

Supporting Your Work to Support Survivors with Disabilities and Deaf Survivors:

Enhancing Access to Healing Services Through Access and Inclusion

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Session Goals

- Summarize what is known about victimization of people with disabilities, including sexual assault and domestic violence
- Discuss survivors with disabilities experiences with healing services and civil/criminal justice systems;
- Discuss common barriers survivors with disabilities face and unique considerations in rural communities; and,
- Share concrete ways we can support your work in this area.

About us

Vera Institute of Justice, Center on Victimization and Safety

Our mission

- > Work to create victim services that reach, appeal to, and benefit all victims of crime.
- > Focus on groups of people who are at elevated risk of harm but who are underserved.
- > Cornerstone of our work is addressing abuse of people with disabilities
- > Work began in 2005

Our goals

- > Promote a framework for understanding, responding to, and ending domestic and sexual violence that accounts for disability;
- > Build and strengthen a diverse, inclusive, and coordinated movement working to end abuse of people with disabilities;
- > Enhance capacity to prevent and respond to violence against people with disabilities; and
- > Increase the availability and use of research and evaluation in these efforts.

Background

Disabilities and Deaf Culture in the United States

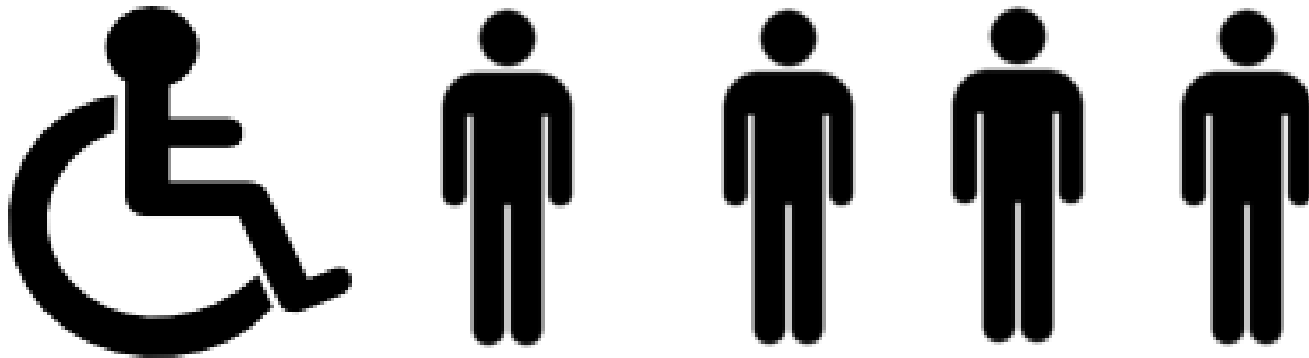
Defining Disability

The most common definition of disability is from the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

- Any physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity.
- Any person having a history of such impairment.
- Any person perceived as having such impairment.

Disabilities Overview

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



Types of Disability

- Physical
 - Limitations in movement, agility, and mobility
- Cognitive and/or intellectual
 - Limitations in cognitive and/or intellectual capacity
- Psychiatric
 - Psychological conditions that cause mental or emotional illness; mental illness; behavioral health
- Sensory
 - Limitations in sight, hearing, and other senses

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 people with disabilities is shaped by abelism.

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.
- > They use the term **Deaf** to reflect their cultural identification.
- > An emphasis is placed on “culture first language” as opposed to people first.

Deaf Culture

Language

American Sign Language
English is often second language.

Values

Collectivism
Transparency
Visual

Behavioral Norms

Direct communication
Eye contact

Traditions

Schools for the Deaf
Deaf clubs
Deaf events

The size of the Deaf community is difficult to determine.

7.6 million people ages 15 and older have difficulty hearing, with 1.1 million defining their hearing difficulty as severe.

Most commonly cited estimate is 500,000 people.

- > Deaf
- > Deaf Blind
- > Hard of Hearing
- > CODAs
- > Interpreters
- > Other hearing allies

Abuse of people with disabilities and Deaf people

What the research tells us

What the research tells us

- > Limited research exists
- > Research has documented that people with disabilities experience increased risk of violent victimization
- > **Some** people with disabilities experience increased risk of domestic and sexual violence when compared to people without disabilities
- > Cannot generalize findings to **all** people with disabilities

People with disabilities are at greater risk of violence.



People with disabilities are three times more likely to experience rape, sexual assault, aggravated assault, and robbery than those without disabilities.

Risk of violence is higher for certain people with disabilities.

> People with intellectual or cognitive disabilities

> People with psychiatric disabilities

> People with multiple disabilities

> Women with disabilities

> People of color who have disabilities



Research continued...

- > Women who have experienced intimate partner violence are more than twice as likely to also report a disability.²
- > 14% of men with disabilities reported experiencing sexual violence at some point in their life time compared to 4% of men without disabilities.³
- > 49% of people with developmental disabilities were assaulted 10 or more times.⁴
- > 20% of Deaf adults have experienced physical abuse by an intimate partner. 15% have experienced forced sex in an intimate partner relationship.⁵

Research continued...

