

Welcome, everyone, to the National Criminal Justice Training Center webinar. Our topic today is Investing in Fatherhood to Reduce Reoffending, Recidivism, and Violence in Tribal Communities. Presenting today's webinar is Kevin Poleyumptewa, and Greg Brown is my name, webinar moderator.

Let's try our first poll question. This is a simple question to find out who's joining us today. Can we launch the first poll question? The question is, which of the following best describes your role? Your choices are corrections, probation, parole; judge or attorney; law enforcement; CAC, social worker, victim service provider, or mental health provider; or other.

As I can see from the results, corrections, probation, and parole is about 15% of the audience today. And I'll let you know that about 460 people have joined us today. Judges and attorneys-- about 3%. Law enforcement-- 6% of our audience. CAC, social workers, victim services, or mental health providers-- 51% of the audience. And 25% are other.

I'd like to welcome you again to our webinar. The focus of our grant from BJA is to support and help improve tribal probation and other community-based corrections services. When we look at the research in evidence-based practices and best practices, we see a constellation of dynamic risk, need, and responsivity factors that, if addressed effectively, can reduce recidivism.

Fatherhood programs can be very effective in addressing several risk-need-responsivity factors. Two of the most relevant to fatherhood programs are family and marital relations and antisocial associations and peers. Fatherhood programming can significantly help to improve family and marital relationships when fathers are present and involved in their children's and families' lives.

Additionally, when fathers are involved in their children's lives, the children's risk of delinquent behavior is reduced. And the educational outcomes improve significantly for those children.

With respect to addressing antisocial peer relationships, when fathers refocus on their families to reduce their involvement with antisocial, procriminal peers and activities, this builds prosocial connections and healthier relationships, helping them focus their purpose and increasing their self-directedness. All of these are protective factors that can reduce violations and recidivism.

I'm pleased to introduce our presenter today, Kevin Poleyumptewa. Kevin is a project coordinator with the National Criminal Justice Training Center of Fox Valley Technical College, providing training and technical assistance for several victim services programs.

Prior to joining NCJTC, Kevin provided fatherhood and healthy relationships programming in communities, jails, and juvenile residential treatment facilities. He also conducted workshops and keynote addresses for various Native American tribes, communities, high schools, and youth programs on the topics of fatherhood and healthy relationships. With that, I'll turn the time over to Kevin.

Thanks, Greg. Good morning, everybody. It's great to be here today. Hopefully everybody is doing OK being in lockdown for several weeks now. And I know we're all trying to adjust to that, as is myself here. And again, glad to be here.

And I just wanted to start off by giving you a little heads up that I do have a little dog here that is very vigilant and can bark at a lot of things. So if you hear that barking in the background, that's probably who it is. I promise you it's not me.

So with that, we'll go ahead and start our webinar here. I just want to go over the learning objectives that we're going to be covering today in regards to fatherhood and its contributions to reduction of recidivism and reoffending, the first one being explaining the importance of investing in fatherhood.

So why do we want to invest in fatherhood? Why should we? What are some of the reasons that we need to put more attention into investing in the fathers in our community? So we'll be going over that today, as well as examining the benefits of fatherhood programs. What are some of the potential outcomes that we can see and predict from a father's involvement in a program that has been provided by your community?

And then we'll also discuss examples of fatherhood program models. What are some of the types of models that different communities are using? Which ones tend to be a little bit more effective and why, what we can look to develop in our own communities to provide this type of service and support for not only our fathers, but our community in general?

And then we will also identify power partners and resources for successful fatherhood programs. What does that look like? Who is providing services in our community? How can we partner with them? How do they benefit the program? And how do they benefit the services that we're looking to provide for the men in our community?

And again, this will be a general overview. And if there are more specific questions of some of the topics that we cover today, those can be submitted at the end of this webinar here. So with that, let's go ahead and do another poll here.

OK. So our second poll question for the day is, do you currently have a fatherhood program in your community-- yes, no, or unsure? As you can see from our results, it's pretty split with people who do have current fatherhood

programs in their community and people who do not. And then 40% of the audience indicates that they are unsure whether they have a fatherhood program in their community.

OK. This is good to know, good information. And fatherhood in general to, I think, most of the country is still fairly new. However, the movement itself has been going on for about 20-plus years and has definitely grown in its efforts and supports in the last 15 years.

And so we will be going through some of the statistical information as well that has been provided by some of the research. However, some of it may seem a little old. But it is the most current information that is available as well. And before we get started into the statistical part of this webinar, I do want to share a short video clip with you just to set the tone of this webinar and give you an idea of why it is important to invest the time and effort into supporting our men and our fathers in our native communities here.

As you can see, I think this is a video that we can all relate to in terms of what we see in our native communities and what the absence of fathers and men has contributed to the state of our communities as well. When we think about our youth and violence and social ills that have come into view currently. It's a sad but true thing that we see throughout our communities. And this video definitely depicts just how much of an impact fatherlessness does have on our children and our families and our communities.

So it's something that we should think about as we continue through this webinar in terms of what we see in our communities. Where are our men? What is the state of our men currently? And how does the community view men? So these are all things that definitely contribute to the psyche, the confidence, the general foundation for our native men and what they are able to do currently.

And so with the involvement in some of these programs, there is definitely a huge change that can take place. And that's what we're going to be talking about today in terms of what we can provide in terms of services for our men to help support them and build them up and put them back in their rightful position as leaders and protectors of our families and communities.

So here are some of the statistical information that has been gathered. These slides here were pulled from the National Fatherhood Initiative, who has been doing research for several years now and is one of the foremost providers of information on the topic of fatherhood and healthy relationships as well.

So in this first slide, you can see that it says, father absence is to blame for many of our most intractable social ills affecting children. And if we think about that on a larger scale, when we're considering federal funding, state funding, even our own tribal funding, how much money is being put into the adverse outcomes that can be attributed to fatherlessness, to dad not being in the home, to dad not being involved?

There's a lot of money and effort that has been putting into programs that treat those symptoms or results. And so this really helps us to think about why it really is important to invest in our men. If men are part of this contributing factor to a lot of these adverse outcomes, then why don't we put more money into them, and not only for our children and our communities, but our survival in general?

