

Funding to Make Services Safe and Accessible for Survivors with Disabilities and Deaf Survivors: OVW's Disability Grant Program

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Webinar Goals

- Summarize what is known about victimization of people with disabilities, including sexual assault and domestic violence;
- Discuss survivors with disabilities' experiences with services;
- Discuss common barriers survivors with disabilities face;
- Share strategies for change to ensure services are safe and accessible for survivors with disabilities and Deaf survivors.

Disabilities and Deaf Culture in the United States

Background

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.



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.

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

What the research tells us

Abuse of People with Disabilities and Deaf People

Incidence and Prevalence

- 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.
- 14% of men with disabilities reported experiencing sexual violence at some point in their life time compared to 4% of men without disabilities.
- 49% of people with developmental disabilities were assaulted 10 or more times.
- 20% of Deaf adults have experienced physical abuse by an intimate partner. 15% have experienced forced sex in an intimate partner relationship.

Research continued... (2)

- 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.

Chat

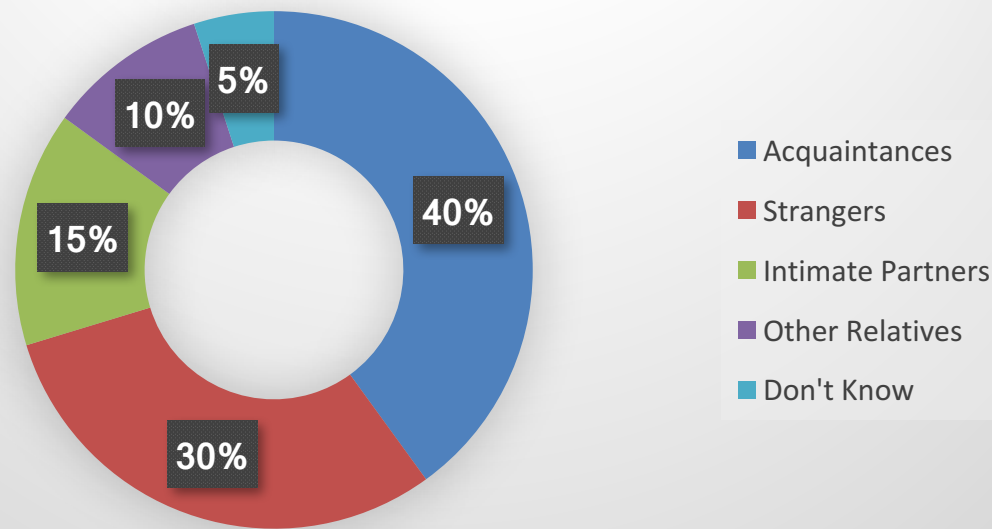
What factors contribute to the high rates of victimization among people with disabilities and Deaf people?

Why?

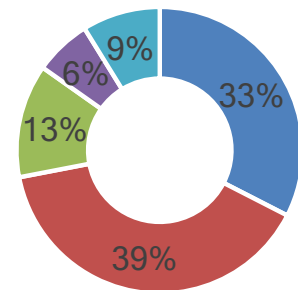
- Devaluation
- Presumed lack of credibility
- Isolation and segregation
- Increased exposure to potential abusers
- Culture of compliance
- Seen as “easy targets”

Who is Responsible?

