What is a Safety and Accountability Audit and How can it Benefit My Community?

An Introduction to Praxis’ Methods of Constructive Engagement for Institutional Reform

Friday, August 25, 2017

Praxis International – Institutional Analysis Technical Assistance
What is a Safety and Accountability Audit and How can it Benefit My Community?
An Introduction to Praxis’ Methods of Constructive Engagement for Institutional Reform

Praxis International Webinar  August 25, 2017
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What is a Safety and Accountability Audit and How can it Benefit My Community?

An Introduction to Praxis’ Methods of Constructive Engagement for Institutional Reform

With Rhonda Martinson, Praxis Technical Assistance Partner

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Do our interventions have unintended harmful impacts?

Are we sending messages of help & accountability?

Is “every door an open door” to someone seeking safety?

Who seeks or gets drawn into community systems?
Who avoids them…and why?

Are we all on the same page?

Will our actions make it better or worse for victims?

The Work of a Coordinated Community Response

Figure 7: Institutional Intervention in Rachel’s Life
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Safety &amp; Accountability Audit</th>
<th>Practice Assessment</th>
<th>Blueprint for Safety</th>
<th>Distinctive Applications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Broad, open analysis and discovery regarding the criminal & civil legal system’s response to violence against women | • Focused analysis on checklists of best practices  
• Praxis guides:  
  • 911  
  • Patrol  
  • Investigations  
  • Charging  
  • Child protective services | • Comprehensive assessment of criminal legal system’s response to battering that results in adoption of model policies | • Broad, open analysis in settings such as foster care, human service organizations, |
Praxis Institutional Analysis

- Praxis Safety and Accountability Audit
  - IS...systematic interagency methods to analyze how specific features are or are not incorporated into daily work routines
- Practice Assessment
  - IS NOT...an assessment of individuals
Audit Phases:

Audit Goal:
Identify and implement institutional enhancements to improve outcomes in cases involving battering.

- Determine scope & focus
- Establish a team
- Gather data
- Analyze data
- Develop recommendations
- Implement recommendations
Gather information through...

- **Mapping**
- **Focus groups**
- **Talking with people about their work**
- **Watching people at work**
- **Case file review**
Praxis tools look for:

• The **GAP** between what people experience and need and what institutions provide.
• The **GAP** from the victim’s perspective.
• How the **GAP** is produced.

In order to close the gap and enhance outcomes.
Rachel
Large Group Discussion

How Rachel experiences her *life* is different than how her situation is *processed as a case*. 
Large Group Discussion

• When Rachel called police, what do you think she wanted to happen?
• What might Rachel NOT want to happen?
Large Group Discussion

• If Rachel’s children (Portia and Daryl) were to make their own list of needs, what might it contain?
• How do you think Rachel, Portia and Daryl are experiencing the help they are getting?
Large Group Discussion

• Rachel’s life becomes fragmented when divided into cases. What kinds of cases were depicted in the video?

• Considering the different agencies involved in these cases, how might their different missions, policies and practices cause problems for Rachel, Portia and Daryl?
How are these and other gaps produced?

Institutions organize and coordinate workers to act in authorized ways:

- Case management
- Treat like cases alike
- Standardize workers’ thinking and actions
8 methods institutions use to coordinate/standardize workers’ actions - what are some examples?
Guiding Principles

Foundations
Increase access to protection and justice

For those being harmed – safety and well-being for ALL
Increase accountability and opportunities to change
For those causing harm

BOYS
WILL BE
BOYS
HELD ACCOUNTABLE
FOR THEIR ACTIONS.
JUST LIKE GIRLS.
Start with real, everyday people
Immigrant battered women, Latinas, Deaf survivors of sexual assault, Battered women with disabilities, victims who are homeless/living in poverty, LGBTQ, etc.
Acknowledge and address intersecting social risks
Sexism, racism, classism, ableism, heterosexism, etc.

Can you give examples from your experience?
We are looking for gaps

Safety, accountability, opportunities for help, meeting the real needs of survivors
Reduce social harms caused by institutions

The cost of being battered, arrests of battered women for self-defensive violence, mass incarceration
### Determining Scope and Focus

**Scope =** Case processing step(s)

- Court hearings
- Screening
- Patrol response
- Case management
- Probation

**Focus = Who**

- All offenders on probation
- LEP victims
- Newly immigrated victims
### Assessment Question Design

- **Stay focused on institutional practices**
- **Always ask “How”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This...</th>
<th>Not this...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How does the design of the visitation center account for the needs of Native American women, children, and families?</td>
<td>Do Native American women, children, and families get their needs met at our visitation center?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is safety for victims of domestic violence in our city built into law enforcement response and the other community interventions initiated by a call to 911?</td>
<td>Do victims of domestic violence see 911 as a resource for them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How does the criminal justice system recognize and respond to risk and safety for immigrant victims of domestic violence?</td>
<td>Why don’t immigrant victims of domestic violence access the criminal justice system?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If You Were to Do An Audit . . . .

