

Child Welfare Information Gateway Podcast  
Increasing the Impact of Community Organizations TRANSCRIPT

Presenters: Female Narrator; Tom Oates, Child Welfare Information Gateway; Lisa Specter-Dunaway, Hamilton Holloway, Families Forward Virginia

[00:00:00]: [Music Introduction]

**FEMALE NARRATOR** [00:00:02]: This is the Child Welfare Information Gateway Podcast, a place for those who care about strengthening families and protecting children. You'll hear about the innovations, emerging trends and success stories across child welfare direct from those striving to make a difference. This is your place for new ideas and information to support your work to improve the lives of children, youth, and families.

**TOM OATES** [00:00:33]: Welcome into the Child Welfare Information Gateway Podcast, I'm your host, Tom Oates, and thank you as always for making the time to join us here on the Information Gateway podcast. This episode focuses on the organizations and non-profits working to support parents, families, and the agencies that serve them – specifically we're gonna talk about how to expand those organizations' footprint and make a greater impact across their community, whether it's a city, county or state. We're going to hear from an organization working across Virginia – everywhere from local service providers all the way up to the state Capitol. But first, we have an announcement that we are really happy to share. The Child Welfare Information Gateway podcast is now available on ApplePodcasts, GooglePlay, Stitcher, Spotify, and SoundCloud – you can subscribe and access all the past and future episodes direct from your mobile device or however you listen to podcasts. We're really excited to – speaking of expanding footprints – extend our reach and connect so many across child welfare to the information and ideas that we get to share here on the podcast.

[00:01:42]: Alright, back to our topic. With a growing emphasis on community-based prevention and collaboration between service providers, agencies, universities and others, local non-profits and non-governmental organizations can make a difference in a variety of ways. From providing direct services, operating contracts with state and local agencies, advocating and increasing awareness, funding opportunities for research and training – there are many opportunities for organizations to play a powerful role in prevention and information sharing, and other ways to meet the needs of children and families. But for those organizations and their partners, what are some of the ways to increase the impact – either to a larger geographic area or widen the types of resources or services they provide?

[00:02:30]: Well, Families Forward Virginia is a relatively new organization – just about two years old. But it's origins and impacts go back longer. It was created by bringing together smaller prevention and home-visiting organizations; leveraging strength in numbers to increase its outreach, its capacity, and its voice across the commonwealth. Now, their entire network has grown because they've been able to increase what they can offer local communities and approach each relationship with a service mindset: asking what communities need rather than walking in with pre-set solution already in mind. So, we spoke with Families Forward Virginia CEO Lisa Specter-Dunaway, and Hamilton Holloway, director of communications to share the lessons and approaches they've taken so other local organizations can take away some ideas and some tips to expand their reach and impact to the communities they serve.

[00:03:23]: We dive into how Families Forward Virginia came to be, how they work with such diverse communities across the entire state - without providing direct service - the key to building effective partnerships, and how to help shape public policy. We hope you enjoy the conversation and find it useful to making a difference in your work.

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[00:03:44]: Lisa and Hamilton, welcome into the Child Welfare Information Gateway Podcast.

**HAMILTON HOLLOWAY** [00:03:48]: Excited to be here.

**LISA SPECTER-DUNAWAY** [00:03:49]: Thank you very much.

**TOM OATES** [00:03:50]: So, just let's get started here and explain to me how Families Forward Virginia actually became established.

**LISA SPECTER-DUNAWAY** [00:03:57]: Sure. So, probably as long ago as 15-20 years CHIP of Virginia - which is an internal child health home visiting model - and Prevent Child Abuse Virginia, which houses Healthy Families America - another home visiting model - found, the two organizations found themselves working together more and more and as, you know, got a better understanding of home visiting and the various models or plans that existed across the country, but also in Virginia, we began working together to try and provide better supports on the state level to our local partners who are actually doing the really tough work of implementing these services with families who are pregnant or have young children

[00:04:47]: And, the more we began to work together, the more people said well, why do we have two different state level organizations - which makes perfect sense, especially when resources get tight, like during the recession. And so, as we began to work more and more together, we started having deeper conversations about what the future could look like with a more formal partnership. And so, about four years ago, the chairman of both of the boards of CHIP of Virginia and Prevent Child Abuse Virginia and the executive director of Prevent Child Abuse Virginia and I met and started talking about what it could look like. And, shortly thereafter, we established committees made up of members from both of our boards and others in the community and really began going through the process in terms of understanding what the business of the organizations were how they were structured, what were their funding resources, those kinds of things. And what was gonna be best for the community, best for children and families. And that really was the touchpoint in all of these discussions, is would this make a strong organization to support children and families in the commonwealth.

