



October 2015

Marion County Community Assessment

ALLIANCE for
HOPE
INTERNATIONAL

Marion County, OR

Background

This report was commissioned by the Marion County, Oregon Board of Commissioners after contracting with Alliance for HOPE International. [Alliance for HOPE International](#) is a domestic violence and sexual assault focused intervention and prevention organization. The mission of the Alliance is to create pathways to hope for women, children, and men who are victims of domestic violence and related sexual assault (and co-occurring child abuse) through collaborative, integrated multi-disciplinary centers, teams, and initiatives in order to break the generational cycle of violence and abuse in families across the United States and around the world.

The Alliance's initiatives and programs include: The [Family Justice Center Alliance](#), focused on developing multi-agency, collective impact collaborative teams that bring together law enforcement, prosecutors, advocates, civil attorneys, doctors, nurses, therapists, chaplains, and others under one roof to create one safe place where victims can come for all the help they need; the [Training Institute on Strangulation Prevention](#), the most comprehensive training program in the country for professionals handling non- and near-fatal strangulation assaults; [Camp HOPE America](#), the only evidence-based camping and mentoring program in the country focused on children impacted by domestic violence and related sexual assault; the [VOICES Advocacy Network](#), bringing together survivors in local communities to advocate for Family Justice Centers and their allied agencies; and the [Leadership Training Institute](#), focused on training leaders working in multi-agency, co-located services models.

Research strongly supports the bundling of services for victims of trauma and their children (Gwinn, Strack, 2006, 2010, 2011). Multi-agency co-located services like Family Justice Centers have also been identified as a best practice in the domestic violence arena by the U.S. Department of Justice (USDOD, 2007). A recent evaluation authorized by the California Legislature has found overwhelming support from victims and survivors for providing services under one roof instead of requiring victims to go from agency to agency, telling their story over and over again ([Petrucci, 2011](#)).

Marion County has a long history of innovative programs and close working relationships in addressing child abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, elder abuse, human trafficking, childhood trauma impacts, and early intervention approaches with at-risk children and families impacted by domestic violence and related child abuse and sexual assault. Commissioner Kevin Cameron and Commissioner Janet Carlson learned of the work of Alliance for HOPE International during the planning and opening of the Clackamas County Family Justice Center called A Safe Place. Alliance President Casey Gwinn presented the work of the Alliance to a small group of Marion County law enforcement and non-profit leaders in 2014. The presentation led to the decision to retain the Alliance to conduct a brief review of existing services and make recommendations for potential improvements in programs and services to Marion County and all the allied agencies working with victims of violence and abuse and pursuing enhanced accountability for offenders.

In preparation for a three-day site visit, law enforcement agencies provided redacted, de-identified police reports in domestic violence cases for review by the Alliance. The District Attorney provided case filing statistics including domestic violence cases. Allycia Weathers, a staff member to the County commissioners, also worked closely with the Alliance team to provide additional background information on Marion County in preparation for the site visit. The Alliance team also reviewed census and demographic information about Marion County, Oregon in order to better compare staffing levels and resources with other similarly sized communities across the United States (Appendix A).

Marion County Community Assessment

On October 20, 21, and 22, 2015, a team from Alliance for HOPE International spent three days in Salem, Oregon evaluating the response of government and community-based agencies to domestic violence and related child abuse, sexual assault, and other childhood trauma. Alliance President Casey Gwinn, Alliance Director of Operations Jennifer Anderson, and Alliance Director of Community Engagement Michael Burke met with leaders of agencies, first line responders, elected officials, court personnel, policy makers, business professionals, law enforcement officers, and prosecutors. We conducted court observation, interviewed survivors accessing services in the court system, and toured a variety of facilities. The Alliance team also reviewed redacted and de-identified domestic violence police reports, statistics provided by various agencies, and various policy and procedural documents. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess current services, gaps in services, levels of collaboration and coordination, and the responsiveness of the Marion County system of services for domestic violence victims and their children in order to provide feedback and recommendations to the Marion County Board of Commissioners, criminal and civil justice system leaders, and direct service providers about potential enhancements. This three-day site visit was not a “deep dive” but a somewhat cursory review by a team of professionals with experience in working with communities across the United States and around the world in improving access to services for victims of domestic violence and their children.

This report is an effort to provide practical feedback to Marion County in the form of observations and findings from an outside team of experts and then to provide recommendations through three time-framed lenses: **Immediate**, relatively simple opportunities to enhance trauma-informed practices or improve access to services; **Mid-term**, somewhat more complex changes to policies, procedures, and systems; and **Long-term**, sophisticated paradigm shifts or major re-alignments or changes in service delivery models.

Observations

The Alliance for HOPE International Team found Marion County to have a host of impressive organizations and dedicated individuals working to meet the needs of survivors of domestic violence and their children. Direct service providers in the domestic violence and child abuse arenas and indirectly related work from professionals in the Juvenile Justice system provides a dynamic and determined platform for offering

increased safety, hope, and healing for survivors and enhanced accountability for offenders as well. Local elected and appointed officials, including the Board of Commissioners, the Sheriff, the District Attorney, the Police Chief, and others are strongly supportive of a relatively well-coordinated system of services that exists in Marion County. However, like all communities, there are also gaps in services, inadequate resources to address the volume of cases and needs, and inconsistent results for victims depending on their point of entry into systems and agency programs. The Alliance's observations from the three-day site visit are included here without a particular structure or order. Pictures or visual images are included throughout the report to provide demonstrative evidence for particular findings. A full photo album from the three-day visit is accessible from this link:

