

# Middlesex L.E.A.D.S.

**LISTEN, EDUCATE, ADVOCATE, & DEMAND SAFETY**  
Strategic Plan



This project is supported by Grant No. 2014-fw-ax-k008 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.

**Middlesex L.E.A.D.S.**

**LISTEN, EDUCATE, ADVOCATE, & DEMAND SAFETY**

## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Partner Agencies</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Vision and Mission</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Needs Assessment Goals</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Methodology</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<i>Listening Sessions</i> .....	8
<i>Performance Indicators</i> .....	8
<i>Needs Assessment Process</i> .....	9
<b>Key Findings</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Implementation Goals and Initiatives</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<i>Implementation Goals</i> .....	12
<i>Implementation Initiatives</i> .....	12
<b>Strategic Plan</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<i>Short-Term Goals</i> .....	15
<b>Safety and Access</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>Policies and Procedures</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b>Training</b> .....	<b>24</b>
<b>Sustainability</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>Resources</b> .....	<b>30</b>
<b>Education and Awareness</b> .....	<b>33</b>
<b>Long Term Goals</b> .....	<b>37</b>
<b>Work Plan</b> .....	<b>39</b>
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>51</b>

## Introduction

Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. (the Collaborative) is an Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) funded collaboration between the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment (the Center) and Alliance Center for Independence (ACI). Since being awarded the OVW Disabilities Grant in 2014, the Collaborative aims to Listen, Educate, Advocate, and Demand Safety for sexual violence survivors with disabilities and Deaf/Hard of Hearing (HOH) survivors in the community. From 2014 to 2015, the Collaborative focused on team building and developed a collaboration charter to serve as the foundation for their partnership. From 2015 to 2016, they conducted a needs assessment with the survivors, persons with disabilities, and Deaf/HOH persons they serve, from which four findings were derived around the safety, access, support, and comfort needs of survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors.

Shifting from the needs assessment to strategic planning, from 2016 to 2017, collaboration members developed three implementation goals and six initiatives for change. These are focused on safety and access, policies and procedures, trainings, resources, awareness, and sustainability. The following plan details the goals, initiatives, and activities which will occur in the final year of the OVW Disabilities Grant, as collaboration members take what they have learned from the people they serve and put it into practice.

## Partner Agencies

Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. (the Collaborative) is comprised of the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment (the Center) and Alliance Center for Independence (ACI).



Founded in 1977, the Center serves survivors of sexual violence and their loved ones in Middlesex County, New Jersey. The Center's free services include counseling, support groups, 24-hour hotline, and 24-hour in-person legal support. It also provides free prevention education, sexual violence professional trainings, educational seminars, and community presentations. The Center facilitates the Sexual Violence Prevention Coalition of Middlesex County, in which ACI is an active member. As the lead agency of the Collaborative, the Center commits Jeanne Manchin, Program Coordinator and Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) Decision Maker, and Gabrielle Gault, Counselor Rape Victimization and Prevention Program.



**Middlesex L.E.A.D.S.**  
LISTEN, EDUCATE, ADVOCATE, & DEMAND SAFETY

Founded in 1986, ACI is a Center for Independent Living serving Middlesex, Somerset, and Union counties of New Jersey. It is a 501(c)(3) community-based, grassroots organization that supports and promotes independent living for people with disabilities. Its services include information and referral as well as educational and recreational programs which promote activism, peer support, independent living, health and wellness, employment, housing, and emergency preparedness for people with disabilities and their allies. In addition, ACI provides Deaf/Hard of Hearing (HOH) services. ACI commits Carole Tonks, Executive Director and OVW Decision Maker; and Luke Koppisch, Deputy Director, to the Collaborative.

## Middlesex L.E.A.D.S.

**LISTEN, EDUCATE, ADVOCATE, & DEMAND SAFETY**

The Center and ACI's history of collaborating dates back to 2010, when the partnership first applied for the OVW Disabilities Grant. Although they were not awarded at that time, they maintained a relationship, working together on projects and training one another's agencies. Today, the partnership is known as "Middlesex L.E.A.D.S." With the support of the OVW and the Vera Institute of Justice, the Collaborative seeks to Listen, Educate, Advocate, and Demand Safety for sexual violence survivors with disabilities and Deaf and HOH survivors. The Collaborative's Project Director is Monica Avisado.

## **Vision**

The vision of Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. (the Collaborative) is to ensure all sexual violence survivors in the community have access to equitable, competent, survivor-focused services regardless of ability.

## **Mission**

Their mission is to identify and close gaps in service by:

- Commitment to the strategic planning process to create powerful and sustainable change.
- Honoring and respecting each partner agency and individual participant and utilizing a strengths-based approach.
- Valuing the importance of this partnership which allows us to create a seamless experience for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/Hard of Hearing (HOH) survivors and properly address the needs of an underserved population.
- Spreading awareness about the intersection of sexual violence and disability and Deaf/HOH community and promoting a culture of inclusiveness.
- Creating a safe and comfortable space for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors so they may openly express their needs, knowing their voices are heard and they are supported.

The Collaborative's vision and mission were honored throughout the planning and implementation of the needs assessment and will continue to be honored as they move forward with strategic planning.

## Needs Assessment Goals

Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. (the Collaborative) developed the following goals which were achieved during the needs assessment:

- To provide a platform for survivors, people with disabilities, and Deaf/Hard of Hearing (HOH) people to openly express their service needs regarding **safety, access, support, and comfort**.
- To identify and understand the gaps in service which exist for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors so collaboration members can work to properly close them.
- To use the data collected to identify the Collaborative's priorities and inform its strategic plan moving forward.

Throughout the needs assessment, the Collaborative focused on the needs and gaps in service related to safety, access, support, and comfort. This allowed collaboration members to maintain consistency with their goals.

## Methodology

### *Performance Indicators*

The Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. (the Collaborative) needs assessment consisted of the collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data. The Collaborative's quantitative data was collected from the "Rape Crisis Center Performance Indicators" and "Disability Organization Performance Indicators," which were developed by the Vera Institute of Justice (VERA) to measure the commitment and capacity of sexual violence service providers and disability and Deaf/Hard of Hearing (HOH) organizations to serve survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors. The assessment was first conducted by the Collaborative in April 2015. The same assessment is conducted every six months and allows collaboration members to track their progress toward greater commitment and capacity. The assessment allows collaboration members to point out achieved competencies as well as gaps in service. Identified gaps were divided into four categories: "Safety," "Access," "Support," and "Comfort."

