



Project EMERGE

Collaboration Charter

Belief in Collaboration

Vera House and Arise are joining the expertise of each agency to create Project EMERGE. This will be a partnership structured around *INTERDEPENDENCE* rather than our two agencies just 'working together'. We will together create a system of resourcing each other to better deliver services. We recognize that Project EMERGE is the formal beginning of a long term relationship between Vera House and ARISE in serving all people, including people with disabilities and Deaf people in our community. This collaboration will→

- Seek input from and listen to people with disabilities and Deaf people who are survivors of domestic and sexual violence
- Create, provide, and improve accessibility at our agencies.
- Co-influence each others policies, procedures, and practices
- Learn from each other how to better assist all people, including people with disabilities and Deaf people who are survivors of domestic and sexual violence.
- Provide training to service providers

Vision

We, Vera House, ARISE, and our community partners, will together create a comprehensive and inclusive community prevention and response system, guided by, and in service to, people with disabilities and Deaf people who are survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Through this system will ensure access, equality, empowerment, and safety for all through accountable and knowledgeable providers.

Mission

Project EMERGE, a partnership between Vera House and ARISE, will build a community movement through increased collaboration, program policy review and education, which will work to improve access by building a comprehensive and inclusive coordinated community response for women with disabilities and Deaf women who have experienced domestic and sexual violence.

Values

Access
Safety
Security
Respect
Improvement
Dignity
Courage
Independence
Accountability

Inclusion
Accessibility
Honesty
Equality
Empowerment
Differences
Healing
Personal Responsibility
Knowledge

Roles & Responsibilities

We anticipate our roles to evolve and refine over the collaboration. Our collaboration is primarily about the connections that we build with each other and the ways that we resource each other. Currently, Project EMERGE is made up of two agencies:

- **Vera House** is a non-profit victim service agency providing direct client service, community education and community planning with a primary focus on domestic and sexual violence. Vera House staffs and administers the Syracuse Area Domestic and Sexual Violence Coalition which was founded in 1987 to work toward a coordinated, effective community response to domestic and now also sexual, and violence.
- **ARISE** is a non-profit, community-based Independent Living Center in Central New York that is run by and for people with disabilities. ARISE's mission is to work with people of all abilities to create a fair and just community in which everyone can fully participate. ARISE embraces the guiding principles of independent living – that individuals with disabilities have a right to dignity, personal responsibility, and self-determination. ARISE offers advocacy and support services to people of all ages with all types of disabilities.

Project EMERGE Core Group

The Core Group will act as a steering committee for Project EMERGE. The group will meet on a monthly basis during the planning year of the grant to assist with guidance and direction setting. The following people make up the Core Group of Project EMERGE:

- **Randi Bregman LMSW**, Executive Director, Vera House
Randi Bregman has worked for Vera House for seventeen years. In her roles as Domestic Violence Coalition Coordinator (1990 – 2001) and Executive Director (since 8/1/01), Randi has provided hundreds of trainings to a range of audiences, and is committed to providing the highest quality service to individuals with disabilities who are victims of sexual and domestic violence. Randi will contribute to Project EMERGE by participating in planning and goal setting for the Needs & Assessts Assessment and Strategic Plan, sharing her expertise around DV/SA and community coalition building and work, participating (as able) in Core Group meetings as well as All Site meetings that Vera Inst. hosts, participating on the Accessibility Task Force as it forms and develops, providing direct supervision and support for Loren and Crystal in their daily work on the project, and assisting with trouble shooting as issues arise. Randi brings a calm presence in the face of anxiety and has a valued reputation of providing others with the opportunity to learn and find solutions. As the leader at Vera House, she is open to learning about how the agency can improve its ability to serve people with disabilities and examine the intersecting oppression of disability and sexism. Finally, Randi believes that 'love is action' and that we need to be the change we wish to see in the world.
- **Tom McKeown**, Executive Director, Arise

Tom McKeown has been the Executive Director of ARISE since 2002, and has more than twenty years' experience in agency and program administration on behalf of individuals having disabilities. He currently chairs the Human Services Leadership Council, an association of more than eighty not-for-profit executives in Central New York, and will facilitate collaboration among these many entities. Tom will contribute to Project EMERGE by helping to gain support from other stakeholders in the community (specifically other disability and deaf service providers), opening up resources and expertise on disability at ARISE to the project to resource the Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan, and by helping Kalina and Nina in their efforts to function for the benefit of the project. Tom will be a leader at ARISE in bringing issues of domestic and sexual violence to the policy, procedures, mission, and philosophy of ARISE, creating long term agency buy in and change. Tom hopes that through this project ARISE will be seen as an agency that is great to collaborate with and he is eager to create change with other agency leaders around the intersection of oppression. Tom is a global thinker who is skilled in resolving conflict at many different levels. The philosophy and strengths of independent living provide a framework for him to operate from and share with not only Project EMERGE, but also our broader community as we create systems change.