Survivors with Disabilities
Offender Relationship, 2011-2015

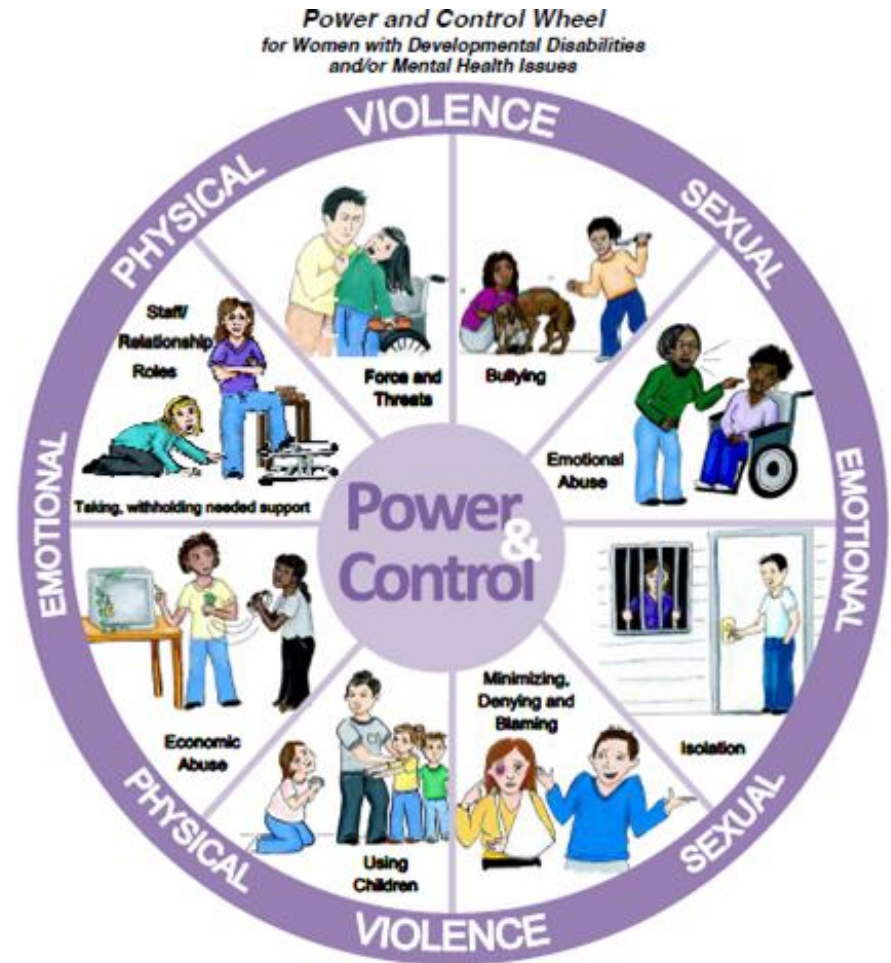


Survivors without Disabilities
Offender Relationship



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

Significant Underreporting

Violent crimes reported to police



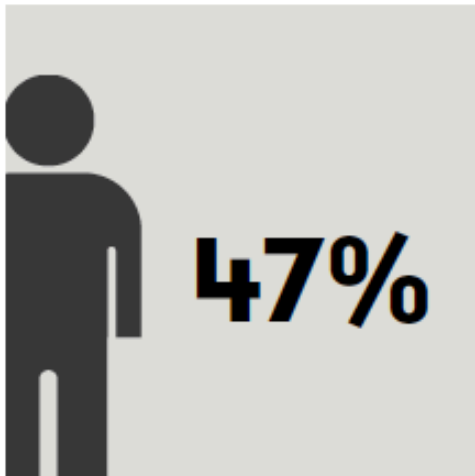
- Silence feels safer/less harmful
- Loss of independence and fear of institutionalization
- Lack of knowledge about healthy sexuality and safety
- Loss of autonomy
- Lack of effective criminal justice response
- Don't know how to report/reach out for help

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 (2)

- 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

Barriers for Deaf Survivors

- Community of ASL interpreters is often small and tight knit
- Disability services may not have strong connection to the Deaf community
- Deaf services may focus exclusively on communication access – not fully on the range of violence and abuse
- Crisis line workers may be unfamiliar with TTY or VRS
- Access to Deaf Advocates or Certified Deaf Interpreters may be limited
- Sense of isolation when living in a shelter
- Lack of understanding of Deaf Culture

Promising Strategies

Solutions for Safe, Accessible and Welcoming Services

Promising Strategies

Strong partnerships among disability, domestic violence, rape crisis, and law enforcement organizations

Victim Services Programs

- ✓ Routinely budgeting for access
- ✓ Involve people with disabilities
- ✓ Establishing expectations through policies
- ✓ Conducting access reviews and removing barriers
- ✓ Supporting staff and volunteers through training and other resources
- ✓ Enhancing engagement with disability leaders and community members

Disability Programs

- ✓ Establishing expectations through policies
- ✓ Conducting safety and responsiveness reviews
- ✓ Supporting staff and volunteers through trainings
- ✓ Creating strong linkages and referrals
- ✓ Supporting self-advocates and other people with disabilities take leadership roles in this work

Collaborate for Change

- Ensure meaningful, sustainable collaboration and partnerships that lasts even without funding.
- Develop partnerships that encourage the sharing of information, resources, and tools to serve survivors with disabilities and Deaf survivors.

Encourage Meaningful Inclusion

- Support self-advocates working on issues at the intersection of domestic or sexual violence and disability.
- Promote the full participation of people with disabilities and Deaf people in services offered.

Develop Inclusive, Accessible Materials

- Materials convey an organization's knowledge, experience, and credibility and conveys information about an organization's culture, priorities, and values.
- Materials that are accessible to all and convey a message of inclusivity and openness to survivors with disabilities and Deaf survivors signal a commitment to serving all survivors.

Build Staff Capacity at the Intersection

- Staff at disability and Deaf organizations should understand dynamics of domestic violence and sexual assault.
- Staff at domestic violence organizations and rape crisis centers should understand disability.
- Agencies should develop shared understanding of dynamics of disability, Deafness, domestic violence, and sexual assault.

Prepare for Access and Inclusion

- Budget for accommodations such as ASL interpreters, creation of accessible materials, and physical modifications.
- Make contacts and connections with other organizations in your community that can provide you with expertise and resources.
- Be proactive!

Seek Funding Opportunities

- While many strategies to achieve access do not require financial resources, many of those we have discussed today do.
- Seeking funding opportunities will assist you in making some changes to ensure that you are providing safe, accessible, and welcoming services to survivors with disabilities and Deaf survivors.
- One funding opportunity: OVW's Training and Services to End Violence Against Women with Disabilities Grant Program

Applications due February 7th

OVW Fiscal Year 2019 Training and Services to End Violence Against Women with Disabilities Grant Program Solicitation is available now.

Find it on the [Office on Violence Against Women's website](#).

To learn more about the solicitation and the requirements for the application, please view OVW's webinar scheduled for **January 8, 2019**. To register, contact the Disability Grant Program at OVW.Disability@usdoj.gov or at 202-307- 6026 by January 6, 2019.

Questions?

Thank you!

Please click on the following [link to complete a survey](#) about this webinar.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PJM76BM>