[00:06:06]: And, after about a nine-month due diligence process it became apparent that this was, in fact, the right thing to do. And so, the two boards voted to come together and officially in September 1st of 2017, CHIP of Virginia and Prevent Child Abuse Virginia merged and adopted the name Families Forward Virginia. And, part of the reason that we wanted to do that was really to promote the positive strength-based approach that both of the organizations have - and that really is that we wanna help families move forward in a way that supports themselves and their children because we know that parents are the child's first and best teacher and that while raising parents is one of the toughest jobs - raising parents, raising children is one of the toughest jobs that you can have, there's no instruction manual, no one teaches us what to do and we tend to do what happened to us as we were children. And so, really having that strength-based families forward approach was much more in line with our values.

[00:07:26]: And so, when we brought this together, we had a couple of different groups and organizations that were included in this umbrella. And so, CHIP of Virginia, which was, is a Virginia-based home visiting model that uses parent educators and registered nurses, Healthy Families America - which

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is a national model, Parents as Teachers - another national model moved in house, within CHIP, as well as the General Child Abuse Prevention Efforts through Prevent Child Abuse Virginia. The other player in this, which helped move some of the conversations along, was at that point our Home Visiting Consortium, where we had begun working ten years earlier to figure out how we could best support home visiting in the Commonwealth. And so, Early Impact Virginia is our alliance for family support professionals and that is the third leg, as you'd say, in the stool in terms of the work that our organization does.

[00:08:30]: So, we really found very quickly that our funders and our partners were all really, really positive about this work and wanted to support it because, again, they knew that there would be more efficiencies, a stronger voice on behalf of children and families and really able to do a lot more together than we could do by ourselves. It really was an issue where, you know, one plus one plus one equals four. And so, we see that on a daily basis because we've seen our budget grow significantly, we've seen opportunities to our services, we have seen partners inviting us to tables where previously, we weren't quite big enough to have the stature and the influence and now people are recognizing that yes, this organization has expertise and it has depth and we need to have them as a key player when we're looking at policies and services that are good for families and children in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

**TOM OATES** [00:09:40]: So, you've got this strength in numbers approach to where, like you mentioned one plus one plus one equals four, so it's a larger voice, it's a, maybe a larger cache of resources. But, as all of these different groups came together, was there a struggle to turn around and say, hey, we just can't continue to do what we're currently doing, we just do more - was there a shift in terms of okay, what is our mission now, because it can't just be everybody's mission added together into one long run-on sentence. How did that, over the past two years, how did Families Forward Virginia kind of morph into, not a collection of agencies together, but one, you know, one organization working in lockstep with everybody in tune?

**LISA SPECTER-DUNAWAY** [00:10:29]: Sure, so, I mean the beauty of this merger was the fact that all of the organizations had the same mission and the same core values - that parents be their child's first and best teachers, that families should be supported - and we really believed that giving parents what they need to start with and that it is a normal thing, every parent needs support, it's not anything that has to do, you know with just your socioeconomic status or where you come from or your age or where you live, but that every single family needs support and we need to make it okay so that people understand it's the strong parents who ask for help.

[00:11:15]: And, I frequently tell the story that I had premie twins and I brought them home and, you know, my husband kept asking me what we're supposed to do because I was in the field and, you know, I was just like every other parent, totally overwhelmed, but very fortunate that I was able to, you know, I had resources, I had family, I didn't have to, you know, worry that I was gonna lose my job because I was, you know, visiting, you know, spending time with my children in the NICU. But, that's not the situation for all parents. And so, all three organizations really had that same value of how do we strengthen parents and how do we support what they're doing so that they can have a strong family and raise children who are ready for school and ready for life.