<https://familyjusticecenter.shutterfly.com/39537>

1. Though not included in the scope of the Alliance's assessment, the Community Re-Entry Initiative and its annual breakfast was the first event in the three-day visit. It is an impressive demonstration of community passion and investment in seeking to meet the needs of probationers and parolees returning to the community after incarceration. This important work connects directly to the domestic violence intervention system since the majority of all criminals locked up *for all crimes* in Marion County come from homes with some mix of child abuse, domestic violence, and/or drug and alcohol abuse. It is an important initiative in the committed effort to reduce prison commitments from Marion County – currently a county with one of the highest prison incarceration rates in the state;
2. Strong personal relationships between agency leaders and direct service staff in government and non-government agencies provide the most obvious foundation for collaboration and coordination among agencies. Throughout the site visit, personal relationships and regular interfacing opportunities in working groups, task forces, councils, and other organized gatherings were clearly a high priority. Indeed, very few major conflicts or tensions were evident anywhere – setting Marion County apart from many communities engaged with Alliance for HOPE International;
3. The leading community-based agency in responding to the needs of domestic violence victims is the Center for Hope and Safety. The Center is a dynamic, survivor-centered organization with strong, long-term leadership. Executive Director Jayne Downing is passionate, visionary, and dedicated to improving and expanding services whenever possible. The Center has a full-time staff of seventeen (17) with a core emphasis on direct advocacy for adult victims. Among many services provided by the Center, direct one-to-one advocacy is offered to



many adult victims. Through a series of collaborative relationships with other local agencies and professionals, the Center seeks to meet the short and long-term needs of survivors. The Center has embedded advocates in the six Department of Human Services (DHS) offices. During our tour of the Center for Hope and Safety, we were impressed with their multi-disciplinary approach and a beautiful walk-in Center. We did not tour the domestic violence shelter. The Center for Hope and Safety has many partnerships and collaborative relationships with other agencies but has no full-time staff members from other agencies co-located with staff in the Center;

4. Liberty House serves as the Child Abuse Assessment Center for Marion County and has a dynamic service model and vision for the future including expanding mental health services for children and adult care providers. Chief Executive Officer Alison Kelley has a diverse background including professional strategic planning experience that allows her to think outside the box. She evidences a strong belief in the value of multi-agency relationships, collaboration, and integration of services whenever possible. During our tour of the Center we were impressed with their expansion vision, adding a second building to their campus approach along with plans for an outdoor garden area. Liberty House has social workers, forensic interviewers, therapists, and medical professionals onsite in a multi-agency model consistent with the standards of the National Children's Alliance (NAC) though the Center is not currently certified pursuant to national Child Advocacy Center standards. The Center is pursuing certification with the NAC and is developing a comprehensive mental health program;
5. Liberty House's effectiveness is negatively impacted by the 30-35% attendance rate of law enforcement professionals in Marion County during forensic interviews in child physical and sexual abuse cases. Liberty House has set a goal of law enforcement participation in forensic interview observation and de-briefing of cases at 85%. Based on national research, the higher the rate of law enforcement engagement in observing the forensic interviews live and working onsite with the multi-disciplinary team, the better the case outcomes and higher the level of collaboration, cross-training, and case coordination;
6. The Center for Hope and Safety and Liberty House operate in separate locations with separate focus areas, but there could be greater interface and coordination particularly in cases involving the co-occurrence of child abuse and domestic violence. Current research identifies a co-occurrence rate of child abuse and domestic violence between 50-75% therefore likelihood of many cases where victims and their children must navigate two service delivery models and two sets of professionals is extremely high;

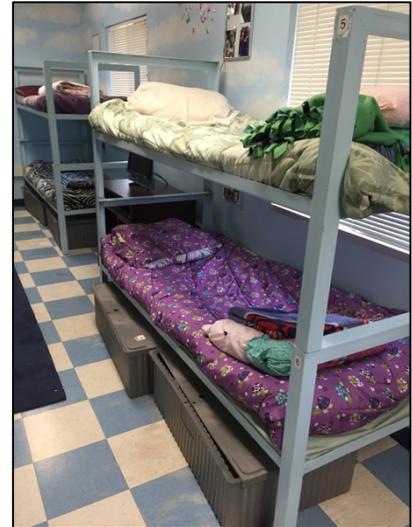


7. The Juvenile Justice model in Marion County evidences strong innovation and a high degree of multi-disciplinary interaction in the handling of dependency and delinquency cases. Though not the focus of the Alliance's site visit, the Juvenile Justice system is an important ally and associated intervention system particularly given the high percentage of juvenile offenders and wards of the court that have experienced childhood trauma before entering



the system (including experiencing child abuse and witnessing domestic violence). Faye Fagel and Chuck Sybrandt provided a tour of Juvenile Justice facilities for the Alliance team including its work programs and social enterprise oriented businesses (including Fresh Start Market and Coffeehouse, automobile repair, woodworking, and firewood sales). Their commitment to trauma-informed practices and reducing the focus on incarceration in favor of more redemptive and restorative sentencing and programs was inspiring. The potential for expanded partnerships and even greater multi-agency co-location of services and programs on the Juvenile Justice campus was very evident. Greater community engagement from the general public, the faith community, and local businesses seemed possible as well;

8. The District Attorney's commitment to the importance of the Juvenile Justice system was very obvious and is rare across the United States. Deputy District Attorney Brendan Murphy is a passionate, articulate, and skilled attorney, leader, and innovator. His work in the Juvenile Justice system enhances the cohesiveness of court personnel, social workers, and other intervention professionals;
9. The District Attorney's Domestic Violence Unit also appears to be a dedicated, aggressive prosecution team committed to prosecuting domestic violence cases when appropriate even in the absence of victim participation or cooperation. This evidence-based practice enhances victim safety and offender accountability. The District Attorney's Office commitment to specialization does not benefit from specialized follow up detectives in the Salem Police Department, but the department does have a number of specially trained police officers. The District Attorney's filing rate appears higher than national averages. The Alliance was not able to evaluate the office's dismissal rate;



