

# *Strategic* *Plan*

Project SAFE  
(**S**afe **A**ccess **F**or **E**veryone)  
Ending Violence Against Women with Disabilities  
In Suffolk County

A Collaborative Project between  
VIBS Family Violence and Rape Crisis Center  
&  
United Cerebral Palsy Association of Greater Suffolk, Inc.

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# ***Project SAFE Strategic Plan***

## **I. Introduction**

A local partnership between two Suffolk County agencies, VIBS Family Violence and Rape Crisis Center and United Cerebral Palsy Association of Greater Suffolk Inc., Project SAFE (Safe Access For Everyone) was created in October 2008. Its purpose is to effect organizational change within both organizations to create a safer, more accessible, and more responsive service delivery system for survivors with disabilities.

Beginning in November of 2009 until March of 2010, Project SAFE has engaged survivors of domestic / sexual violence, individuals with physical and developmental disabilities, VIBS volunteers, and both agencies' leadership, boards of directors, supervisors, and direct service delivery staff in a thorough needs assessment. The information and feedback gained through this process was shared in our needs assessment report. As a result of our needs assessment, Project SAFE was able to identify the key findings that were recurrent throughout the needs assessment process. These key findings revealed areas of concern that both VIBS and UCP-Suffolk may want to address in order to provide a safer, more accessible, and more responsive service delivery system for survivors with disabilities. The implications of each key finding and its possible solutions were also indicated. The information contained in our needs assessment report was essential in preparing the document which follows, our Strategic Plan. This Strategic Plan contains an introduction, including an overview of Project SAFE's vision and mission; an overview of our needs assessment, including a review of methodology and key findings; a description of our short term initiatives

and long term plans; our proposed work plan; and a conclusion.

### ***Overview of Project SAFE***

Project SAFE was created in October 2008 as a collaborative partnership between two local Suffolk County agencies, VIBS Family Violence and Rape Crisis Center and UCP-Suffolk (United Cerebral Palsy Association of Greater Suffolk Inc.). Project SAFE is federally funded for three years by the Office on Violence Against Women, US Department of Justice through the "Education, Training, and Enhanced Services to End Violence Against and Abuse of Women with Disabilities Grant Program". Its purpose and main objective is to create sustainable organizational changes within VIBS and UCP-Suffolk in order to provide a safer, more accessible, and more responsive service delivery system to individuals with a physical and/or developmental disability who have experienced domestic and/or sexual violence.

- VIBS is a not-for-profit agency that has been offering counseling and advocacy services to survivors of domestic and sexual violence, as well as community education, for over 30 years. VIBS Family Violence and Rape Crisis Center is the lead fiscal agent in this collaboration who was awarded the funds for this grant.
- UCP-Suffolk is a not-for-profit agency that has been offering an array of services to individuals with disabilities and their families for over 35 years. UCP-Suffolk agreed to join VIBS as the partner organization in this collaboration.

Both VIBS and UCP-Suffolk have acknowledged that the intersection of domestic / sexual violence and disabilities is an important issue that has not been fully addressed by either organization. Both agencies initially took on this

project with the vision of producing systemic organizational changes that would benefit survivors with disabilities. As this project has evolved, our vision has transformed into a dynamic work in progress with the creation and completion of three written working documents, data and information collection through a detailed needs assessment, a thorough review of the key findings generated from the needs assessment, and some attitudinal changes that have been reflected in both agencies' cultures.

### *Project SAFE's Vision*

Women with disabilities in Suffolk County who are survivors of domestic and sexual violence will have universal access to a network of organizations that promote a culture of dignity, respect, and acceptance. Service providers will work in a seamless and timely manner as partners with these individuals on their journey toward safety, empowerment, and economic justice.

### *Project SAFE's Mission*

VIBS Family Violence and Rape Crisis Center and UCP-Suffolk will work together to promote a safe, accessible and responsive service environment for women in Suffolk County who are survivors of domestic and sexual violence with a physical and/or developmental disability. We will accomplish this by creating sustainable changes in our organizational cultures through:

- Fostering collaboration
- Sharing resources and knowledge
- Enhancing the existing service delivery system
- Implementing policies and procedures that reflect best practices of professional ethics, trust, open communication, and true understanding of the challenges and needs of survivors with disabilities.

