



Sexual Assault DEMONSTRATION INITIATIVE

Enhancing Sexual Assault Services

eNewsletter • Winter 2015

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SADI SITES PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Responsive sexual assault services

Looking back, it was a busy 2014 for SADI Project Sites! As sites continue to implement their individualized plans for the Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative the focus is on defining, developing and enhancing trauma informed services.

This edition of the SADI eNewsletter focuses on key lessons learned about developing responsive sexual assault services. You will find information on tools and approaches to help multi-service programs build trauma informed organizations. For more info on the project, visit www.nsvrc.org/sadi.

2014 NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT CONFERENCE

SADI Team members shared lessons

You can access presentation materials from the conference online:

- To access *Organizational Trauma and Resiliency* by Cat Fribley and Kris Bein, visit <http://tinyurl.com/NSAC2014a>
- To access *Organizational Change According to Cats* by Sally J. Laskey and Kris Bein, visit <http://tinyurl.com/NSAC2014b> (PowerPoint) and <http://tinyurl.com/NSAC2014c> (worksheet).





MORE ABOUT SADI

The Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative (SADI) is the first large-scale project to dedicate resources, support and replicable tools for dual/multiservice programs who want to enhance services for sexual assault survivors.

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BUILDING CULTURES OF CARE

Guide offers tips on creating trauma-informed services

Understanding trauma is critical to providing quality services to sexual assault survivors.

Through the demonstration initiative we have gathered critical tools to help guide programs in developing more trauma informed services.

We recommend that programs take an inventory of their work with the help of the *Building Cultures of Care* publication.

This guide provides information to support sexual assault services programs in strengthening their organizational and individual responses to survivors of sexual violence through the use of a trauma-informed approach.

It includes information on:

- Understanding trauma
- Defining trauma-informed services
- Core principles of trauma-informed services
- Spheres of implementation
- A guide for integrating trauma-informed services



To download a free copy, visit <http://tinyurl.com/lfyaa58>

BUILDING CULTURES OF CARE

Lessons from the sites

As demonstration sites have been working with the *Building Cultures of Care* as a guide for their work they have examined their policies, developed new services and continue to explore how to best meet the needs of sexual assault survivors in their community. Below are some lessons from each site about what they have learned related to trauma-informed services:

Shelter, Inc. in Michigan

Through the guidance of SADI, Shelter, Inc.'s Oscoda location has transitioned from a traditional service model to an outreach program. This has helped us to respond to sexual assault in a trauma-informed way, collaborate more effectively with community partners, and reach more survivors with quality services.

Gila River Indian Community Crime Victim Services (GRIC) in Arizona

When GRIC staff returned from the learning exchange our first action step was to review policies and implement trauma-informed practices. As a staff we also came together to review our forms, as we identified this as a barrier to services and decided to make it less file focused and more survivor centered with listening as our No. 1 tool.

Family Violence & Rape Crisis Services (FVRC) in North Carolina

FVRC has begun offering Art + Discussion, Art + Movement = Healing (incorporating MELT & gyrokenesis with body mapping to allow survivors to safely experience movement, reconnect with their bodies, and interpret those experiences visually), and teen-specific groups. We are planning to create a half-day workshop for male survivors, and hopefully, one for secondary survivors soon.

DOVES in Nebraska

DOVES staff members now carry small bags of tactile items for survivors to hold, manipulate and play with during times of stress. This project is symbolic of our work to understand that it's often the little things that make a big difference to trauma survivors. We were blessed to have a survivor help us create these bags – she wished someone had given her something similar when she sought help after being sexually assaulted.

New York Asian Women's Center (NYAWC) in New York City

NYAWC is reviewing its policies, guidelines, and model of practice (i.e. consistent hotline and in-person message of informed consent, structure of first contact with survivors, incorporating trauma-informed practices into our model of practice, etc.) from the lens of trauma-informed approach to ensure that in every aspect and step of our work, survivors are well informed of their rights and options and that their choices are respected and honored.





TRAUMA AND RESILIENCY

Building strong and healthy organizations

What is organizational trauma and why do we need to pay attention to it? Similar to general advocacy work, leaders and stakeholders at sexual assault programs have to do the hard work of rethinking and restructuring systems to create better experiences for survivors. Most of the time this work happens outside of our agencies. Other times, turning that attention to the systems at play in your own organization creates the kind of growth and change that helps your program stay strong and healthy. This requires that we all pay attention to our work environment, culture, practices and policies.

This thoughtful attention can empower board members and directors in their leadership and stewardship of the agency. It will help you to develop and nurture staff, volunteers and community partners that provide caring and impactful services for survivors.