[00:12:05]: And so, in many ways, that was very easy, the more challenging part was the culture. Organizational cultures are very different and, you know, it is influenced by history and funding and a variety of things and so that's where really looking at - it's not what we used to do, what we used to do

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is better or worse, it really is thinking about what's gonna be best for the new organization moving forward. And everybody in this, in our organizations are incredibly passionate about what they do and so, that's what we just have to remember is that, you know, when there are conflicts about how we do certain things or how we have to do them because we're larger - it really is all about the kids and we all believe the same things for families.

**TOM OATES** [00:13:03]: So, as the groups come together and Families Forward Virginia is established not only is it the internal organization that kind of has to say, alright, here's how we're gonna work together, here's how we're gonna be organized - there's a separate entity of making the rest of the state now aware of who you are and what you do. So, Hamilton is here with us and Hamilton, I wanna bring this about more of an outreach and communication side of alright, so when Families Forward Virginia is established, what are the big challenges to then let everyone know from all of the agencies, to the State House, to the other community partners - how do you then communicate this out that, yes we're new, but there is also this strength and experience behind the new name.

**HAMILTON HOLLOWAY** [00:13:51]: Yes, absolutely. You know, the big focus is on the continued message of taking care of our children and being the role models that they need in their lives, right, having that there. And so, reinforcing that with both our affiliates, having a bigger voice at the state level and even at the national level when we talk to our senators and representatives - it's a big difference in conversations that we have with them. But, the big fuel there is how do we continue to say the message but give people more resources, realizing that coming together, these three organizations coming together are creating richer resources for our affiliates and for people in the child abuse prevention field to use in their day to day activities that make it easier for them to do that and quicker for them to do that.

[00:14:50]: So, for instance, we do a lot of training here at Families Forward Virginia and we created some training spaces now that are much easier to use, much more user friendly for people who are leading training classes, as well as people who are attending the classes. Externally, we've created for Child Abuse Prevention Month, for instance, we traditionally had a paper packet that was mailed out, you know, every March we would mail out this packet filled with 28 to 30 sheets, black and white, because that's cheaper to print, you know, it'd get to somebody's desk, who knows where in Southwest Virginia and they might open it up April 1st or they might not even open it up until April 15th and then they realize it's not for them, they pass it onto somebody else and here goes April and we haven't even gotten information out in the community there.

[00:15:43]: So, we created a digital toolkit that everyone can access. So, everyone in the field, not just the person who gets the packet landed on their desk, but every member of that organization can access this packet online and of course any member of the community can access it online. And it's very simple, easy to use information that's easily updated in English and Spanish to better meet the needs of people we're serving across Virginia. That's been a big difference, where we've been able to offer more resources, easier resources and updated resources for both our affiliates in the field and anyone who wants to learn more about child abuse prevention and the value of home visiting and being your child's first and best teacher.

**TOM OATES** [00:16:33]: You bring up a good communication lesson overall, it's not necessarily about hey, we're here, we're new, you know, look at us. It's much more when you're trying to communicate out, it's what's the value, you know, why, you have to realize that those folks on the other end, they've

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got a question in the back of their minds, it's why do I care. So, if you're able to communicate, hey, here's what we're bringing to you, here is what is new, here is what is either more or still has an impact to make a difference for you, you know, communicating that value kind of goes a long way. Hamilton and Lisa, you both mentioned affiliates - can you break that down for me about where what affiliates are spread across Virginia?

**LISA SPECTER-DUNAWAY** [00:17:14]: Sure. And, yeah, that really is when we think about it, our customer base. We are not here to provide direct services to families. We are here to support 50 local organizations that are playing those roles in their communities. And so, we have affiliates who provide CHIP of Virginia services, we have affiliates who provide parents as teachers or healthy families home visiting, we have our community-based affiliates like Greater Richmond SCAN, SCAN of Northern Virginia, Children's Trust in Roanoke and the Champions for Children in South Hampton Roads, as well as NRV Cares in the New River Valley and those are more community-based organizations that have that broader role of child abuse prevention and promoting strong families.

[00:18:13]: And so, those groups make up our 50 affiliates. So, with some of them, we are providing, well with all of them, we're providing a level of quality assurance. For home visiting programs we are absolutely providing monitoring in terms of the work they're doing, supporting the evaluation, providing a lot of the training and professional development and building the networks within and across programs. So, in business terms, we're like a franchise model and, you know, with some of them, you know with all of them, you know, we are partners and we know that it is our job to support them as much as possible because they're doing the really, really tough work with families on the ground.