## ***Overview of Planning and Development Phase***

There are two phases to this three year grant project; the planning and development phase and the implementation phase. We are currently in the planning and development phase. This phase consists of identifying all collaboration members; strengthening and building our collaboration with the creation of a charter; identifying the particular audiences to engage and the methodologies to utilize as specified in our needs assessment plan; conducting focus groups, interviews, and surveys in our needs assessment process; identifying significant findings gathered through our needs assessment report; and lastly, identifying initiatives to be implemented as outlined in this strategic plan.

### ***Collaboration Charter***

The first deliverable that was required and achieved in the planning and development phase was our Collaboration Charter. Our charter consists of a clear definition of each collaboration member's role in this project, the expectation of each collaboration member, the expectation of each agency, our values and guiding principles, decision making protocol, communication plan, identification of conflict resolution strategies, and confidentiality guidelines. Throughout the process of developing our charter, we were given the opportunity to learn more about each other on an individual basis as well as on a professional level. We learned what professional attributes, education, and experiences we each brought to this project in strengthening our collaboration. We also learned more about our partner agency, the services it provides, who they assist, their mission, and their commitment to the issue of domestic / sexual violence and disabilities. We began writing our charter in December 2008. We completed it, submitted it to OVW, and received confirmation of its approval all in April 2009. The approval of this charter enabled us to proceed to the next phase in this project, our needs assessment plan



### *Needs Assessment Plan*

The second deliverable that was required and achieved in the planning and development phase was our Needs Assessment Plan. Our Needs Assessment Plan includes a description of five identified needs assessment goals; data obtained from local research studies; an overview of the focus groups, interviews, and surveys that were utilized during the needs assessment process; identification and description of participating audiences; identification and role of the facilitation team; recruitment strategies; consent procedures; confidentiality protocol; data collection and storage; safety and access considerations; work plan timeline; the needs assessment tools; and a referral and resource list. In developing our needs assessment plan, many decisions had to be made by our collaboration and other staff members regarding the audiences we would engage in the process, the methodologies we would utilize to engage these audiences, and what questions we would ask to obtain feedback and information specific to our needs assessment.

#### *Audience*

Project SAFE decided to engage its boards of directors, leadership, supervisors, direct service delivery staff from both organizations; VIBS volunteers; individuals with physical and developmental disabilities; and survivors of domestic and sexual violence. These audiences were chosen based on their personal and/or professional experience with the current service delivery system at both agencies, and due to their first hand knowledge and understanding of the issues of disabilities / accommodations or domestic / sexual violence.

#### *Methodologies*

The methodologies that we chose to utilize in engaging the above mentioned audiences were focus groups, interviews, and surveys. We recruited supervisors and direct service delivery staff members from both agencies,

VIBS volunteers, individuals with disabilities, and survivors of domestic and sexual violence to participate in focus groups. We recruited leadership from both agencies and survivors of elder abuse to participate in individual interviews. We recruited boards of directors from both agencies and UCP-Suffolk direct service delivery staff members who were unable to take part in focus groups due to their schedule and work location to participate in a written survey.

### *Questions*

All questions were specifically designed to suit the purpose of our needs assessment. We chose different questions for each audience engaged based on their role in the agency and/or their experience with the current service delivery system. The following list provides the themes that we based our questions on:

- What are the current policies and procedures regarding survivors with disabilities?
- What are the service aspects that are helpful to survivors with disabilities?
- What are the service aspects that are not helpful to survivors with disabilities?
- In what ways can each agency better support staff in assisting survivors with disabilities?
- What are the challenges / barriers that each organization faces in assisting survivors with disabilities?
- What are the opportunities for change in enhancing the current service delivery system for survivors with disabilities?

We began writing our needs assessment plan in April 2009. We completed it, submitted it to OVW, and received confirmation of its approval all in October 2009. The approval of this plan enabled us to proceed to conducting the needs assessment process.

### Needs Assessment Process

The third task that was required and achieved in the planning and development phase of this project was to conduct and complete all needs assessment activities. Project SAFE then began the recruitment of its identified audiences. The methodologies that we chose to utilize in engaging these audiences were focus groups, individual interviews, and surveys. Most needs assessment activities were completed in accordance with our proposed plan. The challenges that were encountered during the needs assessment process were minimal and were easily resolved.