- **Crystal Collette, LMSW**, Project EMERGE Director, Vera House (Job Description, Attachment A)
Crystal Collette began at Vera House as an Intern with the Syracuse Area Domestic and Sexual Violence Coalition. She worked for three years as a therapist in the sexual assault clinical program New Directions where she focused her work on children, adolescents, and their families. As the Project EMERGE Director Crystal will provide expertise to ARISE and other disability agencies on domestic and sexual violence, coordinate and facilitate the Core Group through monthly meetings, emails, goal setting, staff the Accessibility Task Force, nurture community relationships with partners, take leadership on the development of the Charter, development and implementation of the Needs Assessment, and the Strategic Plan, and provide leadership and coordination on program policy review and curriculum development. Crystal will also engage with Vera Inst on a routine basis for consultation and brainstorming and act as a conduit for that information and expertise to reach our Core Group. Crystal will take the lead at Vera House in integrating consciousness and accessibility for women with disabilities as well as resource ARISE in integrating trauma response into their policies, procedures, and service delivery. Crystal believes that when agencies serve 'special populations' better, they do all of their work better. Coming as a survivor of sexual assault, Crystal is committed that healing from trauma for the individual can also happen through participating in community and systems change.

- **Loren Cunningham,MSW**, Education Director and Coalition Coordinator, Vera House
Loren Cunningham has been Coordinator of the Domestic and Sexual Violence Coalition since September 2001 and previously worked with Vera House for three years as an Advocate. Loren is also Vera House's Education Director and oversees community and professional training and curriculum development. Loren will contribute to Project EMERGE by supervising and supporting Crystal with all project-related activities, maintaining general oversight for the project, offering detailed information regarding Vera House policies to resource the Needs Assessment and agency change, participating in the development of the Needs & Assets Assessment, and offering trainings when needed. Loren has devoted her career to social justice and eliminating oppression and believes in the power of hope. She brings the experience of Vera House in fostering collaboration based on a model of trust that will improve coordination between domestic violence and sexual assault and disability service providers. Loren is looking to engage in self learning and increase her knowledge of disabilities and deafness. Through improving system response, addressing agency policies, and implementing trainings Loren will be one person in the big picture of broader change.

- **Nina Lutz**, Director of Independent Living, ARISE
Nina Lutz has worked at ARISE for fourteen years and directs independent living services in Onondaga and Madison Counties. Nina will serve Project EMERGE as the direct supervisor of the Community Liaison, provide oversight and direction at ARISE, and will work as an equal partner in this team. She commits to share her experience and knowledge on disability issues with the team to assure that desired outcomes are met. Nina will be a leader at ARISE in bringing issues of domestic and sexual violence to the policy, procedures, mission, and philosophy of ARISE, creating long term agency buy in and change in. Nina believes that we all have the ability to change and find justice. She brings her voice as a woman, mother, woman with a disability, and citizen of the world in an effort to create a stir and remain steadfast in the face of challenge.

- **Kalina Leshchishin**, Community Liaison, ARISE (Job Description, Attachment B)

Kalina Leshchishin has joined the team at ARISE as a member of Project EMERGE. Kalina has previously worked at the Center for New Americans, assisting refugees and their families in settling in and navigating the challenges of arriving to a foreign country. Kalina will support Project EMERGE through participating in the planning stages of the project, primarily focusing on building relationships with various agencies and community stakeholders that can be of assistance to the work of Project EMERGE. She will also play a key role in the development of implementation of the Needs & Assets Assessment with a focus on developing surveys and compiling data. Kalina will serve as the Co-chair of the Accessibility Task Force, where she will assist with the preparation of agendas, discussion on group direction, and facilitation of meetings. Kalina will participate in all aspects and levels of preparation of Strategic Plan and be a key player in implementing the activities of that plan. As Vera House works to change policy, Kalina will act as a key resource person around disability issues. In turn, she will also be the conduit to ARISE to funnel new information and practices around domestic and sexual violence in programs and services. Kalina's experience with socioeconomic injustices will inform her work consistently. Kalina grew up in Bulgaria during Communism and she also witnessed the struggle of many refugees, who fought injustices and fled oppression. She is a strong advocate for the rights of women with disabilities and she firmly believes that if given the chance, every person can explore their inner strength. With an academic background in international relations, conflict resolution and crisis management, Kalina looks forward to devoting her skills, time and energy to the success of Project EMERGE.

Work Plan

The work plan is a detailed outline of our activities. This work plan is currently under on going construction and is available for review at any time. Actions are listed which set goals and milestones for the planning year of Project EMERGE. The work plan includes three major focus areas for the first year.

