The following report summarizes the key activities and lessons learned from a 15-month planning grant from the Crown Family Philanthropies and Michael Reese Health Trust, awarded to The Network: Advocating Against Domestic Violence and Metropolitan Family Services: Communities Partnering for Peace to explore how to improve responses to victims/survivors who are at the intersections of both community and domestic violence.

Report was prepared by Jaclyn Houston-Kolnik, Ph.D. and reviewed by Stephanie Hawkins, Ph.D., action researchers for the project who observed the planning activities.
Project Background

The project funders, Crown Family Philanthropies and Michael Reese Health Trust, convened a group of providers in April 2020 to explore how to address the needs of victims who are at the intersections of community and intimate partner violence. Following this meeting, the two agencies released a request for proposals to fund cross-sector work between domestic violence and community violence organizations. This planning grant intended to bring together the intimate partner violence and community violence sectors to:

- Generate mutually impactful solutions to those individuals who are at the intersection of both DV and CV.
- Foster collaboration among the two groups of service providers.
- Facilitate mutual learning about these respective forms of violence.

As stated in the RFP, the funders envisioned transformational results from these efforts under the following conditions, which this grant intended to foster:

IF providers worked across sectors to address intersecting challenges together

IF a light were shined on the reality that individuals affected by community violence can be equally at risk of DV/IPV, and DV/IPV incidents often stand at the root of community violence

IF public and private funders supported capacity building in both the DV/IPV and community violence sectors to fulfill the unmet need for services, particularly as new target populations are identified and engaged

IF providers and individuals with lived experience collaborated to solve for the DV/IPV training gaps within the community violence sector, as well as the community violence training gaps within the DV/IPV sector

IF cross-sector partners worked across silos, distinctive languages, and varied practices (confidentiality, violence interruption models, etc.) to adapt their approaches to new populations, ensuring culturally-informed access to the full range of available resources

IF we widened our understanding of, and support for, the rich but not fully tapped assets embedded in community
Applicants were asked to propose feasible initial steps toward building a more sustainable approach to preventing and reducing the often overlapping, and at times causally connected, violence within intimate relationships and the community. The funder expectations for applications were as follows:

- Collaborative leadership of at least two agencies working across the DV/IPV and community violence sectors
- These two agencies would hold leadership roles for the Year 1 (calendar 2020) pilot of this cross-sector work
- Develop a planning process as well as a feasible work product (examples might include, but are not limited to, a curriculum, training plan, and/or service pilot)
- Engage providers and other stakeholders outside the leadership team as thought partners and potential work partners
- Consider appropriate evaluation and sustainability mechanisms

In response to this RFP, The Network: Advocating Against Domestic Violence (The Network) and Metropolitan Family Services’ (MFS) Communities Partnering for Peace (CP4P) applied as collaborative leaders to achieve the following:
Project Structure
Leadership
The leadership team consisted of staff from The Network, CP4P, and the Alliance of Local Service Organizations (ALSO). Early in the project, ALSO joined the leadership team. ALSO is a CP4P partner providing street intervention in the Humboldt Park area. Additionally, they are a national Training and Technical Assistance provider for the Office of Violence against Women. Their organization internally has been engaging in the cross-sector work across the community and domestic violence service community for some time.

Steering Committee Members
The lead organizations worked to identify agencies to participate in the steering committee. This group’s membership shifted across the course of the planning period. The groups below were those that attended most meetings across the 15-month planning period.

In addition to this group, other agencies participated sporadically. In conversations with the leadership team, they shared the following possible reasons for lack of attendance from these groups:

- The COVID-19 pandemic coincided with the launch of the project and carried through the planning period, impacting key trust-building work best done in person.
- The purpose of the meetings may have been unclear.
- Schedules can be challenging to coordinate, and the project struggled with some logistics regarding scheduling early in the project.
- The group’s attendees have predominately been white women and while the project leadership team has intentionally tried to engage a more diverse group on individuals, others may not have felt as represented based on the majority membership.

Project Champions
Within these agencies, steering committee members were also asked to identify “project champions” in December 2021. These individuals began attending the monthly meetings as of February 2021.