### *Focus Groups*

We initially planned to offer 14 focus groups to a variety of audiences from both agencies. We conducted 13 focus groups instead of the proposed 14 due to the combining of two focus groups for individuals with disabilities. The following is a list showing the audiences engaged in focus groups and the number of people who participated:

- Supervisors: Two focus groups offered; one at VIBS and one at UCP-Suffolk equaling 17 supervisors in attendance for both groups.
- Direct Service Delivery Staff: Five focus groups offered; 3 at VIBS and 2 at UCP-Suffolk equaling 34 direct service delivery staff members in attendance for both groups.
- Survivors of Domestic and Sexual Violence: Three focus groups offered at VIBS; 2 for survivors of domestic violence and 1 for survivors of rape and sexual assault equaling 19 survivors in attendance for all groups.
- Individuals with Physical and/or Developmental Disabilities: Two focus groups offered at UCP-Suffolk equaling 16 individuals with disabilities in attendance for both groups.

- VIBS Volunteers: One focus group offered at VIBS for VIBS volunteers equaling 5 volunteers in attendance.

Ninety one (91) people in total participated in the above mentioned focus groups. These focus groups generated a substantial amount of information and feedback regarding the following:

- current and existing policies and procedures
- organizational aspects that support or hinder staff's role in assisting survivors with disabilities
- suggestions on what is needed to better inform staff regarding their role in assisting survivors with disabilities
- the impact of organizational culture on survivors with disabilities
- identifying other professional relationships with other organizations
- important factors to consider when assisting survivors with disabilities
- service aspects that make survivors feel safe and comfortable
- service aspects that do not make survivors feel safe and comfortable
- important factors that should be known about safety, domestic / sexual violence, and survivors in general
- service aspects that make individuals with disabilities feel comfortable and are accommodating
- service aspects that do not make individuals with disabilities feel comfortable and are not accommodating
- important factors that should be known about the various types of disabilities, accommodations, and individuals with disabilities in general

### *Individual Interviews*

Project SAFE conducted 8 individual interviews. Three (3) interviews were conducted with VIBS leadership, 3 interviews were conducted with UCP-Suffolk leadership, and 2 were with survivors of elder abuse. Optional interviews were offered for focus group participants who wanted to participate in our needs assessment but opted to be interviewed one-on-one rather than in a group setting. No one chose this alternative. These interviews provided essential information regarding the bulleted points mentioned above.

### *Surveys*

Project SAFE received 32 completed surveys in total from boards of directors at both agencies and direct service delivery staff at UCP-Suffolk who were unable to participate in focus groups. Surveys were completed by 14 boards of directors at both agencies and 18 UCP-Suffolk direct service delivery staff.

These surveys generated feedback and information on the following:

- whether the goals of Project SAFE are consistent with the agency mission and align with the strategic goals of VIBS and UCP-Suffolk
- whether new initiatives would be supported in addressing the intersection of domestic/sexual violence and disability
- what unforeseen challenges might exist regarding this project
- ways to explore whether an individual with a disability has experienced domestic and/or sexual violence
- how helpful are the various agency policies that address its response to survivors with a disability
- the factors that might make it difficult for an individual with a disability to disclose domestic and/or sexual violence to agency staff

- the factors that might make it difficult for staff to assist individuals with disabilities who have experienced domestic and/or sexual violence to safely access appropriate support services
- ways in which both agencies can better respond to individuals with disabilities who have experienced domestic and/or sexual violence

The needs assessment process spanned a five month period, beginning in November 2009 and ending in March 2010. We engaged 131 people in total. The completion of our needs assessment process enabled us to prepare and finish our next task in this phase; our needs assessment report.

### ***Needs Assessment Report***

The third deliverable that was required and achieved in the planning and development phase was our Needs Assessment Report. Our Needs Assessment Report contains an overview of Project SAFE; an overview of this planning stage, including a detailed description of our collaboration charter, our needs assessment plan, the purpose and goals of our needs assessment; use of information; strategic plan and end goal; detailed description of the methodologies we utilized in our needs assessment process, including focus groups, interviews, and surveys; and our key findings, including their implications and possible solutions.

Our needs assessment report is an integral document that has guided our collaboration in identifying the specific initiatives we wish to implement to effect organizational change that will enhance the current service delivery system for survivors with disabilities. The people who participated in our needs assessment provided us invaluable information as sited in the above section describing the methodology we utilized. Main themes were derived from the information gathered from all audiences. A list of key findings was established by our collaboration of the most prevalent main

themes sited. This list of key findings along with their implications and possible solutions are outlined in the needs assessment report.

### ***Overview of Key Findings***

Overall, our needs assessment was productive and generated a lot of rich information regarding the service needs of survivors of domestic / sexual violence and of individuals with physical and developmental disabilities. Many of our preconceived notions about both organizations' capacity to provide safe, accessible, and responsive services were confirmed. However, we also learned a great deal and received a wealth of suggestions about how both agencies can improve. The following key findings were generated from the information provided by our audiences.

