“Sexual Assault in the Deaf Community”

November 5-6, 2013

Stephanie Smith Bowman
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- CHOICES for Victims of Domestic Violence
  - Psychotherapist: 2011-2013

- Sexual Assault Response Network of Central Ohio
  - Advocate: 2005-2011

- Co-Founder of Ohio Alliance To End Sexual Violence
  - Official 501c3 status: 2009
  - Website: www.oaesv.org
Learning Objective

- Increase Awareness on Sexual Assault Within Deaf Community
Sexual violence is a socially constructed problem that we can deconstruct.

Credit: Jennifer Grove, of NSVRC
Sexual assault is any type of sexual contact or behavior that occurs *without explicit consent* of recipient.

- [http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov/sexassault.htm](http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov/sexassault.htm)

- Completed non-consensual sex act
- Attempted non-consensual sex act
- Abusive sexual contact
- Non-contact sexual abuse
  - [http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/sexualviolence/definitions.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/sexualviolence/definitions.htm)
Root of Sexual Violence: Gender inequality & Oppression
Norms that contribute to Sexual Violence

- Power & Control
- Limited Roles for Women
- Narrow definitions of masculinity
- Prison of Protection

Credit: Jennifer Grove, of NSVRC
Prison of Protection = AUDISM

- Deaf students get sexuality information more often from:
  1). Friends (85% vs. 67%)
  2). Workshops (40% vs. 9%)
  2). Posters (30% vs. 18%)

- 7 times more likely to learn from one another than formal educational resources.

- 25% awareness of sexuality information comparable to hearing peers’ full knowledge.

  (Francavillo, 2009)
Incidental learning: Relationships and Sex?
Images of Women in the Media leads to Violence Against Women

Images of Women in the Media

- Gender Roles
- Hyper-Sexualization
- Objectification
- Violence

Credit: Jasmine Finnie, OAESV
Impact of Media Images: RAPE CULTURE

Credit: Jasmine Finnie, OAESV
Impact of Rape Culture on Deaf Community

- Deaf Hope’s Video: “A Teen Girl's Story: Rape Culture Nurtured at Home”
  - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nlcAfXcPetl

- Deaf Hope’s Video: “Why is Shoshannah Stern pissed off?”
  - http://youtu.be/Jel_9dMrOWs
Deaf women were **3.66 times** more likely than hearing women to report experiences of unwanted sex by intimate partner.

(Anderson, 2010)
Who are the perpetrators?

- Deaf children were more likely to be abused by hearing people than by other deaf people.

Hester, 2002
Sexual Violence Within Deaf Community

Credit: Deaf Hope, 2007
Exercise: SV Continuum within Deaf Community

- Age
- Inappropriate Non-Mutual
- Comments Jokes
- Harassment
- Exploitation Coercion Reproductive Coercion
- Abuse Assault Rape
Culture of Silence

- Reputation and Credibility
- Perpetrator’s Community Standing
- Stigma
- Loyalty to Deaf Community
- Interfaith expectations
Barriers to Reporting Sexual Assault

“Lack of certified and/or qualified ASL interpreters results in diminished ability to report violence and gain proper understanding of legal rights and processes.” - Anderson, 2010
THAT MAN COME INTO MY HOUSE. ME ASLEEP, WAKE UP SEX. PUSH HIM OFF DON’T STOP. DARK IN HOUSE CAN’T UNDERSTAND HIM, MAD. SCARED. HE LEFT.
A man broke into my house while I was asleep. I woke up to find him having sex with me. I tried over and over again to push him off but he wouldn’t stop. It was dark in the house, so I couldn’t see him clearly to read his lips but could tell he was angry.

I was terrified. He finally left.

Credit: Gretchen Waech
Reliance on interpreters also means giving up privacy and sharing intimate details of your life with a stranger.

Deaf women also indicated they do not have confidence in interpreters to accurately represent their words and experience.

(Obinna, et al., 2005)
Empowerment Advocacy for Deaf Survivors of Sexual Assault

Hospital: Emergency Room
- Culturally Specific Advocate
- Trauma Informed Interpreter
- SANE/DNA Evidence Collection Kit
- Social Worker’s Discharge and Safety Planning

Law Enforcement Interview
- Culturally Specific Advocate
- Trauma Informed Interpreter: Finding Words EVAW
- Victims’ Rights: Breaks and Review Initial Report
- Crime Victims Compensation Program

Civil and Criminal Justice Processes
- Protection Orders
- Victim Witness Advocate
- Prosecutors
Culturally Empowering Trauma Informed Advocacy

- Linkages to Trauma Informed Treatment
- Validate Reactions
- Address Victim Blaming and Rape Culture Myths
- Safety Planning
- Psycho-education
Culturally Affirming Empowerment Advocacy

- Deaf survivor of sexual violence is the **EXPERT** on their justice, safety, and healing needs.
Your Next Steps?

- Who will you collaborate with?
- What prevention/intervention/outreach strategies to share with your collaborative partner?
- Partnering on OVW grant for culturally specific local-based or statewide anti-SV program?
National Advocacy Services for Deaf Survivors of SA

- [ADWAS](http://www.adwas.org) (Washington State)
- [Advocacy Services for Abused Deaf Victims, Inc.](http://www.asadv.org) (New York)
- [Deaf Iowans Against Abuse](http://www.csddiaa.org) (Iowa)
- [Communication Services for the Deaf](http://www.c-s-d.org) (Minnesota)
- [Deaf Dawn](http://www.deafdawn.org) (Washington DC)
- [Deaf Dove](http://www.deafdove.org) (Colorado)
- [DeafHope](http://www.deaf-hope.org) (California)
- [Deaf Unity](http://www.deafunitywi.org) (Wisconsin)
- [Deaf Vermonters Advocacy Services](http://www.dvas.org) (Vermont)
- [Safe Place](http://www.safe-place.org) (Texas)
- [Sego Lily Center for the Abused Deaf](http://www.slcad.org) (Utah)
Resources on working with Deaf survivors of SA

- Accessing Safety Initiative form with sample questions Author: Vera Institute of Justice
  - Website: www.accessingsafety..org

- SafePlace Facts and Tip Sheet
  - Website: www.safeplace.org

- Special Collections: Deaf Survivors
  - Website: www.vawnet.org
Contact Information

- Stephanie Smith Bowman
- Email: ssmithbowman@yahoo.com

Thank you for participating in today’s workshop!