

# Harnessing the Potential of a Statewide System


## CONNECTICUT COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

QUOTES COURTESY TONYA JOHNSON, VICE PRESIDENT FOR OPERATIONS • CCADV; MARGARET ROSA, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR • SAFE HAVEN

**Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV)** is the leading voice for survivors of domestic violence in Connecticut and the agencies that serve them. They are a nonprofit membership organization of the 18 domestic violence service programs in the state and use data on a regular basis to tell the story of their work to funders, the state legislature, and other key stakeholders. After CCADV initiated strategic data system improvements, their member Safe Haven was able to use its robust client and program information to impress funders and win more funding awards than ever before.

CCADV members provide a range of critical support services, such as counseling, support groups, emergency shelter, legal advocacy, safety planning, lethality assessment, information and referrals, and more to help survivors navigate crisis situations and support services.

*“We said, let’s have another set of eyes on this and see what we can do. We heard that ECS was really good. They had the experience with a statewide system as big as ours. And that real-time experience synthesized things and really moved us forward.”*



Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence

**CCADV has been in existence since 1978 and works to ensure a systematic and comprehensive response to domestic violence, including victim services and offender accountability. They affect social conditions through policy, advocacy, public awareness, and community education.**

### The 12-person team at CCADV supports its members with:

- Training and technical assistance on best practices
- Guidance and oversight for everyday operations
- State and national advocacy for policies, laws, and funding
- Strategic collaborations to raise awareness about domestic violence, ensure consistent responses statewide, and offer community education ▶

*“Before we hired ECS, I was getting calls every day with someone yelling about ETO and how it didn’t work. I had to have a staff person available every day to field the calls. It was horrible.”*

*“We can get to any of our members within 1.5 hours, so we have a close relationship with them all. We support their work and we oversee it. We make sure there is funding, share best practices, and work strategically to improve responses to domestic violence in the state.”*

*“We just started pulling our data system apart and redoing it, saying what are people having trouble with and how can we improve it?”*

### **A Hard Sell**

CCADV was in search of a way to streamline their processes and use of data. Their members were submitting client and service information in paper files that staff regularly compiled into reports, but they were limited in how they could collect and use statewide data.

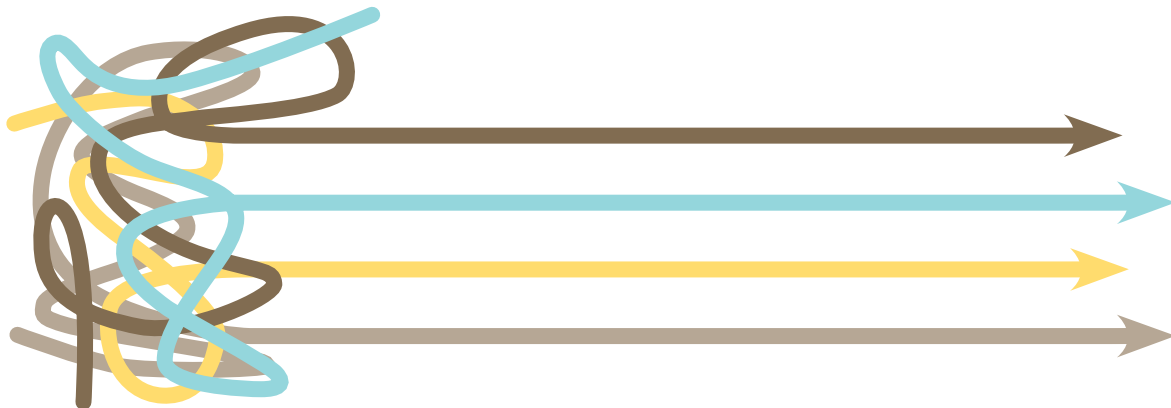


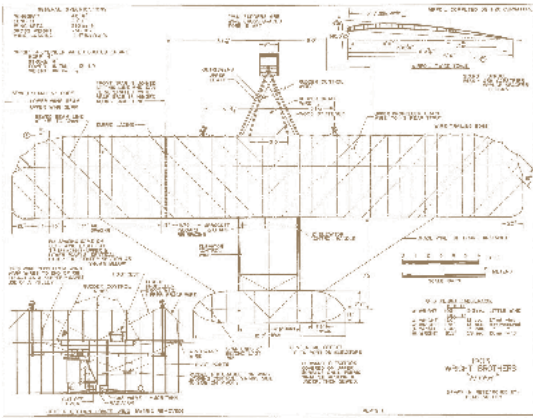
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The organization’s leaders realized that there were ways to be more efficient and accurate, and they saw the potential of the Efforts to Outcomes™ (ETO) system to better capture the range of domestic violence services being provided in the state and enhance reporting to partners, funders, and other key stakeholders. Upon purchasing ETO, CCADV also decided to take on statewide data management for the first time ever.

