Project EMERGE Strategic Plan

Spring 2008



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I. INTRODUCTION

Background

For many years the Syracuse Area Domestic and Sexual Violence Coalition has recognized and sought to improve community response to people with disabilities and d/Deaf people who experience domestic and sexual violence. Agencies, including ARISE, who advocate with, and provide service to, individuals having disabilities recognized an unmet need. They were sure that they were involved with people with disabilities and d/Deaf people who had experienced domestic and sexual violence, but they wanted to be more explicitly helpful. In addition, agencies with long histories of serving people who experience domestic and sexual violence wanted to become more accessible to people with disabilities and Deaf people. The need in our community has always been great, and yet the ability to come together around this issue had been a consistent challenge. The time was right for collaboration.

Many in our community were energized when Vera House and ARISE received a three year grant from the Office on Violence Against Women, Education and Technical Assistance Grants to End Violence Against Women with Disabilities Grant Program. The receipt of these funds enabled Vera House and ARISE to form a collaborative relationship called Project EMERGE. The initial goal of the collaboration was to formalize our relationship through the development of a document that guides our work process- our Collaboration Charter. The team then moved to convene the Accessibility Task Force, a new committee of the Syracuse Area Domestic and Sexual Violence Coalition.

In an effort to move our work forward, the team planned and conducted a comprehensive Needs & Assets Assessment. This was the first step for Project EMERGE in understanding the opportunities and gaps in our community for systematic change. A Needs & Assets Assessment Report was written to summarize the results of a Needs & Assets Assessment that was conducted by Project EMERGE during March, April and May 2008. The findings of the report were utilized in the development of this Strategic Plan for our work within our organizations and our community. This plan provides the specifics around how we will implement change to improve our community response for women with disabilities and d/Deaf women who have experienced domestic and sexual violence.

Understanding Project EMERGE

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.

Vera House and ARISE have joined the expertise of the personnel at each agency to create Project EMERGE. This partnership is structured around *INTERDEPENDENCE*, rather than our two agencies

just 'working together.' Together we are working to create a system of resourcing each other to better deliver services. 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 other's 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

It is also important to understand what Project EMERGE is not able to focus on with the current funding from the Office of Violence Against Women. Project EMERGE is prohibited from providing direct service to survivors with disabilities or d/Deaf survivors or conducting specific efforts around the prevention of domestic and sexual violence. The project also can not do specific work within the criminal justice system. These issues may be part of the long range planning of Project EMERGE as we work to create sustainable systems change.

Overview of Needs & Assets Assessment

"Abused women with disabilities have a double whammy. I didn't know whether to deal with my abuse first or my disability. I didn't know where to turn, and I lost all hope." - survivor in a Listening Circle

This Needs & Assets Assessment sought to seek out often silenced or invisible voices. Project EMERGE conducted a Needs & Assets Assessment, hereafter referred to as NA, in an effort to develop an informed Strategic Plan. In the quote above, a survivor eloquently summarized the experiences of many of her peers. The purpose of the NA was to gather information on Vera House, ARISE, and community agency policies and practices, as well as the experiences of women with disabilities and d/Deaf women who experience domestic and sexual violence.

Project EMERGE utilized three methods to conduct the NA. Twenty seven (27) interviews were conducted with key stakeholders at ARISE, Vera House, and other agencies within the community. The interviews provided a global, policy perspective on the strengths and weaknesses at our agencies and in our county. Listening Circles, or focus groups, were then held with over fifty (50) participants. Project EMERGE brought together our consumers, women with disabilities, d/Deaf women, and survivors (often people who identified as both) to share their experiences with our agencies. Direct service providers at both Vera House and ARISE also met to dialogue about the intersection of disability, d/Deafness, and domestic and sexual violence in the work they do. The final leg of our NA was an online survey for direct service providers at Vera House and ARISE. The survey assisted Project EMERGE in developing a comprehensive understanding of how to better meet the needs of direct service providers.

Findings from the NA are centered on six major categories- trust, knowledge and practice, rapport with law enforcement, outreach to d/Deaf women, merger of strengths, and survivor centered services.

- **1. TRUST:** Women with disabilities who have experienced domestic and sexual violence do not trust the current service delivery system's ability to holistically meet their needs. This is particularly true for women with mental health disabilities.
 - Survivors report not being believed when they disclosed experiences of domestic and sexual violence.

