you to think about all the different aspects of setting that up well.

Let me ask all of you whether you've seen -- some of you have alluded to it or talked about it directly -- changes in the practices, the policies, the beliefs of your partners as a result of a deeper cross-system perspective.

What have you seen about the fundamental ways that your

partner does their work that have changed because of the partnership?

Whoever goes off mute first can take -- Jessica.

65

>> Jessica dorks: I'm excited to talk about this.

So my covid miracle has been that section 8, we work so closely with the Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency, not the housing authority, the Housing Finance Agency, most of their funding's federal, they do the housing choice vouchers.

During covid they shut down for about a month, they weren't doing appointments, they were just kind of figuring things out, and when they opened back up our workers started facilitating meetings on zoom.

So what that would look like is they're meeting with the client in the field, the client is coming into our agency wherever we are, I've done a section 8 appointment while holding a newborn infant in a mother's home.

I don't know if you're familiar with section 8, but these are appointments with 30, 40 appointments.

I like to say it's like the doctor and DMV had a baby, it's awful.

So many people there, five hours long, you might not

get seen, you might get bumped again, and the anxiety, they're so stress inducing because that's a big thing, you know, whoa, section 8 and we're already getting them off the wait list within two months, you know what I mean, so quickly.

66

The turnover on me getting them off the wait list is pretty darn quick and again it's just a lot of momentum going into it and because of covid I've been able to facilitate those here and I do think that again brokering hope that gives us a little bit more we're able to support clients more and seeing -- so my point in this is the way that we're envisioning the communication happening here at the Family Justice Center and my partners down the door feel some sort of hope.

But the other side of that bridge is other housing folks and being able to tell my partners at the Housing Finance Agency that the people I e-mail with every day, hey, this is the client's situation, having them tell us alternative forms of documentation when we don't have birth certificates and we don't have social security cards and that.

Having them bend the rules and showing a preference for

my population which in other homeless programs they wouldn't meet the chronicity very often and changing the tone because so often we hear, well, why didn't she just leave, you know, this is why because she got to a ticket and all of that snowball neighborhood an eviction that stayed on her record and we've talked about working with our partners at child welfare and

stuff, with little to nowhere income, with evictions, criminal history, housing can seem unobtainable.

I can kind of be a little bridge there.

Reunification plans can seem hopeless, being that bridge there.

And safety plans, how we're safety planning and that's one of the big goals is I want to work on having housing specific safety plan and the way we look at that.

But just being able to communicate that to my housing partners and talking to landlords and stuff and being that voice the other way when I put my purple hat on has just been really, really rewarding and also just being able to encourage my partners through, you know, those trainings, through the coordinated case management meetings.

Norma mentioned how hard it is to find a unit, there's no beds, there's no emergency beds, beds period, they all have waiting lists, -- affordable housing.

We have relationships with a lot of land lords in the community.

We have our housing leasing director Ebony Magnus, her whole job is to schmooze landlords, I can do a housing request form to Ebony and she can call her buddy landlords and say do you have an opening on a two

68

bedroom or three bedroom and they might say no but I'm about to and great let's start the process.

That didn't even go on the market, so we snatched it up real quick.

>> Kris Billhardt: You've created all sorts of different inroads and cut bureaucracy and red tape in others.

Jessica, I want to open this question to others as well, can you define chronicity?

We got that question in the chat.

>> Jessica: People experiencing chronic homelessness. It's when you're experiencing a year of homelessness and you have four episodes of homelessness or four episodes that total up to a year within the last three

years.

If you have a year of continuous -- if you have been experiencing homelessness for a solid year or within the last years, you have four or more episodes of homelessness that total up to a year.

>> Kris Billhardt: Okay.

Thanks for clarifying that.

>> Jessica: I'll type it in the chat since it clearly sounds like a mathematical equation that my social worker brain has trouble spitting out.

>> Kris Billhardt: I can't believe it, but we have

69

just a few minutes left and I did want to put it back to the rest of the panel, quick summary of any changes you've seen in your partners, the way they operate, the way they look at things, their lens.

>> Katrina: I'll jump in here.

I think I alluded to this a little bit earlier but I think the biggest thing kind of taking away is that really being mobile helps, being a home visitor we already knew going into people's homes we were able to identify needs, we were able -- you know, that families had, you know, there's a different relationship.

But coming alongside and having, you know, Dani and the

rest of the team being able to come to home visits with us to be able to create those partnerships really changed the way that, it was just a new way to be able to meet families where they're at.