- **Barriers to Safety:** *Survivors of domestic and sexual violence as well as staff at VIBS have identified ways in which both organizations can create environments that promote a safer atmosphere for survivors with disabilities.*
- **Barriers to Accessibility:** *Individuals with disabilities as well as staff at UCP-Suffolk have identified ways in which both organizations can create environments that promote a more accessible atmosphere for survivors with disabilities.*
- **Policies and Procedures:** *Both organizations have shortfalls in their policies and procedures which limit the provision of safer, more accessible, and more responsive services to survivors with disabilities.*
- **Knowledge Building:** *Both agencies have deficits in the training and education they provide to their staff and the individuals they serve regarding survivors with disabilities, safety, and accommodations.*

- **Partnership Building:** *Both organizations have limited knowledge of each other's discipline and service delivery.*

These findings were the most consistently cited. It appeared that all the individuals involved in our needs assessment were very honest and sincere in the feedback that they provided and were very knowledgeable about the issues in question.

In addition to identifying these key findings, our needs assessment report also included the implications that each key finding may have at both agencies and the possible solutions. Our proposed initiatives are a direct link to these key findings and have been chosen based on their priority, feasibility, and practicality at each agency. These initiatives will be clearly stated and defined and the specific steps that will be taken to achieve each initiative, as well as who will do the work, will be detailed below in our strategic plan.

## ***II. The Strategic Plan***

### **Overview of the Strategic Planning Process**

Project SAFE's strategic planning process includes the work of our collaboration and other key staff members in reviewing our mission and vision, identifying the impact of external and internal environments for survivors with disabilities, and a thorough analysis and understanding of the key findings derived from our needs assessment. This process also involves the perspective and feedback of our collaboration regarding the changes that need to be made within both organizations to make the current service delivery system safer, more accessible, and more responsive for survivors with disabilities. The key findings from our needs assessment, our collaboration's professional expertise, and the knowledge and resources acquired through this grant process will serve as the catalysts to long lasting changes that will alter the values, culture, and



attitudes of each organization and its staff. Project SAFE aims to change the nature of the way both our organizations provide services by developing agency environments that are safer and more accessible for survivors with disabilities. This will include modifying attitudes of the staff regarding survivors of domestic / sexual violence and people with disabilities; creating a working atmosphere that embraces the intersection of domestic / sexual violence and disabilities; and building organizational environments that share resources and expertise. Our initiatives will include short-term goals that will affect organizational change in the here and now and long-term goals that will set the stage for future changes.

### Overview of Strategic Plan Short-term Initiatives

Our strategic plan will consist of both short-term initiatives and long-term plans. Our short term initiatives are those that can be achieved within the parameters of this grant program. The short-term initiatives that we chose were derived from an analysis of the key findings of our needs assessment, as well as from our collaboration's thorough knowledge and understanding of our respective organizational structures and how they affect the goals of our project. Project SAFE decided on these initiatives due to their potential to:

- reach the most staff and effect the most change in values, attitudes, and organizational culture (deeply embedded systemic change)
- make the biggest impact on how our organizations provide services (organizational change)
- last beyond this three year grant period (sustainability)
- survive changes in the organization staff and/or the composition of the collaboration (sustainability)

It is well known that in order to achieve sustainability the organizational culture must be changed. Under the umbrella

of our strategic plan, these initiatives together will pave the way to organizational cultural change.

Each of the following five initiatives, although separate components from one another, are part and parcel of a much larger entity. All are collectively linked together as a means to create sustainable changes for survivors with disabilities at both organizations. Our collaboration's decision to work on these five specific initiatives collectively and simultaneously will provide us the most successful results in changing the way that each organization currently works with survivors with disabilities. The overall outcome of creating sustainable organizational changes deeply embedded in both agencies' values and culture would not be possible without all five initiatives being interconnected and working closely together.