- Women with disabilities report that it has been their experience that Vera House's shelter has limited physical accessibility. This is also true for other shelters in the community, as well as non-disability focused services. Women with disabilities and d/Deaf women also report that Vera House could improve in its ability to provide a wide array of accommodations.
- Survivors with mental health disabilities do not find that services at Vera House, or in the greater community, adequately meets their needs.
- **2. KNOWLEDGE & PRACTICE:** A general lack of knowledge around the intersection between disability, d/Deafness, and domestic and sexual violence creates inadequate response for survivors with disabilities and d/Deaf survivors. Both service providers and survivors note that the holistic needs of women with disabilities and d/Deaf women who are survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence are not fully and consistently met at ARISE, Vera House, or elsewhere in Onondaga County due to this lack of a joint skill set at the agency and provider level.
 - Service providers are not knowledgeable about the intersection of disabilities, d/Deafness, and domestic and sexual violence, and this impacts their ability to provide services.
 - Direct Service Providers at ARISE are not comfortable or prepared to incorporate domestic and sexual violence into their work.
 - Direct service providers at Vera House and ARISE are eager to learn and expand their ability to provide best practice services to women with disabilities and d/Deaf women who are also survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence.
- **3. RAPPORT WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT:** Survivors with disabilities and d/Deaf survivors and their service providers report many experiences of inadequate response from law enforcement which has created a legacy of mistrust.
 - Survivors with disabilities and their service providers report many experiences of inadequate response from law enforcement which has created a legacy of mistrust.
- **4. OUTREACH TO d/DEAF WOMEN:** The d/Deaf community sees itself as isolated from hearing service providers that serve populations other than the d/Deaf. The long history of struggling to obtain services has led the d/Deaf to experience difficulty trusting or reaching out to unfamiliar service providers.
 - d/Deaf women in the community are unaware of the services available when they
 experience domestic and/or sexual violence.
 - Trust is extremely important to establish with d/Deaf women. As the d/Deaf community
 is small and most individuals are familiar with each other, there is fear of gossip and
 loss of confidentiality.
 - d/Deaf women reported numerous issues surrounding working with Interpreters.
- **5. MERGER OF STRENGTHS:** Vera House, ARISE, and the larger human service community provide a rich array of services to women with disabilities and/or women who are survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence. However, these services are often delivered in silos. There is a general lack of support for d/Deaf women in our community. Project EMERGE can engage the d/Deaf community by meeting, sharing strengths and learning from each other.
 - Onondaga County is a service-rich community for women with disabilities and women who are survivors of domestic and sexual violence.
 - ARISE and Vera House are both respected agencies within the community at delivering services to their target populations.
 - Service Providers from each field need to improve their ability to cross resource each other.
- **6. SURVIVOR CENTERED SERVICES:** Women with disabilities and d/Deaf women need to be respected and treated as knowledgeable about their situation and needs. Domestic and sexual violence and disability service providers are most empowering to survivors with

disabilities and d/Deaf survivors when they utilize language and approach that focuses on the strengths of the individual and allows them to be in charge of their healing and independence.

- Language should focus on the strengths of survivors with disabilities and d/Deaf women.
- Women with disabilities and d/Deaf women are most empowered when her service providers work together while allowing her to lead the process

Key Short-Term Initiatives

Project EMERGE has developed four initiatives of focus for the remainder of the current grant. These initiatives center on promoting systems change beginning with our own agencies. These initiatives were selected by a team of ARISE and Vera House staff who are positioned to make change within the agencies, as well as participation from crucial stakeholders at other agencies in the community.

- 1. Project EMERGE will build the capacity of Vera House and ARISE to respond to women with disabilities and Deaf women who disclose domestic and/or sexual violence.
- 2. Vera House and ARISE will move towards increased access for all survivors with disabilities (including mental health) and d/Deaf survivors.
- 3. Vera House and ARISE will develop policies, procedures, and practices that enable each agency to provide best practice services to survivors with disabilities (including mental health) and d/Deaf survivors.
- 4. Project EMERGE will build lasting relationships with the local Deaf community, focusing on developing d/Deaf leaders in the area of domestic and sexual violence.

These initiatives were developed and chosen by the Project EMERGE Core Group and a select assembly of key stakeholders from our community. The Needs & Assets Assessment found these initiatives as key needs with unique opportunity for change at ARISE and Vera House. They were chosen because they are most inline with the vision and mission of Project EMERGE as well as congruent with the scope of the grant.

These initiatives will work to build a movement at ARISE and Vera House that will shift the way services are delivered to person centered approach. Every level of agency services will be addressed from service delivery to survivors with disabilities and d/Deaf survivors to Vera House's relationship with the Deaf community. Project EMERGE will systematically examine the need to create lasting interdependence between Vera House and ARISE through finding joint solutions to key, short-term initiatives.