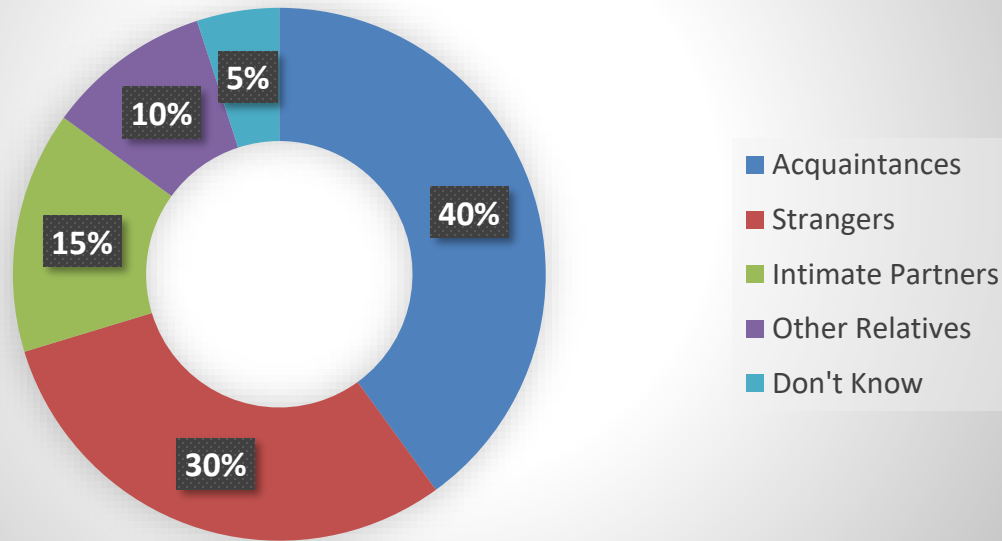
- Women with disabilities were more likely than women without disabilities to:
 - experience more severe victimization,
 - experience abuse for longer duration,
 - be victims of multiple episodes of abuse, and
 - be victims of a larger number of perpetrators.

Why?

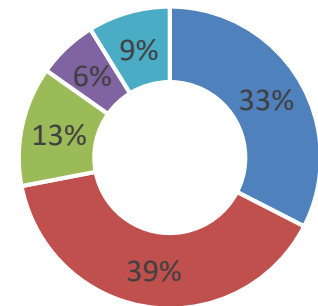
- > Devaluation
- > Presumed lack of credibility
- > Isolation and segregation
- > Increased exposure to potential abusers
- > Culture of compliance
- > Seen as “easy targets”

Who is responsible?

Survivors with Disabilities
Offender Relationship, 2011-2015

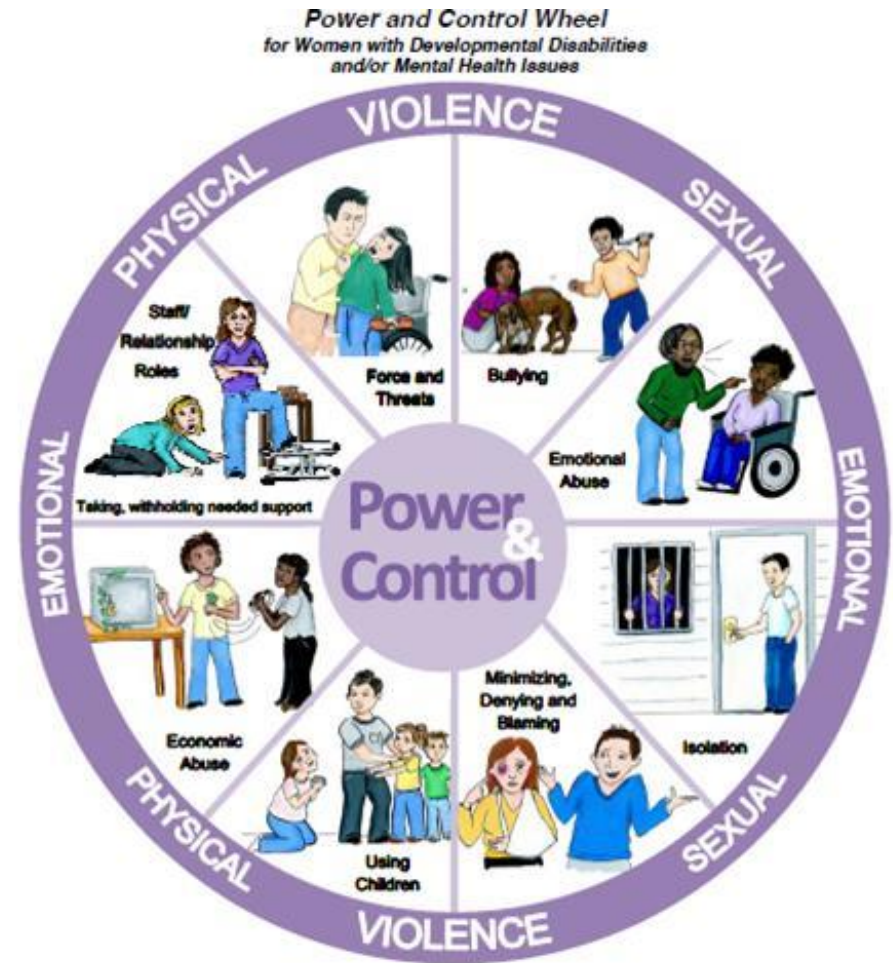


Survivors without Disabilities
Offender Relationship



Some perpetrators use tactics that expressly target people with disabilities and Deaf people.