As many of you know, historically, native men have a very vital role in our communities and the survival of their communities and the passing of our traditions and our history and our culture alongside the women. And it really comes down to that balance.

Think about it in terms of a vehicle. You have four wheels on a vehicle. If one of them goes flat, yes, it will work. And it'll run. It'll go for a little bit. But eventually, it doesn't get as far as it needs to go or you want it to go.

And so in order for us to keep that vehicle running, we have to fix that wheel. We have to make sure that it is part of this vehicle and all wheels are running in unison to get us to our destination. So again, men are very important in that aspect there.

And the next image here shows that currently there are 19.5 million children, which is more than one in four, live without their father in the home. Now, that doesn't mean that because dad isn't in the home that he can't continue to contribute to the outcome of his children and also the support of his community.

So this is one of the things that we also have to think about in terms of, how do we support men who aren't necessarily in the home and be able to be there with their children on a daily basis? And this can still be done, as we'll find out going through the rest of this webinar here.

In another slide here, it says, children living without their father in the home are 47% more likely to live in poverty. And another hard fact for our native communities is the majority of us do live in those conditions already. And this is something that is definitely a learned behavior for our children in terms of what they see growing up, what they begin to normalize as being a part of who they are and what is, for lack of a better word, expected of them, too. So these are things to consider.

And also, 92% of parents in prison are fathers. That's 92% of the people total, men and women, that are incarcerated are fathers. And so when we think about that, we also have to take into consideration if that-- if that large of a number is incarcerated, how are we working with these men? What sort of services are being provided to them to benefit the outcomes of those children that are in the community?

How do we address these men? How do we work with them? Because eventually, they will be released from whether it be prison or jail. They will be coming back out and re-entering our communities. And many of them

have been out of their children's lives for months, even years. So how do we help them to become the fathers that most of them, if not all, want to be?

When they're in there, a lot of times many of these men are thinking about their children. They're wondering what their children are doing. They are feeling bad because they're not there to support their children, to be there for those special moments.

And part of what we're going to be discussing in this webinar also is what sort of factors and variables come into play into the decisions that have wound them up in jail or prison. And so how do these fatherhood programs help to curtail some of that?

Adolescent boys with absent fathers are more likely to engage in delinquency than those with fathers who are present. Children raised in a father-absent home are more likely to experience behavioral problems. And these are things that we already know.

When their relationships in the home aren't the most healthy, then children tend to be the ones who are affected most by it with children being more likely to internalize things, not necessarily being able to make that stuff visible. Those behaviors visible in the home can be made visible out in public, in school. And it is all a part of how they interpret things and internalize some of those things to contribute to the way that they behave outside of the home.

Some of those things-- if they're in an abusive situation at home where mom and dad are constantly arguing, if dad's not there, then where does he find his guidance? Who does he look to for this guidance? And a lot of times that attention seeking is directed to the people that they're closest to, people that are visible to them in their communities, in the school.

So they are looking for people to latch on to feel some of that welcoming, to feel some of that connectedness and belonging. And unfortunately, sometimes they fall into the wrong crowd because those crowds tend to be a little bit more accepting. So eventually, they start to take on the behaviors of that group of people that they are hanging around with. And these are all things that we discuss with the men in these various programs and different lesson plans that they go through.

And here are some of the benefits of father involvement here, which are pretty obvious here. If dads are involved, the overall emotion and social well-being of our children definitely improves. The boys have fewer behavioral problems. And girls have fewer psychological problems when their dads are involved.

And that's all part of the relationship that is built during that involvement. It's one thing to have a father in the home who is not involved. In that situation, you still will have some of those adverse outcomes because that

relationship and that bonding is not there. It could be an abusive one. It could be a fearful relationship. It could just be one that is, in some other terms, somewhat neglected because dad isn't involved with those children, whether it be the son or the daughter.

And we're thinking about these in terms of his involvement. What does that mean? What does that look like? Involvement-- does that mean taking your children and going to see a movie, going to see a ballgame?

Well, yeah, it could be those things. But in these fatherhood programs, when we're talking about father involvement, we're talking about engagement. We're talking about relationship building. We are talking specifically about building quality time and activities with our children.

So if you're sitting in a movie theater watching a movie, yes, it's a great time. You're spending time with your child. The child's spending time with dad. But the interaction is not there.

So we're looking at activities and things that we can do in and outside of the home to help to build and foster that relationship and create a close connectedness. Because when children have a close relationship with their fathers and their mothers, then they tend not to want to disappoint them. They will do as much as they can to make sure that they don't disappoint their parents. And so we want to create that healthy, strong relationship.

Plus it also helps to build their confidence. It helps to build their ability to want to experience new things and be able to stand up for themselves. All these things can be attributed to that healthy and strong relationship.

So what we want to do here is help the men create a strong, healthy relationship with their children, teaching them skills on how to engage with them. How do we dialogue with our children?

How do we have those hard conversations that we know we should have but we are sometimes fearful of having because maybe we feel like we don't have the right answer, or we're going to say something wrong? But the important thing is that those conversations have started. So these are just some of the things that we'll be talking about as well as we go through.

Some more facts-- daughters are less likely to engage in risky sexual behavior when they have a consistent contact and a sense of closeness with their father, again, attributing to that strong relationship and that respect that's built through that relationship. And adolescent teen boys who live with their dads are less likely to carry guns and deal drugs.

And this goes back to the incarceration part of it as well. Some of the research has shown that many of the men who are incarcerated grew up also in fatherless homes. And many of them have talked about how they wish that relationship was different. And the reasons they made the decisions that they did was because there was nobody

there for them to talk to for them to guide them.

And if you go back to the video that we just saw, that's exactly what has played out in many of the lives of our native men. And so we have to think again about them. Why are our men so important? Why should we invest in them? And what are these benefits of that?

In addition to some of these statistics here, when fathers are involved, they're 75% less likely to have teen births, 80% less likely to spend time in jail. And they're twice as likely to enter college.

And I think one of the most important outcomes also is that they tend to have an increased cognitive competence, empathy, and more internalized locus of control. So they have that foundation to build that confidence to take responsibility for a lot of their actions and understand that it's OK to make mistakes.