1. Project EMERGE will build the capacity of Vera House and ARISE to respond to women with disabilities and Deaf women who disclose domestic and/or sexual violence.

Connection to Vision and Mission

There is great energy and excitement from direct service providers at Vera House and ARISE around collaborating in serving women with disabilities and d/Deaf women who are survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence. Staff at Vera House and ARISE have stressed, since the beginning of Project EMERGE, that education around the intersection of domestic and sexual violence and people with disabilities and Deaf people is key to improving their ability to serve. The Needs & Assets Assessment determined that this desire for learning would be best served through creating a team of survivors with disabilities and Deaf survivors to develop and assist with conducting trainings at ARISE and Vera House. This empowerment approach fits with our vision for Project EMERGE and will lay the foundation for person centered service delivery that is accessible and trauma sensitive at both ARISE and Vera House.

Sustainability

Administrators at both Vera House and ARISE have independently, and separate from Project EMERGE, been looking at staff orientation and training within the agency. This creates an exceptional opportunity for the agencies to partner in an ongoing way around training all new staff in person centered and trauma sensitive perspectives. Project EMERGE was created and has grown out of the shared values between our movements and agencies; partnership in supporting our staff only makes sense. Each agency has staff that will partner with Project EMERGE staff to develop and implement the actions and steps listed in this initiative. They will then be able to effectively continue the collaboration between our agencies and also become familiar and comfortable with working with the Multidisciplinary Team.

The Managers Retreat will work to create relationships between administrators at Vera House and ARISE. Due to high direct staff turnover at each of our agencies, it is felt that program managers, who typically have built careers at our agencies, are best positioned to connect with each other around making changes in service delivery, collaborating, and sharing resources.

Action	Steps	Responsibility	Tim	elin	е										
a. Project EMERGE will dev EMERGE.	velop a trained group of survivors with disabilitie	es who represent a wide range of perspectives, E												1 -	
			Sept 08	Oct 08	Nov 08	Dec 08	Jan 09	Feb 09	March 09	April 09	May 09	June 09	July 09	Aug 09	Sept 09
Recruit participants for the multidisciplinary team (MDT).	Develop and document Project EMERGE expectations and responsibilities of the MDT.	Project EMERGE Core Group													
,	Determine compensation for the MDT.	Project EMERGE Core Group													
	Create recruitment flyer and materials for the MDT.	Project EMERGE Staff													

	Recruit participation for the MDT utilizing the Accessibility Task Force of the Syracuse Area Domestic and Sexual Violence Coalition and Self-Advocates.	Project EMERGE Staff						
	Hold an informational session about the MDT.	Project EMERGE Staff						
	Interview and select the MDT.	Project EMERGE Staff						
Train and support the multidisciplinary team (MDT).	Develop the training and a schedule for regular support of the MDT.	Project EMERGE Staff						
	Hold training for MDT	Project EMERGE Staff						
	Seek feedback from the MDT on effectiveness of training.	Project EMERGE Specialist						
	Seek feedback from the MDT on effectiveness of on going support plan.	Project EMERGE Specialist						

b. Project EMERGE will formalize and institutionalize partnership between Vera House and ARISE that promotes agency cultures of person centered services that address consumers as whole people vs. survivors or women with particular disabilities.

			Sept 08	Oct 08	Nov 08	Dec 08	Jan 09	Feb 09	March 09	April 09	May 09	June 09	July 09	Aug 09	Sept 09
Partner with	Collect resources and examples of person centered service delivery training models.	Project EMERGE Staff													
multidisciplinary team to develop person centered	Hold brainstorming session with the MDT.	Project EMERGE Staff													
service delivery trainings for ARISE and Vera House staff.	Draft person centered service delivery experiential training curriculum.	Project EMERGE Staff													
1 louis stain	Review plan jointly with MDT and Project EMERGE Core group.	Project EMERGE Staff, Project EMERGE Core Group, MDT													
Institutionalize joint	Collect resources and examples of person centered service delivery training models.	Project EMERGE Staff													
mandatory staff training on person centered service delivery at ARISE	Draft person centered service delivery experiential training curriculum.	Project EMERGE Staff													
and Vera House through quarterly learning opportunities.	Hold a joint retreat with key Vera House and ARISE program managers to review and approve the join person centered service delivery experiential training curriculum.	Project EMERGE Core Group													