It was a difficult transition, however. During initial implementation, there was a split between those who understood the promise of the new system and others who continued to have significant challenges using it in their programs and shelters. These challenges put a strain on longstanding relationships between CCADV and its members. At that point, CCADV sought support and was referred to Exact Change Strategies (ECS). Their hope was that ECS could address their immediate reporting needs as well as identify knowledge gaps, troubleshoot problems, and ultimately create a highly functional system for all users. ▶

*“ECS really understood that people were frustrated and, literally with a few small tweaks, made things a lot better. They were reliable and responsive.”*





## Identifying Solutions Together

CCADV and ECS began working together immediately to identify problem areas and make key improvements in the ETO site to mitigate difficulties and increase efficiency. ECS took the time to understand how

those in the field were using the system as well as those analyzing reports and results. Together, ECS team members and CCADV leaders held regular meetings to discuss ongoing improvements, address roadblocks, and assess the impact of system improvements. In essence, ECS restructured the system so that it was customized to meet the various needs and requirements of the CCADV team.

### The Impact

A short time after the process with ECS began, CCADV leaders noticed a shift: field staff and members had an increased buy in around data collection and the ETO system. This was leading to other tangible impacts. Not only did complaints about ETO decline dramatically, but CCADV leaders saw they were better able to capture and confirm the range of domestic violence services being provided in Connecticut. Not only were their members providing more services than previously thought, CCADV had a newfound confidence in and ability to report on its data. ►

*“We know people are providing a LOT of services on the ground, and want them to capture it. Even in a 5 minute hotline call, a lot happens. We want to make sure we’re triaging and really identifying what we’re doing. We want ETO to be able to tell us how the people we serve are being helped.”*

*“Utilizing ETO cut down on the time spent searching for data. ...The foundations explained that they want proof organizations are doing what they say. They want to know how your work is making a difference. The funders we spoke to felt ETO provided a guarantee... the numbers we now provide are cross checked, verified and unduplicated.”*

*“ETO also provides a promise to foundations of what Safe Haven wants and hopes to accomplish. Safe Haven sends the message that we care about continuous quality improvement. ...[By working with CCADV], we ensure our data, outcomes and practices are continuously being recorded, counted and measured against best practices around the state as well as the nation.”*

*“It’s been a great experience working with ECS. I’m pleased with the outcomes – what we’re going to build and where we’re going to go.”*

## Spotlight on Safe Haven

- **Safe Haven of Greater Waterbury** is a member of CCADV. They provide a range of crisis intervention and education services to support victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Like other member organizations, they experienced growing pains with the ETO system. Yet, after CCADV and ECS customized the site and increased functionality, leaders at Safe Haven also realized the power of ETO and quickly saw an unexpected financial impact. Not only did they have highly accurate data, *but that data could impress funders and turn into dollars.*
- **In fiscal year 2016**, *Safe Haven applied for significantly fewer grants than in years prior, but received more funding from foundations than ever before.* With limited resources for grant writing, they used the ETO system to make strategic decisions about which grants to apply for and which programs to highlight. Funders told Safe Haven directly that they were impressed with the data-driven work. The funding Safe Haven received has been critical to its day-to-day operations and has set the stage for enduring relationships with foundations.

CCADV and its members now have a robust data system that will serve them well into the future. CCADV is able to support its members and the essential domestic violence services in the state more than ever before. Their partnership with ECS will not stop there; after enhancing their ETO site, CCADV determined that they could streamline their work even further by developing a comprehensive performance management framework. They envision limitless impact and potential. ●

*“I will always have money for ECS! [They] were my own personal support team. And you need that for a living, breathing system.”*

**SPECIAL THANKS** to *Tonya Johnson, Margaret Rosa, and all of the staff and members of Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence*

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