The Project Champion is a peer leader who will:
1) Serve as an agency point-person to help fellow direct service staff understand and address domestic violence and/or community violence within agency program operations.

2) Participate in cross-sectoral trainings

3) Help inform outreach training needs and offerings for cross-training

4) Work with community based DV or CV agencies for referrals, cross-training, and support

5) Participate in monthly meetings to process lessons learned and develop pilot programs

Project champions from a handful of agencies were involved in the final two steering committee meetings of the official planning period. As the project progressed, members of the steering committee who were supervisors or in leadership provided feedback on project champion involvement. They appreciated the opportunity to involve their co-workers, feeling that it created a real-world feedback loop about gaps and how collaborative work is progressing. These members also expressed that there was confusion at times about the role of project champions and what the “ask” was of these individuals beyond attendance at the meeting. This may be because of the nature of planning work to define the purpose and opportunities of future collaborative work.
Project Activities
Across the planning period, the project involved the following activities which sought to explore how to build capacity, develop pilot projects, and inform future practice:

Leadership Team Meetings
- Ad hoc at the start of the planning period.
- Starting in January 2021, these meetings were held monthly at the same date/time.
- Agenda was often focused on setting the agenda for the steering committee meetings and discussing project progress or evaluation feedback.

Steering Committee Meetings
- Meetings were scheduled every 4-6 weeks at the start of the project. Dates/times shifted from meeting to meeting.
- As of January 2021, the meetings were held monthly at the same date/time except for the March meeting which was rescheduled for early April.
- Agenda items were set by leadership team.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Month</th>
<th>Topics Covered</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 2020</td>
<td>Initial project kick-off</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2020</td>
<td>Created plan for smaller regional meetings; Discussed recruitment of ambassadors/champions; Sharing data</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 2020</td>
<td>Discussed potential risks to collaboration; Developed initial community norms/agreements</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 2020</td>
<td>Small, regional group report outs; Discussion on partnership created to apply for ICJIA funding; Training topics/modalities to resolve key problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2020</td>
<td>Reviewed project champion role; Breakout groups to review CP4P and Network training curriculums to guide creation of joint training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2020</td>
<td>Welcomed project champions; Breakout groups to revisit group agreements; Shared reflections on healthy masculinity training; Outlined future steps for the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2020</td>
<td>Discussed case study in breakout groups; Conducted training poll to gauge future interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2020</td>
<td>Presented the Community and Domestic Violence Partnerships Stages of Change Model; INVC and Sarah’s Inn highlighted their partnership; Engaged in discussion about where each attendee organization was at related to the stages presented</td>
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Work Groups

- Early in the project, participating agencies were separated by neighborhood to get to know one another and report back about their services, as well as similarities and differences.
- As the project progressed, work groups were facilitated during steering committee meetings as break out groups for specific topics or activities.

ICJIA Grant Opportunity

- Toward the beginning of the planning period, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) released a funding opportunity to support approaches addressing multiple victimization experiences. This opportunity equipped two agencies to apply together.
- The project leveraged this opportunity to create connections among providers interested in pursuing this funding.
- Project partnerships were created for three applications, two of which were awarded.
  - These projects include a variety of strategies to foster collaborative responses, including cross-training, the development of referral forms/mechanisms, embedded advocates and/or case managers, and increasing access to needed services such as counseling.
  - Approaches sought to create cross-over relationships between partner organizations to holistically meet needs. For both models, the agency where the victim/survivor entered care would continue to maintain contact and thus, both projects emphasized the need to articulate and explore how this would shape new practices versus a warm hand-off that shifts the care to the partner organization.
- It is worth noting that this was a key element of this proposed planning project and thus, lead to a need for the project to shift its focus and explore new opportunities to support collaborative projects of this nature.

Training

- One Healthy Masculinity training was conducted during the planning period.
- Additional trainings were discussed among the leadership team and steering committee.
- There was one steering committee meeting focused on exploring the content for a combined community and domestic violence training.
  - At this meeting, discussion of forming a committee to create an initial training plan was discussed but did not progress further by the time of this report.