[00:19:04]: Another type of organization we work with, it's a program called Circle of Parents and a variety of types of organizations can offer those, including, recently they're beginning groups in the prison system. And it really is a parent support group that provides education and support and is co-lead by a parent. Those are the kinds of activities where we're providing more resources and more guidance to those local affiliates so that they can do the work on the ground and where we can build opportunities for more efficiencies or economies of scale, because we can provide some of these things to them in much more efficient ways and effective ways so that they can focus their work on families, which is what we're all about.

**TOM OATES** [00:20:01]: How are you able to work with each affiliate to kind of determine what their needs are, yet also what you can provide in terms of trying to match that service, especially if you've got 50 affiliates, they all have needs, I'm sure each one of them would love to be the first and only priority you have. How are you able to, kind of - you know, you said franchise, but there's a tailored aspect to each of those affiliates - how do you manage that?

**LISA SPECTER-DUNAWAY** [00:20:30]: You know, it's, it was actually, it's much easier than you would think. Right after the merger, we went through a strategic planning process and every single group, those affiliates and all of our other partners were invited to the table so we could really get an understanding of what they needed and what they wanted and what the organizations had provided to them prior to the merger that was helpful or not so helpful and we were able to take all of that information and put it together into our strategic plan. And again, we really saw many, many similarities across the groups and they asked for things like the most up to date information in research. They wanted affordable training and professional development, they needed a louder voice on the state level in terms of policy, they needed folks to help organize things around these larger issues. And that's, you

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know, where we've begun to make a lot of inroads and feel like we are meeting their needs and absolutely we will always, there will always be things that they want that we can't provide - we can't sponsor all of their local events, we can't, you know, do their fundraising necessarily for them, but we try to be clear about the things that we can offer and bring them together and hear from them pretty regularly what are the things that are a challenge to them and how can we continue to support their work.

**TOM OATES** [00:22:03]: Lisa, in working with all of these various communities and the various customers you have, I'm curious, what topics are you finding that in the past year or two that are most on the rise? What are those emerging trends that you are hearing from those affiliates?

**LISA SPECTER-DUNAWAY** [00:22:19]: One of the big ones that is getting a lot of press recently is opioid addiction. The addiction and the science behind it, we know that this is a disease, it's not something that people are doing going out to be criminals, it is a disease that's affecting families and we've seen a very large increase in the number of children, babies who are born substance exposed. Almost 2,000 families in Virginia last year experienced that. And so, trying to figure out how visiting programs can work with addiction specialists and other providers to support the family, because we don't do that level of treatment.

[00:23:04]: Trauma-informed care, people are talking a lot about, in terms of really helping providers understand, it's not about what's wrong with you but it's really about what happened to you and how do we start there and, again, build on your strengths, because strengths are there for everyone. Technology and raising children is, you know, many parents' biggest nightmare. Certainly, we struggle with that at my house and you know, with router turning off at 11:00 at night, it's really difficult with those trends and while technology can be a wonderful tool, like most things, in excess, it is not healthy at all - that's another one. And, it also provides a new platform for bullying. A lot of children really negatively impacted by things that are going on in the relatively anonymous world of the internet there and there's not a face next to the name that's saying the negative things.

[00:24:14]: And then, you know, I think the thing is, we were talking about home visiting, is it really is how putting a finer point on what we're doing - precision home visiting, kind of like precision medicine - we know what, you know, the long term research it says it worked, but how can we meet, more specifically, the needs of the family, in addition to the broader things that we know that everybody needs. So, I think those are the big things that we're seeing, I don't know if there's others that apply to you -

**HAMILTON HOLLOWAY** [00:24:48]: Well, one of the, yeah, one of the other things that we've worked on at a state level - and this is where, as Families Forward being a stronger voice, we're playing a much bigger role - is in how Child Protective Services workers are compensated, how they're trained. For instance, here in Virginia it takes almost two years to go through the full process for a Child Protective Services worker to get fully trained. At the same time, they're on the job an average of 18 months before they change their roles, right, so many of them are coming into their role not fully trained, taking on a full caseload and that puts, you know, tremendous amount of strain on the families that are there, that are trying to be, the children that are trying to be protected, the families that need help, and certainly our affiliates who are side by side with those families and trying to help them through that. They're having to work extra to make up for some of those deficiencies that we have. So, those are one of the things where we're working at the state level to try to find ways to better train CPS workers, for

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instance when they're, before they even get to the job, right, what can we do at the university and college level in training before they get on the road. How can we have better training throughout their process and not take two years?