10. The District Attorney's Victim Witness Assistance Program is a robust, victim-centered, soulful program led by a gifted and dedicated Director, Kim Larson. The advocates have close working relationships with community organizations, law enforcement officers, and court personnel. Their engagement in the Domestic Violence Response Team with the Salem Police Department provides scene-of-the-crime victim support in many cases. We observed first-hand the importance of Victim-Witness staff members in court interactions and direct advocacy with victims. The District Attorney also has an advocate working with the Probation Department;
11. The District Attorney has developed two victim and witness waiting rooms in the basement of the courthouse to reduce anxiety and mitigate the trauma of testifying in court. Domestic violence victims are subpoenaed to the District Attorney's Office on the day of trial and then escorted by an advocate to two beautiful waiting rooms while waiting to testify in court;
12. Marion County does have a Domestic Violence Council, but the Alliance team did not meet with the Council and cannot provide evaluation information about the roles or effectiveness of the Council. The Council did produce a Domestic Violence Protocol in 2012 but no one we spoke with mentioned this protocol;
13. The Alliance conducted two ride-alongs with Salem police officers and was impressed with the dedication of the officers. One officer, Corporal Andrew Connolly, stood out because of his clear empathy and expertise in working with victims and their children. The Salem Police Department utilizes a domestic violence checklist in all cases which enhances investigation and documentation in felony and misdemeanor domestic violence cases. One Salem Police officer remarked on the benefits of utilizing the checklist, calling it an "easy to use tool" that helps capture critical information in a standardized manner. Some Salem police officers have specialized training in domestic violence, including non-fatal strangulation cases though officers did appear in need of additional training on strangulation crimes. The Salem police officers that do not have the specialized domestic violence training actively call upon and utilize the expertise of the trained officers. We were told by law enforcement officers that there was no countywide Law Enforcement Protocol on the handling of domestic violence cases. Subsequent to our visit, the District Attorney's Office provided us with a 2012 protocol but it has very little information to guide law enforcement agencies. The District Attorney's Office has informed us that the 2012 protocol is currently being updated;
14. The Alliance also attended a meeting of the Commission on Children and Families. It was an impressive array of business leaders, agency heads, and others focused on the needs of children and youth. We did observe that neither Liberty House nor the Center for Hope and Safety were members of the



- Commission. The Commission did not seem to represent the diversity of Marion County except for one representative from a Latino advocacy organization;
15. During our visit, we could not identify a single unified framework for developing collaboration that addresses the intersections of child abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, elder abuse, and human trafficking. In many communities, this often becomes a Family Justice Center framework or a countywide domestic violence prevention plan. There does not appear to be such a framework in Marion County;
 16. We conducted a site visit to the Protection Order calendar in front of Judge Audrey Broyles and observed multiple unrepresented domestic violence survivors seek protection orders without advocacy or support of any kind. We also observed two elder abuse cases where each petitioner had advocacy support from Adult Protective Services workers. Judge Broyles began the calendar by informing all petitioners of her policy of refusing to dismiss an order for one year after it is granted. She warned petitioners not to seek an order unless they were committed to maintaining the order for at least a year. We question whether this policy is consistent with Oregon law and we are concerned

Case Highlight:

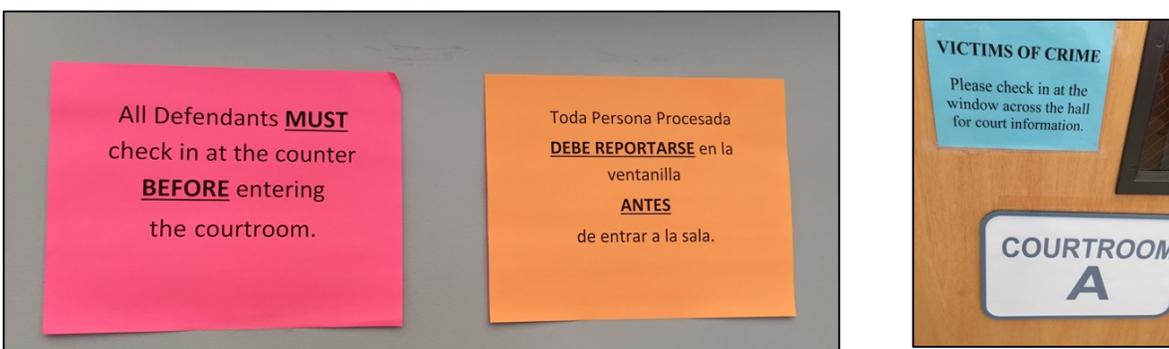
One of the cases observed involved a very distraught ex-wife of a veteran suffering from severe mental health and alcohol problems. She described to the court being strangled to unconsciousness three times in a previous assault by her ex-husband. The victim described multiple prior domestic violence incidents. She was deeply concerned for her ex-husband, describing him as a “hero”, but felt he needed intensive mental health and substance abuse treatment. Her ex-husband was living out of his car and expressing suicidal and homicidal ideation. On the day the victim sought the restraining order, her ex-husband had been released from the psychiatric hospital at 4:00 am and his whereabouts were unknown. The victim described him as “trained to kill”. No advocate was present to support her even though the case was clearly high-risk. Judge Broyles granted the order and referred her to Center for Hope and Safety. As the victim left the courtroom, the Alliance’s Jennifer Anderson, a California state certified advocate, spoke with her to offer local resources and discuss immediate safety planning options. The victim was most concerned with providing her children’s school a copy of the order and rushing home to her children who were unprotected while she was in court pursuing the order.

Later that night on a ride-along with Salem Police Department, the Alliance’s Michael Burke (also a California state certified advocate) accompanied Corporal Connolly on a welfare check of the victim. Corporal Connolly, a seasoned professional with domestic violence training, made contact with the victim and explained his concern for her safety. The victim was very appreciative. “At first I thought you were here to tell me my ex-husband was dead or something horrible happened,” she said. “When I left court, I was trying to do what the judge said. I needed to get my kids right away and keep them safe,” she said. Corporal Connolly was outstanding in his interactions. He invited the victim’s children to check out the police cruiser and provided them with stuffed animals. During this time, Michael and the victim assessed her danger level using Dr. Jacquelyn Campbell’s [Danger Assessment](#), a statistically validated and reliable tool for assessing risk of lethality in domestic violence cases. Michael also reviewed the Power and Control Wheel with the victim and described how advocates from the Center for Hope and Safety and Salem Police Department could help her navigate this difficult time. The victim promised to call the Center for Hope and Safety. Before leaving, the victim asked Corporal Connolly and Michael to explain a restraining order to her kids. After explaining that their father was not to be in contact with them for their safety, Corporal Connolly provided two Verizon HopeLine cell phones to the children. The victim was very happy her children would have a direct link to 911. “I will follow up on this case and make it my personal mission to ensure this restraining order is served. I will check in with this family on a regular basis,” Corporal Connolly said.

that this may compromise victim safety by taking away the right of a petitioner to dismiss an order if necessary to protect him or herself;

The case highlight above exemplifies the importance of a coordinated community response to domestic violence intervention. The complexities of this case illustrate the number of systems a victim may interface with and the importance of cross training and collaboration between agencies.

