


Working Together to End Violence Against Women with Disabilities

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Session Overview

- > Provide foundational information on disability and Deaf culture.
- > Review what is known about domestic and sexual violence in the lives of women with disabilities and Deaf women.
- > Discuss the promise of collaboration for addressing abuse of women with disabilities.
- > Provide practical information on strategies for building and maintaining collaborations with disability and Deaf organization.



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Understanding Disabilities and Deaf Culture




- >Disability Overview
- >Deaf Culture Overview
- >Implications for Service Delivery



Disabilities Overview

1 in 5 people living in the United States have at least one disability.



Source: U.S. Census

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Disabilities cont'd...

- > Disability is an incredibly broad category.
 - > Cognitive
 - > Developmental
 - > Physical
 - > Psychiatric
 - > Sensory
- > Includes visible and “hidden” disabilities.

Disabilities Cont'd...

- > Disability is ordinary.
- > Diagnosis does not predict individual experience.
- > Not all people who have disabilities identify as having one.
- > The experiences of women with disabilities is shaped by abelism.
- > “Nothing about us without us.”
- > People first language

Deaf Community Overview

- > Some deaf and hard of hearing people do not identify as having a disability.
- > They identify as a member of a cultural and linguistic group.
- > This group of people use the term Deaf to reflect their cultural identification.
- > Deaf culture is defined by shared language, values, and history.
- > The experiences of Deaf women are shaped by audism.

Implications

- > Language is incredibly important.
- > People with disabilities and Deaf individuals must be involved in meaningful ways.
- > Agencies should not rely solely on people self-identifying as people with disabilities to create access.
- > Agencies must be flexible and customized to meet an individual's specific abilities and needs.
- > To meet the full range of needs among people with disabilities and Deaf people, agencies will need to address the full-range of access issues – often through partnership.



What We Know About Abuse of Women with Disabilities



- >Statistics
- >Unique Dynamics
- >Current Response, Gaps, and Barriers



What the Research Tells Us

- > The research on the incidence and prevalence of domestic violence in this area is limited.
- > Existing research suggests that girls/women with disabilities and Deaf girls/women have higher rates of domestic and sexual violence than their counterparts without disabilities, as well as hearing girls/women.
 - > Deaf children are **1.4 times** more likely to be neglected and **2 times** more likely to be physically abused.
 - > Children with disabilities are **2.9 times** more likely than children without disabilities to be sexually abused.
 - > People with disabilities are **3 times** more likely to experience violent victimization.
 - > Deaf women are **1.5 times** more likely to be a victim of sexual harassment, sexual assault, psychological abuse, and physical abuse than their hearing counterparts

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Research cont'd...

- > Research suggests that people with multiple disabilities are at higher risk for violent victimization.
 - > 25 out of 100 people with multiple disabilities experienced violent victimization in 2012 vs. 19 with one disability.
- > Research also suggests that people with particular disabilities are at a higher risk for victimization.
 - > Children with intellectual disabilities and mental health disabilities are **4.6 times** more likely than children without disabilities to be sexually abused.
 - > Persons with cognitive disabilities had the highest unadjusted rate of violent victimization from 2009 to 2012.
 - > 63 out of 100 in 2012 vs. 30.5 out of 100 for ambulatory disabilities
- > Research suggests that men with disabilities are at higher risk for victimization than their male and female counterparts without disabilities.

Unique Dynamics

- > Women with disabilities were more likely than women without disabilities to:
 - > experience more severe victimization,
 - > Experience abuse for longer duration,
 - > be victims of multiple episodes of abuse, and
 - > be victims of a larger number of perpetrators.
- > Who is responsible for abuse of women with disabilities?

Unique Dynamics cont'd...



Current Response - Discussion

What's happening in your community?

What gaps exist in services for survivors with disabilities and Deaf survivors?

What challenges do you face?

National Response

- > Disability organizations
- > Domestic violence programs
- > Rape crisis centers
- > Criminal justice system
- > Allied systems

More Implications

- > Current service delivery model does not meet the unique dynamics in lives of people with disabilities.
- > Traditional resources and models for programs may not be relatable to people with disabilities or Deaf people.
- > The potential for peer support is limited.
- > Unprepared programs run the risk of further isolating survivors with disabilities and Deaf survivors.
- > There is a willingness and commitment to address these gaps and advance justice for Deaf survivors and survivors with disabilities.



Collaboration: A Promising Strategy

- >Why Collaborate?
- >The Premise and The Promise
- >The Results

Why Collaborate? A Facilitated Discussion

What is your experience collaborating with disability organizations?

What are the benefits?

What are the challenges?

A Collaborative Model to Address Violence Against Women with Disabilities and Deaf Women

The Premise and Promise

- > All organizations have a role to play and need to be equipped to serve survivors with disabilities.
 - > Proactive budgets.
 - > Inclusive policies.
 - > Welcoming practices.
 - > Knowledgeable and friendly staff.
- > Strong relationships between domestic violence programs, rape crisis centers, and disability organizations are essential to ensure “no wrong door” for help.
 - > Share a common understanding of key issues.
 - > Exchange expertise and resources.
 - > Have effective referral processes in place.