The work you do with survivors is hard and

constant. Exposure to trauma on a daily basis can unsettle the health and strength of the organization over time. The strategy to build and maintain healthy organizations is two-fold:

- 1. Recognize and address organizational trauma**
- 2. Build organizational resiliency-**

Organizational trauma is a term used to describe the collective experience of an organization or agency that is experiencing overwhelming effects of transition, loss or change. Actions or events from both outside or inside, from a series of events that happen over time, or from the nature of the work itself (such as crisis work) can lead to this experience. (Vivian & Hormann, 2013)

Much like individual trauma, organizational trauma can cause ongoing crisis, shifts in behavior, and feelings of grief or powerlessness. A first step is to recognize the factors that may contribute to organizational trauma and the actions that promote healing. (T. C. Preston, personal communication, June 15, 2014)

Organizations must change over time. The change can be difficult, and may involve some growing pains.

Including all stakeholders in the process will promote buy-in and healthy transitions. We can all be facilitators for growth and change in our organizations. It is imperative for leaders to create opportunities to discuss losses and cultivate new ideas.

Strengthening organizational resiliency can help to reduce organizational trauma and support healthy development and program sustainability.

Learn more about what to look for and what you can do. Tips for building strong and healthy organizations, Pages 6-7.

References

Lord, J. H., & O'Brien, K. (2007). Developing resilience. *National Victim Assistance Academy, Track 1: Participants Text* (Chap. 10, 1-40). Retrieved from the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services: <http://tinyurl.com/Developing-Resilience>

Vivian, P. & Hormann, S. (2013). *Organizational trauma and healing*. North Charleston, S.C.: CreateSpace.

Key elements of the organizational resiliency model are described below (Lord & O'Brien, 2007):

Individual characteristics of resiliency

- Personal perspective and meaning
- A sense of hope
- Healthy coping practices
- Strong relationships
- Self-knowledge and insight

Organizational characteristics of resiliency

- Proactive policies to reduce trauma are implemented and reviewed
- Trauma informed supervision techniques are developed and used
- Competency based training is offered to all staff and volunteers with specific focus on resiliency factors
- Learning organization and opportunities to share knowledge, opinions, and insights





TRAUMA AND RESILIENCY: Tips for building strong and healthy organizations

Organizational symptom:

What to watch for:

Actions you can take:

Ignoring or minimizing trauma

- Staff think that their own trauma experiences are less important than survivors they are supporting
- “Ranking” severity of survivors’ trauma
- Staff are uncomfortable discussing the impact of their work on personal lives
- Staff or directors don’t acknowledge difficult experiences

- Encourage staff to read about the impacts of trauma
- Hold trainings on common trauma responses
- Read up on secondary trauma, vicarious trauma, and trauma stewardship
- Encourage breaks, vacations, and in-office self-care

Lack of recognition that the very nature of the work affects the culture of the organization

- Feelings that a staff member isn’t cut out for this work
- Personality conflicts
- Feelings of resentment
- Detachment from meetings and learning opportunities

- Regularly revisit your agency’s mission, vision, and core values
- Consider the ways that everyday stressors can be made more challenging by trauma exposure

Organizational amnesia

- Staff don’t recognize that past traumatic events impact their work in the present
- No one talks about a difficult time
- Unspoken understanding that challenges or setbacks are not to be discussed

- Provide both individual and group opportunities for reflection on past events
- Reflect on the subtle or non-verbal ways that leaders react to discussion of challenges

Limited/limiting attitudes and worldview

- Organization-wide feelings that other offices, systems, agencies or people can’t be trusted
- Unwillingness to explore new community collaborations or opportunities
- Policies, procedures and rules are not regularly updated

- Regroup, reframe, and keep trying with challenging partners
- Seek opportunities for connecting with other agencies and groups
- Implement a regular schedule for revising organizational policies

Staff feel disconnected from leadership

- Agency does not have a transition plan
- Decision-making power is centralized or limited
- Few opportunities for discussion about agency-wide changes or decisions exist
- Resistance to change or leadership turnover

- Work with your board on transition and sustainability planning
- Provide training for supervisors on leadership
- Communicate unpopular or new policy changes in-person

Lack of communication

- Not all staff are aware of changes made in the agency
- Over-reliance on one form of communication (i.e. email)
- Limited opportunity for open discussion in meetings
- Supervision is skipped or regularly rescheduled

- Explore different communication styles and needs with your staff
- Consider the healthiest way to deliver challenging news
- Open up discussion in meetings
- Be flexible with your staff’s changing needs

Lack of inclusion

- Staff feel frustrated about changes
- Limited opportunity to participate in agency-wide decisions
- Routine blank stares or silence in meetings

- Provide opportunities for staff to learn about changes
- Encourage participation in decision-making whenever possible
- Regularly hold supervisory meetings and encourage feedback and discussions



NEW RELEASES

Resources to support this project

A variety of publications have been created to support this project. You can download these free publications at the links below:



1. Building Cultures of Care: A Guide for Sexual Assault Services Programs

This guide provides an overview of the core principles of trauma-informed care and guiding points and questions to help organizations build cultures grounded in the philosophy of trauma-informed service delivery.

Download a free copy at <http://tinyurl.com/lfyaa58>



2. Building Comprehensive Sexual Assault Services Programs

This resource provides general information and examples about comprehensive sexual assault services as a tool for program development. It is not an exhaustive list, but a list of resources to be used to begin a discussion or assessment or organizational efforts to address sexual violence.