- Strengthening Our Collaboration
- Needs Assessment
- Strategic Planning

Under each of these focus areas the work plan specifies organizational and individual responsibility, available resources, needs to accomplish the goal, and potential barriers. Our collaboration plans to utilize the work plan as a way to oversee and direct day-to-day activity and also track how we actually get the work done.

Therefore, this will be an evolving document that will assist us in tracking the evolution of the project. Our collaboration agrees that tasks are not as important as relationship and in order to maintain an ongoing partnership the TOP TASK will always be to maintain our interpersonal and agency relationships.

The collaboration work plan will include the following activities:

November – December 2006	Orient to grant, construct team and attend first All Site Meeting.
January – April 2007	Develop Vision, Mission, Values and Goals of the project as well as begin to define Core group member roles. Begin co-influencing each other and educating partners on Core Group. Convene the Accessibility Task Force of the Syracuse Area Domestic and Sexual Violence Coalition.
May- July 2007	Complete the Collaboration Charter and Needs & Assets Assessment.
August – Oct. 2007	Conduct the Needs & Assets Assessment, gather data. Nurture the Accessibility Task Force.
November – December 2007	Analyze data for and author Needs & Assets Assessment report. Develop a responsive Strategic Plan.

January – September 2008	Implement strategic plan and project activities approved by OVW
October 2008 – October 2009	Influence the policies and practices at other community based agencies- creating systems change. Build a sustainability plan, conduct final project evaluation of Strategic Plan.

Decision Making Plan

Project EMERGE believes that the process that is utilized for decision making is just as important as the final outcome and directly impacts the implementation of those decisions. To this end, Project Emerge adopts **consensus based decision making** and agrees to utilize this approach in most decision making processes. This is a process that not only seeks the agreement of most participants, but it also aims to resolve or mitigate the objections of the minority in order to achieve the most agreeable solution. Consensus is defined as finding both general agreement and the process of getting to such an agreement.

Not all decisions require the same process. Decision making needs to be timely and include input from the right stakeholders, while not over burdening team members who are focused on projects and activities other than Project EMERGE. The following chart will guide the decision making process.

Type of Decision	Plan for Decision Making
1. Choices on Language, Drafting of Documents, and Outreach Materials	1. Consensus of Crystal and Kalina
2. Direction and Purpose of Project EMERGE	2. Consensus of Core Group
3. Setting Priorities and Sequencing Tasks	3. Consensus of Core Group and in some cases, Crystal and Kalina
4. Vision and Direction of Accessibility Task Force	4. Consensus of Core Group
5. Long Range Planning for Collaboration beyond this Funding	5. Consensus of Core Group
6. Logistical	6. Crystal
7. Small Scale Resources- small equipment (<\$500) purchases, books, enrichment material, etc	7. Crystal
8. Large Scale Resources-conference travel, large equipment(>\$500) purchases, training materials, etc	8. Consensus of Core Group
9. Setting Policy for Project EMERGE	9. Consensus of Core Group

When seeking consensus of the Core Group we will utilize **gradient decision making** to determine how close or how far we are to reaching a consensus. When in discussion on an issue team members will be asked to write their number on a piece of paper and everyone will vote at the same time by holding their number up for all to see. Our team has devised the following gradient to assist:

5 = Endorsement. I love it.

4 = Agreement with reservation. Basically I like it.

3 = Mixed feelings. I can live with it and support it.

2 = Disagreement. I have trouble supporting it.

1 = Veto. I can't support it and I don't think we should move forward.

If the score is a three or greater, we will consider it consensus. If there is a vote of a one or a two, the team will engage in the following decision making plan to evaluate recommendations and alternatives that can lead to a final consensus.

Step 1- Reaching Consensus

1. Present the issue, not the solution
2. Define the issue
3. Listen
4. Generate options

Step 2- Reaching Closure

1. Post all options
2. Identify benefits and drawbacks
3. Create/agree on solution
4. Test for consensus (ie. "You may not agree with this decision, but can you support it?")

Source: New York State Governor's Office of Employee Relations (2003). Fundamental Team and Meeting Skills. Retrieved April 13, 2007, from <http://www.goer.state.ny.us/train/onlinelearning/FTMS/500s1.html>.

Communications Plan

This communications plan outlines how Project EMERGE will achieve and maintain effective communication. It seeks to outline the structure for keeping the Core Group members informed as progress towards Project goals is being made. Effective communication will work to build teamwork and provide clarity for all involved.

1. A clearly visible meeting schedule, agenda format, and meeting follow up will be utilized.

The Core Group will meet once a month while the Charter is being drafted.