Community and Domestic Violence Partnerships Stages of Change

- Toward the end of the planning period, the leadership team adapted Prochaska & Diclemente’s Six Stages of Change model to capture the stages of partnership.
As the project made the shift out of planning and into building and supporting partnerships, the following model was useful for partners to reflect on where they were at in the process.

**COMMUNITY VIOLENCE & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PARTNERSHIPS**
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**Stages of Change**

- **PRE-CONTEMPLATION**
  - Ready to listen and learn
  - Curious about partnerships but not yet considering it

- **CONTEMPLATION**
  - Exploring the idea of partnership
  - Getting to know a partner
  - Gathering the information needed with partner to see how to work together

- **PREPARATION**
  - The development phase
  - Regular meetings to lay the foundation
  - Piloting

- **ACTION**
  - Partnership
  - Actively referring/engaging in collaborative response

- **MAINTENANCE**
  - Sustaining the partnership

- **RELAPSE**
  - Something happened to set us off course
  - Need to revisit the partnership
Evaluation Activities

During the planning phase, RTI partnered with the leadership team and steering committee to engage in action research. This collaborative research process intends to provide real-time data and information to help shape and inform planning and future implementation.

This entailed:

- Participating in collaborative meetings and trainings to learn, ask questions, and brainstorm program models or meeting agendas.
- Conducting interviews with project leadership and steering committee members engaged in collaborative approaches, including pilot project staff.
- Assisting in the documentation of planning steps and progress for funders and others who wish to engage in this type of collaborative work in the future, including compiling meeting notes and establishing a feedback loop with the leadership team to provide observations on such topics.
- Compiling a report summarizing the process evaluation, describing the planning steps and key decision points that were made throughout the initial 15 months.
Group Agreements & Shared Language

At the steering committee meeting in August 2020, the external facilitator raised collaboration risks and individuals broke out into groups to draft group agreements that would help mitigate these collaboration risks.

Collaboration Risks

- Being too polite/fear of productive conflict
- Operating in cliques and silos
- Resistance to change
- Holding back information
- Lack of vulnerability
- Unequal voices
- Lack of accountability

Draft Group Agreements

From the August meeting, the following group agreements were compiled based on the breakout groups and re-presented to the steering committee following the addition of the Project Champions for further feedback at the January 2021. The feedback from these January breakout groups is summarized below with the original agreements in green, followed by the feedback provided in groups:

Transparency with Confidentiality

*Open dialogue- open minds*

*Commit to integrity around confidentiality to encourage vulnerability*

- Training needed to meet this benchmark
- Terms need clarification (e.g., confidentiality, transparency), providing examples to increase understanding
- One group noted that having discussions in smaller groups is a viable strategy to facilitate open dialogue and encourage vulnerability

Be Open to Sharing and Learning

*Open to feedback from other members*

*Commit to learning and creating a new language for the intersections of trauma & violence*

*Speak up and step back- ensure all voices are heard*

- No feedback on this agreement

Seek First to Understand than to be Understood, Assuming Best Intentions

*Ask questions*

*Assume that others have good intentions while understanding the impact of your own words or actions*
Agree that learning is important and coming from a place of curiosity versus judgment.

Assuming best intentions is fine, but sometimes best intentions can still be harmful, and we need to make space for this as well. Intentions are not always observable or clear to the group at large.

- Commitment as a group to not ignore legitimate reactions even to well-intentioned statements/behaviors with accountability.

Harms need to be addressed and eradicated when they arise.

- Consider adding something around responding to harmful issues and/or statements that arise during conversations.
- One member offered the idea of CARE-frontations: Call in instead of call out where the intention is to seek to understand. These conversations are not trying to start something but get clarity/perspective.

Put Personal Agendas Aside

Conversations are about ideas, not people/don’t be personal

Acknowledge there are multiple ways to confront a challenge

Commit to group identity

Share responsibility for success and failure

- Need to balance this with valuing lived experience and personal passions; maybe the key is distinguishing an agenda from a passion or an experience. The “personal” piece should be valued.

- Conversations can be triggering and thus feel personal.
  - Personal reasons for being in this work should be celebrated.
  - Remove the phrase “agenda”
    - How does agenda differ from passion and experience?