	Submit person centered service delivery experiential training curriculum for OVW approval. Hold first joint mandatory staff training	Project EMERGE Director Project EMERGE Staff						
	sessions. Seek direct staff feedback on curriculum and make necessary changes.	Project EMERGE Specialist						
	Institute quarterly joint mandatory staff training	Project EMERGE Core Group						
Build opportunities for ARISE and Vera House	Promote partnership and collaboration between direct service providers at Vera House and ARISE	Project EMERGE Staff						
staff to learn about the intersection of domestic	Develop a joint protocol for confidentiality	Project EMERGE Staff and ARISE and Vera House Program Managers						
and sexual violence and disability and Deafness through connecting with each other.	Document and track cases in which ARISE and Vera House partner to serve consumers and incorporate these examples into the person centered service delivery trainings	Project EMERGE Staff						

c. Vera House and ARISE will develop and implement a joint, mandatory, new employee orientation and training. Sept March April Sept 08 80 80 80 09 09 09 09 09 09 09 09 09 Project EMERGE Specialist Collect resources and examples of new employee training models. Partner with multidisciplinary team to Hold brainstorming session with the MDT. Project EMERGE Staff develop new employee Project EMERGE Specialist orientation and training Draft person centered service delivery experiential training curriculum. plan. Review plan jointly with MDT and Project Project EMERGE Staff EMERGE Core group. Develop a training plan. Project EMERGE Specialist Present training plan at joint ARISE and Vera Orient and train new Project EMERGE Staff employees at both Vera House program managers retreat. House and ARISE Hold first joint training for new employees. Project EMERGE Staff quarterly (or as needed). Seek feedback from new employees and **Project EMERGE Specialist** their supervisors on the training. Develop a schedule or plan for ongoing joint Project EMERGE Core Group new employee training. d. Vera House and ARISE will develop creative and diverse opportunities for ongoing learning and support for staff. Feb March Sept Oct Nov Dec Jan April Mav June July Aug Sept 80 80 80 09 09 <u>0</u>9 09 09 80 09 09 09 Project EMERGE Director Research innovative management Implement innovative techniques that motivate person centered service delivery management techniques Connect with other initiatives around person Project EMERGE Director that motivate person centered service delivery centered work in our community. at Vera House and Project EMERGE Staff Plan a half day retreat for Vera House and ARISE. ARISE program managers and agency leadership. Hold ½ day retreat. Project EMERGE Core Group ARISE and Vera House Program Managers Plan person centered service delivery kick off and Leadership, Project EMERGE Staff Facilitate person centered training meetings at manager's retreat. service delivery kick off Arrange details for Vera House and ARISE Project EMERGE Staff training meetings in all team meetings. Vera House and ARISE Conduct person centered service delivery Project EMERGE Core Group team meetings. kick off training meetings in all Vera House and ARISE team meetings. Project EMERGE Specialist Seek feedback from staff on the training.

2. Vera House and ARISE will move towards increased access for all survivors with disabilities (including mental health) and Deaf survivors.

Connection to Vision and Mission

Creating accessibility and a holistic response for survivors with disabilities and Deaf survivors is the center of what Project EMERGE seeks to accomplish. Staff at every level within Vera House are very aware of the physical limitations at both the shelter and Administrative office. Policy and practice review of the direct service programming at Vera House will focus on making it routine for staff to begin the conversation and provide an opportunity for the consumer to voice what is not working if they are in need of an accommodation. At ARISE, integrating trauma sensitivity into all programming will be a culture shift. The months of planning that Project EMERGE has conducted has laid the foundation for screening, assessment, and crisis response around domestic and sexual violence at ARISE.

Sustainability

Project EMERGE will utilize this implementation phase of this grant to institutionalize the changes listed in this initiative at both ARISE and Vera House. Vera House is committed to find community resources to improve our physical accessibility and fund ASL Interpretation. At ARISE, Project EMERGE will also institutionalize changes and train program managers in supporting these changes as a new way of delivering more comprehensive services. Conducting ongoing Listening Circles at each agency will become part of our routine client service evaluation. Administrative staff at each agency who focus on program reporting and evaluation will attend and begin to facilitate Listening Circles so that they can be continued post funding.