And these are things that can be taught to our children through those relationships, through that dialogue. But at the same time, these are things that we need to teach our men to understand as well. They need some of that understanding. So as we've seen, our father involvement has a significant impact on childhood outcomes. And with that, let's go into another poll question.

Thanks, Kevin. Here's our third poll question. The question is, are you familiar with fatherhood programs? Yes, I'm familiar with the-- the first response is, yes, I'm familiar with the programs and what they provide. The second response is, I've heard of them but not familiar with the benefits. And third, no, I have no prior knowledge of fatherhood programs.

And as you can see from our results, about 26% of attendees are familiar with the fatherhood programs in their area and what they provide. About 45% say they have heard of them but not familiar with the benefits. And about 29% say, no, have no prior knowledge of fatherhood programs.

Again, thank you for the information. It's very helpful to Kevin as we go through this webinar and look at subsequent trainings as well. So thanks, Kevin. And I'll turn it back to you.

Thank you, Greg. And so looking at those answers here, you really have to take that into consideration. I think we have over 400 people that are currently on the webinar today. And so we're looking at 29% of that have no prior knowledge of fatherhood programs.

Now, this obviously could be because their location, remoteness. It may be something that just hasn't been thought of, is really not top of mind. But I think a good majority of you are familiar with fatherhood programs but may not necessarily understand completely what a fatherhood program is and what it can do or even how to start one. And that's why many of you are here today to figure out if this is something that might be useful for your

community.

So let's talk about that a little bit. What is a fatherhood program? A fatherhood program is-- and it really can be many things. It's solely dependent, really, on your mission and your goal as a community and what fits your community. That is the most important thing.

There are quite a few curriculums out there that are designed for fatherhood programs or for men but don't necessarily fit your community. And that's one of the things that is very important to take into consideration also is that-- what is appropriate for our community? And the truth of it is that many of them are. We just have to figure out how to tweak it a little bit and make it more appropriate for our community.

And so those are some of the things that we can look at when we're talking about different fatherhood curriculums and other things. How appropriate is that going to be for my community? How do I make that? How do I create that? What does the curriculum look like? So these are all questions that we will talk about here shortly.

And so these are just a few of the things that a fatherhood program can provide. We obviously want to empower the men to play a more active role in the lives of their children. And that is probably the most important thing.

Again, going back to the involvement, thinking about our statistics that we just went over, what are some of the things that we can provide to help empower these men to play that more active role? And the truth of it is most of these men want to. They want to be good fathers. They really don't know how because they have not had that modeled for them in their own lives.

So how do we find that? How do we teach these men to play that more active role? We want to help educate the men on how important they are, not only as fathers and partners in their relationships, but also as community members.

If we want to look at our native communities historically, traditionally men have held a very important role in our communities. And the unfortunate truth is that for decades now, men have been gone. They've been absent. And our women have been there on the front lines holding the families together, continuing to push forward.

And so we need to figure out how to bring those men back, how to create that balance again within our homes, within our communities. And so that's part of what this fatherhood program can do.

And then we also want to provide skill-building activities for fathers because, as I said, many of them have not had that modeled for them before. What does a healthy relationship look like? What does a healthy home look like? What are my responsibilities?

I come across men quite often that are very proud to be Native American. But they don't understand what that means. They don't understand what it means to be Native American and what it means to be a Native American within their community. What are my roles and responsibilities there, not only to my family, but to my community? How do I contribute to that? How do I protect that? How do I become that native warrior that I call myself?

You hear that term quite a bit in jails and in prison. I'm a warrior. I'm a strong Native American. And I've got tattoos of Native American designs, feathers, and things all over my body. But I don't really know what that means. When I sit down and talk with them, many times they don't know how to respond. They don't understand really what that means.

And so part of these skill-building things that we can provide are helping them to understand that. What does that look like? What is my culture? What is my lineage? Where do I come from? And what are my responsibilities according to that lineage also?

And then we're talking about modern-day skills, conversation skills. How do I talk with my children? How do I begin those conversations? How do I just talk? How do I create a conversation? Because a lot of the curriculum that is out there today is using terms that are not familiar to our native men. They're written out in a way that our native men don't talk. It's not the way that they speak.

So they feel very uncomfortable practicing these skills or using those terms. But they can be learned, as with anything else. These are skills that can be learned. And once they understand the importance of this certain sentence structure, they are more likely to be able to utilize it.

And then we'll talk a little bit about role playing down the road as well, which is another important factor for a fatherhood program. But also, a good fatherhood program should include case management because they will need that continued support, that ongoing support to help them navigate the different services that are available in the community and all the different steps that we'd like to see them go through to get to where not only we, but they want to be.

So how do we provide that support? And sometimes it is having somebody there in the office who is available for them to drop in and just talk with. You'll see that a lot of men really just want that, just want somebody to listen. They want to hear. They want to be upset. They want to be angry.

A lot of times they want to cry because they can't do that out in the community when they're amongst their peers. Whether they are somebody who is this big, strong, burly guy who just got out of prison, they're involved in gangs, whatever it might be, they still have those emotional burdens that they carry around with them. So sometimes an ear is a huge thing for them.

And we'll talk a little bit about the ideology behind some of their behavior as well. But as we're going through these things, all of these items that I've been speaking about-- they all contribute to the way that individual man views the world. It contributes to the type of father he is. It contributes to what he is like in a relationship. It contributes to everything around him.

And many times they don't understand that. They're stuck in this world where they're used to blaming everybody else. They blame law enforcement. They blame Social Services. They blame everybody else but do not take responsibility for their own actions. And that's part of what this fatherhood program can bring out in these men.

And then we move on to our fatherhood curriculums and activities. As I mentioned, there are many different curriculums out there. And there are not so many curriculums which are written specifically for Native American communities. And there are some really good curriculums out there. And so they can be purchased.

And they can also be created for your own community. That's where a team is important because it helps to create an understanding of why we want this program. But also, what should we put into this program? What is appropriate for our communities? What is appropriate for the group of men that we will be providing service to?

And cultural education is a big part of it within our native communities. How do we integrate that into our community? Because we know it's important. We hear it time after time after time. Well, it's got to be culturally appropriate. What does that mean for you as an organization, for you as a community?