- Committing to a group identity is also problematic. Maybe substitute “shared purpose”

Remain committed to the process, project, and our time together

Move forward even when the movement is slow or incremental

- Add accountability within this as new people join, or people who may be experiencing trauma share their experiences, etc.

- Acknowledge the small wins and movement.

- Value of the experience of relationship development and the time it takes to build a strong collaborative.

- Revisit the commitment when needed.

Listen and honor the community’s experience

Diversity in trauma experienced

Value of and type of lived experience is different in each community

Orientation to violence (survivor v. perpetrator) can make conversations difficult.
Individuals can be both survivors and perpetrators
We can all grow and repair harm
  ○ Agreement about the value of community experiences and feel this should be central and celebrated
  ○ This is a place where language is especially important, especially around terms that describe people, such as “gang members”
  ○ Have an oops/ouch mechanism in place here to handle conflicts or tensions

Be Present
Camera on if you can
Avoid “meeting after the meeting” bring issues to the larger group
  ○ Re: Camera: This is very individualized and may vary according to the circumstances of the day

Logistical Agreements
Leave meetings with action items, follow up at outset of subsequent meetings
Agenda goes out prior to meeting with opportunity to add items to be addressed
  ○ No feedback on this agreement

Additional Agreements/Feedback Raised
Additional feedback provided during this breakout group include:
  • Adapting agreements to use “I” statements equipping the group to reflect on what they mean for each individual member
  • Emphasizing the importance of speaking for one’s own experience
  • Agreements like these need to be accompanied by group norms that establish and reinforce how the group lives them out
  • Two additional collaboration risks were noted regarding the range of voices included in the planning work:
    ○ During the breakout groups, it was noted that the female-identified perspective was dominant in these meetings and this work and thus, the project was losing male-identified perspective, buy-in, and the recognition of the impact of domestic violence on men.
    ○ In one-on-one conversations with planning group members, individuals noted that the two provider groups and their staff have historically been different regarding race, with more men of color in the community violence space and white women in the domestic violence field. Individuals noted a need to continually assess the presence of a broad range of voices from both the community and domestic violence fields and work to engage individuals from a broad range of races, ethnicities, and gender identities.
The group has yet to finalize these agreements at the time this report was composed.

**Shared Language**

Another goal of the project was to begin to create shared language across the DV/CV community. In the breakout groups in January 2021, we also asked participants to reflect on some areas where we need to work on shared language, specifically, where they see differences in language between community and domestic violence responses/approaches.

- Acknowledge there is language the groups share, and some that they do not share and work towards understanding each perspective:
  - Perpetrator versus abuser
  - Survivor versus victim
  - Fatalities versus homicide
  - How DV homicide defined: according to the act versus love triangle scenarios

- Importance of asset-based language
  - Naming people for who they are and using their names when appropriate and possible
  - Acknowledging people as individuals instead of putting them into boxes
  - Need to use language that does not conflate who a person is with what they may have done; Identity is not equal to what they have done
  - Additional training on this may be helpful for the group
  - Inclusive language: Need to account for varied life experiences
Lessons Learned Related to Planning Work
As the project progressed, there were a variety of lessons learned that were uncovered about the planning process itself.

Trust Building in a Virtual Format
Early in the project, both leadership and steering committee members talked about the importance of building trust in order to engage in cross-collaborative work among the community and domestic violence service communities. Trust was seen as foundational to building out and implementing an approach as providers expressed a desire to understand where each group was coming from, establish clear communication, and respect each other’s roles and limitations. The project’s initial plan intended to foster trust among providers through regular, in-person meetings and honest conversations about the barriers to trust-building and collaborative work. However, the start of the planning project coincided with the coronavirus pandemic. The project needed to adapt planning meetings to a virtual format, which created a barrier to trust building for a variety of reasons:

- **Culture of being on mute**: Within a virtual meeting, it is considered a courtesy that individuals who are not speaking mute themselves to reduce possible background noise or interruption. However, this also can make it challenging to have a conversational flow where others jump in to add their perspectives and may make it more challenging to garner participation from individuals who tend to quietly observe meetings.