### *Listening Sessions*

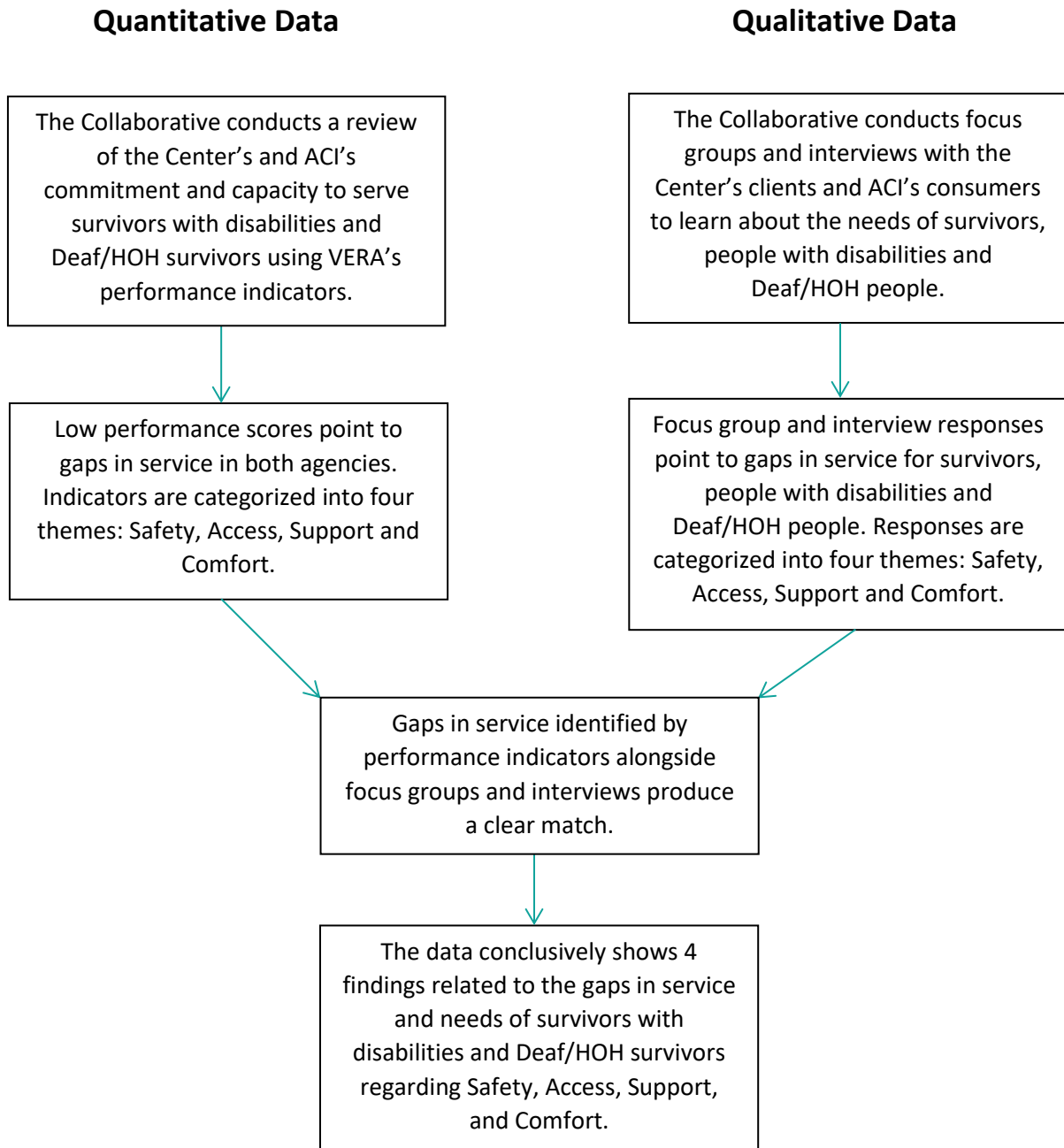
The Collaborative's qualitative data was collected from "listening sessions." These are focus groups or individual interviews conducted by the Collaborative, during which participants were asked a series of questions and their responses were recorded. During needs assessment planning, collaboration members developed two sets of questions to be answered by the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment's (the Center's) clients and the Alliance Center for Independence's (ACI's) consumers. Participant responses were compiled and reviewed by the collaboration members. In this process, important quotes were highlighted and categorized into four themes: "Safety," "Access," "Support," and "Comfort." Our listening session findings were condensed into two charts, one highlighting the safety, access, support, and comfort needs of the Center's clients and one highlighting the same needs of ACI's consumers. In the following report, you will find the Collaborative's key needs assessment findings were produced by combining the qualitative data of the listening sessions and quantitative data of



the performance indicators to uncover gaps experienced by clients and consumers.

The following flow chart summarizes the Collaborative's needs assessment process:

### *Needs Assessment Process*



## Key Findings

The Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. (the Collaborative) Needs Assessment Plan was approved by Amy Loder of the Office on Violence Against Women in November 2015. The Collaborative used the “Rape Crisis Center Performance Indicators” and “Disability Organization Performance Indicators” developed by the Vera Institute of Justice to identify gaps in service for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/Hard of Hearing (HOH) survivors. In addition to these assessments, the Collaborative conducted listening sessions or interviews with a total of 33 people, including 10 survivors from the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment (the Center) and 23 individuals with disabilities and Deaf/HOH individuals from the Alliance Center for Independence (ACI).

ACI’s performance indicator scores were paired with the Center’s listening sessions to identify gaps in service for sexual violence survivors. Likewise, the Center’s performance indicator scores were paired with ACI’s listening sessions to identify gaps in service for persons with disabilities and Deaf/HOH persons. The Collaborative’s key findings are as follows:

1. **Safety** – Sexual violence survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors cannot fully trust service providers if they do not feel physically and emotionally safe. Physical and emotional safety includes: location and environmental safety; confidentiality; choice; and respect.
2. **Access** – Sexual violence survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors do not have easy access to services. One of the greatest barriers for sexual violence survivors is not knowing services specific to sexual violence exist. Further, sexual violence programs need to be physically and programmatically accessible to all sexual violence survivors so every survivor has an equal opportunity to utilize services.
3. **Support** – Options for support are limited for sexual violence survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors, who require support from programs with sexual violence and disability expertise. They require support that encourages choice, equality, and empowerment as well as flexible and

individualized services. Further, sexual violence survivors require support that is trauma-informed and survivor-driven.

4. **Comfort** – Sexual violence survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors need to experience comfort as survivors of trauma and as people with disabilities or Deaf/HOH persons. Comfort depends upon a welcoming and calming environment and staff. The environment should be inclusive to survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors, and all should be treated with equality and respect.

The four key findings were used to inform the Collaborative’s strategic plan as outlined in this document.

## Implementation Goals and Initiatives

### *Implementation Goals*

Upon the successful completion of the needs assessment, Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. (the Collaborative) established four key findings around the safety, access, support, and comfort needs of survivors with disabilities and Deaf/Hard of Hearing (HOH) survivors. The key findings contributed to the development of the Collaborative's implementation goals, which will inform every part of the implementation process including execution of key activities and tasks. The implementation goals are:

1. To increase physical and programmatic access at the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment (the Center) and increase emotional and environmental safety at the Alliance Center for Independence (ACI), overall increasing safety and access for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors when receiving services from either agency.
2. To increase the service capacities of the Center and ACI to collaborate effectively and establish competence in listening, educating, advocating, and demanding safety for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors.
3. To increase awareness of the intersection of sexual violence and disability/Deaf culture and of the services and supports available for survivors and loved ones.

### *Implementation Initiatives*

With the three goals of implementation in place, collaboration members developed six initiatives, or six areas of focus for constructive and systematic change. These initiatives include:

1. **Safety and Access** – To increase safety and accessibility of services by identifying and removing barriers and unsafe practices in addition to

promoting an overall culture that promotes flexibility and trauma-informed practices.

2. **Policies and Procedures** – To strengthen policies and procedures to empower survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors so they may know their options, make informed decisions, and know they will be supported.
3. **Training** – To train all Center and ACI staff to be empathetic of and responsive to the needs of survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors to reduce the risk of re-victimization and other harm.
4. **Resources** – To develop resources which are informative, inclusive, and accessible to all survivors with disabilities, Deaf/HOH survivors, and loved ones.
5. **Awareness** – To generate awareness through collaboration and education by hosting joint events and developing accessible sexual violence awareness materials.
6. **Sustainability** – To ensure the sustainability of newly implemented practices as well as the sustainability of the Center’s and ACI’s partnership.

The following chart displays the three goals of implementation and their corresponding initiatives.

Implementation Goals and Initiatives	
<i>Goal</i>	<i>Initiatives</i>
1. To increase physical and programmatic access at the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment (the Center) and increase emotional and environmental safety at the Alliance Center for Independence (ACI), overall increasing safety	<b>Safety and Access</b> – To increase safety and accessibility of services by identifying and removing barriers and unsafe practices in addition to promoting an overall culture that promotes flexibility and trauma-informed practices.