- **Initiative # 1 Safety Assessment**  
*Create safe and welcoming organizational environments.*
- **Initiative # 2 Accessibility Assessment**  
*Create accessible and welcoming organizational environments.*
- **Initiative #3: Policies and Procedures**  
*Develop and enhance policies and procedures to guide collaborative organizations' staff in serving survivors with disabilities.*
- **Initiative # 4 Knowledge Building**  
*Enhance organizational knowledge for both VIBS and UCP-Suffolk staff by offering training on a consistent basis in providing foundational knowledge on domestic / sexual violence and disabilities / accommodations.*

- **Initiative # 5 Partnership Building**

*Enhance organizational relationships between VIBS and UCP-Suffolk staff by providing networking opportunities and by increasing the knowledge of each other's discipline and service delivery.*

Overview of Work Process

Project SAFE chose five initiatives to include in our strategic plan with the hope of creating long lasting future organizational changes to make the service delivery system at both VIBS and UCP-Suffolk safer, more accessible, and more responsive for survivors with disabilities. We feel that these five initiatives are the most important to focus on based on their ability to transform both agencies in improving services, attitudes, and physical environments for diverse populations. Although the results of our needs assessment helped to guide us with what changes need to be made as reflected by staff, boards of directors, volunteers, survivors of domestic and sexual violence and individuals with disabilities, it was our collaboration that determined the issues most relevant to the purpose of this project and what areas should be addressed.

Project SAFE has formulated a comprehensive outline of the specific objectives and activities needed to accomplish each initiative. Many in-depth conversations took place among our collaboration, Vera representatives, agency leadership, and other primary staff members to review and ensure that all key elements are included in this process of creating a strategic plan, as well as determining who amongst the collaboration and staff should be involved. It was during our consistent collaboration meetings and our recent site visit with Vera Institute of Justice that a lot of these key concepts and major themes were discussed and highlighted. It was also decided that all initiatives would include selecting workgroups, developing and providing conceptual framework for training, and a debriefing meeting for all workgroup members. The conceptual framework

training will be held before any workgroup activities commence, and the debriefing meeting will be held at the end.

## **Rationale, Description, and Sustainable Systems Changes**

### *Initiative # 1 Create Safe and Welcoming Organizational Environments*

#### *Rationale*

The first initiative of our strategic plan is to create safe and welcoming organizational environments for survivors with disabilities. We chose this initiative as a way to produce long standing organizational changes within each agency because of its potential to transform attitudes and physical environments to be more responsive to the needs of survivors with disabilities. It was revealed during our needs assessment that survivors of domestic and sexual violence, while seeking or using services in the community, have encountered some very uncomfortable experiences which they felt compromised their safety. Conversely, they have also experienced some positive situations wherein they felt very safe. Project SAFE feels that both agencies could benefit from a thorough safety review in order to reveal areas of concern and identify ways in which to make each agency safer, more responsive, and more welcoming for survivors with disabilities.

The projected time frame in accomplishing this initiative is 12 months; initiating in October 2010 and completing in September 2011.

### *Description of Objectives for Creating Safer and More Welcoming Service Environments*

The following is a descriptive outline of the specific objectives and activities identified by Project SAFE that need to be achieved in order to implement this initiative. The nine objectives of this initiative are:

- convene workgroups
- develop and provide conceptual framework for training
- review and create safety tool
- conduct safety tool and evaluate findings
- review and revise UCP-Suffolk program registration forms and other relevant forms
- review and revise referral lists
- create a plan to follow through with this process and implement changes
- debriefing meeting with members from all workgroups to share experiences in this process with each other
- utilize the MOU to assure the protection of health information

All activities and steps will be included, along with who is responsible for each task, the period of time in which it will be accomplished, and a detailed narrative of the work process.

#### *First Objective- Selection of Workgroups*

Project SAFE believes that the first step in achieving this initiative is to convene two separate workgroups. These workgroups will consist of collaboration members and staff members who will conduct all activities and fulfill all responsibilities for this initiative. The first workgroup, to be known as the Safety Assessment workgroup, will be responsible for developing a safety assessment tool that satisfies our project's goals. Their responsibilities will include reviewing current available safety assessment tools and designing one that meets the needs of Project SAFE. Throughout their process of design and development, they will keep Project SAFE collaboration members informed of any additional tasks that come to their attention. Through the collaboration members on this workgroup, other workgroups will be kept apprised of progress so that any

necessary modifications could be made. This Safety Assessment workgroup will consist of one VIBS collaboration representative, one UCP-Suffolk collaboration representative, two direct service delivery staff members from VIBS and two direct service delivery managers from the Adult Day Services division of UCP-Suffolk. Project SAFE has decided on these particular individuals for this workgroup due to their position in the agency, their knowledge, and work experience (October 2010).