Project EMERGE Director (Crystal Collette) will communicate meeting announcement to Core Group, email an *Agenda* to the group (see Attachment C) at least one business day in advance. The agenda will be drafted by Crystal and Kalina and input from other Core Group members is encouraged. The meeting will be followed up with a *Summary of Decisions Made and Actions to be Taken* that will serve as minutes from the Core Group meeting. Meeting agendas will always include the *Summary of Decisions Made and Actions to be Taken* from the previous meeting. The Project Director will also maintain a growing list of *Summary of Achievements to Date* which will be attached to each agenda. This will serve to maintain a historical record of the decisions made and the accomplishments achieved for Project EMERGE.

2. Format for communication among Core Group members

Crystal and Kalina will communicate directly multiple times each week concerning tasks, related to the progress of the Project. This will occur through phone, email, and at least once weekly through in-person meetings.

All Core Group members are encouraged to inform others of the progress or problems of Project EMERGE through email at any time as opposed to waiting for the scheduled meetings. The Core Group is committed to utilizing email for information exchange and updates in between meetings. When emailing a product in need of review, feedback, or seeking information, a 'due date' for the return email

should be placed in the subject line of the email. This will prompt the recipient that their response is time sensitive.

Not all communication is appropriate for email. Our team commits that when a question or topic seems emotional, highly important, or in need of processing, it will be discussed in person or through a telephone conversation. This will work to reduce misunderstanding and provide clarity. Courteous and respectful language will be maintained throughout email exchanges and meeting discussions. Core group members are encouraged to communicate directly with each other through personal interaction on a routine basis rather than follow traditional hierarchy norms. This will further encourage cross training and relationship building.

3. Creating Safe, Respectful, and Accessible Meetings

A *safe meeting* is defined as a meeting where the facilitator encourages participants to take care of themselves and exit the meeting if needed for any reason and where participants feel that they can do this if desired. If an individual does exit a meeting a team member will check on that person after a few minutes if they do not return. If someone is planning on needing to leave the group early, the team asks that they announce this at the beginning of the meeting.

A *respectful meeting* is defined as a meeting where all participants feel comfortable sharing their thoughts, opinions, experiences, and expertise. An opposite experience would be a meeting where people fear that they will be minimized or discounted.

An *accessible meeting* is defined as a meeting that allows for all persons, including people with disabilities and Deaf people, equal access to the meeting activities and materials.

4. External Communication

Project EMERGE will work to communicate with many external stakeholders to accomplish project goals.

Communication with those stakeholders will take place via phone, email, mail, and/or during personal interactions for the purpose of providing update on the progress of Project EMERGE. Accessibility Task Force Meetings (ATF) will be announced one month in advance and will be followed up with a reminder email (paper letter in large print sent to those without email addresses and/or phone contact) 10 days in advance of the meeting along with a solicitation for accommodation requests. Email will be utilized as a main method of communication with the Accessibility Task Force (ATF) and other community groups. Accessibility will be provided in all written and email communication through use of 16 point font and plain language. Braille copies of email, letters, minutes, and brochures will be provided upon request.

Stakeholders will also need to be kept aware of our progress towards meeting the goals of the project. Our team will utilize the people who are attending ATF meetings to bring information on progress of Project EMERGE back to their agencies. Crystal and Kalina will work together to develop flyers that people can bring back to their agencies as Project EMERGE accomplishes key goals and anticipates moving forward in the next stages of the work. These flyers will also serve as a way for our team to document our outreach and community updates.

5. Dialoguing around Problems and Communication Challenges

Our collaborative acknowledges that problems, barriers, and differences in perspective will arise as we partner in this work. We seek to grow from the misunderstandings and learn from our differences in an effort to build a stronger collaborative. We acknowledge that individuals on our Core Group bring a diverse set of communication styles and commit to learning as we move forward.

We commit to making an effort to always **speak from our own experience** (“From my perspective, women with disabilities often experience...”) as opposed to making generalizations (“Women commonly experience...”). We encourage our team to **check our perceptions** with others in an effort to reduce inaccurately interpreting how others feel or what their opinion is. We plan to use **specific feedback** through email, in meetings, and in personal conversation to describe rather than evaluate what we heard the other communicate. The team commits to using an **objective language format** when communicating with one another, as opposed to imposing a format characteristic to the fields that the members represent.

6. Confidentiality and Safety

Confidentiality ensures that information is accessible only to those authorized to have access, and this is an underlying principle of our work. Confidentiality is essential to the establishment of an atmosphere of confidence and trust between the professionals and the individuals they serve.

Project EMERGE recognizes that in both the disability and domestic and sexual violence fields confidentiality is of utmost importance. We commit that our team will maintain an open dialogue around consumer/client confidentiality at all times. Our Needs and Assets Assessment Proposal will specifically focus and make plans for confidentiality.