- **Little opportunities to informally network and get to know one another**: The work of this group was in part to have individuals in the same community providing services get to know one another. While these conversations were facilitated through breakout groups or ad hoc meetings, the virtual setting does not often lend itself to more informal conversations about our lives or even other aspects of our work. Conversations that used to happen before or after meetings or during breaks are not available in a large group, virtual format. This lack of informal opportunities may make it hard to connect with others and build trust through informal relationship.

- **Hard to read body language**: A common phrase used in group settings is “reading the room,” or assessing the mood of participants to guide conversation or project steps. However, in a virtual format, some cues such as body language or staying on mute are hard to interpret. Project leaders expressed how it was difficult to gauge progress on the project because these non-verbal cues were unavailable or inconclusive in a virtual setting. Without these cues, it was hard to gauge people’s reactions to conversation topics or possible areas of tension.

- **Communication in a remote environment**: Among the leadership team, members noted that a mix of stressors across work, personal, and the pandemic all caused disruption and impacted communication among the leadership team and for the larger project. Leadership team members were in communication regularly about other projects,
however they noted that more consistent communication to plan for meetings outside of email was important and thus, established more regular leadership meetings.

- **Can we say hard things in a virtual format?** The question that arose across the project was can we, and how do we, say hard things that may be risky, unfavorable, or even confrontational in a virtual format. In person, you can handle conflicts or misunderstandings one-on-one or are able to read body language, which is not always available in the virtual format. Additionally, individuals who participated in planning expressed it felt high stakes to say something risky or unfavorable because of a fear of silence due to the culture of staying on mute, the inability to “read the room,” or a general discomfort and pressure with large group virtual settings. Individuals reflected that people were not being “real” in the meeting or communicating tensions they may be feeling. One leadership member discussed having more one-on-one zoom conversations with individuals to garner these insights, which they could then present in the meeting in an anonymous way to open the door for that participant or others to reflect upon. Additionally, the project adjusted larger group meetings over time to incorporate breakout groups to facilitate opportunities for more direct feedback and opinions, which a few participants noted was helpful for them to feel like there was a space to share honestly and openly.

**It wasn’t all bad though!**

Switching to a virtual format also had a positive impact on the project: more individuals, both leadership and direct service staff, were able to participate because they did not have to travel to meetings. For those agencies that may have struggled to commit someone to step away for a half day due to the time needed to travel and meet, the virtual format equipped them to participate without requiring as much of their time.

**Differences in Funding & What Funding Supports**

During interviews with individual stakeholders and smaller group meetings, individuals raised that a tension impacting this collaborative work is around funding differences among the two types of providers. Across individuals, there is a perception among service providers that community violence programs are well-funded, while domestic violence programs feel overlooked and underfunded. Both community and domestic violence service providers recognized this tension, and discussed how while these differences may exist, both groups can feel their funding is precarious, often due to shifting priorities. Individuals felt this tension would impact collaboration, and thus should be explicitly named and discussed. While this happened in smaller groups and was mentioned at a steering group meeting, during the April 2021 leadership meeting it was decided that these conversations should be had by each respective network. The Network had already begun addressing this issue with its domestic violence members, noting the need to shift away from a scarcity mindset and siloed practices to partner with the broader violence community. It remains to be seen whether these conversations will mitigate concerns about funding or if they will reveal underlying concerns about trust or how collaborative partnerships are structured and funded.
In addition to funding differences, providers discussed how many funding streams are geared toward supporting direct services with little to no support for the time and effort it takes to engage in planning work. Funding from this project has provided agencies with support to engage in initial conversations that may not have been facilitated without financial support as agencies are already limited on time and resources. One pilot project highlighted the importance of funding to establish policies and procedures when engaging in collaborative work because of the level of effort such activities can take. This pilot project team member noted the importance of not rushing such crucial work that lays the groundwork for better connected and collaborative direct services, while balancing the desire of funders to see tangible results from their financial investment. They also discussed how important it is that funders be open to partners reconfiguring their approach as they learn what works best to serve their clients.