We also conducted a site visit to the Marion County Jail Annex, Courtroom B and observed a “show proof” calendar, which included a series of post-disposition domestic violence cases. Multiple defendants showed proof of completion of their local batterer’s intervention program or an out of town program. We learned that for certain calendars the District Attorney is allowed to appear by video and noted that the batterer’s program facilitator was allowed to appear by telephone. We found there was no waiting area for victims of domestic violence or other crimes and observed victims and family members huddled near a few chairs in the corner of the lobby. We also observed signs directing both victims and criminal defendants to stand in the same line – requiring victims and criminal defendants



to check in with a clerk before entering the courtroom. This procedure places victims and defendants in close proximity to each other;

17. The Alliance also observed the court process for initially applying for a restraining order inside the courthouse at Courthouse Square downtown. Pro se litigants in domestic violence cases must complete all paperwork by 10:30 AM in order to have their ex parte application for a restraining order heard that day. This very small window leaves many victims of domestic violence unable to obtain a protection order on the same day they seek such an order. The role of the family law facilitator is to ensure proper completion of all the paperwork.

The facilitators do not provide legal advice and attempt to serve only as impartial and independent reviewers of the paperwork. This process does not provide any risk assessment or safety planning process for victims unless they have previously contacted the Victim-Witness program in the District Attorney’s Office or Center for Hope and Safety. We did interview one family law facilitator and asked what she does with extremely high-risk victims or with victims that miss the 10:30 AM deadline for the completion of paperwork. The facilitator said that she refers victims over to the Victim-Witness office, but does not refer them to Center for Hope and Safety because “it is too far away”. On one high-risk case we had

observed in court, she said she had called over to the District Attorney's Office for an advocate out of concern for the victim, but no advocate was available to come over and meet with the victim. Later, the Victim-Witness staff told us they were available the entire day and did not receive a call. We did not observe the process employed by the Victim-Witness program or the Center for Hope and Safety in assisting victims in filling out the protection order paperwork outside of the courthouse. Once all paperwork is completed the victim still must come to court by herself without legal representation and meet with a family law facilitator before appearing before the judge. If the victim is high-risk, there is no formal process or policy related to ensuring contact with an advocate for risk assessment and safety planning services;

18. During the site visit, the Alliance team twice visited Broadway Commons (developed and hosted by Salem Alliance Church) for meetings. Broadway Commons is a powerful, effective community re-development and engagement model. Similar to a Family Justice Center, it is a community gathering place for many in the community. While no social service, criminal justice, civil justice, or advocacy services are present as in a Family Justice Center, it is an excellent model of community collaboration and engagement. A local community health clinic is located in Broadway Commons along with a coffee shop and restaurant. The Alliance strongly endorses the philosophy and approach of Salem Alliance Church. During our site visit, we often wondered out loud what the many direct service provider models might look like if they embraced and implemented a similar approach with partner agencies and the general public;
19. The Alliance was not permitted to conduct a focus group with survivors as we do in most communities in the United States, however we did speak with victims in the courtrooms and courthouse hallways we visited and each victim expressed strong support for the concept of being able to go one place for all her services. We received a similar response from Salem police officers during our ride-alongs. Officers strongly supported the co-location of police officers, prosecutors, advocates, civil legal services professionals, and others. All officers praised the small co-location initiative with advocates from the Victim-Witness program;
20. Marion County does not have coordinated crime mapping of all domestic violence offenses countywide. We requested domestic violence crime mapping from the Salem Police Department and the Marion County Sheriff's Department, but have not been able to view these maps to date;
21. Marion County has not done any countywide mapping of service providers in the government and community-based sector that provide crisis intervention, mid-term support, or long-term support for victims of domestic violence;
22. Knowledge of the Family Justice Center movement is very low among professionals or survivors and, in the absence of any advocacy for a comprehensive Family Justice Center model, there is little understanding of the



- model. Only a handful of local individuals in Marion County have ever been to a Family Justice Center and no one has visited multiple Centers or attended the International Family Justice Center conference hosted by the Alliance;
23. There is a strong sense that the Center for Hope and Safety is the primary organization providing most, if not all, advocacy services for victims of domestic violence in Marion County. While the Center is doing tremendous work, many victims of domestic violence do not access services at the Center for Hope and Safety. None of the victims we spoke to in court had contact with the Center. None of the victims on the protection order calendar on the day we were present had contact with the Center for Hope and Safety. We provided a brochure to one victim. Another victim said she tried to take a brochure in the family facilitators office, but there were only Spanish-language brochures available.
 24. It is unclear how many places victims go for support and assistance, but they include faith community locations, the District Attorney's Office, the Criminal Court, the Family Court, Liberty House (when co-occurring child abuse is being investigated), Family Building Blocks, the Department of Children and Family Services, Center for Hope and Safety, health clinics and/or hospitals, counseling programs, job training programs, and other locations. The primary linkage mechanism among the agencies is the traditional social service referral method – sending victims from place to place. The primary tool to provide information on all the available agencies and services is a brochure. The District Attorney's Office maintains an excellent brochure wall. We did not observe a similar wall in Liberty House, in the Marion County Courthouse, or in the Juvenile Justice courthouse. The Salem Police Department has a strong partnership with Center for Hope and Safety and provides referrals to the Center, brochures, teddy bears, and even 911 emergency phones to victims and their children. We did not conduct a ride-along with the Sheriff's Department or other law enforcement agencies, so we cannot comment on their interaction with the Center for Hope and Safety;
 25. No assessment has been done in Marion County to determine the overlap of domestic violence victims calling 911, accessing services directly from Center for Hope and Safety, and those applying pro se for protection orders. It is our opinion that these diverse groups are different populations without high percentages of overlap. In similarly sized communities, the overlap between those calling 911 and those seeking protection orders has varied from 15-25%. This analysis is foundational to determining how to connect protection order applicants with advocacy, social, and legal services;
 26. Civil legal services for victims of domestic violence are inadequate to meet the enormous need. Victims seeking civil protection orders rarely have attorneys or even paralegal or law student assistance. The only support we identified during our assessment was provided by non-lawyer victim-witness advocates and non-lawyer advocates from Center for Hope and Safety. While beneficial to those victims receiving this assistance, it is not a best practice and is not the equivalent of assistance from trained legal



professionals. The Center for Hope and Safety recently partnered with Legal Aid to obtain a lawyer position to provide part-time legal assistance to clients at the Center. This will increase the level of legal assistance, but is still inadequate for the many victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in need of legal services;