The second workgroup will be referred to as the Safety Audit Team. They will be responsible for conducting a safety review audit at each agency by applying the assessment tool developed by the Safety Assessment workgroup to both organizations. At the end of their audit process, they will assist Project SAFE collaboration members in preparing a report of their findings and in generating a list of changes needing to be made at each organization. Through the collaboration members on this audit team, other workgroups will be kept apprised of progress so that any necessary modifications could be made. The Safety Audit Team will consist of direct service delivery staff members and managers, not involved in the Safety Assessment workgroup, from each organization. Project SAFE has decided on these particular individuals for this workgroup due to their position in the agency, their professional knowledge, and work experience (October 2010).

Project SAFE chose to have two separate workgroups, the Safety workgroup to create the safety audit tool and the Safety Audit Team to conduct the audit. Each will consist of different staff members in order to stimulate more buy-in on our project and its activities, as well as to add a fresh perspective that eliminates bias when conducting the audit.

*Second Objective - Develop and Provide Conceptual Framework for Training*

Project SAFE believes that the second step in achieving this initiative is to develop and provide a conceptual framework for training for staff members outside of the collaboration who will be a part of these workgroups. This training will be developed by the Project SAFE collaborative team for non-collaborative workgroup members who have limited knowledge of our project and this initiative. The main purpose for this training is to provide non-collaborative members an overview of the main concepts of this grant process, a brief summary of all the activities completed in the planning and development phase, the strategic planning process, an outline for implementation, a review of each initiative, and the individual tasks and responsibilities of all. Nationwide statistics and the historical background regarding the intersection of domestic / sexual violence and disabilities, which forms the basis of this grant, will also be shared. (October 2010).

This training session will be provided to all workgroup and audit team members who have not been part of the collaboration, together as a group, in order for them to fully understand the conceptual framework of the mission and activities of Project SAFE, the purpose and goals of this specific initiative, and their tasks and responsibilities. The training will be delivered in person by collaboration members, supplemented by a power point presentation and handouts. It will be held at one of the partner agencies prior to any work or activities commencing (October - November 2010).

*Third Objective -Utilize the MOU to Assure the Protection of Health Information*

The third step in achieving this initiative is to incorporate a section into our existing MOU (memorandum of understanding) to ensure that both agencies agree to abide by HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and

Accountability Act) and to protect the health information of individuals through the use of releases authorizing the exchange of information (November 2010).

*Fourth Objective - Review and Development of a Safety Tool*

Project SAFE believes that the fourth course of action is to review and develop a safety tool. The first activity that the Safety Assessment workgroup will be responsible for is reviewing all safety findings from our needs assessment report (November – December 2010).

Once all the safety findings have been reviewed, the Safety Assessment workgroup will then explore, gather, and review several safety audit tools from VIBS, UCP-Suffolk, and other local agencies. Once all safety audit tools have been reviewed, a decision will be made as to what components from each would be imperative to include in our own safety audit tool. (November – December 2010).

The third step in this process would be to develop a new safety audit tool specifically designed to satisfy the goals of our project (December 2010 –February 2011). This completed safety audit tool will then be shared with executive leadership at both agencies for their review and agreement. Any changes suggested by the executive leadership will be incorporated and the final safety audit tool will be submitted to OVW for approval (February 2011).

*Fifth Objective - Conduct Safety Review and Evaluate Findings*

The fifth course of action in achieving this initiative is to conduct a safety review and evaluate its findings. The first task to be done for this objective is to have the Safety workgroup provide training on the safety audit tool to the members of the Safety Audit Team (March 2011). Since the members of the Safety Audit Team will not be involved in



the development of the safety audit tool, they will need training on how to utilize and implement this tool.

Once the audit team has been trained, they will go ahead and conduct these safety audits at both organizations. Leadership will be engaged in this process to inform the staff so that they are well aware of when the audit will take place, who will be involved, and what aspects of the agency will be incorporated. This audit will help to inform both agencies of the physical, programmatic, and attitudinal changes needing to be made based on safety concerns and issues (March 2011).

Upon completion of the safety audits at both organizations by the Safety Audit Team, the Safety workgroup will conduct a thorough review of the findings and a needs list will be prepared. Subsequently, a remedial plan to address the necessary changes will be developed (March – April 2011). The safety tool may be revised as needed during this process, so that it remains a flexible, informative instrument (April 2010). The safety assessment findings and remedial plan will be presented to executive leadership at both organizations and OVW. Executive leadership will have the opportunity to review the findings and the plan, ask questions that may arise, and make recommendations. OVW will have the opportunity to review all proposed changes from a funding perspective to identify which short term objectives can be supported by the grant. All recommendations and suggestions given by leadership and OVW will be incorporated into a final plan as developed by the Safety workgroup. The finalized plan will then be submitted to executive leadership for agreement and OVW for approval (April 2011).