Action	Steps Resp	onsibility	Tim	elin	e										
a. Project EMERGE will sup	pport Vera House and ARISE to update outrea	ch materials and methods to be more accessible	at Vera	House	and t	rauma	a sens	itive at	ARISE.						
			Sept 08	Oct 08	Nov 08	Dec 08	Jan 09	Feb 09	March 09	April 09	May 09	June 09	July 09	Aug 09	Sept 09
Conduct a review of Vera House and ARISE	Gather all Vera House and ARISE outreach materials. Prioritize materials that should be reviewed first.	Project EMERGE Core Group, ARISE and Vera House Development Departments													
outreach materials and develop new, targeted, joint outreach materials	Arrange, with Accessing Safety, a site visit from an Associate to assist with the review outreach materials.	Project EMERGE Director													
with Accessing Safety Associate and the	Hold site visit with Accessing Safety Associate and MDT.	Project EMERGE Staff, ARISE and Vera House Development Departments													

Make changes to outreach materials. Draft new, targeted, joint outreach materials. Develop alternative formats of all.	Project EMERGE Staff, ARISE and Vera House Development Departments					
Accessing Safety Associate and MDT to review revised outreach materials.	Project EMERGE Staff					
Submit for approval by OVW and other agency funders as applicable.	Project EMERGE Director					
Finalize revised outreach materials.	Project EMERGE Staff, ARISE and Vera House Development Departments					
Publish updated outreach materials.	ARISE and Vera House Development Departments					
Kick off distribution campaign in the community.	Project EMERGE Core Group					

b. Project EMERGE will support Vera House in conducting an accessibility review and implementing an action plan to make changes.

			Sept 08	Oct 08	Nov 08	Dec 08	Jan 09	Feb 09	March 09	April 09	May 09	June 09	July 09	Aug 09	Sept 09
Conduct a comprehensive accessibility review with all Vera House programs	Research other accessibility review tools, being sure to include physical and attitudinal accessibility.	Project EMERGE Specialist													
and facilities.	Tailor tools for review of Vera House in partnership with MDT.	Project EMERGE Staff, MDT													
	Submit tool for OVW approval	Project EMERGE Director													
	Recruit local accessibility review leader to work with selected MDT members.	Project EMERGE Specialist, Beata Karpinska-Prehn & MaryAnn Miller (ARISE)													
	Conduct Accessibility review with all Vera House programs and facilities.	Project EMERGE Specialist, Beata Karpinska-Prehn & MaryAnn Miller (ARISE), Vera House Program Managers													
	Compile and document findings.	Project EMERGE Specialist													
Vera House will make feasible changes to	Engage Vera House management team in prioritizing needed improvements and setting timeline.	Project EMERGE Core Group													
improve physical and programmatic	Develop a plan for funding physical changes.	Project EMERGE Core Group, Vera House Program Managers													
accessibility.	Begin to make physical and programmatic changes.	Randi Bregman, Project EMERGE Director, Property Management Committee at Vera													

		House													
c. Project EMERGE will sup	pport ARISE in conducting a trauma informed se	rvices review and implementing an action plan to	make c	hange	s.										
			Sept 08	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March 09	April	May 09	June 09	July 09	Aug	Sept 09
		D : LEMEDOE D:	08	08	08	08	09	09	09	09	09	09	09	09	09
Conduct a comprehensive trauma informed services	Research other comprehensive trauma informed services review tools	Project EMERGE Director													
review with all ARISE programs.	Tailor tools for review of ARISE in partnership with multidisciplinary team.	Project EMERGE Staff, MDT													
	Submit tool for OVW approval	Project EMERGE Director													
	Conduct comprehensive trauma informed services review with all ARISE programs.	Project EMERGE Director, ARISE Program Managers													
	Compile and document findings.	Project EMERGE Director													
ARISE will make feasible changes to improve their	Engage ARISE management team in prioritizing needed improvements and setting timeline.	Project EMERGE Core Group, ARISE Program Managers													
ability to provide trauma informed services.	Develop a plan for implementing changes.	Tom McKeown, Nina Lutz, Project EMERGE Specialist													
	Begin to make changes programmatic changes and implement trauma sensitive services and practices	Tom McKeown, Nina Lutz, Project EMERGE Specialist													
d. Project EMERGE will see	ek ongoing feedback on services at Vera House	and ARISE through seeking input from survivors	with dis	ahilitie	e and	Doof	eurviv <i>i</i>	ore							
			, with and	abilitie	3 and	Dears	suivivi	JIS.							
			Sept 08	Oct 08	Nov 08	Dec 08	Jan 09	Feb 09	March 09	April 09	May 09	June 09	July 09	Aug 09	Sept 09
	Plan training.	Project EMERGE Staff	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb							
team members to co-	Plan training. Hold training for MDT.		Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb							
team members to co-		Project EMERGE Staff	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb							
Train multi- disciplinary team members to cofacilitate Listening Circles. Conduct 4 Listening Circles and integrate	Hold training for MDT.	Project EMERGE Staff Project EMERGE Staff	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb							
team members to co- facilitate Listening Circles. Conduct 4 Listening Circles and integrate feedback into the ongoing	Hold training for MDT. Develop plan for ongoing support for MDT. Develop promotional materials and plan for	Project EMERGE Staff Project EMERGE Staff Project EMERGE Core Group	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb							
team members to co- facilitate Listening Circles. Conduct 4 Listening Circles and integrate	Hold training for MDT. Develop plan for ongoing support for MDT. Develop promotional materials and plan for Listening Circles.	Project EMERGE Staff Project EMERGE Staff Project EMERGE Core Group Project EMERGE Staff	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb							
team members to co- facilitate Listening Circles. Conduct 4 Listening Circles and integrate feedback into the ongoing work of Project EMERGE and multi-disciplinary	Hold training for MDT. Develop plan for ongoing support for MDT. Develop promotional materials and plan for Listening Circles. Hold Listening Circle 1	Project EMERGE Staff Project EMERGE Staff Project EMERGE Core Group Project EMERGE Staff Project EMERGE Staff	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb							
team members to co- facilitate Listening Circles. Conduct 4 Listening Circles and integrate feedback into the ongoing work of Project EMERGE	Hold training for MDT. Develop plan for ongoing support for MDT. Develop promotional materials and plan for Listening Circles. Hold Listening Circle 1 Hold Listening Circle 2	Project EMERGE Staff Project EMERGE Staff Project EMERGE Core Group Project EMERGE Staff Project EMERGE Staff, MDT Project EMERGE Staff, MDT	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb							