- > Withholding medication
- > Delaying or refusing to provide care
- > Abusing or threatening to abuse a service animal
- > Threatening to move a person to a nursing home or institution



Reaching out: healing and justice

What the research tells us

Significant underreporting

Violent crimes reported to police



- > Silence feels safer/less harmful
- > Loss of independence and fear of institutionalization
- > Lack of knowledge about healthy sexuality and safety
- > Loss of autonomy
- > Lack of effective criminal justice response
- > Don't know how to report/reach out for help

Victim services are out of reach.

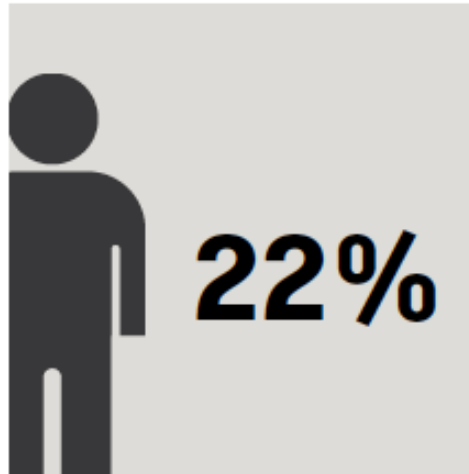
Only 13% of victims of violent crime with disabilities receive support from victim services.

Justice is out of reach for many.

**Violent crimes
reported to police**



**People charged
with an offense**



**People convicted
of the offense**



Barriers to victim services and justice

- Limited to no specialized outreach to survivors with disabilities
- Physical, communication, programmatic and attitudinal barriers in anti-violence programs
- Lack of specialized knowledge and response protocols to survivors in disability organizations
- Lack of coordination between anti-violence and disability organizations.
- Perceived lack of credibility
- Lack of accommodations
- Lack of specialized training for law enforcement and prosecutors

Barriers continued...

- Isolation, exploitation, marginalization of people with disabilities
- Denial of information about healthy sexuality and relationships
- Lack of confidentiality
 - Small, close knit communities
 - Guardians
 - Mandatory reporting policies

How we can support your work

Online Clearinghouse of Information: www.endabusepwd.org

Safety Alert! If you are in immediate danger, call 911. If you need to leave this site quickly, click "Quick Escape" to be taken to a different site.

END ABUSE

of People with Disabilities

Quick Escape

Search



The Problem

The Solution

Get Connected

Stay Informed

Understanding is the First Step to Ending Abuse



Violence against people with disabilities occurs at alarming rates.

People with disabilities experience violent victimization at rates three times higher than people without disabilities, making them one of the most harmed groups in the country.

What are the rates of abuse?

Help is out of reach.



Monthly Newsletters

March 2018 - In This Issue:

Not on the Radar

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In the News

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Upcoming Webinars and Trainings

.....
Share Your Ideas

End Abuse of People with Disabilities

Monthly Newsletter

Vera Center on Victimization + Safety



Upcoming Webinars and Trainings

2018 End Abuse of People with Disabilities

Not on the Radar: An Epidemic of Sexual Assault of College Students with Disabilities

By: Anneliese Brown, Senior Program Associate

In the past 10+ years, much attention has been paid to the issue of sexual assault on college campuses, leading to changes that have improved safety and justice for many victims. However, students with disabilities and Deaf students have remained largely

Monthly Webinars

Vera Center on Victimization + Safety

**Register Now for the next webinar in our 2018
End Abuse of People with Disabilities Webinar
Series**

**Nothing About Us Without Us: A Webinar on Centering
the Movement Around Self-Advocates**

About this Webinar

*Date: July 17, 2018
Time: 2:00-3:30 pm EST*

Any effort to address domestic violence and sexual assault in the lives of people with disabilities should include those most affected. At the same time, to ensure their full and meaningful participation, you need to prepare self-advocates to be involved. This is accomplished by teaching them about the systems involved in interpersonal violence, as well as the history of the anti-violence movement and its philosophical underpinnings. This webinar will

Tailored Training and Support

Training Examples

- Serving survivors with disabilities
- Safety planning for survivors with disabilities
- Working with sign language interpreters
- Navigating the complexities: mandatory reporting and guardianship

Consultation Examples

- Conducting an access review
- Measuring capacity to serve survivors with disabilities and Deaf survivors
- Enhancing the accessibility of your outreach and other written materials
- Developing policies and protocols to support staff

● Phone

● Video

● In-person

Creating Accessible Training

- Three Day Intensive Training on designing events and technical assistance that is accessible to participants with disabilities and Deaf participants
- Topics covered:
 - Conducting physical reviews for access
 - Designing accessible agendas
 - Working with interpreters
 - And more!
- Date TBD

Contact Information

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