

Closing the Gap Between Values and Reality: Disability Inclusion in Culturally Specific Work

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Objectives for today

- Review the need for accessible services at culturally specific programs;
- Discuss benefits of increasing accessibility;
- Outline strategies culturally specific programs can use to increase the accessibility of their services.



The Need for Accessible Services for Culturally Specific Programs

People with disabilities are most at risk for DV/SA - data

- People with intellectual or developmental disabilities are 7x more likely to experience sexual assault.
- 49% of people with developmental disabilities are assaulted 10 or more times in their lifetime.
- 20% of Deaf adults have experienced physical abuse by an intimate partner. 15% have experienced forced sex in an intimate partner relationship.
- Population is so invisible that we can't even find data connecting race, disability, and victimization.
- Culturally specific organizations are best positioned to get data.

Factors that increase risk

- Isolation
 - Dependence on others
 - Denied information about basic rights
 - Denied education about their body, boundaries, healthy relationships, sex or abuse
 - Learned compliance
 - Lack of control over life choices
 - Culture of institutionalization (no choice of where and with whom one lives)
 - Racism, homophobia and other marginalization but no outlet to process
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People with disabilities are least likely to receive services

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

Why? Answer in the chat.

Erika Harrell, Crime Against Persons with Disabilities, 2009–2014 - Statistical Tables (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2016).

Culturally specific programs are best positioned to provide accessible services

- Disability does not discriminate – every race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, sexual identity, and socioeconomic class experiences disability
- Avoiding additional trauma or marginalization

Approximate number of adults with a disability by ethnicity and race



Courtney-Long, E.A., Romano, S.D., Carroll, D.D. et al. Socioeconomic Factors at the Intersection of Race and Ethnicity Influencing Health Risks for People with Disabilities. *J. Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities* (2017) 4: 213. DOI: 10.1007/s40615-016-0220-5external icon.

Serving the most marginalized

- Culturally specific programs understand that when you reach the margins, your solutions are the best decisions for everybody.
- By reaching the most marginalized in our communities, people with disabilities, and meeting their needs, we are living our values of creating the best services for everybody.
 - Overcome the most barriers, address the most needs
- More accessible services = benefits for everyone



Benefits of Accessible Services

What benefits are there?

How could increasing the accessibility of services benefit survivors you serve? How could it benefit your program?

Answer in the chat.

Survivors benefit from more accessible services

- Gap filled for survivors - allows survivors with disabilities to receive accessible, culturally competent services that they otherwise might be denied at mainstream organizations
- Increased services for all survivors in your community

Programs benefit, too

- New perspectives on issues at the intersection of DV/SA, racism, and ableism
- Accessible spaces, materials, and programming mean reaching a wider audience
- Relationship building with organizations in your community
- Save time and money – having the right stakeholders at the table
- Funding and fundraising opportunities
- New opportunities for different work



Sharing our Journey: Des Moines, Iowa



Strategies for Culturally Specific Programs to Increase Access

Begin with conversations

- How is disability viewed in your community?
 - Does the community you serve think about disability? If so, how (negatively, positively, neutrally)? Would this have an impact on how you provide services?
- How does your agency think about disability?
- How would you serve a survivor with a disability?
- What are the biggest barriers/challenges when providing advocacy and other services for these survivors?

Address agency/program needs

- Review policies, procedures, and practices – are they inclusive for survivors with disabilities? Are they unintentionally exclusionary?
- Conduct an access review of your physical space
- Review your budget - do you budget for accommodations? Could you?

Partner with other agencies

- Disability organizations in your community can be a great resource on how to increase access and reach people with disabilities
- You can also be a resource for them on how to be culturally competent and integrate a culturally competent framework into their work
- No wrong door for survivors
- Reach out for assistance



Final Thoughts

Final thoughts

Culturally specific programs are best positioned to meet *all* of the needs of people we serve when we ensure our programs are accessible and disability responsive.

Programs can take small steps to make change – looking at policies, practices, materials, and physical materials and making connections with contractors and community partners.

Ask for help – you're not in this alone.

Final thoughts from you

What is one thing you learned today that you can apply to your work?

Answer in the chat.

Questions?

Thank you!

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Please complete our brief survey

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SV58PT7>

Materials for download (PowerPoint PDF and Record of Attendance):

<https://vera.egnyte.com/fl/JlxP0wK10N>