Incorporate evaluation of our capacity to serve women with disabilities	Develop new questions that examine accessibility and trauma sensitivity for existing ARISE and Vera House tools.	Project EMERGE Staff				
and Deaf women into current consumer feedback tools.	Add to current tools.	Project EMERGE Staff				
	Compile and examine feedback.	Project EMERGE Specialist				

3. Vera House and ARISE will develop policies, procedures, and practices that enable each agency to provide best practice services to survivors with disabilities (including mental health) and Deaf survivors.

Connection to Vision and Mission

Project EMERGE will utilize the strengths of each agency to help this initiative create person centered services for survivors with disabilities and Deaf survivors at Vera House and ARISE. Project EMERGE feels that by bringing the leadership at our two agencies together great change is possible. Our collaboration will serve as a model of a comprehensive and inclusive coordinated community response in the protocols that we develop jointly.

Sustainability

Through creative and user friendly tools Project EMERGE will assist direct service staff at both agencies in integrating the person centered approach in all they do and how they understand their job. Vera House understands that physical changes are just the beginning-these initiatives will change the way our program managers and direct service staff understand accessibility. Integrating trauma awareness into programming at ARISE will also be a lasting culture shift that will be supported over the long term through the support of program managers.

Action	Steps	Responsibility	Tim	elin	е										
a. Project EMERGE will sup	port Vera House in developing a flexible respon	se protocol that will guide staff in responding to v								A	Mari	1	le de	A	Cont
			Sept 08	Oct 08	Nov 08	Dec 08	Jan 09	Feb 09	March 09	April 09	May 09	June 09	July 09	Aug 09	Sept 09
Multi- disciplinary team will work with each direct service team at Vera	MDT representative and Project EMERGE staff will meet with each Vera House direct service manager to outline goals and timeline for response protocol change.	Project EMERGE Staff, MDT Representative, Vera House Program Managers													
House to develop accessible and meaningful	Research response protocols and tools that other DV/SA programs have used.	Project EMERGE Director													
tools to support person centered service delivery unique to their program.	Blend response tools with person centered approaches and develop a plan around them being accessible and meaningful at Vera House.	Project EMERGE Director, Vera House Program Managers													
	MDT will develop a menu of meaningful and accessible tools for direct service programs to utilize.	Project EMERGE Staff, MDT													
	Present plan to MDT and Project EMERGE Core Group for review and edits.	Project EMERGE Staff													
	Share plan at Managers Retreat.	Project EMERGE Staff, MDT													
	Share plan at person centered service delivery kick off training meetings in all Vera House and ARISE team meetings.	Project EMERGE Staff, MDT													

