Learning to Support People to Heal

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Partners for Inclusive Communities
how to support people - Our Journey together in the Work
What we know...

• This is a hard topic to talk about for some...
• Individuals with disabilities are particularly at risk of crime for a wide variety of reasons, including, but not limited to, reliance on caregivers, limited transportation options, and isolation from the community. Therefore are twice as likely to be a victim of abuse.
• Chronic marginalization is a form of trauma
• People with Disabilities continue to be stereotyped
• Social Norms about violence and People with Disabilities contribute to and support violence
Social Norms are the rules of behavior that are considered acceptable in a group or society.
Social Norms

- Refers to values, beliefs, attitudes, and/or behaviors shared by a group of people.

- Can function as unspoken rules or guidelines for how people behave, and for how people are expected to behave.

- Can result in positive or negative outcomes.

Social Norms that support violence?

- Frat in trouble for 'freshman daughter drop off' banner 2015
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CglSWb1lDu8
Social Norms that support violence?

MEDIA REPRESENTATION

An object of pity and charity

LANGUAGE

How we refer to people has a lot to do with how we treat them.
When words do not seem to work... behaviors...???

- They tried and were not heard
- Person was not believed
- No one to tell
- Words were not understood
- Easier to act it out - Don’t know what they feeling or why
- Behavior – it’s the only thing they have control over
Self-advocates can and must take the lead.

- break the cycle by learning, sharing and reporting
Self Advocacy Movement

**Civil Rights** - Self Advocacy Movement is working against negative societal stereotypes and negative “disability labels”

The Self Advocacy Movement is changing these social norms and attitudes to:

- I have a disability – I am not my disability.
- Nothing about us without us.
- I am a person first
- I am not my disability
- *I have CIVIL RIGHTS*
Self-Advocate Task Force
Self Advocates - In relation to violence and abuse – information is power

• Self Advocates need information to support other people with disabilities
What we do...and WHY?

Training for Staff, Families, Administrators

• Tools for Safety and People with Disabilities

Workshops for People with Disabilities

• Give Respect Get Respect
• Stop - Think – Decide - Act
Social-Ecological Model -
Getting Honest About the Issues – Sexual Violence Prevention Beginning the Dialog
Primary Prevention

takes place **BEFORE** violence initially occurs and involves programs and strategies designed to **reduce risk factors** or **increase protective factors**.

Identify Risk and Protective Factors

Definitions

• **Risk Factor** - Characteristic that increases the likelihood of a person becoming a victim

• **Protective Factor** - Characteristic that decreases the likelihood of a person becoming a victim

• **Risk factors are not direct causes.** The presence of a risk factor does not mean that a person will always experience violence. Victims are never responsible for the harm inflicted upon them.

• **Protective factors** do not mean that the person will never experience violence. It simply makes it less of a chance.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Factor</th>
<th>Protective Factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Does not have the ability to say no or has a weak NO</td>
<td>a. Ability to say NO and mean it - has had practice - EXAMPLE OF PRACTICE SAYING NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Does not have process for making decisions independently</td>
<td>b. Have a way to Make Decisions and think things through – DECISION MAKING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. No one to tell or does not feel comfortable telling if something happens</td>
<td>c. Know who you can talk to and keep telling. – NAME AT LEAST TWO PEOPLE and EMERGENCY LINE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Unable to recognize abuse or violence</td>
<td>d. Has knowledge of abuse/violence and understands what to do</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Trauma - Our Experiences

TRAUMA – “big T” and “little t”

• ALL traumatic events are significant!

• These words are a simple way to expand our definition and understanding of trauma to include things that may not be found within a formal definition.

• Adapted from: Kathleen Young, Treating Trauma
Our Experiences

• Generally the first person a victim confides in is typically a friend or family member.
  • How they react helps determine whether people who are victims are able to report/access services /heal.

• Disclosure is a process not event - difficult for everyone
  • comfort level and trust
HELP ERASE RAPE CULTURE & PREVENT VICTIM BLAMING

Sexual assault happens when a person decides to harm someone. It is NEVER a victim’s fault. Some victims may talk about it right away, while others may wait months or even years. It’s important to support survivors whether they speak out publicly or not.

Learn more at www.nsvrc.org •  

NSVRC
national sexual violence resource center
Healing Room and the T-Shirts

• Bridging the Gap Conference sponsored by the VERA Institute of Justice and the Office of Violence Against Women - October, 2012

• Louisville, KY
Healing – Our Experiences

Remember that people with disabilities are more alike than different

- They have similar reactions yet their trauma is often not recognized.
- Sure there are some other issues – Who’s issues are those?

Why do they talk during Give Respect Get Respect?

- Feel comfortable
- Julie is a person with a disability and is lead trainer
- Co-trainer respects Julie therefore co-trainer must be okay too
- Feel Safe – Set the tone for that
- They know it is not a one time thing – multiple contacts
Healing – Dr. Harvey Recovery Model

Safety  Empowerment

Connection
What can you do?

• Understand the bigger issues
• Think about risk and protective factors in light of this information.
• Rethink what information people really need.
• Know about violence and trauma not just mandated reporting requirements
• Work with your states victim services community
• Change norms and policies that inadvertently silence and allow violence
What can you do?

• EDUCATE and Support people and their Healing
• Learn how to use attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors to promote healthy relationships and safe communities.

• Become a Trauma SENSITIVE and INFORMED agency!

Measuring Capacity to Serve Survivors with Disabilities: Performance Indicators.

Vera Institute of Justice: The Center on Victimization and Safety
Publication Date: 11/12/2015
http://www.endabusepwd.org/publications/performance-indicators/
We’ve come too far from where we started to get tired now

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead
Resources

Vera Institute of Justice - End Abuse of People with disabilities website at 
http://www.endabusepwd.org/

The Disability and Abuse Project is a function of Spectrum Institute, a nonprofit educational corporation directed by Dr. Nora Baladerian, http://www.disabilityandabuse.org/

Justice Strand - Justice for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities – video by Beverley Frantz and Liz Weintraub and issue brief 
http://rtc.umn.edu/nationalgoals/#justice or 
Resources

• **National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma & Mental Health** (NCDVTMH) Information on Trauma-Informed Domestic Violence Advocacy

• Trauma Informed Oregon - a statewide collaborative aimed at preventing and ameliorating the impact of adverse experiences on children, adults and families.

• [http://traumainformedoregon.org/](http://traumainformedoregon.org/)
Contact Information

Initiatives for Access and Justice
- Safety and Sexual Violence Prevention Project
- Crime Victims with Disabilities Project

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