[00:26:12]: You know, you don't put a policeman out in the field, you give him a badge and hire him one day and give him a badge the next day and put him out in the field and say we'll train you as you go along and hope things turn out okay. But we're doing that with our children in Virginia right now and we need to, we need to fix that. And so, that is one of the things that we're working as a louder voice on.

**LISA SPECTER-DUNAWAY** [00:26:30]: We expect to spend a fair amount of time during this upcoming General Assembly really helping legislators understand the importance of their compensation and filling vacant positions so that, you know, we can make sure that our children are protected because everyone in the child welfare system cares about children and wants to do a good job and there are systemic barriers that are keeping them from doing that. And so, that, we see that as one of our very important public policy discussions that we are having with elected officials right now and through the upcoming General Assembly session and it will be going on for years because we have a drastically underfunded child welfare system and we owe it to children and families to protect them and provide them the supports that they need.

**TOM OATES** [00:27:25]: Yeah, you talked about having a voice in front of legislation and I wanna talk about that and so a kind of mental reminder to me but - you guys just mentioned, you know, about providing training or providing the resources or all of this array of services that you're, you know, providing to your affiliates. For other organizations that are out there throughout the country that are trying to have an impact throughout their community or their state - like you mentioned, you aren't doing direct service, but you're working with those folks who do - so, talk to me about the type of partners you work with and are looking for when you're developing those types of resources and training.

**LISA SPECTER-DUNAWAY** [00:28:06]: I think that doing things with partners is pretty much the only way to get things done on a big scale and so, you know, one of the things, you know, we obviously will look for organizations that have similar values and similar missions, but we don't limit ourselves to that because that's, you know, where, in some ways, the secret sauce is when you can have, you know, different voices at the table. So, we try and work with the chambers of commerce and various business communities because if we can help families be more stable, they have better employees. And, if children aren't sick as frequently, if parents have a better understanding of their roles, then they are better employees.

[00:28:51]: So, working with the corporate community has been, you know, strategy that we have embraced and they have been very supportive of our work because they get it. They understand, you know, not just their bottom line, but also, you know, as parents themselves and individuals who care about their communities. We found universities are wonderful partners. One of the amazing things we've been able to do on the national level is through a federal innovation grant, we are working with the Iowa Department of Public Health and Kansas State University and we've developed the Institute for Family Support Professionals. It is professional development available for free for anyone who is working in human services or even parents. We have about 60 modules that are web-based and that people in every state and other countries who are taking these courses on their own time - at night,

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during the day, whenever it's convenient for them - and because of the partnership with the universities, they're really fun, in a sense, ways to increase the depth of your learning.

[00:30:11]: So, with some of them, it's like a choose your own adventure. So, when you're in a family's home and you see this, do you take this path or do you make a decision and do the other thing and then how does it play out? So, those are really, you know, great opportunities that we've had to work with other people who have other areas of expertise to broaden what can be provided to the community. So, you know, that's something, again, available at no cost to our partners. I think when we, you know, continue, we look at public sector partners as well as private sector.

[00:30:50]: Again, when you work in state or local government, you have opportunities and access to information, but you may not have a voice when it comes to public policy or talking to legislators. And so, in many ways, we are that voice for them and we can, you know, as a non-governmental agency talk to legislators about what we see and help them ask the right questions. And so, again, that really is playing to the strengths of the various partners.

**TOM OATES** [00:31:24]: So, how are you getting your foot in the door - and it's almost like connections, is one of the biggest assets to some success for Families Forward Virginia - establishing those connections and kind of turning the lightbulb on for those other agencies or be it corporations to say, hey, here's how you can help. How are you engaging these entities to form those partnerships?

