

**What Rural Means to Us:
Sexual assault services in a rural state and
the communities that address them**

Robin Clover, Executive Director
Sublette County Sexual Assault Family Violence (SAFV) Task Force

Tiffany Eskelson-Maestas, Outreach Program Manager
Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault

**Overview of Sexual Assault
Services in Wyoming**

Reality of Wyoming

- “Fresh air, freedom, and fun!”
- Compromises.
 - Greater impact on sexual assault survivors.
- Wyoming has a budget surplus.

How do you picture Wyoming?
(Don’t hold back....)

**Overview of Sexual Assault
Services in Wyoming**

You might be right!

- Wyoming is the 9th largest state in area.
- 563,626 Wyoming residents live in 97,818 square miles. 5.8 people per square mile.
- Wyoming is larger in area than Maine, Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Maryland and Delaware all combined. 29.9 million people live in those states
- Cheyenne (largest city), state capitol – 57,000 people.
- 92% of Wyoming’s population is Caucasian, Native Americans, Hispanics, African Americans, and Asians comprise the remainder.
- Since 2000, the population has increased over 14%.

Structure of Advocacy In Wyoming

- Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Programs
 - 24 dual non-profit programs (DV/SA); 1 in each county (23) and 1 on the Wind River Indian Reservation.
 - 32 offices around the state.
 - 19 stand alone shelters.
 - Staff numbers range from 1.5 to 17 full time equivalent.
 - All programs have individual 24 hour crisis lines.
 - 7 of the 43 victim witness programs located in the DV/SA programs.
 - Combined budgets for the 23 DV/SA county programs – \$7.5 million per year.

Structure of Advocacy In Wyoming

– Work from all of a survivor’s experiences, always from a “dual mind-set.”

Besides the dual advocacy programs Wyoming has

- Warren Air Force Base Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program
- 43 Victim Witness programs
- 3 Court Appoint Special Advocate (CASA) Programs
- 3 Child Advocacy Programs

Structure of Advocacy in Wyoming

Statewide Partnerships

Division of Victim Services /Wyoming Office of the Attorney General (DVS)

- Established in 1998 to consolidate funding and programing for victim services under one roof.
- **Financial:** In the 2011 FY \$7,281,574 in funding was distributed from the DVS
 - State funding for DV/SA programs \$2,675,470
 - State funding for Victim Witness (VW) \$1,226,658
 - State Surcharge for VW \$454,925
 - State funding for Child Advocacy Programs \$99,999
 - State salary money for DV/SA and VW \$755,363
 - Federal formula funding for DV/SA programs \$1,007,302
 - Competitive funding under VAWA D and VOCA for DV/SA, VW and CASA \$1,061,857

Structure of Advocacy in Wyoming

Statewide Partnerships

Division of Victim Services (DVS) cont.

– **Operational:**

- State Rules regarding the operations of Victim Services programs receiving state and federal funding.
- Administrators Guide Book.
- Grants management system.
- WyoSafe – State statistical reporting program.
 - 797 incidents of sexual assault were reported through WyoSafe for the 2010 calendar year.
- VAWA Rural Grant
 - In FFY 2008 Wyoming received a Rural Grant to help Wyoming overcome some of the geographical barriers in providing services to victims of sexual assault. Primarily in Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner and Sexual Assault Response Team support.

Structure of Advocacy in Wyoming

Statewide Partnerships

Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (WCADVSA)

- Serving Wyoming since 1987.
- Through a collective voice, the WCADVSA is committed to provide leadership, education, and systems advocacy to advance social change and end violence.
- Membership consists of the 24 DV/SA programs, and the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office at FE Warren Air Force Base as an honorary member.
- Legal Assistance to Victims, Public Policy, Sexual Assault specific projects, Organizational Development, AmeriCorps.

Challenges of Sexual Assault Services in Rural Wyoming

Challenges for Survivors

- Harsh isolating barriers.
- Oppression of culturally isolated populations.
- Wage gap.
- Cost of living.
- Transportation issues.
- Limited access and information on services.
- Sexual assault not seen as a priority.
- Limited privacy.
- Limited employment opportunities and housing.
- But, no limits of firearms in Wyoming!

“A key defining characteristic of rural life is physical isolation.”

Stan Orchowsky

Challenges of Sexual Assault Services in Wyoming

Challenges for Programs

- Distances to provide services – outreach communities.
- Volunteer base.
- Anonymity issues for staff and volunteers.
- Staff workload – including being on call.
- Equal services for sexual assault.
- Feelings around expertise in sexual assault.
- Limited services to provide to survivors.
- Funding.
- Federal Reporting.
- Conflicts of interest.
- Cultural and social beliefs.
- Transportation.

Addressing Challenges of Sexual Assault Services in Wyoming

What does it mean to address challenges?