**Definition of a Shared Goal or Target**

Throughout the steering group meetings, individual members expressed feeling that there was not a shared understanding of what the project was seeking to address. These individuals shared how there was confusion over the approach each provider takes to address violence and ultimately, how each provider defines the roots of violence.

Defining the goal or target is often a part of planning work, so it is not surprising that individuals expressed confusion. Part of this confusion was also brought on because a large part of the project was to develop pilot programs, however with the ICJIA funding opportunity this development was fast-tracked. While this provided external support to fund pilot sites, it did alter the course of the planning work as a key goal was met through the ICJIA opportunity early in the planning period. At various times across the planning period, both leadership and steering committee members mentioned that the larger goal of the planning initiative was unclear. As the planning work progressed following the ICJIA grants, the leadership team reflected on the shared target of this work and the best approach to begin to illuminate different approaches and philosophies. The focus shifted to develop understanding the history and approach of each provider group, foster conversation around key issues identified that can impact partnership, and support cross-trainings or a training curriculum. The project also incorporated discussion on preventing violence at the January 2020 meeting.

One of these approaches was the use of scenario-based learning and discussion to facilitate a deeper understanding of each group’s approach. It should also be noted that individual providers recognized that while discussion as a large group can begin to lay the foundation, some of this work is best done among organizations seeking to partner with one another. Through cross-training and collaborating to address instances of violence in their communities, partners may be able to identify areas of tension and alignment, debrief collaborative responses, and work together to build stronger support and connections for victims/survivors.
Importance of External Facilitation
Early in the project, the leaders and members agreed that an external facilitator would benefit the project. Planning members expressed how having an external facilitator would provide an individual who did not have a personal stake in the outcome of the group and could also operate without previous assumptions or history about either group of service providers. The leadership team identified a facilitator who was able to meet one-on-one with leadership and steering committee group members to understand the existing dynamics and concerns. The facilitator led the August 2020 steering committee meeting and then did not return to the project until April 2021, needing to take time away for personal reasons. During this time away, the facilitation of the meetings became the responsibility of the project partners, who wanted to leave space for the facilitator to return to the project should they wish to do so. In conversations with the leadership team and individual steering committee members, the lack of external facilitation over the course of absence was seen as a challenge for the project due to busy schedules and they dynamics created by not having an unbiased, external facilitator.

Busy Schedules
Scheduling is often an issue when bringing together multiple practitioners and with the addition of organizations needing to shift their service models to respond to the coronavirus pandemic, this project was not exempt from scheduling difficulties. At first, meetings were scheduled ad hoc, with no consistent date or time for leadership or steering committee meetings. Meetings were more sporadic at this time, sometimes cancelled at the last minute, and re-scheduling responsibilities fell to the project leads, who were also busy navigating the pandemic, policy changes, and the continual need to identify funding to support their network organizations. All in all, the project and its participants faced stressors that were unavoidable given the upended nature of victim services during the pandemic and ultimately impacted engagement in this planning work. Some individuals were not able to participate due to organizational capacity and others may have been unable to commit due to a lack of clarity about the meeting dates and content. With more consistent meeting times and additional administrative support through an intern, multiple individuals have noted how meetings have become more consistent and organized (e.g., agendas sent in advance, clear goals for the meeting).
Lessons Learned Related to Partnerships
The following covers lessons learned related to exploring, building, and maintaining partnerships that are cross-collaborative. Where applicable, we highlight specific lessons or challenges identified related to collaborative work among community and domestic violence partners.

Clarification about Confidentiality and Role Expectations
Throughout steering committee meetings, two interrelated conflicts were raised as key to address when thinking about how to build a collaborative response. These conflicts centered on confidentiality and role expectations.

• **Confidentiality:** When talking about collaborative approaches, providers expressed that confidentiality could pose as a barrier or conflict that may arise. Community and domestic violence agencies and their staff have different levels of confidentiality that need to be understood and clarified to inform future collaborative approaches. For instance, how confidentiality functions in the context of collaborative or community accountability work is an area for further exploration and discussion. Committee and pilot project members discussed the importance of identifying where practices differ, understanding the reasons for these differences, and creating shared practices for when those individuals serve experience both community and domestic violence.