It can be difficult in some of our communities because we have blended communities now. Or we've lost-- we haven't lost sight. But we've lost that understanding of which way things should be done.

And I've heard this in many communities also where we tried to do this. But these people over here in the community say we're doing it wrong. You're not doing it right. Or don't use that person because they don't know. They're not doing it the correct way. And so these are dialogues that you'll have to have internally to come up with that cultural education piece.

What does that look like? Does it matter? Do we have to be that stringent? Or is it something that we will provide regardless because we want to at least provide some sort of cultural component for our participants?

And what is that going to include? It can be many things. When we talk about our power partners and resources, we'll talk about those individuals, those organizations that can be a part of the cultural education piece to your curriculum and your program.

And then we have role playing. Role playing is very important for these men because, as I mentioned before, when you give them something to do, they first off are reluctant. They tend not to trust very well. And also, they

don't want to be embarrassed. They don't want to feel like they're not doing it correctly. Or like I said, it might be foreign to them.

And so they're not going to go home and practice these skills with their partner or with their children because it just feels uncomfortable. There's a huge fear there. So within these fatherhood programs, you can provide opportunities for them to role play these things.

And these are scenarios that I've done with the various men also in my programming-- is providing them scenarios that they have to come up with dialogue on. You provide them with a simple topic. Say it's teen pregnancy. What does that look like? You let them develop that scene and let them play that out.

And the thing to remember is that they are doing this within a safe environment. They're doing it in front of other men in a closed location where nobody else can see.

And it actually turns out to be pretty fun and funny at times because men-- native people in general-- I think we like to pick on each other. We like to tease each other. And so this is a comfortable area for them. And it also provides an opportunity for the other men to provide feedback.

So we will have one of the fathers play the father role. We'll have another father play the role of the daughter in this particular situation. And maybe it's a situation where the daughter is coming to her dad to tell him that she's pregnant. How do you play that out? What does that look like?

And that's a pretty extreme topic there. But then you go into other simpler things as well. When you're talking to your son about school, he's been ditching school a lot. How do you start that conversation? A lot of times men will go from one extreme to another and start yelling at the kid, punishing him, and telling him what to do rather than having the child figure out for themselves what needs to be done.

And so that's where the dialogue comes into play. That's what makes it so important. And what we're talking about here is communication-- not talking at somebody, but actually communicating. What does that look like? Why is listening such an important component of communication?

And within that, the larger picture being, if I'm communicating with my child, then I'm building a stronger relationship. I'm building a stronger connection. I'm building trust in my child for me, knowing that he can start to come to me with these issues because it's not going to be a 0-to-60 type of situation. So having them being able to role play these things within the comfort of their peers is a wonderful thing.

And then we move on to community involvement and volunteering. And this is another important component because many of the men that you will be working with have tarnished reputations. Many of them-- unfortunately,

this is the real truth about it-- is they've been to jail. They've been to prison.

And so the community knows them as that person. They know Joe as this guy who's-- he's always drinking. He's always high. Or he's always yelling at his kids or whatever. And that's who he is before he went away. Then when he comes back to the community, that's who Joe is. That's what the community knows him as.

So how do we change that? And a fatherhood program can be a good caveat for that change for this individual because now you're providing opportunities for them to get out into the community and eliminating that fear factor of it. Because you're not telling them to go out and do this and this and this. You're actually providing that avenue for them within your community activities that maybe your department or your program is hosting or a part of.

These men can be the guys that are sitting at your information booth at a health fair or community event. They're sharing their experiences about your program. Now you've just killed two birds with one stone because these men not only are speaking about your program. They're doing your marketing for you as well. But you're also providing them that opportunity for the community to see them in a different light. Now they're doing something positive.

And the more involved your program is in the community, the more opportunities these men have to be a part of that and to begin their transition back into the community in a different way and creating a different reputation of what they want rather than who they are currently. So that is a very important part of a good program in terms of being able to provide that support and foundation building for these men.

And then another one that I like a lot is our introspective activities, having them look into themselves, look really, really deep into themselves. And this goes back to talking about understanding the ideology behind their behaviors. What causes me to make the decisions that I have?

Because there's always reason for the things that we do, whether it be our childhood upbringing. It may be past relationships. It may be current relationships. It could be death. Maybe we haven't fully grieved in a healthy way. And so we still carry a lot of that around. So all of these things contribute to that.

So we have to help the men understand why these things happen. And this contributes to, again, going back to taking responsibility for who I am as an individual and for the things that happened to me. Looking at themselves, many of them don't realize how much pain they carry around. And we've been able to find this through some of this sort of introspective work.

And one of the things that I have done in a lot of the trainings that I do and a lot of the programmings is an activity called "letter to dad." And this is an activity where the men are given about 30 to 45 minutes to write a letter to their father.

Now, this is an opportunity for them to praise their father for everything that they have taught them, whatever it might be. It's an opportunity for them to cuss them out, to yell and scream at them, whatever it might be that they feel they need to get across in this letter.

And they're informed that they need to be truthful in writing this letter because nobody is going to see this letter. Their dad's not going to see this letter unless they choose to send it to him. That's up to them. But nobody is going to read this letter. So this is your opportunity to say whatever you wanted to say or ask those questions that you've never had the opportunity or maybe have been too scared to ask. This is that opportunity.

So they write this letter. And at the end of it, when they're done, we have a little dialogue, talk about, what was that letter like? Was it difficult? Was it easy? And the men will begin to open up a little bit. Yeah, it was difficult because this. I lost my dad a couple of years ago that kind of thing. It's a short dialogue with only a couple volunteers.

And what I did mention to them in the beginning was that they actually will be reading this letter in front of the group. So at that point, the volunteers will start off by coming up one at a time. And they read that letter. And this is when you begin to see that pain, that emotion that they've been carrying around come to the forefront.

And it's been really just amazing to see these huge, burly men, tattoos head to toe, straight out of prison, ex or current gang members reading this letter and finding it very difficult to get past the third or fourth sentence without becoming emotional. And this is something that has been missing in their lives for a long time.

Then they start to realize, OK, well, yes. There is this big emptiness, this big void. Or maybe I am appreciative for the experiences that I had with my dad. But that all starts to come out.