			Sept 08	Oct 08	Nov 08	Dec 08	Jan 09	Feb 09	March 09	April 09	May 09	June 09	July 09	Aug 09	Sep 09
Multi- disciplinary team will work with each direct ervice team at ARISE to	MDT representative and Project EMERGE staff will meet with each ARISE direct service manager to outline goals and timeline for response protocol change.	Project EMERGE Staff, MDT Representative, ARISE Program Managers													
evelop accessible and neaningful tools to	Research response protocols and tools that other Independent Living Centers have used.	Project EMERGE Specialist													
upport person centered ervice delivery unique to neir program.	Develop a plan around tools being accessible and meaningful at ARISE.	Project EMERGE Specialist, ARISE Program Managers													
,	MDT will develop a menu of meaningful and accessible tools for direct service programs to utilize.	Project EMERGE Staff, MDT													
	Present plan to MDT and Project EMERGE Core Group for review and edits.	Project EMERGE Staff													
	Share plan at Managers Retreat.	Project EMERGE Staff, MDT													
	Share plan at person centered service delivery kick off training meetings in all Vera House and ARISE team meetings.	Project EMERGE Staff, MDT													
	Plan delivered to part time and out of county ARISE staff at team meetings.	Project EMERGE Staff, MDT, ARISE Program Managers													

4. Vera House will begin to build trust in the Deaf community to enable Deaf women to feel comfortable reaching out for help and recommending services at Vera House to each other.

Connection to Vision and Mission

relationships and sexual

safety and empowerment.

From the inception of our collaboration, Project EMERGE has sought to be innovative and grassroots in our outreach to Deaf women. This initiative puts Deaf leadership in the driver's seat in an effort for Vera House to elevate our relationship with the Deaf community to that of true, working ally. Vera House will also be able to demonstrate competency and commitment to the Deaf community, which will work to establish trust.

sexual safety and empowerment

dialogue for 'Lunch and Learns'.

Train Deaf members of the MDT on interactive presentation and facilitating

Sustainability

Project EMERGE plans to facilitate the growth of Deaf leadership through partnering to learn about Deaf culture by sharing our expertise in healthy relationships and safe, empowered sexuality. We have learned that a strengths based perspective is often most successful in the Deaf community vs. focusing on violence and abuse. This approach will build solid relationships and partnerships for Vera House with the Deaf community. Future 'Lunch and Learns' could be conducted in the future by the Education department at Vera House or the Accessibility Task Force- once a solid model has been established and piloted. Vera House also maintains staff that support our agency website and these staff will be trained to also maintain the Deaf outreach website by the conclusion of the grant.

Action	Steps	Responsibility	Tim	elin	9										
a. Project EMERGE will buil	d relationships and lasting partnerships with lea	aders from the Deaf community.													
			Sept 08	Oct 08	Nov 08	Dec 08	Jan 09	Feb 09	March 09	April 09	May 09	June 09	July 09	Aug 09	Sept 09
Project EMERGE will	Connect with local Deaf organizations	Project EMERGE Staff													
network and build relationship with a diverse	Connect with local Deaf schools	Project EMERGE Staff													
group of leaders within the Deaf community	Connect with local Deaf faith communities	Project EMERGE Staff		—	—										
	Connect with medical community serving Deaf community	Project EMERGE Staff													
Project EMERGE will	Gather materials and national resources on conducting training with a Deaf audience.	Project EMERGE Specialist													
engage with leaders in the Deaf community and educate them on healthy	Develop material and agenda for a series of 'Lunch and Learns' for leaders in the Deaf community on healthy relationships and	Project EMERGE Staff													

Project EMERGE Staff

	Conduct Lunch and Learn #1	Davie et EMEDOE Como Cura											
	Conduct Lunch and Learn #2	Project EMERGE Core Group											
		Project EMERGE Core Group											
	Conduct Lunch and Learn #3	Project EMERGE Core Group											
	Conduct Lunch and Learn #4	Project EMERGE Core Group											
	Seek feedback from participants and the 'Lunch and Learn' sessions	Project EMERGE Specialist									 	 	
Project EMERGE will continue to participate on and support the committee of the Deaf Advocacy Council that is looking at community awareness of domestic and sexual violence.	Regularly attend meetings of the committee	Project EMERGE Staff											
	Host an open house at Vera House during Deaf Awareness Week	Project EMERGE Director											
b. Leadership from the Dea	Review other websites targeted for Deaf people around domestic and sexual	assault as an issue of concern and partner	r with Project	EMER	RGE to	build	comn	nunity	awaren	ess.			
MDT members, as well as interested leaders from the Deaf community, will develop a website that speaks to our local Deaf community about healthy relationships and sexual safety and empowerment and domestic and sexual violence and services at		Project EMERGE Staff, MDT											
	Submit website to OVW for approval	Project EMERGE Director											
	Launch website in our community	Project EMERGE Core Group											
violence and services at													
violence and services at Vera House.	Design media campaign in partnership with	Project EMERGE Staff MDT											
violence and services at	Design media campaign in partnership with MDT and Deaf leadership	Project EMERGE Staff, MDT											
violence and services at Vera House. A print media campaign		Project EMERGE Staff, MDT Project EMERGE Director Project EMERGE Core Group											

Key Long-Term Initiatives

Project EMERGE has developed four initiatives to focus on beyond the scope of our current funding. These initiatives focus on expanding our accessibility at our own agencies with survivors who are d/Deaf and with mental health disabilities as well as promoting systems change within our broader community.