What area of focus would you be interested in?
Who does the work of an audit?

• Coordinator
• Community-based victim advocate(s)
• Representative(s) of discipline(s) being analyzed
• Representatives of key disciplines closely linked to focus of analysis
### Example of a Team Configuration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scope</th>
<th>Suggested Team Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>911 and language access</td>
<td>• One or more 911 call takers and dispatchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Patrol officer(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Prosecutor’s office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Victim-witness services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Language interpreter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Language access specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Community-based victim advocate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Coordinator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gathering Information

Or data collection activities
Data Collection Activities

- Mapping
- Focus groups
- Talking with people about their work
- Watching people at work
- Case file review
Mapping

- Understand steps in official response
- Use expertise of team members
- Identify questions that need to be answered
- Reference throughout the audit
- Focus on the system you are auditing
- Determine the institutionally authorized steps and sub-steps
- Look for linkages to other agencies
Interviews

or...talking with practitioners

- Big Picture
- Work Practice
- Text-Based
- Community Consultation
- Group Interviews (or focus groups)
## Big Picture Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When?</th>
<th>With who?</th>
<th>Ask about</th>
<th>Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early on in data gathering activities</td>
<td>Agency heads, Policy makers, Administrators</td>
<td>Mission, purpose, function, Essential elements, Historical trends, Relationship to other agencies, Statistical information</td>
<td>Build awareness of project, Build trust of process, Gather statistical information, Lay the ground for case file access</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Text-Based Interviews

**When?**
- Throughout data gathering

**With who?**
- Policy makers
- Supervisors
- Front line staff

**Ask about**
- A specific form, case file, policy
- How text is produced and used
- How to read it
- Info needed to complete form
- Terminology

**Goals**
- Gather all text used
- Learn what texts could be adjusted to enhance response
- How safety is/isn’t incorporated
## Work Practice Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When?</th>
<th>With who?</th>
<th>Ask about</th>
<th>Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Throughout data gathering | • Supervisors • Front line staff | • Details of the job, purpose, & function  
• Approach with victims  
• Case processing steps  
• Equipment, checklists, processes  
• Linkages with agencies  
• Experiences with different cases | • Get detailed description of work and choices  
• Learn more about specific work practices |
Focus Groups
Data collection activity

Focus groups
Learning from victims during an Audit

Beginning
- Identify biggest gaps in system response
- Clarify scope and focus of assessment

Middle
- Learn more details of gaps

End
- Advise on preliminary findings
- Advise on recommendations
To observe without interviewing means we risk making up the meaning of what we see; to interview without observing means we miss the actual work that people do.
Watching people at work

• See:
  • What practitioners do
  • Conditions in which they work
  • How processes operate
  • How workers are organized

• When:
  • Throughout data gathering

Observations
(Watching people at work)
Mock Observation: 911 Center

If you were to observe 911 center staff, when you walked into the center, you might see:
911 Center

What agencies the center dispatches for
911 Center

How many staff the center has on what shift
911 Center

The screens which display calls, data, and other information
Case file review

• Text as an actor in case processing
• Finding it
• Accessing it
• Analyzing it
  • Text-based interview
  • Analyze the forms
  • Analyze the files
• Code and read
Debriefing, data analysis, and recommendations

Take notes!
Implementation and impact

• Impact on interagency collaboration efforts
• Immediate policy or practice changes
• Higher hanging fruit
## Outcomes and Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8 Methods</th>
<th>Law Enforcement</th>
<th>Courts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rules &amp; Regulations</td>
<td>Sexual assault policy &amp; procedure established</td>
<td>Municipal judges adopted best practice principles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Practices</td>
<td>Patrol report writing guidelines to incorporate risk and danger</td>
<td>Reduced delay between arrest &amp; first appearance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>New investigator position established</td>
<td>Officer now present in courtroom to monitor for witness intimidation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concepts &amp; Theories</td>
<td>Self-defense and predominant aggressor determinations</td>
<td>Balance punishment with rehabilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission, Purpose, &amp; Function</td>
<td>Establish pattern and history of abuse</td>
<td>Protect victims, rehabilitate offenders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced Linkages</td>
<td>Increased referrals to advocacy program</td>
<td>Formal communication with supervised visitation centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>Case review by supervisors</td>
<td>Don’t allow offender to intimidate victim in courtroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education &amp; Training</td>
<td>Specialized training on predominant aggressor determinations</td>
<td>Cross training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Questions?

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