• **Expectation setting:** Members discussed how each person impacted by violence that they serve views their advocate or case manager as someone “in their corner.” When considering collaborative approaches, how can each organizational representative build trust with their clients, while also engaging collaboratively with partners when situations arise where a domestic violence victim/survivor is in a violent relationship with a community violence victim/survivor. Communication among partners to clarify roles and discuss their limitations in how they can collaborate while providing support for their client is key.

While the planning group began to discuss these topics, further exploration and conversation is warranted. Some members commented that it is through partnerships that these conflicts arise and are navigated. As pilot projects progress, it could be valuable for staff coordinating these collaborative efforts to share examples of how they navigated confidentiality and expectation setting within their efforts. Indeed, multiple providers noted that having opportunities to hear how others who have fostered partnerships and navigated new opportunities and conflicts would be helpful to inform the development of new collaborative efforts.

Providers Agree that They Want to Stop Violence, but Their Foci may be Different
When envisioning collaborative responses to community and domestic violence, a shared vision may be important to foster. While both provider groups agree that they would like to stop violence, their foci are different. Community violence providers discussed how their focus is on
how to keep more shootings and shooting-related deaths from occurring. Domestic violence providers are seeking to respond to and prevent violence among intimate partners and their families. Both agree that they do not want to do anything that would increase danger, but the frame of violence with which they approach is centered on two different foci—street violence and intimate relationship violence. As the planning committee met, ways in which these foci shifted priorities or responses revealed themselves.

For instance, one community violence provider noted that they do not often think about the impact of violence on loved ones or families, particularly children. For domestic violence providers, multiple noted a challenge in navigating the needs of street-affiliated victims/survivors, especially when trust has not been built or providers are interacting with victims/survivors within a court setting which is not an appropriate setting to ask these questions.

While a shared focus in their individual work may not be feasible or appropriate given different training and organizational missions, providers expressed the importance of centering partnerships in a shared perspective to stop violence. They discussed how partners could work to explore ways in which each provider can provide needed services with an understanding of the value of each other’s knowledge and particular approach to achieving this shared aim. Staff at pilot project organizations expressed a desire to foster this understanding and build relationships so that a staff member can identify when additional support from the other provider is needed and have relationships to make these connections.

Topics to Discuss to Gain Alignment in Partnership Work
Throughout the project, a variety of topics were raised and noted as key topics for discussion to set the foundation of partnership work. These topics were areas where providers felt it important to acknowledge the history of each service community and identify ways to gain alignment in a shared vision or perspective on how to best support victims/survivors at the intersections of community and domestic violence. Discussing these topics were thought to provide possible and existing partners the opportunity to think about and address these issues to build stronger partnerships and collaborative approaches moving forward.

**Topic 1: Concerns about Domestic Violence’s Reliance on Criminal Justice Responses/System**
Concerns were raised about how historically, domestic violence has relied on criminal justice responses, such as calling law enforcement or pursuing legal avenues to mitigate or respond to violence. These concerns about the criminal justice system and responses to domestic violence are related to broader concerns about systemic racism within the criminal justice system. Providers within the domestic violence community recognize this issue, but questions remained about how to hold people who use violence accountable and keep victims/survivors safe through other avenues beyond the criminal justice responses/system.
**Issue 2: What is Community Accountability?**

Community accountability was raised to address Topic 1; however, many domestic violence providers expressed a lack of knowledge about what community accountability is. Community accountability has been proposed as a response to violence outside of the criminal justice system however, how to engage in this form of accountability and balance safety for all individuals involved remains a topic to be discussed among the steering committee. Domestic violence providers noted that the philosophical orientation of their field has been to remove individuals from unsafe homes or communities, however, more recently there has been conversations about how to navigate safety while an individual is still engaged or living in their community. Throughout the planning period and across evaluation activities, providers from domestic and community violence agencies expressed the importance of defining community accountability and exploring how create foster these conversations and responses through pilot projects or opportunities to collaborate. In other words, it seems that providers felt that partnerships were the best way to build community accountability approaches that incorporated perspectives of the domestic and community violence fields.