<p>and access for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors when receiving services from either agency.</p>	<p><b>Policies and Procedures</b> – To strengthen policies and procedures to empower survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors so they may know their options, make informed decisions, and know they will be supported.</p>
<p>2. To increase the service capacities of the Center and ACI to collaborate effectively and establish competence in listening, educating, advocating, and demanding safety for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors.</p>	<p><b>Training</b> – To train all Center and ACI staff to be empathetic of and responsive to the needs of survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors to reduce the risk of re-victimization and other harm.</p> <p><b>Sustainability</b> – To ensure the sustainability of newly implemented practices as well as the sustainability of the Center’s and ACI’s partnership.</p>
<p>3. To increase awareness of the intersection of sexual violence and disability/Deaf culture and of the services and supports available for survivors and loved ones.</p>	<p><b>Resources</b> – To develop resources which are informative, inclusive, and accessible to all survivors with disabilities, Deaf/HOH survivors, and loved ones.</p> <p><b>Awareness</b> – To generate awareness through collaboration and education by hosting joint events and developing accessible sexual violence awareness materials.</p>

## Strategic Plan

### *Short-Term Goals*

Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. (the Collaborative) developed three goals and six initiatives for implementation. Within each initiative are key activities, or actions which aim to fulfill the initiative. For example, within the safety and access initiative, there is a key activity to conduct safety and access reviews within both agencies. Following that is another activity to compile the findings into a report. The key activities allow collaboration members to break down their initiatives.

Furthermore, within each activity are key tasks. These allow collaboration members to break down the activities even further into smaller manageable steps. For example, in order to compile the findings of the safety and access reviews, collaboration members would have to review the findings first. Reviewing the findings would be one task required to complete the activity. The graphic below displays the breakdown of this process:



The following section details each goal, corresponding initiatives, and key activities in addition to who will be involved, what will be done, when it will take place, and how it will be sustained beyond the life of the grant.

**Middlesex L.E.A.D.S.**

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**Goal 1: To increase physical and programmatic access at the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment (the Center) and increase emotional and environmental safety at the Alliance Center for Independence (ACI), overall increasing safety and access for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/Hard of Hearing (HOH) survivors when receiving services from either agency.**

*Initiative: Safety and Access – To increase safety and accessibility of services by identifying and removing barriers and unsafe practices in addition to promoting an overall culture that promotes flexibility and trauma-informed practices.*

Findings of the needs assessment revealed a lack of access for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors to sexual violence services (Key Finding 2). It was found that survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors require accommodations such as auxiliary aids, interpreters, flexible counseling sessions, plain language, pictorials, and braille, some of which are not readily available at the Center. In addition, it was found that survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors require services which are emotionally and environmentally safe (Key Finding 1). Safety measures which were found to be useful included displaying welcoming and inclusive materials, ensuring a confidential space, bright lighting in dark places, the option for soft lighting in intimate places, the option for open or closed spaces, and other security measures. It was indicated that ACI lacked in this area and could not guarantee trauma-informed safety.

To address the above mentioned safety and access issues, collaboration members will arrange to conduct safety and access reviews within the Center's and ACI's agencies. First and foremost, they will develop the safety and access review tools to be approved by the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW). In order to make the reviews as accurate as possible, they will be conducted by volunteer survivors and persons with disabilities and Deaf/HOH persons, who know first-hand what the people we serve need. The findings will be incorporated in a Safety Enhancement Plan (SEP) and Barrier Removal Plan (BRP). Once the plans are approved by OVW, they will be executed to make the Center physically and programmatically accessible and ACI emotionally and environmentally safe.

This initiative and the activities within will be carried out over the course of the first seven months of the implementation period. Safety and access reviews

**Middlesex L.E.A.D.S.**

LISTEN, EDUCATE, ADVOCATE, & DEMAND SAFETY



will occur on an annual basis as collaboration members incorporate them in the new Center and ACI Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which will be developed in the final months of the grant. Center staff will be responsible to recruit volunteer survivors to conduct safety reviews at ACI and ACI staff will be responsible to recruit volunteer persons with disabilities and Deaf/HOH persons to conduct access reviews at the Center. Collaboration members will review the findings and develop the BRP for the Center and SEP for ACI. Finally, Center staff will be responsible for the implementation of the BRP within their agency. Likewise, ACI staff will be responsible for the implementation of the SEP within their agency.

This initiative will foster systems change by putting safety and access in the forefront of each agency’s work with the people they serve. The first round of safety and access reviews will reveal needed changes, which will be made immediately upon approval of the BRP and SEP. Upon completion of the MOU, safety and access reviews will occur on an annual basis, promoting the continued collaboration of the Center and ACI staff as well as the agencies’ continued growth towards safer and more accessible services. The following work plan outlines the order of events under this initiative:

<b>Initiative 1: Safety and Access – To increase safety and accessibility of services by identifying and removing barriers and unsafe practices in addition to promoting an overall culture that promotes flexibility and trauma-informed practices.</b>													
<i>Activity 1.1: Develop Safety and Access Review Tools.</i>													
	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Timeline (Months)</b>											
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Task 1.1.1:</b> Identify and review known tools.	CFE, ACI	X										-	-
<b>Task 1.1.2:</b> Select tools to be used and adapted.	CFE, ACI	X										-	-
<b>Task 1.1.3:</b> Adapt tools to fit each collaborating agency.	CFE, ACI	X										-	-
<b>Task 1.1.4:</b> Send tools to OVW for approval	CFE, ACI		X									-	-
<i>Activity 1.2: Conduct safety and access reviews at the Middlesex County Center for</i>													

<i>Empowerment and Alliance Center for Independence.</i>													
	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>Task 1.2.1:</b> Recruit volunteer survivors and persons with disabilities or Deaf/HOH persons to conduct reviews.	CFE, ACI		X									-	-
<b>Task 1.2.2:</b> Volunteers conduct safety review of the Alliance Center for Independence.	CFE			X								-	-
<b>Task 1.2.3:</b> Volunteers conduct access review of the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment.	ACI			X								-	-
<b>Task 1.2.4.:</b> Work group analyzes the findings of the reviews.	CFE, ACI			X								-	-
<i>Activity 1.3: Develop a Barrier Removal Plan (BRP) for the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment and Safety Enhancement Plan (SEP) for the Alliance Center for Independence.</i>													
	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>Task 1.3.1:</b> Review samples of existing BRP and SEP.	CFE, ACI				X							-	-
<b>Task 1.3.2:</b> Create Middlesex L.E.A.D.S BRP and SEP.	CFE, ACI				X							-	-
<b>Task 1.3.3:</b> Submit BRP and SEP to OVW for approval.	CFE					X						-	-
<i>Activity 1.4: Execute the BRP at the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment and SEP at the Alliance Center for Independence.</i>													
	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>Task 1.4.1:</b> Remove barriers at the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment.	CFE						X	X				-	-
<b>Task 1.4.2:</b> Make safety	ACI						X	X				-	-

enhancements at the Alliance Center for Independence.														
<b>Activity 1.5: Establish the process to conduct annual safety and access reviews.</b>														
	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Timeline (Months)</b>												
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	
<b>Task 1.5.1:</b> Develop process for annual safety and access reviews.	CFE, ACI										X	-	-	
<b>Task 1.5.2:</b> Incorporate process in new Middlesex LE.A.D.S. MOU.	CFE, ACI										X	-	-	

**Goal 1: To increase physical and programmatic access at the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment (the Center) and increase emotional and environmental safety at the Alliance Center for Independence (ACI), overall increasing safety and access for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/Hard of Hearing (HOH) survivors when receiving services from either agency.**

*Initiative: Policies and Procedures – To strengthen policies and procedures to empower survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors so they may know their options, make informed decisions, and know they will be supported.*

Findings of the needs assessment indicated that the Center and ACI require accessible policies and procedures which clearly articulate confidentiality and choice (Key Findings 1 and 2). In the Center's case, this is particularly true regarding their policies and procedures for consent for services and release of information which do not explicitly address the needs of survivors with very involved loved ones or guardians. In ACI's case, it was found that they need stronger policies and procedures to clearly articulate confidentiality and choice for the safety and empowerment of survivors (Key Finding 1). ACI's policies and procedures should explicitly state confidentiality limits as well as the options available to survivors regarding where, when, and with whom they can share their stories with.