27. Home visits by Victim-Witness advocates in partnership with law enforcement agencies is a best practice and occurs in certain cases of the Salem Police Department and the Marion County Sheriff's Department. A number of programs in Marion County also support such home visit models including Family Building Blocks (www.familybuildingblocks.org) that supports early childhood home visiting programs as well as the Marion County Health Department (Babies First Program), Early Learning Hub, Inc. and others. We were not able to observe the numerous home visitation programs but strongly endorse this model;
28. The interfacing of agency heads, policy makers, business leaders, and elected officials was evident throughout our site visit. We did not observe the same interaction of large groups of those working "in the trenches" for the agencies represented in meetings of agency heads or in policy making bodies;
29. In response to questions about frameworks for multi-agency collaboration, two themes emerged. Multi-agency collaboration happens on a topic-by-topic basis or in particular community crisis situations. Strong personal relationships create important interactions among agencies and professionals on a topic by topic basis, but we did not observe structures that ensure these interactions will continue if/when staff turnover occurs;
30. During our site visit, we did not observe any community collaboration efforts that have an impact on the way the civil and criminal courts operate. How cases are handled and how victims experience the criminal and civil justice system seems to vary based on the particular judge or court staff member they interact with during their cases. Many professionals expressed frustration with the inability to influence the evolution of the court system toward more trauma-informed practices and more victim-centered practices;
31. We did not meet with the Presiding Judge of the court system though we did observe individual judges handling cases on the bench. It was not apparent to us how the court system solicits feedback from or has accountability to survivors and other litigants it serves. The court subsequently informed us that feedback is solicited through community partner meetings. We were not able to attend any meetings to observe this feedback process;
32. No processes appear to exist in the Marion County Circuit Court system that are specifically designed to reduce trauma to victims of domestic violence or their children. There are best and promising practices across the country including electronic filing processes and video conferencing programs in many courts that reduce the need for victims and their children to come to court except for



- testimony in criminal cases. None of these practices appear to exist in Marion County though prosecutors are allowed to appear by video in some circumstances and we observed batterers' intervention program professionals being authorized to call in to the court for their cases. Children are not welcome in courtrooms and waiting areas outside courtrooms do not meet this need for childcare. We observed one victim who was forced to leave her children at home in a dangerous situation while she sought a protection order;
33. There are no formal processes for law enforcement officers to regularly receive feedback from the District Attorney's Office on the outcome of cases investigated by local agencies. Officers expressed the desire to know what happens on their cases without having to keep track of them personally and hunt down the results. There are models for consistent feedback from a prosecutor's office on all cases filed including reporting out to all involved officers on the disposition of the case. None of these processes appears to exist in Marion County;
 34. We did not receive any information on the recidivism rate of domestic violence offenders prosecuted by the District Attorney's Office or on the completion rate of the batterers' intervention program;
 35. The District Attorney, Walt Beglau, is an articulate and passionate advocate for victims and for the aggressive prosecution of domestic violence cases. In our national work, the Alliance sees many approaches to the prosecution of domestic violence cases and the priority given to child abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, elder abuse, and juvenile justice cases. District Attorney Beglau is an excellent example of a prosecutor committed to victims' rights and increased accountability for offenders;
 36. We visited the DeMuniz Resource Center, part of the County's re-entry initiative. The Resource Center is a referral source for parolees and probationers. It is not a wraparound service or holistic service Center, but does play a positive role in providing referrals to criminal defendants and in hosting beneficial classes for offenders;
 37. Marion County has strong political leadership committed to supporting innovative and effective strategies and programs to improve outcomes in the handling of domestic violence, sexual assault, elder abuse, child abuse, and human trafficking cases;
 38. Strangulation assault is only seen as a misdemeanor in state law. If a child is present during a strangulation assault, it can be charged as a felony. Attempted murder is attempted murder no matter who is present and it is best practice to hold perpetrators who strangle accountable for their actions and charge it as a felony.

As in every community we visit, there are clear areas for improvement and opportunities to build on strong, victim-centered work already being done in many different systems and organizations.

Recommendations

The observations of the Alliance during our site visit provide a host of opportunities for improvements and enhancements.

During any community assessment we also look for a community's capacity to form a Family Justice Center or similar multi-agency model that will allow victims to come one place or at least less places in order to obtain all their needed services.

Marion County is not poised at the present time to begin a Family Justice Center, does not have a local champion advocating for a Family Justice Center or multi-agency model, and does not have agencies interested in any significant co-location of staff members from government and non-government agencies. Nevertheless, we have identified a host of opportunities for improvements and enhancements in services for victims and their children. And though not presently viable in the domestic violence context, there are other systems in Marion County that appear poised to develop greater multi-agency approaches to both prevention and intervention initiatives. These recommendations have been developed in tiers through three time-framed lenses: Immediate, relatively simple opportunities to enhance trauma-informed practices or improve access to services; Mid-term, somewhat more complex changes to policies, procedures, and systems; and Long-term, sophisticated paradigm shifts or major re-alignments or changes in service delivery models.