Confidentiality and safety for participants in our Core Group has also been discussed. We recognize that this work may not only be our chosen profession but also touch our lives personally. Personal disclosure on our team will be kept confidential, respected, and not shared or discussed. When discussing the project and setting policy for the work we ask that if an individual or an agency is in need of confidentiality they specifically request that. Other than personal disclosure, the discussions of our team will not be considered confidential, unless, as highlighted, there is a specific request. Our communication and decision making plan will work to provide a first layer of safety for our Core Group. The values listed in this Collaboration Charter and understanding of healthy relationships will assist us as we create safety and trust on our team.

Safety provides confidence and assurance that one will be protected, to the best of the abilities of others against physical, social, spiritual, political, emotional, occupational, psychological, or other types or consequences of harm, damage, or error.

Safety will also be strongly considered as we set policy for Project EMERGE and engage in activities with consumers/clients. Our Needs and Assets Assessment Proposal will focus on issues of safety for all participants.

7. Common Terminology and Vocabulary

Domestic and Sexual Violence Field Acronym Dictionary, see Attachment D

Disability and Deaf Field Acronym Dictionary, see Attachment E

Conflict Resolution

(Attachment F)

When consensus based decision making and communication plan are not able to bring the group or individuals to an agreement, a plan for addressing the disagreement has to be established. Project EMERGE recognizes that both of our fields specialize in empowering individuals who are historically oppressed. We value conflict resolution and negotiation that upholds the values previously stated in this Collaboration Charter. The following is our Conflict Resolution protocol, which will be applied if a conflict situation arises.

What is Conflict? The most common definition states:

“Conflict is a form of competitive behavior between people or groups under circumstances in which two or more people compete over perceived or actual incompatible goals or resources.”

Conflict can arise in all areas of our lives. The myth that conflict is negative or bad should be avoided at all costs. Wherever there are individual perspectives, interests, ideas, creativity, innovations, needs, desires, beliefs, cultures and values, which basically means that wherever there are people - the potential for conflict exists. The goal in conflict resolution is not to eliminate conflict but to manage it in a creative and productive way.

We recognize that conflict is not always negative but it is often an opportunity for the team to learn how to function in a better way. Since every conflict is unique, every conflict resolution process must be tailored to the individuals and context of the situations. The attached Conflict Resolution Protocol (Attachment F) includes eight steps will serve as a guide to the members of Project Emerge when managing a conflict through a process appropriate to the people and circumstances involved.

Ongoing Project Evaluation

- **Conduct Mutual Evaluations of our Collaboration twice a year**

We plan to utilize ‘The Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory’ twice a year in an effort to assess our collaborations strengths and weaknesses. By stopping to ask ourselves and examine- "How is each agency changing internally to help the whole system improve?"- We will work to hold our team more accountable to addressing the challenges of women with disabilities who are survivors. The Project Director will initiate the delivery of this inventory at a Core Group meeting and Project EMERGE members will submit their completed survey a Program Associate at Vera Institute. Allissa has agreed to provide the team with themes and feedback on group results. If the team would like to request outside evaluation from an Associate through the Vera Institute this is possible and available.

- **Evaluation of Goals and Progress on the Work Plan**

Progress on goals will be monitored by the Core Group in check in meetings. Our team commits to flexibility and responding to individual strengths to meet the goals of Project EMERGE. We see this charter and the work plan as an evolving document that will help us track our progress and record our accomplishments of goals.

Giving Credit & Showing Appreciation

- Openly thanking individuals for their work during meetings and in emails.
- Including an acknowledgements section when writing a report or giving a presentation.
- Giving annual recognition and celebrating successes at a collaboration social event or Core Group retreat.

Vera House, Inc.
Project EMERGE Director
Job Description and Responsibilities

The Vera House Project EMERGE Director is responsible for the implementation of the Education and Technical Assistance Grant to End Violence Against Women with Disabilities which provides training and technical assistance regarding women with disabilities who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking. This three year Project is funded by the Office on Violence Against Women/U.S. Department of Justice. The Project includes analyzing current systems serving women with disabilities and those serving victims of interpersonal violence, including identifying system gaps. The goal of the Project is to develop training and technical assistance to address gaps and enhance collaborations in order to better serve women with disabilities who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- I. Community Collaboration
 - a. Partner with multiple agencies to achieve Project goals
 - b. Solicit input from victims and service providers, as well as from other community stakeholders
 - c. Seek new sources of funding to continue the Project beyond the current grant period and to support new goals of the collaboration and project
- II. Technical Assistance and Curriculum Development
 - a. Develop and implement training and technical assistance for a variety of recipients to address identified gaps in system
- III. Evaluation and Reporting
 - a. Develop and implement data collection processes
 - b. Complete Comprehensive Needs Assessment (including conducting focus groups and key stakeholder interviews) and gaps analysis followed by development of an Strategic Plan for the project
 - c. Provide reports, statistics, and other documentation as required meeting Federal reporting requirements
- IV. Relationship Building with Partner Agency and Community
 - a. Solicit input and guidance from the Grant Project Core Group
- V. Agency Involvement
 - a. The Project Director is supervised by the Coalition Coordinator/Education Director
 - b. Attend team and committee meetings, required trainings and Project development activities
 - c. Attend regular agency staff and programmatic meetings