The Collaborative will follow key activities in order to strengthen their policies and procedures in the following areas: handling disclosures, confidentiality, consent for services, and release of information. Collaboration members will develop staff guides to handling disclosures which will include the process of listening to disclosures and offering immediate support as well as the process of safely making a mandatory report. In addition, they will review and revise the Center's consent for services and release of information policies and procedures so they better speak to the needs of persons with disabilities, Deaf/HOH persons, and persons with guardians. Finally in order to enhance the safety of those receiving services at ACI, the Collaborative will review and revise the agency's policies and procedures on confidentiality so it may be trauma-informed and speak directly to the needs of survivors. The new policies and

procedures will go into effect immediately upon the approval of the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW).

The activities under this initiative will occur within the first four months of the implementation phase simultaneous to the safety and access activities, because safe and accessible policies and procedures make for safe and accessible environments. They will be sustained beyond the life of grant as they will be adopted into the Center's and ACI's individual agency policies and procedures once they are approved by all agency and administrative stakeholders.

The Center will lead the Collaborative in the development and implementation of the staff guide to disclosures, which is for staff and volunteer use and must be survivor-centered and trauma informed. Collaboration members will revise the Center's and ACI's current policies and procedures together, but it is up to each agency to ensure their new policies and procedures are observed by all staff and volunteers. For example, Center staff will ensure their new consent for services and release of information policies and procedures are observed with the people they serve. Likewise, ACI's staff will ensure their new confidentiality policies and protocols are observed for those whom they serve.

This initiative on policies and procedures will foster systems change by shifting the way the Center and ACI practice and promote confidentiality and choice. The policies and procedures of both agencies will have a zero tolerance policy for re-victimization and will allow survivors to open up in an environment where they feel safe and supported. Since the Collaboration Charter's approval from OVW in August 2015, collaboration members have followed similar policies and procedures. During implementation, they invite their entire organizations to follow these safety and support measures to create a consistent experience for each person served by either agency. The following work plan outlines the order of events under this initiative:

**Initiative 2: Policies and Procedures – To strengthen policies and procedures to empower survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors so they may know their options, make informed decisions, and know they will be supported.**

**Activity 2.1: Develop new policies and procedures for a safe referral process.**

	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<b>Task 2.1.1:</b> Discuss existing referral process.	CFE, ACI	X											-	-
<b>Task 2.1.2:</b> Make safety enhancements to existing referral process and develop formal policies and procedures.	CFE, ACI	X											-	-
<b>Task 2.1.3:</b> Submit referral process policies and procedures to OVW for approval.	CFE		X										-	-

**Activity 2.2: Revise existing confidentiality policies and procedures.**

	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<b>Task 2.2.1:</b> Review and revise existing confidentiality policies and procedures for the Alliance Center for Independence.	ACI	X											-	-
<b>Task 2.2.2:</b> Submit new confidentiality policies and procedures to OVW for approval.	CFE		X										-	-

**Activity 2.3: Revise existing policies and procedures for consent for services and release of information.**

	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<b>Task 2.3.1:</b> Review and revise existing consent for services and release of information policies and procedures.	CFE		X										-	-
<b>Task 2.3.2:</b> Submit new consent for services and release of	CFE			X									-	-

information policies and procedures to OVW for approval.														
<b>Activity 2.4:</b> <i>Develop a staff guide for disclosures to assist Middlesex County Center for Empowerment and Alliance Center for Independence staff in safely handling disclosures specifically from survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors.</i>														
	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Timeline (Months)</b>												
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	
<b>Task 2.4.1:</b> Develop and review the L.E.A.D.S. model for disclosures.	CFE, ACI		X											- -
<b>Task 2.4.2:</b> Develop and review the mandated reporting procedures.	CFE, ACI		X											- -
<b>Task 2.4.3:</b> Develop flow-charts for mandated reporting and disclosures and put guide together.				X										- -
<b>Task 2.4.4:</b> Submit the staff guide for disclosures to OVW for approval.	CFE			X										- -

**Goal 2: To increase the service capacities of the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment (the Center) and Alliance Center for Independence (ACI) to collaborate effectively and establish competence in listening, educating, advocating, and demanding safety for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/Hard of Hearing (HOH) survivors.**

*Initiative: Training – To train all Center and ACI staff to be empathetic of and responsive to the needs of survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors to reduce the risk of re-victimization and other harm.*

The needs assessment findings revealed a need for training for both the Center’s and ACI’s staff on supporting survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors. The Center’s listening sessions indicated that survivors prefer working with professionals who are educated on sexual violence (Key Finding 3). Likewise, ACI’s listening sessions indicated that persons with disabilities and Deaf/HOH persons prefer to receive services from those who are educated on disability and Deaf culture (Key Finding 3). Given this information, collaboration members agreed that comprehensive and extensive trainings on sexual violence and disability/Deaf culture would be necessary to demonstrate competence on the intersection of the two. Furthermore, both the Center’s clients and ACI’s consumers expressed the preference to work with experts in their fields (Key Finding 3). For this reason, collaboration members urge the importance of making proper referrals and will train staff to provide safe, accessible, and consistent referrals for those they serve.

Collaboration members determined three areas of focus for staff training. These include cross-training, clinical training, and development and implementation of a staff training plan. Cross-training will be the first activity to take place under this initiative. It will take place in the fourth through sixth months of the implementation period, following the approval of the Center’s and ACI’s new policies and procedures. Cross-training will allow collaboration members to introduce the new policies and procedures as well as key concepts regarding sexual violence, disabilities, and Deaf culture. Training for clinical staff will be ongoing from the start of the implementation phase, but clinical staff



should feel fully prepared to counsel survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors at least by the sixth month. Finally in the sixth month, collaboration members will develop a training plan to solidify future cross-trainings and trainings for new hires. Towards the end of the implementation period, collaboration members will develop a new MOU which will include implementation of the training plan. In these ways this initiative and its key activities will be sustained beyond the life of the grant.

The needs assessment indicated that survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors require unique support from trauma-informed, survivor-driven, flexible, and individualized services. The Collaborative dedicates this initiative to train all Center and ACI staff to provide this support and be cognizant of the other safety, access, support, and comfort needs as identified in the needs assessment. The Center and ACI will share responsibility for the cross-training of their staff and the development of the training plan. The Center’s clinical staff will be responsible to find and attend trainings on counseling persons with disabilities and Deaf/HOH persons.