Immediate

1. The Community Re-Entry Initiative has powerful, evidence-based outcomes and could immediately begin a conversation about ways to increase the co-location of services for parolees and probationers in order to improve the already positive outcomes from the services being provided. We recommend the creation of a Sub-Working Group in the Community Re-Entry Initiative to familiarize themselves with multi-agency, co-location models and then evaluate opportunities for providing more services from one location. Focus groups with offenders could help identify the kinds of services that offenders would like to have access to during the re-entry process. Such co-location could include classes on Parenting After Violence, drug and alcohol treatment, job training, spiritual support groups, parent-child interactions, camping and mentoring programs, and a host of other options;
2. The Center for Hope and Safety is a dynamic, multidisciplinary program and could include other agency partners in its current expansion plans with the Greyhound building. We recommend the Center continue convening focus groups with survivors utilizing our Survivor [Focus Group Toolkit](#) to identify other services that survivors would like to have in the same location as the Center. Such an effort must include survivor feedback on additional services they need that the Center does not provide onsite. This could include public benefits eligibility, health screenings, and civil legal services partnerships (including the

- pending partnership with Legal Aid). Additional co-location could be enhanced by the immediate creation of policies to direct law enforcement to interview victims on pending cases at the Center instead of at the police department or in their homes. Whether the victims are clients of the Center or not, such a policy would connect many victims to the Center that do not currently access its services;
3. The embedded advocacy model of co-located services which has been embraced in Marion County could be enhanced to place advocates in the courtroom for every protection order calendar. Such advocates could be developed on a volunteer basis or on a paid basis, but this need is immense and completely unmet at the present time. Such a program could be developed by the Victim-Witness program or by Center for Hope and Safety. If volunteers are used initially, little cost would attach to this program and far less victims would be left without advocacy in this very dangerous and volatile period of time for victims and their children;
 4. Liberty House is already committed philosophically to multi-agency co-location of services through its Child Abuse Assessment model. We recommend that Liberty House continue to identify other services and programs that might support adult survivors of domestic violence and their children where there is a co-occurrence of child abuse and domestic violence. This assessment may include studying the Camp HOPE America program operated by the Alliance and potential partnerships with the Clackamas Family Justice Center in their operation of Camp HOPE Oregon;
 5. The Salem Police Department, the Marion County Sheriff's Department, and all other law enforcement agencies should create a stronger policy requiring law enforcement investigators to attend and view forensic interviews at Liberty House. The current attendance rate of 30-35% negatively impacts the effectiveness of the Child Abuse Assessment Center model and the positive outcomes that come from participation of law enforcement in observing forensic interviews and dialoguing with other professionals during an interview;
 6. The Marion County Circuit Court with its strong commitment to practices responsive to victims needs, should reconsider the ability of a judge to create rules that may be inconsistent with state law or best practice such as a judge telling victims they cannot dismiss their order for one year after applying for protection. Such a rule appears inconsistent with Oregon law, ignores the civil rights of protective order petitioners, and may increase danger of violence and abuse for victims. Separation in an abusive relationship increases risk of violence and death. The victim's ability to end separation for a variety of reasons in the relationship is consistent with victim empowerment principles;
 7. The current check-in procedure for victims in the Marion County Jail Annex, courtrooms should be re-considered. Victims, like members of the general public, have a right to be in a public courtroom without being identified or having their attendance screened or controlled by court personnel. Whatever the reasons for the current check-in process, it is not consistent with respecting, honoring, or empowering victims of crime, particularly victims of domestic violence;

Mid-Term

8. The Juvenile Justice team in Marion County should convene a working group to look more closely at potential onsite partners that might be able to increase services and collaboration on their impressive juvenile intervention campus. Principles of the Family Justice Center movement, regarding improved case outcomes and greater support for victims and their families, apply in the Juvenile Justice system as well. Given the strong, innovative leadership in the Juvenile Justice system, there appears to be greater potential for community agency and public engagement in the work of the Juvenile Justice system in reducing recidivism and creating community for youth in dependency and delinquency cases. Such increased onsite presence of community programs may also ease the transition for youth back into the community;
9. We recommend the Salem Police Department focus on creating detective positions for the follow-up investigation of domestic violence cases to supplement their specially trained domestic violence police officers. Detective follow up on misdemeanor and felony domestic violence cases increases offender accountability and produces better evidence in all cases;
10. We recommend that District Attorney and local law enforcement agencies develop a countywide protocol on the handling of domestic violence cases at both the misdemeanor and felony level. This will improve on-scene investigation and follow up investigations. It will also reduce the potential for inconsistencies among officers and agencies in their interactions with victims;
11. All communities need a clear, easily accessible process for feedback from survivors on their experience with local law enforcement agencies. We recommend that the Domestic Violence Council develop a written feedback form to be provided to all survivors seeking restraining orders in order to provide feedback on their experience with local law enforcement and with other agencies in the system. These forms could be gathered by court personnel and provided to the Domestic Violence Council. The forms can be anonymous, but we recommend they also allow victims to provide their names and case numbers if they wish to do so;
12. All law enforcement agencies in the county should utilize a domestic violence checklist form similar to that used by the Sheriff's Department and the Salem Police Department. The countywide law enforcement protocol on domestic violence cases currently being updated should include this requirement and a comprehensive section on the investigation of domestic violence cases;
13. Additional training on the handling of non- and near-fatal strangulation cases should be provided regularly to police officers, prosecutors, 911 dispatchers, advocates, therapists, doctors, nurses, and other system professionals. Marion County should consider sending a multi-disciplinary team to the Alliance's four day Training Institute on Strangulation Prevention (www.strangulationtraininginstitute.org) held 2-3 times a year;
14. The Commission on Children and Families should invite Liberty House and the Center for Hope and Safety to be represented as formal voting members of the Commission;

15. The District Attorney's Office should create a formal process to provide feedback on all domestic violence cases submitted for prosecution by local law enforcement agencies. Law students or volunteers could assist in tracking filed felony and misdemeanor cases and then providing feedback by memo or email to all involved officers. This feedback would be meaningful and helpful to officers and deputies, particularly if it included reasons why a case might have been unprosecutable or why other evidence was needed;