REQUIREMENTS: Knowledge of disabilities issues and/or violence against women. Degree in human services, criminal justice, or related field (Bachelor's required, Master's preferred) and experience in working with systems and collaborative teams. Strong writing, interpersonal, and organizational skills. Experience in the development and delivery of training. Person with a disability a plus.

ARISE Job Description

Job Title: Community Liaison
Reports to: Director of Independent Living
FLSA: Exempt

Job Summary: The Community Liaison will build and establish lasting relationships with Onondaga County community partners by raising awareness of the issues effecting women with disabilities who have experienced domestic violence and/or sexual assault.

Essential Functions

- Provide leadership in the overall project panning to accomplish set goals
- Collaborate closely with project director
- Serve as a consultant to the project on all disability/Deaf related issues
- Conduct research, compile data and create written materials to support the efforts of the project
- Assist in establish and implement short and long range goals, objectives, policies, and operating procedures
- Build relationships with community provider agencies and governmental entities
- Develop training tools and conduct presentations to various community partners
- Attend all project related meetings as well as selected other events relevant to the mission of the agency
- Assist in plan and coordinate public event and communication efforts, to include public relations and community outreach
- Promote strong relationships among collaborators
- Other duties as assigned

Qualifications:

- Bachelor Degree or equivalent
- Personal experience with a disability or knowledge of disability issues
- Excellent public speaking skills
- Understanding to issues related to domestic violence
- Word, Excel, Power Point
- Use a variety of research techniques to gather relevant information, including document analysis, surveys, case studies, interviews (face-to-face, telephone, online)

Rev. 5-2007



MEETING AGENDA AND SUMMARY



Accessibility Task Force

Meeting Date: Friday, June 29, 2007

Location: Enable

Start and End Times: 9:00am-10:30am

Action Agenda

Time	Agenda Item	Who
9:00 am	 Coffee & Meeting People	All
9:15 am	Meeting Begins- Everyone Introduces Themselves	All
9:20 am		Crystal Collette
9:25 am		Kalina Leshchishin
10:00 am	Project EMERGE Needs Assessment Work Group Update on Last Meeting	Crystal Collette

Attachment C

Decisions Made & Next Steps From the Last Meeting

Meeting Date: May 23, 2007		
Goal of Meeting: Task Force Purpose and Goal Setting		
People who were at the Last Meeting: Elisa Morales, Loren Cunningham, Nina Lutz, Randi Bregman, Kalina Leshchishin, Sally Johnston, Agnes McCray, Crystal Collette, Deanna Opdyke, Kathy O'Connell, Carolyn DaVia, Sue Farr, Linda Grady, Tom McKeown, Lejla A, Kara Vanderveer, Stacy Nunn, Diane O'Brien, Mark Okazaki, Kristin Leeson, Jo Rosen, Linda Grady, Diane O'Brien, Mark Okazaki, Monica Brown		
Decision Made & Next Steps	Who	When
<p>Brainstorm on TOP VISION in Focus Areas→ <u>Education & Training</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitivity Training Across System (develop a train the trainer w/best practices) • Work with System to create long standing policy change around the intersection of violence and disability and deafness • THROUGH AN EMPOWERMENT PERSPECTIVE- Create Dialogue and Education for people with disabilities and deaf people on healthy relationships and healthy sexuality (develop a train the trainer w/best practices) <p><u>Improving Physical & Attitudinal Accessibility in our Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with Residential Service Providers Group specifically regarding shelter accessibility • Partner in offering accessibility audits in area shelters <p><u>Creating Broad Attitudinal Change</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Craft a community message that ties in with above initiatives 	All	On Going
<p>Reviewed draft of Accessibility Task Force Purpose Statement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will come back to the committee for continued review at the next meeting 	All	6/29/07
<p>Project EMERGE Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant Project- Needs Assessment • ATF will be utilized as a 'think tank' and consulting group 	Crystal Collette	On Going Summer 07

Attachment C

Things We Are Proud Of...