Increased training for Center and ACI staff will foster systems change by shifting the way the Center and its staff address disability/Deaf culture and the way ACI and its staff address sexual violence. Increased training will increase awareness about the issues, stigma, and barriers faced by survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors. In addition, it will increase empathy and mindfulness for all staff when working with this population. For these reasons the Collaborative will take advantage of all training and education opportunities and develop comprehensive curriculums for their staff trainings. The following work plan outlines the order of events under this initiative:

**Initiative 3: Training – To train all Center and ACI staff to be empathetic of and responsive to the needs of survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors to reduce the risk of re-victimization and other harm.**

*Activity 3.1: Cross-train all Middlesex County and Center for Empowerment staff so they may be updated on new policies and procedures as well as prepared to handle disclosures.*

	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<b>Task 3.1.1:</b> Develop sexual violence training for Alliance Center for Independence staff, introducing new policies and procedures.	CFE				X	X							-	
<b>Task 3.1.2:</b> Develop disability/Deaf training for Middlesex County Center for Empowerment staff, introducing new policies and procedures as well as the staff guide to disclosures.	ACI				X	X							-	-
<b>Task 3.1.3:</b> Submit cross-training presentation and materials to OVW for approval.	CFE					X							-	-
<b>Task 3.1.4:</b> Choose dates for trainings.	CFE, ACI					X							-	-
<b>Task 3.1.5:</b> Cross-train staff at each agency.	CFE, ACI						X						-	-
<i>Activity 3.2: Train the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment's clinical staff to provide individualized therapy for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors.</i>														
	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<b>Task 3.2.1:</b> Explore options for clinical training on working with survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors.	CFE	X	X	X	X	X	X						-	-
<b>Task 3.2.2:</b> Submit all training requests to OVW for approval.	CFE	X	X	X	X	X	X						-	
<b>Task 3.2.3:</b> Clinical staff attends trainings before Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. begins its awareness activities.	CFE	X	X	X	X	X	X						-	-

**Activity 3.3: Develop a training plan for new hires at the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment and Alliance Center for Independence as well as for annual staff training.**

	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<b>Task 3.3.1:</b> Develop disability training plan for new hires at the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment	ACI						X						-	-
<b>Task 3.3.2:</b> Develop sexual violence training plan for new hires at the Alliance Center for Independence.	CFE						X						-	
<b>Task 3.3.3:</b> Develop training plan for annual disability training at the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment.	CFE, ACI						X						-	-
<b>Task 3.3.4:</b> Develop training plan for annual sexual violence training at the Alliance Center for Independence.	CFE, ACI						X						-	-
<b>Task 3.3.5:</b> Submit all training plans to OVW for approval.	CFE						X						-	-

**Goal 2: To increase the service capacities of the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment (the Center) and Alliance Center for Independence (ACI) to collaborate effectively and establish competence in listening, educating, advocating, and demanding safety for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/Hard of Hearing (HOH) survivors.**

*Initiative: Sustainability – To ensure the sustainability of newly implemented practices as well as the sustainability of the Center’s and ACI’s partnership.*

Needs assessment findings revealed that survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors require services which are safe, accessible, and consistent (Key Findings 1, 2, and 3). The Collaborative will ensure consistency through sustainability of the Center’s and ACI’s partnership to promote ongoing implementation of safe and accessible practices, ongoing training, and ongoing outreach and awareness.

Collaboration members will take the following measures to ensure their work together is sustained beyond the life of the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) Disabilities Grant: They will develop a new Collaborative Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which will include the ongoing practice of safety and access reviews, cross-trainings, and awareness events. The MOU will also include the establishment of safe consultation and referral processes for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors when necessary, and particularly for those receiving joint services. The new MOU can sustain the partnership while still allowing for growth for both the Center and ACI as they continue to learn from each other, generate awareness, and serve more survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors.

The MOU will be developed in the final months of the grant period in the ninth and tenth months of implementation. It will be written by collaboration members and sent to OVW for approval. It will then be signed by Center and ACI program directors and sent to the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders and ACI Board of Trustees for further approval. The MOU will take action immediately following the approval of all stakeholders and will impact systems change by solidifying the agency enhancements made during implementation. Collaboration members will continue to explore funding options to sustain the

reproduction of resources and awareness materials, including the staff guide to disclosures, survivor rights, and limits of guardianship resources as well as awareness posters and booklets.

In the initial months of the implementation period, collaboration members will discuss future funding. Throughout implementation, they will look into other funding options and opportunities. The following work plan outlines the order of events under this initiative:

<b>Initiative 6: Sustainability – To ensure the sustainability of newly implemented practices as well as the sustainability of the Center’s and ACI’s partnership.</b>														
<i>Activity 6.1: Develop Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. MOU between the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment and Alliance Center for Independence.</i>														
	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Timeline (Months)</b>												
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	
<b>Task 6.1.1:</b> Create Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. MOU. Include annual safety and access reviews, training, safe consultation and referral processes, and annual awareness events.	CFE, ACI											X	-	-
<b>Task 6.1.2:</b> Submit Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. MOU to OVW for approval.	CFE									X	X	-	-	
<b>Task 6.1.3:</b> Submit to County of Middlesex and Alliance Center for Independence Board of Directors for approval.	CFE, ACI										X	-	-	

**Goal 3: To increase awareness of the intersection of sexual violence and disability/Deaf culture and of the services and supports available for survivors and loved ones.**

*Initiative: Resources – To develop resources which are informative, inclusive, and accessible to all survivors with disabilities, Deaf/Hard of Hearing (HOH) survivors, and loved ones.*

The Collaborative aims to increase awareness of the intersection of sexual violence and disability/Deaf culture by expanding their resources and awareness efforts. In regard to resources, the needs assessment findings revealed a need for inclusive and accessible resources for survivors with disabilities, Deaf/HOH survivors, and loved ones (Key Finding 2, 3, and 4). Additionally, listening sessions revealed the greatest barriers to receiving services were lack of awareness about services and rights (Key Finding 2). Survivors, persons with disabilities and Deaf/HOH persons shared the need to know next steps ahead of time for fear of being blindsided or feeling out of control (Key Finding 3).

In order to address the issues identified above, collaboration members will develop three resources, including a pictorial and plain language resource on the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment's (the Center's) services and legal process; a plain language resource on the limits of guardianship; and a plain language guide on survivor rights. The resources regarding survivor rights and limits of guardianship will be developed between the sixth and seventh months of implementation. The pictorial and plain language guide on the Center's services and legal process will be developed from the fourth through eighth months of implementation. All resources must be approved by the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) before approval of the Collaborative's outreach activities as described in the next initiative.

The lead agency for the development of resources will be the Center to ensure survivor-centered and trauma-informed practice. However, staff from both agencies will share responsibility for reviewing and revising resources to ensure access. The resources developed by the Collaborative will create systems change by speaking to and reaching more survivors and loved ones in the community. Accessible resources will generate awareness of the Center's services among the disability and Deaf/HOH communities, which will further close the

**Middlesex L.E.A.D.S.**

LISTEN, EDUCATE, ADVOCATE, & DEMAND SAFETY

gaps in service for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors. The continued development and distribution of resources must be sustained upon completion of the grant period. In order to sustain this initiative, collaboration members will research and apply for continued funding. If continued grant funding is not available, they will explore other options. The following work plan outlines the order of events under this initiative:

<b>Initiative 4: Resources – To develop resources which are informative, inclusive, and accessible to all survivors with disabilities, Deaf/HOH survivors, and loved ones.</b>													
<i>Activity 4.1: Develop a pictorial and plain language booklet to illustrate services offered at the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment as well as the various steps of the legal process.</i>													
	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>Task 4.1.1:</b> Review existing pictorial and plain language tools.	CFE, ACI					X						-	-
<b>Task 4.1.2:</b> Interpret available services and legal process in plain language.	CFE, ACI				X	X						-	-
<b>Task 4.1.3:</b> Use existing images or create new images to illustrate the forensic exam process.	CFE, ACI						X	X				-	-
<b>Task 4.1.4:</b> Use existing images or create new images to illustrate the police interview process.	CFE, ACI						X	X				-	-
<b>Task 4.1.5:</b> Use existing images or create new images to illustrate court proceedings.	CFE, ACI						X	X				-	-
<b>Task 4.1.6:</b> Use existing images or create new images to illustrate individual or group counseling.	CFE, ACI						X	X				-	-