And so it was -- it also helped for us to just grow deeper roots with our families.

I think that it grew for our families to be able to see, oh, you know, we're not just making toys and having fun and talking about child development, but there, you know, this home educator and this advocate can bring real assistance to their lives.

And fundamentally change the course of, and the direction where they're going.

70

So and I think just as far as our values as home educators we just grew so much, we talk about it so much, about just survivors being their best expert and continually just seeing that.

And I will say that to my dying day just because it changed the way that I perceive families, it changed the way -- everything from, you know, you're in a difficult relationship and how do I talk about relationships with you, and to anywhere from somebody need to go get their baby off of the bottle.

And like how do we, you know, what is best for that family.

And so, yeah.

So.

>> Kris Billhardt: All those layers you talked about, yeah.

There are many layers.

Yeah.

Norma or Amber, any ways that DHS has changed because of the co-location project?

>> Amber: Norma, I don't want to steal your thunder if you wanted to share something.

>> Norma: I would like to just say that it's just been a great way to be able to collaborate and learn about

71

each other's agency and what we each do and can do to better support the survivors that participate, people that come in for services so it's just been great to be able to collaborate, help each other, and we're all like working for the same goal that's to better serve the survivors, and I think it's just a great way to be able to collaborate with having open minds, open communication, and sometimes, you know, able to, you

know, agree to disagree, you know.

So there's something that it's so -- we've been able to work out by having communications and work closely together.

>> Kris Billhardt: Yeah, and I think there can be a real evolution from, oh, now I have to work with this advocate, to, oh, my God, the advocate helps me so much.

So you really kind of see that change over time when you introduce something new to the system.

And we're going to go ahead and put up the resources pages, your contact information, and some COVID-19 resources that are available.

You'll all -- everybody who's attending or registered today will get, you know, copy of the PowerPoint slides and the recorded webinar will be available.

But I wanted to ask you each to very quickly, because

72

we're very limited in time now, to just think about what words of wisdom or lessons learned, if -- what would you say to a program or a community that's exploring co-location or coworking right now as they consider moving forward?

What would you say to a program that's exploring

this strategy?

>> Jessica: I would try to send them over with a partner.

We have another navigator program where they were embedded and there was two of them that went over and started the pilot.

I started over here by myself and I think it would have been really helpful to have just had one more housing person in the building with me to kind of partner with, to bounce things off of.

Try to go for two if you can, if you find the funding for two people, then get you two.

>> Kris Billhardt: That's great.

If you can stay away from the sole advocate or sole navigator model and I think that administrative support and the top-down support and messaging about the program is really important as Amber was talking about.

Thanks, Jessica.

73

Any other words of wisdom?

>> Amber: I'd say if you're thinking about doing it, do it.

I also think it's very helpful to have -- I like to say that we're bilingual, that we can speak DHS and we can speak advocacy and so that's important to be able to literally translate in between.

So if you have someone who can walk both lines and be able to really talk to here's the advocate lens and here's the Oregon Department of Human Services lens and help to mesh those two, it's extremely helpful, so looking for your best resources.

>> Kris Billhardt: Great.

Thanks.

Synergy.

>> Leigh: I would through in there don't underestimate the power of really giving yourself a commitment to some time and spaciousness together and bringing not just the decision makers together but bringing as many members of your team who actually do the front line work together with the decision maker, so you're all hearing the same thing and, you know, I feel like it naturally like if you really give yourself some of that time, the things that are most challenging will

74

naturally surface and the things that you're excited about will naturally surface.

But like don't underestimate the commitment to times and spaciousness to keep moving forward.

>> Kris Billhardt: Thank you, Leigh.

I think within that is kind of a caution against siloing this program within the larger agencies so that this advocate understands it really well, but nobody else in the agency really knows what goes on in that program.

It's better to have an all-agency kind of embracing of the model.

All right.

We are at time.

I'm so sorry we ran out because I know we could have talked more.

I just really want to thank everybody who attended today.

This wonderful panel for sharing your time and your expertise and all the experience that you brought to today's webinar.

Thank you so much.

The slides, Jenny, you can -- well, I think you showed the resource pages but those will all come to you so that you don't have to try to have a photographic

memory as these slides go past you.

And thank you so very much for coming today.

Remember that the next in this mini series on co-location is happening a week from today and we hope we'll see you all again there.

Thank you so much.

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