- Working *within* the challenges.
- Membership sharing.
- Unity.
- One big community with long streets.
 - “We have to work together, and *live* together.”
 - Relationship building is 24-7 in our communities.
- Use of key stakeholders – including maximizing statewide policy.
- Access to “everybody knows everybody.”

Addressing Challenges of Sexual Assault Services in Wyoming

Highlights from Statewide Partnerships

- WCADVSA:
 - Wyoming Sexual Assault Response Advisory Team
 - Sexual Assault Systems Development
 - Other sexual assault work
 - an advocate to the advocate.
 - primary sexual violence prevention.
 - Legal project civil sexual assault.

Addressing Challenges of Sexual Assault Services in Wyoming

- Division of Victim Services:
 - Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Programming Support
 - 7 hospital-based programs
 - Approximately 55 RNs received SANE training in the last 2 years.
 - Wyoming SANE Adult/Adolescent Credentialing (24)
 - Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)
 - SART handbook available August 2011 to help communities in working with a starting and developing SART Teams

Addressing Challenges of Sexual Assault Services in Wyoming

Highlights from Sublette County Sexual Assault Family Violence (SAFV) Task Force

- What does Sublette County look like
 - Population.
 - County 10,247.
 - 8th least populated county
 - Town of Pinedale 2,221.
 - Town of Marbleton/Big Piney 1,480.
 - Area
 - 4,883 square miles
 - 6th largest county in size
 - Larger then Connecticut.
 - 2.1 person per square mile.
 - Distance needing to travel.
 - Staff travels anywhere from 30 to 1 hour to get to work.
 - On-call advocate could travel up to an hour to reach a client.
 - Nearest larger town to shop 100 miles Rock Springs (23,036 people) (Wal-Mart).
 - Nearest small city to shop Idaho falls Idaho (53,786 people) 140 miles (large mall).
 - Closest large City Salt Lake City Utah (178,858) (237 miles).
 - Nearest Hospital 77 miles in Teton county to the north.

Addressing Challenges of Sexual Assault Services in Wyoming

Highlights from the SAFV Task Force

- What does the SAFV Task Force look like
 - 2010/11 FY budget \$279,307
 - State funding 28%
 - Federal funding 25%
 - Local Government (3 towns and county) 26%
 - Private funding 21%
 - New facility
 - Opened spring 2009
 - Community Development Block Grant \$300,000
 - County \$200,00
 - County land
 - Staff
 - Four full time staff
 - Executive Director / BA.Ed / 10.5 years
 - Direct Services Coordinator: Advocate/ Masters in social Work/ 8.5 years
 - Administrative Assistant: Advocate/BA in social Work/ 3.5 years
 - Violence Prevention Coordinator/AmeriCorps / Member 2 years

Addressing Challenges of Sexual Assault Services in Wyoming

Highlights from the SAFV Task Force

- Mission Statement :
Sublette County Sexual Assault Family Violence (SAFV) Task Force provides protection, assistance, and support to the victims and their families of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. SAFV is committed to ending sexual violence through prevention education and social change.
- Clients served – 76 total /10 SA this does not count intimate partner sexual assault.
- Client numbers increase 200% since 2001
- Working toward a SART
- Clients have assess to state and local elected officials to help improve victim services.
- Clients help design and pass legislation

Addressing Challenges of Sexual Assault Services in Wyoming

Highlights from the SAFV Task Force

- Community partnerships
 - Coordinated Care of Sublette County
 - TANF Community Partnership Initiative Grant
 - 15 MOU partners in the 2010/2011 FY
- Prevention Programing
 - Schools
 - White Bird and other Sexual Violence Education programing
 - Community
 - AmeriCorps member
 - Tough Topics with Library
 - Prevention coalition
 - Pilot community- Community Based Sexual Violence Primary Prevention Education Award
 - Community readiness assessment of Sublette County's readiness to work toward primary Prevention of Adolescent Sexual Violence
 - I'm doing my part: My Hands Are Not For Hurting

Addressing Challenges of Sexual Assault Services in Wyoming

Highlights from SAFE Project Albany County

- Population.
 - 36,299.
 - 6th most populated county.
- Area
 - 4,272 square miles.
 - 8th largest county in size.
 - 8.5 person per square mile.
- University of Wyoming located there.

Addressing Challenges of Sexual Assault Services in Wyoming

Highlights from the Helpmate Crisis Center – Niobrara County

- Population.
 - 2,484.
 - Least populated county
- Area
 - 2,626 square miles
 - 8th smallest county in size
 - .9 person per square mile.
- Women's state prison is located there

Reach Out to Us!

Robin Clover
1.307.367.6305
cloversafv@vcn.com

Tiffany Eskelson-Maestas
1.307.789.8855
te-m@wyomingdvsa.org