<b>Task 4.1.7:</b> Review booklet safety and accessibility.	CFE, ACI								X			-	-	
<b>Task 4.1.8:</b> Submit booklet to OVW for approval.	CFE								X				-	
<i>Activity 4.2: Develop plain-language resource on sexual violence survivor rights.</i>														
	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Timeline (Months)</b>												
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	
<b>Task 4.2.1:</b> Review and translate sexual violence survivor rights to plain language.	CFE, ACI						X						-	-
<b>Task 4.2.2:</b> Develop the survivor rights resource for survivors.	CFE, ACI						X						-	-
<b>Task 4.2.3:</b> Submit survivor rights resource to OVW for approval.	CFE							X					-	-
<i>Activity 4.3: Develop plain-language limits of guardianship resource for survivors and loved ones.</i>														
	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Timeline (Months)</b>												
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	
<b>Task 4.3.1:</b> Discuss and review the limits of guardianship and translate to plain-language.	CFE, ACI						X						-	-
<b>Task 4.3.2:</b> Develop the resource for survivors and loved ones.	CFE, ACI						X						-	-
<b>Task 4.3.3:</b> Submit the limits of guardianship resource to OVW for approval.	CFE							X					-	-



**Goal 3: To increase awareness of the intersection of sexual violence and disability/Deaf culture and of the services and supports available for survivors and loved ones.**

*Initiative: Education and Awareness – To generate awareness through collaboration and education by hosting joint events and developing accessible sexual violence awareness materials.*

Needs assessment findings indicated an overwhelming need for awareness. More specifically, the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment's (the Center's) clients indicated a need for awareness about sexual violence, the impacts it has on survivors and loved ones, and the services available to help survivors cope with trauma (Key Finding 2). Before receiving services at the Center, many survivors felt as though their experiences were not traumatic enough and they did not deserve services. The Collaborative will close this gap in service by increasing the accessibility of sexual violence material resources. Furthermore, the Alliance Center for Independence's (ACI's) consumers indicated a need to know more about services, especially those which are accessible and have staff who are trained in disability/Deaf culture (Key Finding 2). Towards the end of the grant period, the Collaborative aims to launch an awareness campaign focused on survivors with disabilities and Deaf/Hard of Hearing (HOH) survivors. The campaign will include joint Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) events; an open house event at the Center; and the development of awareness materials including a booklet and matching poster.

Of the above mentioned awareness activities, the awareness booklet and poster will be developed first, between the seventh and ninth months of implementation or sooner, if possible. Not only do collaboration members have to develop the materials, but they have to choose a campaign theme, review and revise materials, assess them for accessibility, make necessary changes, and submit them to the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) for approval. During this process, they will also begin to plan the awareness events. The SAAM events will be planned in the sixth month of implementation and held in the seventh, during April or SAAM. The open house will be planned for and held between the eighth and tenth months of implementation or as soon as possible, pending the approval of the materials for the awareness campaign. At this point,

the Center's services should be fully accessible and staff should be fully trained and ready to serve survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors.

The awareness campaign will create systems change in a number of ways. Firstly, it will generate awareness about sexual violence and more survivors may be compelled to seek support. Particularly, survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors may be compelled to seek support when they see the Center's and ACI's competence and desire to do more for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors. As the Center and ACI begin to serve more survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors, they will have a continued need to collaborate in order to meet the needs of those survivors, especially those receiving services from both agencies.

The Center and ACI will share the lead on tasks highlighted in this initiative. The Center will lead the organization of the SAAM events and open house and both agencies will share the lead on development and distribution of materials for the awareness campaign. The awareness campaign will serve as the announcement to the community that accessible sexual violence services are available and ready to serve. Everything accomplished within this grant will culminate to this point when the Collaborative is competent and can provide a safe, accessible, and seamless experience to survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors.

Essentially, the Collaborative will shift their awareness efforts to speak to the needs of survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors, who are an underserved population in the community. Consequentially, they will serve more survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors, reducing the gap in service for this particular population. Awareness events will be sustained in the new MOU, which will call for annual collaboration between the Center and ACI. In order to sustain the development and distribution of awareness materials, members will research and apply for funding and/or explore other financial resources. The following work plan outlines the order of events under this initiative:

**Initiative 5: Awareness – To generate awareness through collaboration and education by hosting joint events and developing accessible sexual violence awareness materials.**

*Activity 5.1: Develop a poster and informative booklet as resource for survivors, loved ones, and allies.*

	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>Task 5.1.1:</b> Discuss and decide on a theme for the poster and booklet.	CFE, ACI							X			X	-	-
<b>Task 5.1.2:</b> Design the booklet including its images, language, and chapters.	CFE, ACI							X	X			-	-
<b>Task 5.1.3:</b> Review safety and accessibility of booklet.										X		-	-
<b>Task 5.1.4:</b> Submit booklet to OVW for approval.										X		-	-
<b>Task 5.1.5:</b> Design the poster.	CFE, ACI							X	X			-	-
<b>Task 5.1.6:</b> Review the safety and accessibility of poster.	CFE, ACI								X			-	-
<b>Task 5.1.7:</b> Submit the poster to OVW for approval.	CFE								X	X		-	-

*Activity 5.2: Host a joint Middlesex County Center for Empowerment and Alliance Center for Independence Sexual Assault Awareness Month event(s) in April.*

	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>Task 5.2.1:</b> Plan the joint Sexual Assault Awareness Month event(s).	CFE, ACI						X	X				-	-
<b>Task 5.2.2:</b> Advertise Sexual Assault Awareness Month event(s).	CFE, ACI						X	X				-	-
<b>Task 5.2.2:</b> Host Sexual Assault Awareness Month event(s).	CFE, ACI						X	X				-	-

*Activity 5.3: host an annual open house at the Middlesex County Center for*

**Middlesex L.E.A.D.S.**

LISTEN, EDUCATE, ADVOCATE, & DEMAND SAFETY

*Empowerment, arranging tours for Alliance Center for Independence consumers.*

	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>Task 5.3.1:</b> Plan open house agenda, content, and dates.	CFE, ACI								X			-	-
<b>Task 5.3.2:</b> Submit open house plans to OVW for approval.	ACI									X		-	-
<b>Task 5.3.3:</b> Advertise open house with Alliance Center for Independence consumers.	CFE										X	-	-
<b>Task 5.3.4:</b> Host open house at the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment.											X	-	-
<b>Task 5.3.5:</b> Incorporate awareness activities in Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. MOU.	CFE, ACI										X	-	-

## Long-Term Goals

There are gaps in service uncovered through the needs assessment process which are not addressed in this strategic plan. In both the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment's (the Center's) and the Alliance Center for Independence's (ACI's) listening sessions, participants expressed fear of medical professionals and law enforcement. They also expressed the need for these service providers to receive training on working with survivors, persons with disabilities, and Deaf/Hard of Hearing (HOH) persons. The Center works closely with law enforcement, the local medical school, and Forensic Nurse Examiner (FNE) program, and sees that the three programs may benefit from more training on working with survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors. Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. (the Collaborative) aims to address this need as a long-term goal for the partnership.

The needs assessment also revealed a need for sexual violence prevention education for persons with disabilities and Deaf/HOH persons. More sexual violence prevention education was suggested by the Center's survivor listening sessions. One survivor in particular stated that there should be an "educational specialist who goes around... doing presentations on prevention education." Further, ACI's listening sessions revealed a need for education about services. Combining these findings, the Collaborative sees the need for prevention education for persons with disabilities and Deaf/HOH persons, with a component on sexual violence services in the community. The Collaborative aims to address this initiative as a long-term goal for the partnership and sees it as an opportunity to educate persons with disabilities, Deaf/HOH persons, others on the meaning, importance, and legal implications of "consent." Professionals who work with persons with disabilities and Deaf/HOH persons, parents, and guardians would be encouraged to attend as well. The presentation would educate about sexual violence in addition to encouraging autonomy and self-determination for persons with disabilities and Deaf/HOH persons.