And following that whole exercise is a discussion on, what do we do with this now? We have to process that. We have to figure out what we're going to do with all the stuff that just came out. This does affect me as a man. It affects me as a father.

And then you start to continue that dialogue in the following sessions. OK, well, now I can start to understand and see why I do some of the things I do in my relationship based off of my relationship with my father or my mother, whoever that might be. But this stuff that happened in the past is definitely with me now in the current. And it affects who I am. It affects the way that I do things.

So this is part of when you start to see that transformation of them understanding who they are as an individual and, again, why they're so important because this affects everybody else around us. And that goes into part of the talking circles here. It's very important to provide the men with an opportunity to just talk. That is when you start to see the camaraderie between the group start to grow.

And now what you start to create is a different group, a different family for them to attach themselves to because now you're creating an environment for them to foster change within themselves. Because the men in there are mostly-- I won't say every one of them. But most of them are there to get to a different point in their life that they want to be.

And when everybody shares that same vision, that same goal, then the participants are more likely to take on those types of behaviors as well, those aspirations, that idea of being something else. What you're creating here is a new family, in a sense. And that's something that you see in a lot of these fatherhood programs-- is that family environment that is developed because they're spending so much time with each other and learning a lot about each other and starting to feel safe and, in addition to that, starting to trust a little bit more with each session.

And so in this one here, we have lists of the different types of fathers that can be served within your fatherhood program. We're looking at noncustodial fathers. We're looking at military fathers, fathers with children of special needs. They're all men. And they share a lot of things in common. But they're all also different.

So how do we provide a program that services all these different categories of men, of fathers? Because they're likely every single one of these situations within your community. So as you build your program, you must consider the different resources that are available to serve these particular populations. They can be a valuable asset in helping to build or be a part of your program design and/or curriculum.

We have high instances of stepfathers as well. What does that look like? What does that dynamic look like? I've heard before in these groups that a guy comes into a relationship. And mom is still-- don't talk to my kids like that. Or the guys-- those aren't my kids.

Well, these are things-- when we're talking about a relationship and communication, we have to address that. What does that look like? And why do you have that type of thinking? So this is all part of that healthy relationship-building component of the program for them and giving them the skills.

OK, well, how do I address this? How do I talk to mom? How do I talk to my stepchild? Because mom and I love each other. We're going to be together. Maybe they're getting married or they are married. And so I have to make this relationship work. How do I do that? How does that work?

So maybe your program facilitator doesn't have the answer to that. So who can I bring into this program to help address that, to speak to that, to help educate these men on that type of situation? Again, going back to our community partners, who is in our community that can help target or provide education and resources to these different categories of men?

And this here, we are talking a little more about the pillars of the program, really the foundation, the necessities, if

you will, of a good, solid program. Again, setting the foundation, which is essential to any program-- it's essential to any relationship. It's essential to being a father. You've got to have a strong foundation.

So in that, we have to be able to help create a positive self-concept for these men. When talking with the men, sometimes you'll hear that-- in that conversation, as time goes on, it may be pretty superficial stuff in the beginning-- what they're doing, where they want to go kind of stuff, what's going on in their daily lives.

But as those conversations get a little bit more intimate, you start to hear more about their history. And then it goes into how they want something better. They want to be better. But they can't get there. Or they feel they don't deserve that. And these are answers that have come directly out of men. I don't deserve better.

So why is that? That, obviously, is coming from an individual who doesn't feel very good about themselves. So how do we bring that up? And understanding the parent and child relationships-- how do I work well with my partner? How do I create a healthy relationship? How do I increase our communications with my wife, my girlfriend, and the children? How do I do that?

And so part of that, in understanding the relationship with the children, we have to look at understanding of the development of stages because parents can get very frustrated with children for being children. Children exhibit behaviors that are common and normal for children. But sometimes parents don't understand that. Or they may have forgot. Then they see it as inappropriate behavior.

And so helping them to understand that this-- during this time in your child's life, these are the behaviors that they will exhibit. Those are things that you can expect. And then when they're from this old to this old, then they will start to do this, this, this, and that-- and so helping them understand, OK, this is normal. This is part of what happens.

And that helps to increase the communication with the child as well because now they're being more understanding and less likely to blow their top when it comes to these types of behaviors. And so understanding the different stages of intimate relationships as well is part of that, too. There's different zones or phases that we will go through within our own intimate relationships. And understanding those can also contribute to their understanding and their ability to communicate as well.

And understanding our adult relationships-- when it comes to coparenting, what does that look like? We have a lot of blended families these days. And so what does that look like? How do I work with this? How do we as a couple work with this?

Maybe dad's got three children from two different women. And he's now with a mom who has maybe two children

of her own. And so you're looking at three different families. How do we work through that? And how do we work with our children through that as well? So these are all things that can be considered for your different programs here.

How do we fight fair? How do we argue? What are some of those rules that are in place? What does that look like? So these are things that can be part of your curriculum.

And then understanding what a functional versus dysfunctional relationship is-- what is a functional relationship? What does that mean? What is a healthy relationship? What does that mean to you? And then what were you shown growing up as a relationship? Was it functional? Was it dysfunctional?

Many times you'll get the response of it being dysfunctional. It wasn't a healthy family relationship. OK. So how do we fix that? How do we create a healthy relationship for you? And again, that goes back to the skill building and role playing and all of these other things that are part of your program.

And so, again, we all perceive the world differently according to our upbringing, our experiences, and our self-concept. So if we all looked at, say, the picture on your screen here, you look at the dad. You look at the mom. And you look at the daughter there.

And each-- not each one of us. Many of us will come up with the same situation. But we will also come up with different ideas of what this image is. What do you see there? I see mom has a big smile on her face. Dad is kind of like, eh, I don't know if I want to be here. And the baby is-- she's happy, obviously.

So in that picture, maybe you assume that it's a happy family. Some of the victims' advocates on here may see the guy's face as a little suspicious, maybe. So again, based on our experiences, based on the things that we know, we interpret this picture differently from different views.

And so when we're talking with our men, we have to try to understand that view. What has contributed to their vision of the world, of relationships, of being a father? What are all these things that have contributed to me here today?