*Sixth Objective - Review and revise UCP-Suffolk Program Registration / Intake and Other Relevant Forms to Inquire More Directly of New Participants About Their Experiences*

### *With Domestic / Sexual Violence and Their Need For A Safety Plan*

The sixth step in achieving this initiative is to review and revise UCP-Suffolk program registration / intake and other relevant forms to inquire more directly of new participants about their experience with domestic / sexual violence and their need for a safety plan. The review of these forms will be a part of our safety audit and will be incorporated in our remedial plan. This will enable us to discover at an earlier point in the service delivery process whether or not an individual with a disability is being affected by past or present domestic / sexual violence, rather than waiting to discover it. This will provide an earlier opportunity for possible intervention and support. It will also help the staff to become more cognizant of the potential for domestic / sexual violence to co-exist alongside disability, and to become more comfortable with conversations about this subject. This in turn will serve to change the culture of the organization to include the intersection of domestic / sexual violence and disabilities. The safety workgroup will have direct communication and contact with the policy and procedure workgroup as the work of this initiative will inform and influence the work of the policy and procedure initiative. All forms that are revised will be presented to leadership for their review and approval at both organizations (May 2011 – July 2011).

### *Seventh Objective - Create a Work Plan to Ensure that Approved Changes are Implemented*

The seventh step in achieving this initiative is to create a work plan to ensure that approved changes are implemented. This work plan will dictate how these changes will occur, in what time frame, and who will be responsible. Executive leadership at both organizations will be presented with this work plan for review, input, and approval. The work plan will be presented to staff during regular staff meetings (May 2011 – September 2011).

*Eighth Objective - Debriefing Meeting with All Workgroup Members to Share Their Experiences in this Process with Each Other*

The eighth step in achieving this initiative is to provide a debriefing meeting with all workgroup members to share their experiences in this process with each other. We feel that it would be beneficial for all members to have the opportunity to speak about both their work and personal experiences with this project and to discuss the end results of all activities. This meeting will also allow for long term planning for initiatives extending beyond the grant period, and will provide input to Project SAFE for the fine tuning of our activities and written documents. It will provide closure to the members and also stimulate buy-in for future projects (September 2011).

*Anticipated Systems Change, Results, and Sustainability*

Creating safer, more responsive, and more welcoming environments for both organizations will reflect attitudinal, systemic, and physical structural changes which will be universally beneficial and transparent to staff and all individuals who seek services. Safer environments will invite more people to avail themselves of the good services already existing at both agencies. Safer service environments lead to a greater confidence level and a better ability to focus on the services needed. Relevant policies and procedures and training programs may incorporate any safety changes, thereby helping to make them permanent and ongoing.

INITIATIVE # 1 Create Safe and Welcoming Organizational Environments														
	Who is Responsible?		Timeline (Months)											
Objective and Activities	Collaboration	Workgroup	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S
<b>Objective # 1 Selection of Workgroups</b>														
1. Convene two separate workgroups, one to develop safety tool and one to conduct reviews / audits.	X		X											
<b>Objective # 2 Develop and Provide Conceptual Framework</b>														
1. Project SAFE will develop conceptual framework based on needs assessment findings.	X		X											
2. Project SAFE will schedule training sessions to deliver conceptual framework training to non – collaborative members.	X			X	X									
<b>Objective # 3 Utilize the MOU to Assure the Protection of Health Information</b>														
1. Incorporate a clause in the MOU that assure the protection of health information for all clients / participants	X			X										
<b>Objective # 4 Review and Develop a Safety Tool</b>														
1. Review needs assessment findings from survivors		X		X	X									
2. Review and evaluate VIBS, UCP-Suffolk, and other local agencies safety audit tools.		X		X	X									
3. Develop safety audit tool for Project SAFE		X			X	X	X							
4. Present safety audit tool to leadership at both agencies for review and approval.		X					X							
5. Submit newly developed safety audit tool to OVW for approval		X					X							
<b>Objective # 5 Conduct Safety Audit</b>														
1. Safety workgroup will train Audit Team on tool		X						X						
2. Audit Team will conduct safety tool at UCP and VIBS		X						X						
3. Evaluate findings and develop a plan to address issues		X						X	X					
4. Revise tool as necessary		X							X					
5. Present findings and plan to leadership at both agencies and OVW for review and approval.		X							X					
6. Submit plan to OVW for approval		X							X					