The Results

- > More than **50** multi-disciplinary collaborations have been created using this model.
 - > Northern Utah Choices Out of Violence
 - > The Hope Collaborative of Haywood County
- > Organizations have:
 - > Reviewed and improved their accessibility.
 - > Implemented on-going staff training programs and instituted case consultations with disability organizations.
 - > Developed policies, protocols, and funding pools for providing accommodations.
 - > Enhanced their practices.
 - > Created tailored outreach materials and strategies.
 - > Increased the number of volunteers with disabilities.
 - > Changed ineffective state policies/legislation.



The Nuts and Bolts of Collaboration Lessons Learned From the Field



> The Right Organizations

> The organizations in your collaboration depend on the focus of your work.

> State-Level

- > Arc
- > Deaf and hard of hearing commissions
- > Mental health associations
- > Protection and Advocacy organizations
- > State independent living centers

> Local-Level

- > Arc local chapters
- > Boards of MR/DD
- > Community mental health providers
- > Deaf service provider
- > Deaf-specific domestic violence program
- > Independent living centers
- > Interpreter agencies



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Meaningful Inclusion of People with Disabilities and Deaf People

- > “Nothing about us, without us.”
- > Include self-advocates and other people with disabilities in the work of your collaboration.
 - > Co-leaders
 - > Committee members
 - > Access review team members
- > Build relationships with local self-advocacy chapters and/or disability organizations to find self-advocates to include.
- > Provide full support to ensure full participation.

A Shared Understanding

Sample Questions to Explore

- > What philosophies and values drive the work of each field?
- > What do we mean when we use common words like domestic or sexual violence, disability, safety, empowerment, etc.?
- > What factors underlie/contribute to violence in the lives of women with disabilities and Deaf women?
- > What do we believe about mandatory reporting, and what will our process be for mandatory reporting?

A Clear Purpose and Path

- > What do you hope to gain through collaborating with disability organizations? How will you achieve your goal?
- > What contributions and commitments is each organization making?
- > How will the organizations work together?
 - > Meeting locations and logistics (access needs)
 - > Communication
 - > Decision-making
- > What resources are needed and who is providing them?

Trust and Respect

- > Organizations from different fields are often guided by different philosophies, values, cultures, structures, and procedures.
- > They also often have histories with one another that must be considered.
- > Disability and Deaf organizations also have long-histories of being marginalized, excluded, and discriminated against.
- > To build trust and respect:
 - > Centralize access (and safety)
 - > Providing time for relationship-building
 - > Get to know each other's agency, history, and field
 - > Conduct agency tours

Skilled Leadership

- > Consider co-advocacy/leadership with people with disabilities.
- > Strong collaborative leaders can communicate, organize, build relationships, manage strong personalities, and embrace multiple work styles.
- > Experience in project management and facilitation, an ability to handle conflict and find common ground, and tact are a plus.

Collaboration- Facilitated Discussion

What barriers/challenges to collaboration do you face?

What strategies have people used to overcome those barriers/challenges?



Initial Steps Towards Collaborating

- > Dialogue
- > Basic Accessibility Review
- > Outreach and Relationship Building
- > Understanding Resources and Needs
- > Continue the Dialogue



1. Start a Dialogue

- > How has disability and Deafness intersected in the work of the organization and its staff?
- > Is your organization serving survivors with disabilities and Deaf women? Why? Why not?
- > What are the biggest barriers/challenges when providing advocacy and other services for these survivors?
- > What do staff member's need by way of support to address those barriers/challenges?



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2. Conduct Basic Accessibility Review

- > Legal Requirements
 - > Americans with Disabilities Act
 - > Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
 - > The Fair Housing Act
- > Best Practices
 - > Universal Design
- > Scope
 - > Physical Environment
 - > Policy & Practice Environment
 - > Communications Environment
 - > Information Environment
 - > Training Environment

Sample Tools for Promoting Access

- > Basic Access Considerations (Vera Institute of Justice)
- > Accessibility and Safety Audit Tool (H.O.P.E. Collaborative)
- > Accessibility and Responsiveness for Survivors with Disabilities Review Tool (Safety First Initiative)

3. Understanding Resources and Needs

- > Where will you meet with your partners from the disability organization?
- > What access needs might your partners have (an accessible meeting location, ASL interpreters, accessible print materials)?
- > What resources do you need and steps can you take to meet those needs?
- > How can you structure the meeting to maximize accessibility and full participation for everyone?

4. Outreach and Relationship Building

- > Determine the types of disability organizations you want to collaborate with.
- > Determine if anyone in your agency has an existing relationship with the organization(s).
- > Arrange for initial meeting.
- > Make time for on-going relationship-building activities.
 - > Agency tours
 - > Informal presentations (lunch and learns)
 - > Invite staff to attend your events
 - > Co-training opportunities

5. Foster On-Going, Internal Dialogue

- > What's working for survivors with disabilities and Deaf survivors in our advocacy and services?
- > What are areas where improvements are needed?
- > Where are staff comfortable, and where could they use more support?
- > How has ableism/audism influenced our organizational and individual responses to survivors with disabilities and Deaf survivors?
- > How can we combat ableism and audism in and through our work?

National Resources

- > Accessing Safety Initiative's website:
www.accessingsafety.org
- > U.S. Department of Justice's ADA home page:
www.ada.gov
- > Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center:
www.dbtac.vcu.edu
- > Job Accommodation Network: www.jan.wvu.edu

Contact Information

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