Mark Lapiz ([00:00](#)):

What we were really trying to do in a lot of ways around co-creation was may have been new to a system such as child welfare, but it's not new to the way communities operate. And so I think for many of us, there was, for my own self and transformation, there was like a liberating moment to say there's much of who I am as a person in my community that now is really being integrated and intersecting with who I am as a professional and being recognized and celebrated.

Alexis Kirk ([00:31](#)):

Yeah. So once you started, you know, really thinking about that recognition and celebration within your communities, what was the type of feedback you started hearing from community members and from other partners about how you guys were using co-creation and how it started to change your organizational culture or other things?

Mark Lapiz ([00:52](#)):

Yeah, I mean they, you know, our community partners, you know, felt like there was a lot of trust with our implementation team. Things such as changing our policies and processes started to really occur. Things like if they were coming to a meeting why weren't they financially compensated? Much like the rest of us from a system, we get paid to attend a meeting and they don't. So, and then we would look at our processes within our system to say, how would we be able to make that happen? And so we started really understanding that there had to be this sense of kind of equity and fairness across, because the contributions from them were probably more valuable than us, yet we were getting financially compensated for it. So, you know, I don't think there was an expectation from them that they were gonna get paid for everything to do, but they, I think there was a sense of trust that we were gonna take care of them as much as they were gonna take care of us. You know, they would make space amongst, when we came up with problems, we would bring it to them and we would allow them to identify the solution to some of these, you know, technical issues that we couldn't think of. And so there definitely felt like, at least from my perspective, that they were true partners and that at least with the folks in our system that they had built relationships with, there could be true, honest communication back and forth about things that we could solve and the things that we couldn't solve, the things that were easy to fix and things that were too complicated to fix, but at least they knew that they could communicate with those leaders, those implementation team members and those folks that were kind of trusted with this practice model that they, they co-designed to have those kind of conversations. And many of the issues that we were able to at least adaptively address were because they were the ones that trusted us to bring those, those ideas to, to us.

Alexis Kirk ([03:15](#)):

Mark, hearing you talk just then, you kept on using the word trust and it really made me think back to, to earlier in our conversation when you first started talking about the early stages of engaging in this co-creation process and that issues of mistrust were real barrier for you. And so it sounds like through all of these efforts and, and through taking the time to really build relationships with partners, that you were able to at least between your team and your community partners, really build some trust where before there had been this, this really great mistrust between social services and the communities.