Long-Term

16. We recommend that Marion County develop a countywide domestic violence plan with a 5-10 year focus on violence reduction and prevention. To date, there is no countywide plan or framework for reducing and preventing domestic violence. This plan should include an analysis of the potential for multi-agency co-located services to improve access to services and enhance the effectiveness of existing services. Special attention should be paid to gaps in service and the desire of survivors to have more services in fewer locations. Attention should also be paid to designing a framework that can maximize community outreach and subsequent engagement in concrete, specific initiatives that youth and adults can actively and meaningfully participate in over the long-term effort to change community norms and values around violence and abuse;
17. The Protection order process should be re-examined in its entirety. In the short-term, family law facilitators should receive training in domestic violence dynamics and risk assessment factors. A process should be developed to ensure that victims connect with an advocate prior to obtaining a protection order without risk assessment or safety planning support. This could be facilitated in a variety of ways. The Protection Order process could require a victim speak to an advocate before the judge grants or denies an order. This could initially focus on high risk cases with facilitators notifying the court of high-risk markers in certain cases. Once cases are being heard in court, the judge could trail the case until an advocate is able to come to the courtroom and speak to the victim. In the longer term, a professional advocate or volunteer advocate could be assigned to the Protection Order courtroom each day to offer support and services to victims including meeting with all victims in high-risk cases. The more complex issues should be addressed in discussion with the Domestic Violence Council or other similar body regarding eliminating the role of family law facilitators altogether and ensuring civil legal assistance or advocacy support for all victims applying for protection orders;
18. The Commission on Children and Families, the Domestic Violence Council, and Public Safety Coordinating Council should consider the case highlight of "Joe" and his girlfriend's daughter shared earlier in this report. The policy discussion should focus on how to provide referrals and services to children and youth from 5-18 years old that are not in the Juvenile Justice system, are not clients of Liberty House or Center for Hope and Safety, and are not connected with any formal intervention process. Based on research presented by Casey Gwinn and documented in his new book, *Cheering for the Children: Creating Pathways to*

- HOPE for Children Exposed to Trauma*, the community should discuss how to identify all high ACE Score children and should discuss how to ensure advocacy, mentoring, and follow up support for these children that represent the next generation of victims and perpetrators of domestic violence in Marion County;
19. The current process of requiring all victims of domestic violence to submit their paperwork for protection orders before 10:30 AM must be reconsidered. It endangers victims, denies them access to court services and protection, and does not appear to have any exceptions for high-risk cases. The informal referral of cases from the family law facilitators to the Victim-Witness program is not an adequate process to ensure protection and support for high-risk victims in need of immediate protection;
 20. We recommend that Marion County law enforcement agencies seek to coordinate their crime mapping efforts to allow for creation of a county-wide map to document all domestic violence calls for service each year in Marion County. It would provide a much fuller visual image of the scope and volume of domestic violence calls for service in Marion County. Existing maps of domestic violence incidents maintained by the Sheriff's Department and the Salem Police Department should be disseminated to all community agencies focusing on youth and families to better educate the public on the scope of the problem;
 21. Marion County should create a mapping process to identify all potential service locations where victims of domestic violence must go for services during the crisis intervention phase of their journey and long after the crisis. Typically, communities that map such services throughout their whole county (including child abuse-related programs) find that victims must go 10-15 places in counties the size of Marion County. Focus groups with survivors, conducted by independent third parties, can validate such mapping;
 22. Marion County should consider conducting a brief study for 60-90 days to analyze the overlap or lack of intersections between victims calling 911 and accessing criminal justice system intervention (including the services of the District Attorney's Victim Witness Program), those calling the Center for Hope and Safety, and those seeking civil protection orders pro se in the courthouse. There is currently no data analyzing these populations. Such a baseline analysis is foundational to identifying service gaps for victims and ways to increase access to services for victims;
 23. We urge the Marion County Circuit Court, including judges and court personnel, to participate in a facilitated conversation with service providers and survivors to discuss the issues raised in this report and other issues that survivors, professionals, and community members have identified in helping the court process to be more trauma-informed in their approach to services for victims and their children;
 24. The City of New York School of Law Incubator model could be an excellent approach for increasing civil legal services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. The Alliance's incubator/accelerator models – including the Center for Solo Practitioners and its Justice Legal Network – are both viable, sustainable, and low-cost models for increasing affordable civil legal services for victims and their children. We recommend creation of a working group to study

- the incubator/accelerator models promoted by the Alliance and now developing in various forms in Family Justice Centers across the country. The Center for Hope and Safety could be a viable location for development of such a model in partnership with Willamette University's College of Law;
25. The Alliance recommends the Commission on Children and Families or the Public Safety Coordinating Council host a discussion about formal, long-term frameworks for how to create regular interaction among all staff members providing direct assistance in their respective agencies and organizations. In a co-located, multi-agency services model this is a regular daily occurrence, but other than reference to interaction around particular topics at particular moments in time, there does not appear to be a framework for staff members in the diverse agencies represented by the Commission to regularly interact and build close working relationships similar to those among the leaders of agencies and organizations;
 26. We recommend development of a work group to study, in collaboration with the court system, to evaluate the viability of electronic filing, video teleconferencing, and other mechanisms that allow victims of domestic violence to access legal assistance without coming to court. Such processes are viable, models exist across the country (including in Oregon), and remote access to justice system support allows childcare to be provided by the agency or organization where victims go to access legal assistance;
 27. The DeMuniz Resource Center is an important resource of parolees and probationers, but it could be developed into a much more robust, holistic services model with more co-located services and agencies to help meet the needs of criminal defendants;
 28. Although there is currently no one championing a co-located, multi-agency approach to services for victims of domestic violence and their children, we recommend a team from Marion County attend the 16th Annual International Family Justice Center Conference in San Diego in April, 2016. This would create a better understanding of the model and the diversity of Family Justice Centers and similar multi-agency models across the United States and around the world. In 2016, the conference will focus on trauma-informed practices and approaches in the criminal and civil justice system and other intervention efforts. Such information and training will provide benefit to all professionals attending the conference whether Marion County ever decides to pursue the Family Justice Center framework in its prevention and intervention efforts around domestic violence and sexual assault.