Download a free copy at <http://tinyurl.com/q3czqtk>



3. Self-Care and Trauma Work

This document provides a brief overview of vicarious trauma and how to take care of yourself when working to address sexual violence.

Download a free copy at <http://tinyurl.com/q5yyubs>



4. Trauma Informed Advocacy and Services Recommended Reading

This recommended reading list was developed for the National Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative to assist organizations in strengthening trauma-informed advocacy and services

Download a free copy at <http://tinyurl.com/nbsxdo3>



5. Listening to Our Communities: Community Assessment Toolkit

This toolkit focuses on key tools and skills for conducting community assessments in order to strengthen services for sexual assault survivors. It is written specifically for multi-service programs, but will be useful for most victim service programs.

Download a free copy at <http://tinyurl.com/lo6rjav>



6. Multi-service Programs and the Essentials of Sexual Assault Services

This annotated bibliography is for advocates, policy makers and allies to help inform their work of meeting the needs of sexual assault survivors. This document provides the best available research to explore sexual assault program services and the challenges with meeting sexual assault survivors' needs in multi-service programs.

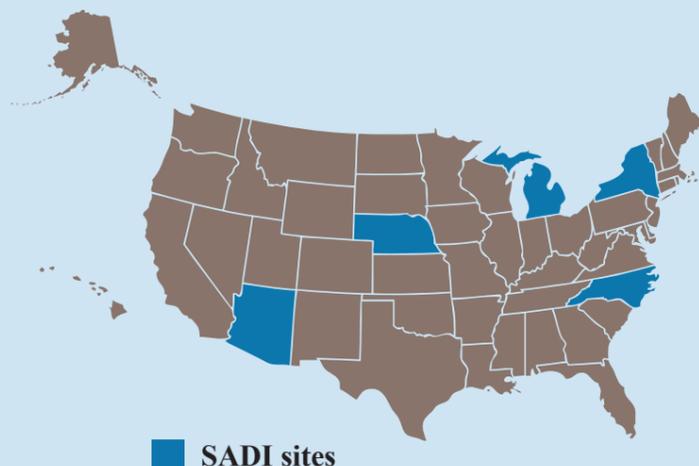
Download a free copy at <http://tinyurl.com/qabp5k5>



ABOUT THE PROJECT

What is SADI?

The Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative (SADI) is the first large-scale project in the United States to address the challenges dual domestic violence and sexual assault/multi-service programs face in reaching sexual assault survivors by dedicating resources, support, and replicable tools tailored specifically to the needs of those programs. The SADI will develop a range of innovative outreach tools, service models, and agency structures to discover best practices and needed action in reaching more sexual assault survivors with comprehensive quality care.



■ SADI sites

For more, check out the video on YouTube at <http://tinyurl.com/cx9ht75>

National Sexual Assault Coalition Resource Sharing Project

The National Sexual Assault Coalition Resource Sharing Project (RSP), a collaborative project of Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault, North Carolina Coalition Against Sexual Assault,

and Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs, works to end sexual violence and increase services available to sexual violence survivors by developing tools, providing technical assistance and training, and otherwise assisting rape crisis centers and state, tribal and territorial sexual assault coalitions. The RSP provides technical assistance, support, and the dissemination of peer-driven resources for all state and territorial sexual assault coalitions, SASP administrators, and Rural Grantees that are dual/multi-service advocacy agencies. Through deep connections to coalitions, service providers, and survivors, the RSP is at the cutting edge of identifying emerging issues, advancing promising practices, and synthesizing the voices and experiences across the nation into coherent best practice models.

THE ORGANIZATIONS



The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape created the **National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC)** in 2000 to identify, create and disseminate resources to assist those working throughout the country to address and prevent all forms of sexual violence. NSVRC identifies sexual violence as a public health, social justice, and human rights issue, and collaborates with experts using a variety of strategies, to create a culture free from sexual violence, and one that responds appropriately and compassionately to survivors. NSVRC believes that through collaboration, prevention, and research-based resources, we are making the world safer and healthier.



National Organization of Asian Pacific Islander Ending Sexual Violence (NAPIESV) is a national organization established by Asian and Pacific Islander anti-sexual assault advocates to give voice to the experiences of Asian and Pacific Islander women and girls who are victims of sexual assault. NAPIESV's goal is to provide technical assistance to culturally and linguistically specific organizations that are currently serving or attempting to serve victims of sexual assault in Asians and Pacific Islander communities.



The Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition is a statewide membership tribal coalition, and a national technical assistance provider; working to end sexual violence against Native women and children. Our membership is comprised of advocates and others who are working to end violence in Native communities in Minnesota, and include Native and non-Native; male and female, individual and organizational members. We provide technical assistance to the Tribal Sexual Assault Services Program grantees nationwide to develop, enhance, or strengthen their sexual assault services. Our vision is to: Create Safety and Justice Through the Teachings of Our Grandmothers.