Finally, the needs assessment revealed a need for awareness about sexual violence against males and the supports needed by male survivors. Male survivors in the Center’s listening sessions openly discussed the service barriers experienced by males. They felt as though sexual violence is widely seen as a “woman’s issue” rather than a man’s. They expressed feeling excluded by victim services when they appear to be geared towards women. Male survivors with disabilities or Deaf/HOH male survivors experience more barriers and collaboration members understand that males with disabilities are more likely to experience sexual violence than their non-disabled/hearing counterparts. The Collaborative would like to do more to promote inclusion for male survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH male survivors by developing materials and through education and awareness.

To conclude, the collaboration members have three long-term goals for Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. Firstly, they aim to provide training for law enforcement, medical professionals, and FNE. Secondly, they aim to provide prevention education specifically for survivors with disabilities, Deaf/HOH survivors, loved ones, and professionals. Thirdly, they aim to promote inclusion for male survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH male survivors.

## Work Plan

Below is the Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. (the Collaborative) implementation work plan in its entirety, including all six initiatives, twenty activities, and seventy tasks. They will be carried out over the span of ten months from November 2016 to August 2017.

	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<b>Identify workgroups for all 6 Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. initiatives.</b>	CFE, ACI	X											-	-
<b>Develop OVW budget revision, including workgroup budgeting and gift card budgeting.</b>	CFE	X											-	-
<b>Submit budget revision to OVW.</b>	CFE	X											-	-
<b>Initiative 1: Safety and Access – To increase safety and accessibility of services by identifying and removing barriers and unsafe practices in addition to promoting an overall culture that promotes flexibility and trauma-informed practices.</b>														
<i>Activity 1.1: Develop Safety and Access Review Tools.</i>														
	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<b>Task 1.1.1:</b> Identify and review known tools.	CFE, ACI	X											-	-
<b>Task 1.1.2:</b> Select tools to be used and adapted.	CFE, ACI	X											-	-
<b>Task 1.1.3:</b> Adapt tools to fit each collaborating agency.	CFE, ACI	X											-	-
<b>Task 1.1.4:</b> Send tools to OVW for approval	CFE, ACI		X										-	-

**Activity 1.2: Conduct safety and access reviews at the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment and Alliance Center for Independence.**

	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<b>Task 1.2.1:</b> Recruit volunteer survivors and persons with disabilities or Deaf/HOH persons to conduct reviews.	CFE, ACI		X										-	-
<b>Task 1.2.2:</b> Volunteers conduct safety review of the Alliance Center for Independence.	CFE			X									-	-
<b>Task 1.2.3:</b> Volunteers conduct access review of the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment.	ACI			X									-	-
<b>Task 1.2.4.:</b> Work group analyzes the findings of the reviews.	CFE, ACI			X									-	-

**Activity 1.3: Develop a Barrier Removal Plan (BRP) for the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment and Safety Enhancement Plan (SEP) for the Alliance Center for Independence.**

	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<b>Task 1.3.1:</b> Review samples of existing BRP and SEP.	CFE, ACI				X								-	-
<b>Task 1.3.2:</b> Create Middlesex L.E.A.D.S BRP and SEP.	CFE, ACI				X								-	-
<b>Task 1.3.3:</b> Submit BRP and SEP to OVW for approval.	CFE					X							-	-

**Activity 1.4: Execute the BRP at the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment**



*and SEP at the Alliance Center for Independence.*

	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<b>Task 1.4.1:</b> Remove barriers at the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment.	CFE						X	X					-	-
<b>Task 1.4.2:</b> Make safety enhancements at the Alliance Center for Independence.	ACI						X	X						-

*Activity 1.5: Establish the process to conduct annual safety and access reviews.*

	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<b>Task 1.5.1:</b> Develop process for annual safety and access reviews.	CFE, ACI											X	-	-
<b>Task 1.5.2:</b> Incorporate process in new Middlesex LE.A.D.S. MOU.	CFE, ACI										X	-	-	

**Initiative 2: Policies and Procedures – To strengthen policies and procedures to empower survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors so they may know their options, make informed decisions, and know they will be supported.**

*Activity 2.1: Develop new policies and procedures for a safe referral process.*

	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)													
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
<b>Task 2.1.1:</b> Discuss existing referral process.	CFE, ACI	X												-	-
<b>Task 2.1.2:</b> Make safety enhancements to existing referral process and develop formal	CFE, ACI	X												-	-

policies and procedures.														
<b>Task 2.1.3:</b> Submit referral process policies and procedures to OVW for approval.	CFE		X										-	-
<i>Activity 2.2: Revise existing confidentiality policies and procedures.</i>														
	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Timeline (Months)</b>												
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	
<b>Task 2.2.1:</b> Review and revise existing confidentiality policies and procedures for the Alliance Center for Independence.	ACI	X												-
<b>Task 2.2.2:</b> Submit new confidentiality policies and procedures to OVW for approval.	CFE		X											-
<i>Activity 2.3: Revise existing policies and procedures for consent for services and release of information.</i>														
	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Timeline (Months)</b>												
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	
<b>Task 2.3.1:</b> Review and revise existing consent for services and release of information policies and procedures.	CFE		X											-
<b>Task 2.3.2:</b> Submit new consent for services and release of information policies and procedures to OVW for approval.	CFE			X										-
<i>Activity 2.4: Develop a staff guide for disclosures to assist Middlesex County Center for Empowerment and Alliance Center for Independence staff in safely handling disclosures specifically from survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH</i>														

<i>survivors.</i>														
	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<b>Task 2.4.1:</b> Develop and review the L.E.A.D.S. model disclosure flow-chart	CFE, ACI		X										-	-
<b>Task 2.4.2:</b> Develop and review the mandated reporting flow-chart	CFE, ACI		X										-	-
<b>Task 2.4.3:</b> Develop flow-charts for mandated reporting and disclosures and put guide together.				X									-	-
<b>Task 2.4.4:</b> Submit the staff guide for disclosures to OVW for approval.	CFE			X									-	-
<b>Initiative 3: Training – To train all Center and ACI staff to be empathetic of and responsive to the needs of survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors to reduce the risk of re-victimization and other harm.</b>														
<i>Activity 3.1: Cross-train all Middlesex County and Center for Empowerment staff so they may be updated on new policies and procedures as well as prepared to handle disclosures.</i>														
	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<b>Task 3.1.1:</b> Develop sexual violence training for Alliance Center for Independence staff, introducing new policies and procedures.	CFE				X	X							-	-
<b>Task 3.1.2:</b> Develop disability/Deaf training	ACI				X	X							-	-

for Middlesex County Center for Empowerment staff, introducing new policies and procedures as well as the staff guide to disclosures.														
<b>Task 3.1.3:</b> Submit cross-training presentation and materials to OVW for approval.	CFE					X							-	-
<b>Task 3.1.4:</b> Choose dates for trainings.	CFE, ACI					X							-	-
<b>Task 3.1.5:</b> Cross-train staff at each agency.	CFE, ACI						X						-	-
<i>Activity 3.2: Train the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment’s clinical staff to provide individualized therapy for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors.</i>														
	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Timeline (Months)</b>												
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	
<b>Task 3.2.1:</b> Explore options for clinical training on working with survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors.	CFE	X	X	X	X	X	X						-	-
<b>Task 3.2.2:</b> Submit all training requests to OVW for approval.	CFE	X	X	X	X	X	X						-	-
<b>Task 3.2.3:</b> Clinical staff attends trainings before Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. begins its awareness activities.	CFE	X	X	X	X	X	X						-	-
<b>Activity 3.3:</b> Develop a training plan for new hires at the Middlesex County Center														

for Empowerment and Alliance Center for Independence as well as for annual staff training.													
	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>Task 3.3.1:</b> Develop disability training plan for new hires at the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment	ACI						X					-	-
<b>Task 3.3.2:</b> Develop sexual violence training plan for new hires at the Alliance Center for Independence.	CFE						X					-	-
<b>Task 3.3.3:</b> Develop training plan for annual disability training at the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment.	CFE, ACI						X					-	-
<b>Task 3.3.4:</b> Develop training plan for annual sexual violence training at the Alliance Center for Independence.	CFE, ACI						X					-	-
<b>Task 3.3.5:</b> Submit all training plans to OVW for approval.	CFE						X					-	-
<b>Initiative 4: Resources – To develop resources which are informative, inclusive, and accessible to all survivors with disabilities, Deaf/HOH survivors, and loved ones.</b>													
<i>Activity 4.1: Develop a pictorial and plain language booklet to illustrate services offered at the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment as well as the various steps of the legal process.</i>													
	Lead	Timeline (Months)											

