

DEVELOPING AN INCARCERATED SURVIVOR TEAM AT YOUR RCC

Part of developing a long-term and sustainable PREA program that serves and supports incarcerated survivors, is ensuring that several staff at your rape crisis center (RCC) are trained and knowledgeable on the inner- workings of the PREA program. In order to institutionalize the PREA program here are some tips to engage your staff and strengthen your PREA program through the development of an incarcerated survivor team at your RCC.

CREATE OBJECTIVES WITH YOUR TEAM

1. Shift the culture of your agency to think about incarcerated survivors as part of our communities, not separate.
2. Identify patterns of abuse, strategize when experiencing resistance from corrections staff, and celebrate successful and challenging advocacy.
3. Build the capacity of your agency to provide consistent, reliable, and fair advocacy to incarcerated survivors for the long-term.
4. Add your own objective or objectives with your team: _____

DEVELOP YOUR OWN COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

1. Use person first language: Avoid using the word inmate and instead use prisoner or incarcerated person, client, or survivor
2. Use trauma-informed language: Avoid language that centers crime and criminality when discussing incarcerated survivors
3. Shift culture: Challenge the binary between criminals/harm-doers vs. victims/survivors
4. Recognize difference: Each staff member has different levels of experience when it comes to working with incarcerated survivors and corrections staff
5. Ask for support: Be honest and transparent when we're unsure of how to support a survivor or how to respond to negative commentary from corrections staff
6. Add your own agreements with your team: _____

INVITE YOUR TEAM MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE!

- Designated PREA advocate, coordinator, or liaison
- Any staff who respond to hotline calls and forensic exams
- Management staff who provide guidance around your PREA program

SUGGESTED MEETINGS

- Share updates during all staff meetings (monthly or quarterly)
- Meet with designated incarcerated survivor team (weekly or bi-weekly)
- Share updates with JDI/ValorUS (ongoing - monthly)

GUIDANCE FOR FACILITATOR (TOPICS AND ACTIVITIES TO KEEP IN MIND)

IMPROVE COMMUNICATION

- Communicate with RCC staff who connect with incarcerated survivors, whether on the hotline, in a letter, or during a forensic exam accompaniment to ensure that follow up care is provided, as needed
- Share any communication and updates from facility staff that may impact how advocates provide support and services to survivors

CREATE A TRACKING SYSTEM

- Track patterns of abuse in detention
- Track patterns of resistance from correctional staff

IDENTIFY NEEDS

- Identify increases and decreases in calls, letters, and hospital accompaniments.
 - » Why? This might be a signal for the PREA advocate to check-in with the PREA coordinator/compliance manager to ensure:
 - RCC posters are up
 - Letters are being distributed properly to ensure confidentiality,
 - Hotline calls remain free, non-recorded, and confidential, and
 - Facility staff are calling your RCC each time an incident of sexual violence occurs