Conclusions

Marion County, Oregon has a long history of close working relationships, collaborative approaches, and innovative programming in seeking to address child abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, elder abuse, and human trafficking. The community has some knowledge of and interest in the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. This interest in the impact of childhood trauma on adult illness, disease, and criminality is an excellent vehicle to pursue enhancements in

current initiatives and programs. The correlation between ACEs and homelessness, drug and alcohol addiction, mental health problems, family violence, campus sexual assault, and many other social issues is VERY high. Casey Gwinn has said: “If we as a nation invested the money and time necessary to give every trauma-exposed child a cheerleader, we would empty our prisons and mental health facilities within two generations”. The Alliance strongly encourages additional community education on ACEs and a concerted effort by the County to implement ACEs screening in government and community-based organizations working with victims of trauma and abuse.

Marion County’s history of innovation and close working relationships forms an excellent foundation for additional improvements to prevention and intervention efforts in addressing domestic violence, sexual assault, and related child abuse. We urge local elected officials and policy makers to continue learning about the Family Justice Center model and similar multi-agency, co-located services efforts evolving rapidly across the United States and around the world. When the question is openly and honestly framed to survivors – “Would you like to be able to go one place for all the help you need?” – the answer is almost universally “Yes.” If Marion County is committed to providing services the way survivors would like to receive help, a Family Justice Center or similar multi-agency model could be developed. But even in the absence of support for the model among current service providers in the domestic violence and sexual assault areas, the model and the lessons learned from it could provide guidance to the Juvenile Justice system, the Offender Re-Entry Initiative, and the Child Abuse Assessment Center in expanding the co-location of agencies and services in their existing approaches.

Alliance for HOPE International, through its [Family Justice Center Alliance program](#), has a host of online resources, conferences, Institutes, and national webinars that can provide additional resources for interested community members, policy makers, elected officials, and direct service providers including criminal and civil justice system professionals.

Appendix A: Marion County Demographic Information

People QuickFacts	Marion County	Oregon
Population, 2014 estimate	326,110	3,970,239
Population, 2010 (April 1) estimates base	315,335	3,831,073
Population, percent change - April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2014	3.4%	3.6%
Population, 2010	315,335	3,831,074
Persons under 5 years, percent, 2014	6.8%	5.8%
Persons under 18 years, percent, 2014	25.4%	21.6%
Persons 65 years and over, percent, 2014	14.4%	16.0%
Female persons, percent, 2014	50.1%	50.5%
White alone, percent, 2014 (a)	89.6%	87.9%
Black or African American alone, percent, 2014 (a)	1.4%	2.0%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent, 2014 (a)	2.6%	1.8%
Asian alone, percent, 2014 (a)	2.3%	4.3%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent, 2014 (a)	0.9%	0.4%
Two or More Races, percent, 2014	3.3%	3.6%
Hispanic or Latino, percent, 2014 (b)	25.7%	12.5%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent, 2014	66.9%	77.0%
Living in same house 1 year & over, percent, 2009-2013	82.3%	82.0%
Foreign born persons, percent, 2009-2013	13.7%	9.8%
Language other than English spoken at home, pct age 5+, 2009-2013	25.3%	14.8%
High school graduate or higher, percent of persons age 25+, 2009-2013	83.2%	89.4%
Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons age 25+, 2009-2013	21.2%	29.7%
Veterans, 2009-2013	25,842	323,205
Mean travel time to work (minutes), workers age 16+, 2009-2013	21.8	22.5
Housing units, 2014	122,449	1,700,549
Homeownership rate, 2009-2013	60.3%	62.0%
Housing units in multi-unit structures, percent, 2009-2013	23.6%	23.2%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2009-2013	\$192,200	\$238,000
Households, 2009-2013	113,285	1,516,456
Persons per household, 2009-2013	2.72	2.49
Per capita money income in past 12 months (2013 dollars), 2009-2013	\$22,001	\$26,809
Median household income, 2009-2013	\$46,885	\$50,229
Persons below poverty level, percent, 2009-2013	18.6%	16.2%
Business QuickFacts	Marion County	Oregon
Private nonfarm establishments, 2013	7,685	108,527
Private nonfarm employment, 2013	95,058	1,396,563
Private nonfarm employment, percent change, 2012-2013	3.6%	2.4%
Nonemployer establishments, 2013	15,789	260,438
Total number of firms, 2007	23,677	348,154
Black-owned firms, percent, 2007	0.6%	1.2%
American Indian- and Alaska Native-owned firms, percent, 2007	S	1.2%

Asian-owned firms, percent, 2007	3.0%	3.6%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander-owned firms, percent, 2007	0.2%	0.2%
Hispanic-owned firms, percent, 2007	6.6%	3.3%
Women-owned firms, percent, 2007	27.2%	29.8%
Manufacturers shipments, 2007 (\$1000)	2,845,369	66,880,653
Merchant wholesaler sales, 2007 (\$1000)	3,461,700	51,910,777
Retail sales, 2007 (\$1000)	4,016,561	50,370,919
Retail sales per capita, 2007	\$12,950	\$13,494
Accommodation and food services sales, 2007 (\$1000)	D	7,555,764
Building permits, 2014	698	16,645
Geography QuickFacts	Marion County	Oregon
Land area in square miles, 2010	1,182.33	95,988.01
Persons per square mile, 2010	266.7	39.9
FIPS Code	47	41

Appendix B: Marion County District Attorney's Office Prosecution Statistics

Year	Cases Reviewed	Cases filed	Felony Charges Filed	Misdemeanor Charges Filed	Cases Dismissed After Charging	Cases With Convictions
2009	10,799	7,695	6,100	9,596	201	6,159
2010	9,900	7,173	5,703	8,534	155	5,845
2011	9,687	7,127	5,504	8,536	158	5,897
2012	9,867	6,943	6,237	9,165	188	5,752
2013	9,513	6,600	6,351	8,059	223	5,304
2014	9,916	6,716	5,500	7,686	219	4,978

Year	DV Cases Reviewed	DV Cases Filed
2009	1,243	970
2010	1,200	916
2011	1,137	876
2012	1,086	811
2013	1,201	886
2014	1,214	888