**LISA SPECTER-DUNAWAY** [00:31:50]: Just like the work that's done with families, it's all about relationships and it's all about going in and being open about what you can do and what you can't do, what you know and what you don't know and following up on what you say you're going to do and really trying to show partners where this can be mutually beneficial to all of us. And when we say we come to the table with 50 affiliates, you know, that does get people's attention because we have, you know, coverage and relationships across the entire Commonwealth. And so, as we begin to work with people or continue to work with people - because all of the organizations individually had lots of these relationships and so, as we are able to deepen them and they see the advantages, you know, it's really not a hard sell at all because we want the same thing for kids and, you know, we realize that we bring different things to the table.

**HAMILTON HOLLOWAY** [00:32:51]: Yeah and, Tom, I think the other part of that is that we're really working to change social norms here, right, so the conversations that we have, whether it's with one of our partner non-profit agencies or it's a corporation, it's not about saying oh, we're just talking about human service issues or things like that, we're talking about how do we, how do we change how we talk about child abuse prevention, how do we change how we talk about taking care of our families, right, how do we raise a child? It's not, as Lisa said earlier, you know, it's the healthy parent, it's the smart parent who asks for help, you know, it's not that parent over there, it's every parent who has a child needs help. And, child abuse can happen in any environment, right, and so, to try to compartmentalize who we talk to about that or where we talk about it doesn't do us or anyone any good, right. We have to have those conversations and change the way we talk to people about why this is important and how we talk about things out in the open and not have our work be hidden in the background anymore.

**TOM OATES** [00:34:05]: You know, and you brought up something, you know, communication, relationship, having those open and honest conversations - as many other organizations throughout the country may nod their head with all of this and getting some insight of hey, here's how I can kind of, you

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know, expand those partnerships and those agreements and try to improve the impact that you're able to have, walking up the steps in a state capitol and having that kind of impact, what's the guidance that you would give to other organizations to try to do that either within their county or within their state to kind of, you know, that can seem pretty daunting to try to really change policy versus, hey I can go to an agency, I can provide some training, which hopeful has an impact, but to really go at that level - what's the guidance you would give to another organization on trying to start to be able to influence public policy?

**LISA SPECTER-DUNAWAY [00:35:00]:** You know, the most important place to start is not at the State House, it is in your community and home. It is showing elected officials who are your neighbors, you know, they are there because they want to improve things. And so, it really is talking with them on a regular basis about what's important to you and why. And again, it's those relationships when you have those, you can call them when they're at the State House and you can go and talk to them in the meetings during session. Those are very crazy times, they have a lot of things that are - especially in Virginia, where we do not have a full-time legislature - you gotta get a lot done in a short amount of time. So, doing that work, building the relationships prior to session. But then, again, just sharing accurate information and being open and not assuming that someone who has a different belief is bad or wrong, they just have a different perspective and you really have to work to try and find that common ground.

**HAMILTON HOLLOWAY [00:36:11]:** And as Lisa said, that common ground comes with a couple of things - one, asking that legislator to go to a site visit, to a local visit, right. Whether it's visiting with a family who is having a home visit or going to a child advocacy center and seeing what it's really like and how many children are interviewed there on a weekly basis is eye-opening to legislators because they can see numbers on a paper and we can put numbers on the paper all day, but until they get in the community with you and we can show them standing side by side with them, here's a family in your community and here's what they're struggling with. And then, we can turn around and talk about here's how these programs and activities that we do help them have a better start to life, help them take care of their families themselves, help the child to develop, to be strong and want to learn and want to grow and not have to have services after services after services later in life because we didn't take care of them when we should have - that makes a world of difference in those conversations when it comes to, okay, what will we now approve or not approve.

**TOM OATES [00:37:22]:** So, you've been able to, you know, there's the impact at various levels, right, and I appreciate you guys going in depth to say, hey, it's not knocking up on the governor's door first, start to talk about your neighbors and start to also work with your neighbors in terms of service providers or community collaboration and trying to find where you can fit and offering the value that Hamilton spoke to earlier of like, it's not what I have, it's what you need and being able to meet that need for folks.