## Middlesex L.E.A.D.S.

LISTEN, EDUCATE, ADVOCATE, & DEMAND SAFETY

	Agency	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>Task 4.1.1:</b> Review existing pictorial and plain language tools.	CFE, ACI				X	X						-	-
<b>Task 4.1.2:</b> Interpret available services and legal process in plain language.	CFE, ACI				X	X						-	-
<b>Task 4.1.3:</b> Use existing images or create new images to illustrate the forensic exam process.	CFE, ACI						X	X				-	-
<b>Task 4.1.4:</b> Use existing images or create new images to illustrate the police interview process.	CFE, ACI						X	X				-	-
<b>Task 4.1.5:</b> Use existing images or create new images to illustrate court proceedings.	CFE, ACI						X	X				-	-
<b>Task 4.1.6:</b> Use existing images or create new images to illustrate individual or group counseling.	CFE, ACI						X	X				-	-
<b>Task 4.1.7:</b> Review booklet safety and accessibility.	CFE, ACI								X			-	-
<b>Task 4.1.8:</b> Submit booklet to OVW for approval.	CFE								X			-	-
<i>Activity 4.2: Develop plain-language resource on sexual violence survivor rights.</i>													
	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Timeline (Months)</b>											
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>

<b>Task 4.2.1:</b> Review and translate sexual violence survivor rights to plain language.	CFE, ACI						X						-	-
<b>Task 4.2.2:</b> Develop the survivor rights resource for survivors.	CFE, ACI						X						-	-
<b>Task 4.2.3:</b> Submit survivor rights resource to OVW for approval.	CFE							X					-	-

**Activity 4.3:** *Develop plain-language limits of guardianship resource for survivors and loved ones.*

	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<b>Task 4.3.1:</b> Discuss and review the limits of guardianship and translate to plain-language.	CFE, ACI						X						-	-
<b>Task 4.3.2:</b> Develop the resource for survivors and loved ones.	CFE, ACI						X						-	-
<b>Task 4.3.3:</b> Submit the limits of guardianship resource to OVW for approval.	CFE							X					-	-

**Initiative 5: Awareness – To generate awareness through collaboration and education by hosting joint events and developing accessible sexual violence awareness materials.**

**Activity 5.1:** *Develop a poster and informative booklet as resource for survivors, loved ones, and allies.*

	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<b>Task 5.1.1:</b> Discuss and decide on a theme for the poster and booklet.	CFE, ACI							X					-	-

<b>Task 5.1.2:</b> Design the booklet including its images, language, and chapters.	CFE, ACI							X	X			-	-
<b>Task 5.1.3:</b> Review safety and accessibility of booklet.										X		-	-
<b>Task 5.1.4:</b> Submit booklet to OVW for approval.										X		-	-
<b>Task 5.1.5:</b> Design the poster.	CFE, ACI							X	X			-	-
<b>Task 5.1.6:</b> Review the safety and accessibility of poster.	CFE, ACI								X			-	-
<b>Task 5.1.7:</b> Submit the poster to OVW for approval.	CFE								X	X		-	-

*Activity 5.2: Host a joint Middlesex County Center for Empowerment and Alliance Center for Independence Sexual Assault Awareness Month event(s) in April.*

	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>Task 5.2.1:</b> Plan the joint Sexual Assault Awareness Month event(s).	CFE, ACI						X	X				-	-
<b>Task 5.2.2:</b> Advertise Sexual Assault Awareness Month event(s).	CFE, ACI						X	X				-	-
<b>Task 5.2.2:</b> Host Sexual Assault Awareness Month event(s).	CFE, ACI						X	X				-	-

*Activity 5.3: host an annual open house at the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment, arranging tours for Alliance Center for Independence consumers.*



	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>Task 5.3.1:</b> Plan open house agenda, content, and dates.	CFE, ACI								X			-	-
<b>Task 5.3.2:</b> Submit open house plans to OVW for approval.	ACI									X		-	-
<b>Task 5.3.3:</b> Advertise open house with Alliance Center for Independence consumers.	CFE										X	-	-
<b>Task 5.3.4:</b> Host open house at the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment.											X	-	-
<b>Task 5.3.5:</b> Incorporate annual open house in Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. MOU.	CFE, ACI										X	-	-

**Initiative 6: Sustainability – To ensure the sustainability of newly implemented practices as well as the sustainability of the Center’s and ACI’s partnership.**

*Activity 6.1: Develop Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. MOU between the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment and Alliance Center for Independence.*

	Lead Agency	Timeline (Months)												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<b>Task 6.1.1:</b> Create Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. MOU. Include annual safety and access reviews, training, safe consultation and referral processes, and annual awareness events.	CFE, ACI											X	-	-

<b>Task 6.1.2:</b> Submit Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. MOU to OVW for approval.	CFE									X	X	-	-
<b>Task 6.1.3:</b> Submit to County of Middlesex and Alliance Center for Independence Board of Directors for approval.	CFE, ACI									X	-	-	

## Conclusion

After conducting a comprehensive needs assessment with the sexual violence survivors, persons with disabilities, and Deaf/Hard of Hearing (HOH) persons they serve, Middlesex L.E.A.D.S. (the Collaborative) has designated three goals for implementation in the final year of the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) Disabilities Grant period. They are:

1. To increase physical and programmatic access at the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment (the Center) and increase emotional and environmental safety at the Alliance Center for Independence (ACI), overall increasing safety and access for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors when receiving services from either agency.
2. To increase the service capacities of the Center and ACI to collaborate effectively and establish competence in listening, educating, advocating, and demanding safety for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors.
3. To increase awareness of the intersection of sexual violence and disability/Deaf culture and of the services and supports available for survivors and loved ones.

In order to meet these goals, the Collaborative has developed six initiatives, or six areas of focus in their change process. The six initiatives include:

1. **Safety and Access** – To increase safety and accessibility of services by identifying and removing barriers and unsafe practices in addition to promoting an overall culture that promotes flexibility and trauma-informed practices.
2. **Policies and Procedures** – To strengthen policies and procedures to empower survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors so they may know their options, make informed decisions, and know they will be supported.

3. **Training** – To train all Center and ACI staff to be empathetic of and responsive to the needs of survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors to reduce the risk of re-victimization and other harm.
4. **Resources** – To develop resources which are informative, inclusive, and accessible to all survivors with disabilities, Deaf/HOH survivors, and loved ones.
5. **Awareness** – To generate awareness through collaboration and education by hosting joint events and developing accessible sexual violence awareness materials.
6. **Sustainability** – To ensure the sustainability of newly implemented practices as well as the sustainability of the Center’s and ACI’s partnership.

Over the span of ten months, the Collaborative will implement the above initiatives and make changes to their agencies so services are more safe, accessible, supportive, and comfortable for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors. In doing so, the Collaborative aims to remove barriers for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors and better serve this underserved population. After changes are implemented, the Center and ACI will develop a joint Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to ensure their continued collaboration and growth. The MOU will include annual safety and access reviews; cross-trainings on sexual violence and disability/Deaf culture; and collaboration on awareness efforts. In addition, they will continue to consult with one another, refer to one another, and collaborate whenever necessary to provide a safe and seamless experience for survivors with disabilities and Deaf/HOH survivors.