These initiatives were selected by a team of ARISE and Vera House staff who are positioned to make change within the agencies. The team also included participation from crucial stakeholders at other agencies in the community. These long-term initiatives will rely on the successes of our short-term initiatives.

- 1. Project EMERGE will engage survivors with mental health disabilities and mental health professionals in partnering to specifically create increased access for survivors with significant mental health concerns at Vera House and ARISE.
- 2. Project EMERGE will continue to develop partnership with local law enforcement and the criminal justice system, prompting increased understanding of the intersection of disability, Deafness, and domestic and sexual violence.
- 3. Project EMERGE will explore and implement strategy for a team of d/Deaf women to serve as on-call Advocates for d/Deaf survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence.
- 4. Project EMERGE will support community efforts to expand the pool of qualified ASL Interpreters and develop protocols and budgets with our community partners to ensure that ASL Interpreters are increasingly available.

Plans to Sustain Collaboration

Vera House, Inc and ARISE are committed to sustaining our partnership and interdependence. This will be done in several ways.

Project EMERGE

As outlined in the goals and actions of our key short term initiatives, Vera House and ARISE are working to fully integrate our collaboration into all programs and services at each agency. Administrators and direct service staff at each agency will not view these initiatives as a 'special grant project', but rather a partnership between our two agencies that is working to redefine how we each deliver services. Project EMERGE will utilize the implementation funds to institutionalize joint new staff orientations, ongoing direct service staff training, person centered service delivery technique, and a general focus on the intersection of domestic and sexual violence and people with disabilities and Deaf people.

The Syracuse Area Domestic and Sexual Violence Coalition- Accessibility Task Force (ATF)

The SADSVC is a community coalition with subcommittees dedicated to addressing prevention and education about domestic and sexual violence in different populations. The Accessibility Task Force has been formed with the goal of bringing people together from the disability and d/Deaf community and the domestic/sexual violence community. The ATF plans to give power to people of all abilities to create healthy relationships and to make systems work better for people of all abilities who need help because someone is hurting them. For the past two years, and continuing at the termination of the grant funding, Project EMERGE will have *consistently ensured that staff at Vera House and ARISE attend the Accessibility Task Force* of the Syracuse Area Domestic and Sexual Violence Coalition. This will ensure that the leading community agencies in service provision for

domestic and sexual violence and disabilities have a prominent voice in determining needs of both populations.

Human Services Leadership Council

Leaders at both Vera House and ARISE have served on the Syracuse's Human Services Leadership Council (HSLC) and will continue to do so. Participation in HSLC provides local agencies an opportunity to inform each other about plans for and struggles with the local service delivery service system, and with particular populations. Given that the executive directors of Vera House and ARISE serve as co-chairs of this group, we are uniquely positioned to influence other non-profit leaders in our community. HSLC will be a great springboard with which to launch the work of the collaboration of Vera House and ARISE into the rest of the community. Project EMERGE plans to utilize this platform to share the best practices that we establish within our own agencies in our broader community.

The Wildfire of Culture Change

"It often takes more courage to change one's opinion than to stick to it." Geoffrey F. Abert

Since the inception of Project EMERGE, our collaboration has been focused on inspiring change. We have been thinking, talking, planning, and preparing for change. This plan outlines our commitment and the tasks at hand that will create new standards and practices at Vera House, ARISE, and our greater community. Much of this change will involve Project EMERGE mentoring and supporting staff in examining deeply engrained 'opinions' on domestic and sexual violence, disability, and Deafness.

Vera House and ARISE recognize the responsibility to utilize this funding opportunity to develop best practices that all at Vera House and ARISE can commit to over the long term and other agencies in our community can make work in their settings. Keeping in line with the values of each agency and Project EMERGE, survivors with disabilities and Deaf survivors will be leading the way in this effort to create culture change at ARISE and Vera House. Vera House and ARISE, along with our community partners, will utilize this Strategic Plan to create an inclusive system to provide comprehensive services to people with disabilities and Deaf people who are survivors of domestic and sexual violence. This project, launched through by a grant from the Office on Violence Against Women, will strive to ensure access, equality, empowerment and safety through the efforts of knowledgeable providers for years to come.