And going back to understanding that ideology and how this contributes to this portion of it also, we have to think about, what has happened to our men historically? Back in the day of our ancestors, our men were hunters. They were gatherers. That's what they did.

And the family was constantly together unless the men went away to war. They went to go hunt. They may have been gone for somewhat extended periods of time. But they were always back. And each day, for the most part, they were back in the house as a family having dinner and building that relationship.

Over time, as things modernized, other things were invented, we start to enter into the industrial era of America and of the world. And once that happened, now we have things like cars and lights, electricity, stuff like this that costs money for us to pay for. And in order for us to get the money, the men now had to leave the home.

Unfortunately, for many of our native men, that meant actually leaving home. You had to leave the reservation to go out into the city to find work, to make the money, to buy the food. And so things have changed. So over time, men have been removed further and further from the home.

Eventually, you have war. Men went away to war. And then because the men went away to war, now you have women who are removed from the home because they had to go to the factory to build the planes to do-- and so if you look at that history, we have to think about how that has affected us in terms of who we are today.

What are some of those-- if you want to think about it this way-- the historical trauma effects of that? What has happened? And we're not even addressing the adverse treatment of Native Americans throughout the history as well. And that's going to contribute to it as well.

So over time, that distance has grown greater and greater and greater. So how do we pull those men back into here? And that's part of-- as a facilitator, as a program, we have to understand that. There's always a story behind a person's behavior.

Even in our own communities we have to think about that, too. We look at the state of our community. What does that look like? And then we need to think about, what created that? How did we get here? And how do we go back to where we want it to be? And it takes input from everybody. It takes support from everybody.

And that could be a hard thing to do. But for these men, your program can be just that. It can help them to understand that, OK, well, this has happened to me. But it doesn't necessarily mean this is who I have to be. But I can't change that without changing the way that I think, without understanding myself first.

And then you think about the social perceptions of fathers. What is that like today? One of the questions that we ask in the program is, give me a name of somebody in television that you know was a-- that is depicted as a great father, as a good father.

And you'll have people come up with things like-- Bill Cosby is always one. He's always the guy that pops up. But if you think about that and you remember the TV show, he made a lot of mistakes. And it was always mom that came to the rescue.

And I'm not saying he wasn't a good father. He was a good father to his kids. But he was still portrayed as an individual that made a lot of mistakes, that didn't do everything right. And so we have to think about that as well in

terms of what publicly is contributing to the psyche of these men and how they see themselves and how they feel the rest of society views them also.

Again, also, with our communities, going back, what does that look like? How has the community contributed to this current situation? How has the community contributed to this individual? Those are conversations that can be brought out with the men in these talking circles.

This can be a topic that you talk about with them to help them navigate and process and think about that more in a different way. As opposed to it being said to them, now they're talking about why they make some of the decisions that they do. They're understanding. They're starting to understand why they do some of the things that they do. So those talking circles and just basic conversation can be a great tool for doing that.

And so a couple other things here that are important are accountability and responsibility, helping the men to understand the consequences that they experience now or that they have experienced are all based on the choices that they make. As I mentioned in the beginning, you have men who are in jail who aren't necessarily bad men. They've just made bad decisions. And those bad decisions have come from their experiences in life.

And so those are things that we have to take into consideration when it comes to helping them to build their foundation to achieve the change that they want. And part of that is, again, taking responsibility, not blaming the police. And that is another unfortunate fact that we see-- is there is a lot of negative views towards law enforcement, which can be supported in many cases.

But does it necessarily have to be that? Because those are things that we are teaching our children because a lot of times that spills into the house. We have those discussions. We drop those little phrases here and there, whatever it might be. And the children will start to grow up thinking about that.

When we're talking about our communities that have severe gang problems, imagine this. If a child who is in a home grows up in a home where mom and dad, say, are both gang members, and they both have very negative views of the police because that's what they're taught, from the moment they're able to walk until whatever age they are, 10, 12 years old, in his entire life, he's growing up being taught that.

And so he learns over time that that's the way it is. That's the way things are. The scary thing about that is, in my view, there really isn't anything more scary than a teenager who has no fear of authority or consequence. There's almost nothing that they won't do. So we have to think about that as fathers.

And these are one of the conversations that can get pretty deep for these men and can get pretty heated because of their current views. But helping them to understand that that's not necessarily the way it has to be, it can be a

very powerful thing because now you are investing in the future of your child. Because now you are teaching them to respect the authority, to respect the law enforcement, not necessary that you have to like it. But you have to respect it sometimes for your own safety.

And unfortunately, that's a real issue that many people face today. When you get pulled over by the police, you're scared. Some people are taught, keep your hands on the steering wheel. Don't ever move your hands. Just stay there.

So there's a lot of things that go into play. And we have to think about just how powerful these conversations can be-- so helping the men understand that it really is up to me to mold my children into who I want them to be. And sometimes that means taking responsibility for my own ideas and ways of thinking and changing that to help produce better outcomes for my kids.

Again, going back to the father's importance and responsibility of family and community, we have to be able to provide that opportunity for men to be a part of their community if that's what they choose to do. Again, it is a pretty sacred right that is given to us as men to be leaders and protectors of our communities. We have a responsibility that comes with that. Men have a responsibility to our community.

How do we help them to understand that they are important to the survival of our community and our people? And that's where your cultural component can come in as well to help them understand that. Some men want to learn their language. They want to begin participating in their cultural ceremonies and different things. So how do we as a program provide them that opportunity and include that to them?

We want them to understand, again, that it is a very sacred responsibility to them for their families and their communities. But in order for this to all happen, you have to be able to have that open mind to be teachable, so to speak. And the reason I put this quote at the bottom speaks to that.

It says, "progress is impossible without change, and those that cannot change their minds cannot change anything." And that's so true. So that's something that we have to encourage the men to do.

And I will say that it's not something that we can expect the men to do. It's something that we have to help them to do as programs, as facilitators to be able to provide the different opportunities and resources for them to open up their minds so that they can change their thinking to achieve the position in life that they want to be at in terms of being a father. I want to be a good father. OK, well, how do I get through-- want to provide those opportunities for them? And with that, we are going to go into our next poll question here.

