



Building Deaf Allied Services:

Vera House and the Syracuse Deaf Community (part 2)

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Who We Are

- Jennifer Shaw
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- Vera House, Inc



Summary of Project EMERGE

- OVW Funding
- Needs and assets assessment forming the strategic plan
- Accomplishment of various goals



**So, what has becoming
Accessible to Deaf individuals
looked like?**






Tools for Building Relationships

- Expand your knowledge and understanding of Deaf Culture
- Meeting guidelines
- Policy/Protocol Development
- Deaf/Signing Advocates
- Trauma Informed Qualified Interpreters
- Interpreters at Events
- Videophones at shelter and main offices




A closer look at building relationships:

- Identify leaders within the Deaf Community
 - Hold Deaf Dialogues
 - Invite Deaf Community to Vera House and ARISE for an open house
 - Attend Deaf Advisory Counsel meetings
 - Include Deaf survivors in the Project EMERGE Advisory Group
 - Ongoing education for staff on Deaf Culture and Deafhood
 - Offer ASL Classes
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Meeting Guidelines

- Determining seating arrangements lead by Deaf individuals
 - Ensuring effective communication
 - Securing ASL Interpreters
 - Defining Concepts and Terms
 - Multiple conversations
 - Pausing when writing
- 




Interpreter Policy

Policy should include language that:

- Establishes the agency is responsible for providing interpreters, including the financial responsibility
 - Instructs staff to engage in communication with the Deaf individual, not the interpreter
 - Provides confidentiality for the Deaf individual
 - Asks for preferred method of communication
 - Asks for names of preferred interpreters
 - Reminds staff and volunteers to not act as interpreters
 - Provides information on agencies that provide interpreting services
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Trauma Informed Qualified Interpreters (TIQIs)

- Need to have ASL Interpreters trained to be more effective in communicating with Deaf Survivors, both for themselves and for the survivor
 - Received 30+ hours of training on understanding domestic and sexual violence, understanding Deaf Culture and the intersection of domestic and sexual violence, providing trauma informed interpreting
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Trauma Informed Qualified Interpreters (TIQIs) part 2

- Regular conversations about maintaining boundaries
- Used by other agencies
- Provide a deeper foundation from which trust can be built



Deaf/Signing Advocates

- Provide advocacy services in a far more meaningful and culturally based manner
 - Teams with Employed Advocates
 - Assists to decrease isolation in shelters
 - Received over 30+ hours of training
- 



Other tools

- Publicizing the availability of ASL Interpreters
- Interpreters at events
- Videophones at shelter and main offices
- Security/fire alarm changes at shelters



Increasing Accessibility for Deaf individuals outside of Vera House

- Partnering with law enforcement agencies
 - Policy/protocol
 - Training on Deaf Culture facilitated by A Deaf person
 - Myths about Deaf individuals
 - Activities
 - Information on ASL Interpreters



Disability/Community Service Providers

- Interpreter policies
- Deaf Culture/Communication Education