Achievements	Who	When
First Meeting of the Disability Task Force of the Syracuse Area Domestic and Sexual Violence Coalition at Enable	Project EMERGE	March 13, 2007
Name changed from 'Disability Task Force' to Accessibility Task Force (ATF)	All on ATF	April 17, 2007

Commonly-Used Vera House Abbreviations and Terms

ADA	Assistant District Attorney
CPS	Child Protective Services
DA	District Attorney
DCJS	Department of Criminal Justice Services
DSS	Department of Social Services
DV	Domestic Violence
EC	Emergency Contraception
ECHO	Envisioning Change & Healthy Options for Families
IDVC	Integrated Domestic Violence Court
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning
MVP	Mentors in Violence Prevention
NYSDOH	New York State Department of Health
NYSOCFS	New York State Office of Children & Family Services
SA	Sexual Assault
SV	Sexual Violence
SANE	Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner
SOAR	Seeking Out Answers and Resources
STEPS	Striving Towards Empowerment & Personal Self-Awareness
TANF	Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
VHN	Vera House North
VAWA	Violence Against Women Act

Domestic Violence- a pattern of assaultive and/or coercive behaviors, including physical, sexual, and psychological attacks, as well as economic coercion, that adults or adolescents use against their intimate partners.

Sexual Assault- includes, but is not limited to rape, unwanted touching, being forced or pressured to perform sexual acts, forced vaginal, anal or oral penetration by body parts or foreign objects, sexual name calling and sexual harassment.

Power and Control- the intentional use of abusive tactics used to gain power and to exert control over another in order to meet the abuser's needs. The abuser aims to acquire and employ *power* in the relationship or interaction. With sufficient power, the abuser can *control* another person – forcing or coercing him to do as the abuser wishes.

Personal Responsibility- we are all responsible for what we say and do, we can control or change only ourselves, we make choices before we act, and all of our behavior has consequences.

Commonly-Used ARISE Abbreviations and Terms

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADL	Activities of Daily Living
ASL	American Sign Language
CBVH	Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped
CDPAP	Consumer Directed Personal Assistant Program
CP	Cerebral Palsy
CSE	Committee on Special Education
DDSO	Developmental Disabilities Service Office
DSO	Department of Social Services
ED	Emotional Disturbance
FBA	Functional Behavioral Assessment
IL	Independent Living
ILS	Independent Living Skills
LD	Learning Disabled
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
MR	Mental Retardation
PWD	Person with a Disability
SAS	Supplementary Aids & Services
SBST	School-Based Support Team
SILC	State Independent Living Council
SSA	Social Security Administration
SSDI	Social Security Disability Insurance
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
SRO	State Review Officer
TBI	Traumatic Brain Injury
TTY	Teletypewriter
VESID	Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities
VR	Vocational Rehabilitation
WEP	Work Experience Program

Accessible – to make something user friendly to people of all capabilities.

Braille – a written language, a System of embossed characters formed by using a Braille cell, a combination of six dots consisting of two vertical columns of three dots each, which is usually used by people who are Blind.

Cognitive Disability - a disability that impacts and individual's ability to access, process, or remember information

Deaf Culture -The Deaf community has its own culture. In the United States, one of the strongest unifying and central components of Deaf culture is the use of American Sign Language (ASL). It makes the group a linguistic and cultural minority. This shared language serves to bring together groups of people who are deaf and hard of hearing. In addition to a shared language, people within Deaf culture also share common beliefs, values, norms, customs, institutions, and history.

Developmental Disability – a life-long disability attributable to mental and/or physical or combination of mental and physical [impairments](#), manifested prior to the age of twenty-two.

Disability – an individual with a physical or a mental impairment who is substantially limited in one or more of the major life activities of the individual. According to the World Health Organization, disability is not something that a person has but, instead, something that occurs outside of the person—the person has a functional limitation. Disability occurs in the interaction between a person, his or her functional ability, and the environment. A person’s environment can be the physical environment, communication environment, information environment, and social and policy environment.

Independent Living Philosophy - people with disabilities have the same basic rights as people without disabilities to fully participate in their communities. People with disabilities have the right to self-determination – to living as independently as possible and making choices that shape their own futures.

Learning Disability - Learning disabilities refer to actual neurological impediments to processing sound or visual cues, and other components of processing or synthesizing information. It can be explained as a “short-circuit” in one or several of the components of brain processing: input, memory, integration, and output of information.

People First Language – People First Language puts the person before the disability, and it describes what a person *has*, not who a person *is*. Example: a person with a disability, as opposed to a disabled person

Physical Disability – bodily impairment. See disability definition.

Simple Text/Plain Language – ensuring that documents are written in a clear and simple way so they may be more easily understood by people of all abilities, such as using 18pt. font, with clear spaces and symbols/pictures.