Great information, Kevin. Thank you. And we have another poll question. Please launch poll question number four. The question is, does your organization have a collaborative network?

First response is, yes, we have a strong collaborative network with many other departments and organizations. Second possible response would be, we have a collaborative network, but it's small. And the third one is, no, we struggle to build a strong collaborative network with our departments and organizations.

And it looks like 56% of the audience, the attendees, have strong collaborative networks with many other agencies. So that'll make it much easier to look at how to integrate a fatherhood program if you're interested. Those that have a small network-- still might be very appropriate to look at that network. See who's offering what kinds of fatherhood types of programming and then to be able to build on that with other partners.

And about 10% say, no, we struggle with building collaborative networks with others. The fatherhood program can be a jumping-off place to actually look at building a collaboration around looking at fatherhood programming. So Kevin, we'll turn it back to you.

All right, Greg. Thank you. And so with 56% of you saying, yes, you do have a strong collaboration, that's great news because those are things that-- that is very important to having any successful program-- is collaboration. And I know for years, some communities have struggled with that-- departments and different programs working within silos. We do this. We don't do that.

But I think with the help of the federal government and some of their funding requirements a few years ago, with the new buzzword they termed going around, "interoperability," that's really helped to break down some of the walls as well and the way that the funding has been distributed in terms of requirements also. Many of the funding resources do require now some sort of collaboration or MOUs to receive the funding.

So that's a good thing. And like I said, it makes it much easier to be able to provide a well-rounded program to serve all the different categories of men and the different categories of topics that you can provide in your program.

And so here is an example of some of the different types of program models that exist and can be developed. You have your standard community-based model, which is usually housed under maybe Social Services or behavioral health. It just depends.

Or it could be a grassroots organization that is started by some community members. But it's based out in the community. And it's available to their community members or whoever else they allow to participate in that.

And so one of the things to consider with the community-based program is, where is it going to be held? Where is it going to be located? It's not always easy to get people to come participate in a program in the Social Services building, especially if you're in a small community. People don't want to go because, oh, they're going to see my

car outside. Or if it's in behavioral health, I don't want people to see my car outside. What are they going to think?

So these are some things to consider also. But they're not always deterrents, either. The program that I worked for was actually housed within Social Services, which most times doesn't have a very good reputation with the community. But we did have great attendance.

Our fatherhood program itself usually averaged about anywhere from 25 to 35 men every Tuesday night. And our healthy relationships program was a lot more. We would get up to 50, 60 people on a Thursday night as well. So these are just some ideas of how your program potentially can grow and be very successful. So you have that community-based program.

You also have the DOC program, Department Of Corrections. Maybe the local tribal jail once a week can go in there and talk with inmates. And a lot of times, the detainees are eager to go because they're locked up in their cell most of the day. They want to get out. And so they'll go just to get out.

They won't go initially to learn anything. They'll just go because it provides them an opportunity to get out of their cell and to do something different. But over time, they start to learn to become intrigued by some of the topics that you'll be providing-- learn to appreciate it. And now they start to come because they want to come. And they miss coming if you don't show up.

And that's one of the important things with any of these programs-- is to be consistent in being able to-- now, things can be difficult at times when you're talking about local jails or even prisons. Things happen. So there may be times where you're not able to go in. Maybe they're on lockdown, or something like that happens.

And it's important to help them understand that although those things will happen, on your part, you'll be consistent and come in when you say you're going to be there. Because again, we're looking to develop trust. And that's something that many of these men don't have.

And if we break that trust, immediately we are put into a category with everybody else. We don't care. We don't really want to help. And so we don't want to get into that situation. We want to be consistent. We want to be honest. We want to create as much transparency as we can because we're trying to build some stuff up with them.

Then you can have programs in high school. These are things that can be done through a health class or even an after-school activity. They can also be provided as a separate activity for high-risk youth in high schools.

And not necessarily talking about this high school model in a traditional fatherhood program sense, more of a coming-of-age type setting. You talk about what it means to be a man, what it means to be a community member.

And then you also talk about relationships. You help to build their communication skills.

So there's a lot of the same teachings that can be implemented into a high school program along with the group homes, whether they're within the community-- if they're outside the community, sometimes you can work with the group home agencies to bring the youth together to a specific location. We actually have our group homes bring the youth to our Social Services building once a week. And they would pick them up afterwards.

And so we have the youth involved with the men as well because there's a mentoring that takes place in that situation also with the older men. And the younger youth-- they are more likely to listen to the older men in the group than they are to us as a facilitator anyway because they're their family. They're their community members. And they're the ones they look up to. So it can be a very positive interaction there as well.

Then you're looking at your reentry program, again, talking to incarceration and men coming out and reintegrating into the community. So there's a lot of different types of programs.

And within these programs, at DOC, you can have other additional subprograms in there, like the Storybook Dads program, where you're videotaping or audio recording a dad read a story book for their children, which then gets delivered to their kids at home. And so their kids can hear dad's voice on a regular basis. Burritos with Dads in the schools, Young Warriors program in the schools again, young men's gathering-- you can do an outing with the group home kids, the men and their kids, a cultural outing-type setting.

And here we go with our power partners here, again, talking about the different resources that are available. What is available in your community? What sort of programs already exist? And how can they help support this fatherhood program? How can they support fathers as a group? And how can they support fathers as an individual?

Social Services typically has a lot of support and services that they provide. Behavioral health is something that is very important when it comes to these fatherhood programs because you will be bringing out a lot of emotion.

You'll be bringing up a lot of new feelings. And they will be needing to process that as well because we don't want to bring all that to the forefront and just set them on their way not having them being able to process that in a healthy way. So we need that support.

DOC-- obviously, you need the support from them to go inside. Probation-- probation officers can approve their probation need to attend your fatherhood program as part of their community service. We were able to do that within the community I worked for, as well as alongside a few of the state probationers-- or probation officers would allow their state probationees that were tribal members attend our program.

Tribal council, obviously, is a great support. Schools-- to help support your in-school program. Health Services-- because we want to encourage the men to stay healthy, to take care of themselves. So Health Services is a good partner as well.