[00:37:55]: So, I wanna flip this around a little bit and now talk about those state agencies, those county agencies who can then benefit from being, let's say, an affiliate like, or working with their local partnerships to find organizations like yours. What would you tell those service providers and those social workers on how to find and utilize community-based organizations like yours?

**LISA SPECTER-DUNAWAY [00:38:21]:** And I think that, especially with our home visitors, they are really, really good at finding partners and they make themselves available and make themselves known in

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public agencies. And again, I think developing those relationships before you're asking for something or asking someone to do something. You know, but also, going in the door and saying here is who we are, here is what we can provide, what do you need? And really asking, you know, the public agencies and others, what do you need. And so, and when public agencies are there thinking about what they can't do, you know, again how do they talk with those people that have resource fairs, you know, you hear from clients who the folks are who can help you, who are the good agencies where you can get the things that you need. And it really is about going in with an open mind and trying to establish that common ground in terms of what we can do for families and what is it that, you know, you need or we need, again, so that we can help support children and families in this work.

**HAMILTON HOLLOWAY** [00:39:36]: Yeah and, as Lisa was talking, you know, really it does have to happen on a local basis community to community. Here in Virginia, we're somewhat unique in that though we have a state department of social services, each community has their own department of social services that, though operates off of guidelines from the state, operates independently within their county or their city or their town. And so, it's not like we can say, okay, state department of social services, here's this great program we're working on, share it with everyone and everything will be great. It really is coming down to, you know, boots on the ground in each community and sharing those resources - here's the value that we add for you and for your organization and here's how we do it.

[00:40:28]: So for instance, we convene an annual conference for human service workers throughout the state to help share this information and to work with them and provide resources and training that they wouldn't normally have in their community, and it creates deeper relationships there. So, things like that are what makes all the difference in the world.

**TOM OATES** [00:40:50]: Lisa and Hamilton, I really appreciate you guys sharing the experience and the guidance on what community-based organizations, what organizations that are working to kind of help fill those gaps, how you can expand your footprint and how you can find those partnerships that make the difference, it all starts from relationships, it all really starts from being good neighbors. Lisa Specter-Dunaway, Hamilton Holloway, I really appreciate your time and thank you guys so much for being a part of the Child Welfare Information Gateway Podcast.

**LISA SPECTER-DUNAWAY** [00:41:22]: Our pleasure, thank you for inviting us.

**HAMILTON HOLLOWAY** [00:41:24]: It's been great.

[00:41:27]: You can find Families Forward Virginia's website and the tools Hamilton discussed, such as the digital prevention toolkit on the web page for this podcast. You can find it at [www.acf.hhs.gov/cb](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb), just search podcasts. We'll also point you to a series of other resources for community organizations to help connect with others in their community. And we'll also have the link to the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Resource Guide – lots of information and tools specific for community organizations.

[00:41:57]: Now, for other examples of community-based collaboration, we'll also put in some links to previous episodes of the Information Gateway podcast that featured the work of Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention, those CBCAP grantees sharing how they've established partnerships with others in their backyard and other local agencies. Of course, you can find the Child Welfare Information Gateway podcast over on Apple Podcasts, Google Play, Stitcher, Spotify, and SoundCloud, so you can go back and listen to all the previous episodes and subscribe to receive each new episode every month.

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[00:42:31]: Now, if you're looking for other information, hey, check out Child Welfare Information Gateway at [www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov) - it's the national clearinghouse of vetted, peer-reviewed information and resources to help service delivery, support training, tools and resources to inform families and others, you can access data and contact information – all right there on Child Welfare Information Gateway. If you have a particular need for information, you can reach out to our team go on the website and check out the live chat, or you can reach them at [info@childwelfare.gov](mailto:info@childwelfare.gov) and they can help point you in the right direction. So, my thanks to Lisa Specter-Dunaway and Hamilton Holloway with Families Forward Virginia for their time and energy. And as always, thanks to you for being part of this community and listening to the Child Welfare Information Gateway podcast. I'm Tom Oates. Have a great day!

**FEMALE NARRATOR** [00:43:29]: Thanks for joining us for this edition of the Child Welfare Information Gateway podcast. Child Welfare Information Gateway is available at [www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov) and is a service of the Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families. The views and opinions expressed on this podcast do not necessarily reflect on those of Information Gateway, or the Children's Bureau.