Universal design - designing programs, services, tools, facilities and the physical environment as a whole so that it is easy to use, without modification, by the widest range of possible people, taking into account a variety of capabilities people have.

Conflict Resolution Protocol

Step 1: Identify the Conflict.

The involved parties should become aware if conflict exists at the beginning stages. Are there any changes in the behavior of the members? Have the social patterns among the members of the group changed: eye contact, level of humor, word choice, tone of voice, body language, change in social patterns, body language, etc.

Step 2: Decide Whether to Intervene

The Group needs to make a decision if the situation requires some sort of an intervention and what the outcomes of each chosen possibility would be.

- What would be the consequences of not processing the conflict?
- If an intervention is necessary, the Group will have to decide on who is the most appropriate and most objective person for handling the conflict resolution process. This person is usually referred to as the facilitator. S/he will have to be familiar with what a conflict resolution process is and everyone has to agree for this person to be the facilitator. The facilitator will then initiate a process following the steps outlined in this protocol.
- If an intervention is decided, the facilitator will have to carefully examine the situation and select the appropriate conflict resolution process from the following choices: facilitation, mediation, arbitration or legal action.

Step 3: Identify Parties, Issues, and Emotions

In this step, the appointed individual will carefully examine the situation and s/he will collect as much information as possible about the conflict, including gathering each person's perspective on the issue. Here has to be decided who are the participating parties, what are the underlying issues, and the emotional content of each of the parties. Depending on the situation, individuals and groups involved will be encouraged by the facilitator to speak from their own experience when describing the conflict. From the onset, the facilitator will mentor and role model for others the appropriate conduct of behavior. S/he will emphasize the need for people to be separated from the problem. When appropriate, the facilitator will encourage the participants to consider and share personal motives, interests, positions and ideas for solutions to the conflict?

Step 4: Analyze the Conflict

At this point, the facilitator will have to formally analyze the conflict based on the information collected in Step 3. This step will require tools such as analytic abilities, judgment and creative thinking. The problem will have to be sorted in one of six specific categories: relationship, identity, data, structural, and value or interest conflicts. The facilitator should be clear on the positions of the participating parties, their involvement, interests and emotional condition.

The facilitator can utilize the following questions to assist in her/his detailed analysis:

- Can this conflict be handled by an informal process?
- Who are all the people with stakes in this conflict?
- What are the power relationships among the individuals?
- What gender or cultural differences need to be considered?
- What are each party's positions/solutions?
- What are the assumptions made by each side?
- Do some individuals share interests and positions?
- Is the conflict interpersonal or it is induced by the system or both?

- Are there known limitations to potential resolutions that the facilitator must impose on behalf of the organization?
- Consider why the problem exists and what the causes are before proposing answers.

Step 5: Design the Process

In this step the facilitator and/or parties involved will plan the way, in which the parties will come together to address the conflict. The analysis performed in Step 4 will offer the necessary information for designing a process that is specific to the conflict situation. Here are some guiding questions:

- What are the goals of the process?
- How much time will the process take?
- How will power imbalances be handled?
- How will management handle people's emotions regarding the conflict?
- In what setting will the meeting occur?
- If this is a system-induced conflict, who needs to be consulted if changes in policy or procedure are part of the resolution?

Step 6: Educate Parties and Get Agreement to Participate

At this stage, the facilitator will explain everything that will happen in the conflict resolution process and ask each person to agree to participate. Every aspect, positive and negative, of the conflict has to be clearly explained to every individual. In some occasions, individuals will agree to participate if they have someone they trust present at the meeting. In order for outsiders to be present during the negotiation, everyone has to agree to this prior the negotiation.

Step 7: Conduct the Conflict Negotiation

This is the actual conflict negotiation stage, when the facilitator holds the meetings and helps the parties find creative solutions and a plan with which to manage their differences. The following are some basic steps that can be applied.

- The facilitator sets up the meeting environment.
- The facilitator opens the meeting and explains the process steps.
- The facilitator then assists the group in setting the ground rules for the conversation.
- Each party is given an opportunity to tell their story without interruptions.
- Facilitator can invite different questions for clarification of different experiences.
- Discuss and sort issues. Facilitator assists parties in finding common areas of agreement.
- Review and modify the issues and possible solutions. Discuss the pros and cons of the various solutions as a group.
- Agree to a resolution that is clear and applicable.
- Formalize the agreement.

Step 8: Celebrate and Check-In

This is the time to celebrate a successful conflict resolution process. The facilitator should praise everyone's efforts in this process and invite the parties to begin their relationship on a positive note by encouraging everyone to shake hands. At this final step, the facilitator needs to set up a system to be sure that the agreement is followed; the solutions are effective and the parties are satisfied. Successful conflict management often leads to growth, innovation, new ways of thinking, or additional opportunities.