And substance abuse programs, obviously-- we find that as men go through this growth, they may come to the conclusion that, OK, I do need help. I'm still suffering. I'm struggling. And that's a decision that they make.

Now, these programs aren't meant to be substance abuse programs. They're not meant to be an AA program or anything. In fact, we've had several men that have told us that this is better than any AA program I've had. And I think the big component of that is just that consistent support and interaction also with their group. It's not necessarily us as facilitators, but the dynamic of the group that has been created over time.

Working with your domestic violence programs to support that reduction in reoffending-- because when an individual is confident in who they are and understands the impact that they have and understands the ideology behind their behavior and is able to grow and move up to a different level of thinking, their possibility of reoffending can be drastically reduced.

And so that's what makes these programs so important because now you're growing an individual that is looking at the community as a whole and their part in that community, their part in the family, and their part in the world. So it can make some huge change. And I'll give you some examples after this slide here.

GED programs are very important also because they will provide that educational component. One of the things that you will find also is that you'll have participants that will have never completed high school or maybe even dropped out in grade school, don't have a GED.

But they want to get an education because they don't want their children to be one of those statistics that grows up in severe poverty. So they want to make that change. Now we have to go to GED to help them through that process. And this is part of your case management.

Casinos-- if you have any available, they can provide funding sometimes for some of the activities that you have. We were allowed to utilize their banquet room for our graduation ceremonies, for our date nights that we had for the healthy relationships group.

I'll tell you, it's funny trying to teach a bunch of native people how to ballroom dance. They're so used to being able to cumbia and shake those hips and things. But when you try to teach them to ballroom, it's a whole different thing. But they learn from this. And it's fun, and it's interactive.

And then you have other outside entities that you can look for as well. Some of the things that you can partner

with-- Boys & Girls Club, the Boy Scouts of America. They have these obstacle courses that sometimes you can use to do relationship or team-building activities.

So these are all just different types of activities that can help to support your program and help it to be more successful. And all of these things are also helping to contribute to that individual's understanding of themselves to help in those reduction rates.

And so here we will go ahead and end with examples of some of the outcomes that we've seen over the years. This is obviously doing well in schools. Individual didn't have their GED. They dropped out, I believe, in their junior year of high school and went on to enroll at the university and did very well.

And one of the individuals was reunified with their kids. This third one here, an individual I know and remember very well-- he was an individual that came out of prison.

And within, I think, about eight months, he enrolled in our program. And then within a year after that, he gained custody of his young child and a year later got custody of his second child as well, got a driver's license, ended up getting a really great job with the community because he also enrolled in their apprenticeship program. And so these are things that you can see can happen in these types of program.

So there is a lot more information that is available and so much more that we can discuss. And like I said, this was a really quick, brief overview of what a fatherhood program can be, what it can provide, and who it can serve and how. And I think now we will open it up to questions if we still have time.

Thank you, Kevin, for the excellent presentation today and sharing your insight and knowledge with us. We're now going to move to the question-and-answer portion of the webinar. And we've got several questions. One of the questions, Kevin, is, can children join discussions, meals, et cetera, offering an opportunity to interact with fathers beyond the role plays within fatherhood programs?

Yes. One of the things that we did with our program, both our fatherhood program and healthy relationship, was we always started out with a dinner because group started-- it was from 6:00 to 8:00 in the evening. And so it was right around dinner time. It wasn't fair to have these parents bring their kids here to the group without-- and we provided childcare. That was another thing, too.

Now, not all programs are able to do that. But we were very lucky to be able to provide food and child care for them. So we all ate our meals together before any programming started. And then the kids were taken into the daycare section of it. And then we worked with the parents.

Thanks, Kevin. Another question we had is, we see a lot of mostly men-- I'm sorry. Let me go with this one. When

personal information arises, such as physical, emotional, sexual abuse that the fathers have experienced in their own childhood, how do the facilitators address this type of sharing in the fatherhood programs?

That type of sharing-- it does come out. And it's not necessarily a negative thing at all because it creates dialogue between the men. And many times that individual that decides to share that will initiate a conversation between the other men, who will also share that this has taken place. This has happened to them also when they were kids.

And so then you start-- that creates that dialogue between them and understanding of how important that is that they're able to talk to that. And then what do we do here? What happens from here now? How do we go about reporting this? Do they want to report that? As mandated reporters, that's something, obviously, that we have to disclose. And they know this upfront as well.

And that's one of the things I failed to mention-- is that you have to remind them that you are a mandated reporter. But you're also there to support them. And so we do what we need to do in terms of being a mandated reporter. But we also are there to support them as well as individuals and help them to get the help that they need.

Thanks, Kevin. And I think the final question given the time that we're at is, can you talk a little bit about how historical trauma and maybe even current trauma is addressed through fatherhood programs? And if people are looking for a curriculum, is this a necessary aspect, especially when you're dealing with Native American populations that have significant historical trauma?

OK. Well, when we're talking about historical trauma, it's important to-- I think it is a very important part or component of the fatherhood program because, as I mentioned, it affects us today. Now, when you're talking about historical trauma, it's-- oh, sorry. My timer went off here. So it affects us today.

And a lot of times when you're talking about historical trauma within a Native American community, a lot of times what they're thinking about are the boarding school era and the killing of many native people. And so that has happened to us. And how does that affect us today? And we can't forget that, obviously. But we have to understand that it does affect us.

And it really is important also to have a facilitator that is able to have that conversation. If the facilitator isn't able to have that conversation or isn't educated in that particular area, then it's important to bring somebody in. But it is important to have that conversation because it does exist.

And it doesn't necessarily have to be a part of the curriculum. But I can almost guarantee you that that topic will come up. Now, it may not come up in the terms of, quote unquote, "historical trauma." But they will talk about

those different things.

When you're talking about your view of the world and how you interact, things like that, it will come up. How does this affect me? It didn't happen to me. But I carry around a lot of anger because it did happen. So how do we process that?

And that takes some skill, to some extent, to be able to have that conversation. And so it is important to have that as part of the repertoire of a program and understanding that this will come up. How will we address it when it does? I hope I answered that question.

Thanks, Kevin. And this concludes our question-and-answer portion of the webinar. Thank you for joining us today, and have a great day.