**Issue 3: Concerns about Gender Equity and Community Violence Responses**

Community violence responses have largely focused on violence among male-identified individuals, perhaps missing domestic violence indicators or female-identified victims/survivors of community violence as well. As projects seeks to collaborate and identify victims/survivors at the intersections of community and domestic violence, steering committee members expressed a need for an increased awareness to how female-identified individuals may experience violence and how current responses may adapt to serve their experiences and resulting needs.

These three topics were raised across multiple stages of the project. Ultimately, these are not topics that can be covered in one meeting but will likely be continual conversations as the field shifts in how to address violence wholistically, instead of in the siloed approaches that have been reinforced for decades through policy, practice, and funding decisions. As more opportunities to partner, collaborate, and cross-train arise, these topics will continue to be worked through among local providers, who are the ones who can begin to change and shape practice and forge new paths for comprehensive approaches to violence and violence prevention.

**To Build Partnerships, Showing Up, & Shared Philosophy Matters**

Having a presence in the neighborhood or community and sharing a similar philosophy were two elements that were key to building partnerships, according to both pilot site staff, and other steering committee members engaged in collaborative approaches. These individuals discussed the importance of having offices or staff in communities to show up and build relationship at events and community meetings was important. Additionally, individuals engaged in partnerships talked about how a shared philosophy about viewing people who experience and use violence holistically was foundational to their decision to work together. Especially for those who work with persons who are justice-involved, these providers noted how seeing their partner agency acknowledge and address the entirety of circumstances that contributed to and shaped
someone’s victimization and justice involvement laid the groundwork for their organizations to work together. One provider described their partner agency as someone “who gets it” and “walks the talk” regarding seeing and serving people through a holistic, asset-based lens.

**Staff who Understand Both Contexts is Invaluable**

One key strategy or resource that individuals noted as particularly impactful to lay the foundation and build collaborative partnerships was employing or embedding partner staff who understood both community and domestic violence. Providers discussed how these individuals were able to help identify blind spots in cases where opportunities for identification and referral were missed. When these staff members were curious and used these conversations to explore alternative approaches and options, positive results were described including changes in practice or the beginning of culture shifts that could help break down silos. One interviewee discussed how sometimes people use the phrase of “staying in their own lane” as a shield to not respond to other forms of violence, however this individual noted how cross-over staff were well-equipped to identify opportunities to respond that did not deviate from staff’s role and responsibility to serve their clients. These cross-over staff were able to emphasize that there is support available to assist both direct service staff and victims/survivors to address the other form of violence.

**Continual Need for Cross-Training**

Within committee meetings, a continual thread arose about the importance of cross-training. Cross-training was discussed as an activity that may help breakdown silos among providers through increased knowledge and understanding about each other’s philosophies and approaches. When discussing how these trainings should be conducted, providers emphasized the importance of ensuring trainings were practical, scenario-based and included content that would help transform knowledge into recognition and then into action. Topics for cross training discussed included:

- Understanding the history and dynamics of domestic violence
- Detecting domestic violence within street intervention programs
- Framing street dynamics in the context of domestic violence (e.g., family dynamics, street-affiliation)
- Fostering an awareness of administrative barriers that impact confidentiality, data sharing and each approaches’ best practices.

The hope of cross-training would be that victim advocates from both sides would be equipped to now recognize and then connect to providers with whom they have relationships. Engaging project champions early in the development of and attendance within these trainings was seen as one strategy that could be used to increase receptivity among those they work alongside or lead.
Conclusions
In talking with providers, they have noted how this planning process has provided them space to raise tensions and explore potential solutions to conflicts. For those building out partnerships, the planning process facilitated the front-end of their conversations through identifying potential issues to be discussed. Individuals engaged in the planning process highlighted the importance of planning work that is funded and honors the time and effort it takes to build new models of responding to victims/survivors who are at the intersections of community and domestic violence. The planning work has identified future opportunities for continued conversation, partnerships, and training; it also has revealed a commitment among providers to do the work in Chicago to find new ways to address these tensions and support victims/survivors holistically.