<b>Objective # 6 Review and revise UCP-Suffolk program registration forms and other relevant paperwork</b>															
1. Review and revise UCP-Suffolk program registration forms and other relevant paperwork to inquire directly about domestic / sexual violence.		X								X	X	X			
2. Present revised registration forms and relevant paperwork to leadership for review and approval.		X										X			
<b>Objective # 7 Create a Work Plan to Ensure that Approved Changes are Implemented</b>															
1. Create a work plan to dictate how these changes will occur and who is responsible for making these changes happen.		X									X	X	X	X	
2. Present work plan to leadership for review, input, and approval.		X													X
3. Present work plan to staff during regular staff meetings		X													X
<b>Objective # 8 Debriefing meeting with all members of all workgroups at the end of the grant period to share their personal and work experiences with each other</b>															
1. Offer a debriefing meeting for all members of all workgroups at the end of the grant period to share their personal and work experiences with each other.		X													X
2. Create a plan to address concerns regarding activities that were completed during grant period.		X													X
3. Create a list of long term planning endeavors that evolve from meeting.		X													X

## Initiative # 2 Create Accessible and Welcoming Organizational Environments

### Rationale

The second initiative of our strategic plan is to create accessible and welcoming organizational environments for survivors with disabilities. We chose this initiative as a way to produce long standing organizational changes within each organization because of its potential to transform attitudes and physical environments to be more responsive to the needs of survivors with disabilities. It was revealed during our needs assessment that individuals with disabilities have encountered some very uncomfortable experiences in utilizing services in the community due to environments not being accessible and to people's attitudes not being conducive to acceptance and understanding. Conversely, they have also experienced some situations that were positive and accommodating. Project SAFE feels that both agencies could benefit from a thorough accessibility review in order to reveal areas of concern and ways in which to make each agency more accessible, more responsive, and more welcoming for survivors with disabilities.

The projected time frame in accomplishing this objective is 12 months; initiating in October 2010 and completing in September 2011.

### Description of Objectives for Creating Accessible Environments Initiative

The following is a descriptive outline of the specific objectives and activities identified by Project SAFE that need to be conducted in order to implement this initiative. The nine objectives of this initiative are:

- convene workgroups
- develop and provide conceptual framework for training
- review and selection of accessibility tool
- conduct accessibility audit and evaluate findings
- review and revise intake paperwork and relevant clinical forms at VIBS
- review and revise referral lists
- create a work plan to ensure that approved changes are implemented

- debriefing meeting with members from all workgroups to share experiences in this process with each other
- utilize the MOU to assure the protection of health information

All activities and steps will be included, along with who is responsible for each task, the period of time in which it will be accomplished, and a detailed narrative of the work process.

### *First Objective - Selection of Workgroups*

Project SAFE believes that the first step in achieving this initiative is to convene two separate workgroups. These workgroups will consist of collaboration members and staff members who will conduct all activities and fulfill all responsibilities for this initiative. The first workgroup, to be known as the Accessibility workgroup, will be responsible for reviewing the current existing accessibility audit tools and choosing one that best satisfies our project's goals. Throughout their process of review and selection, they will keep Project SAFE collaboration members informed of any additional tasks that come to their attention. Through the collaboration members on this workgroup, other workgroups will be kept apprised of progress so that any necessary adjustments could be made. This Accessibility workgroup will consist of one UCP-Suffolk collaboration representative, one VIBS collaboration representative, two direct service delivery managers from Adult Day Services division of UCP-Suffolk, and two direct service delivery staff members from VIBS. Project SAFE has decided on these particular individuals for this workgroup due to their position in the agency, their professional knowledge, and work experience (October 2010).

The second workgroup will be referred to as the Accessibility Audit Team. They will be responsible for conducting an accessibility audit at each agency by applying the assessment tool developed by the Accessibility workgroup to both organizations. At the end of their audit process, they will assist Project SAFE collaboration members in preparing a report of their findings and in generating a list of changes needing to be made at each organization. Through the collaboration members on this audit team, other workgroups will be kept apprised of progress so that any necessary adjustments could be made. The Accessibility Audit Team will consist of direct service delivery staff members and managers, not involved in the Accessibility workgroup,

from each organization. Project SAFE has decided on these particular individuals for this workgroup due to their position in the agency, their professional knowledge, and work experience (October 2010).

Project SAFE chooses to have two separate workgroups, the Accessibility workgroup to select the accessibility audit tool and the Accessibility Audit Team to conduct the audit. Each will consist of different staff members in order to stimulate more buy-in on our project and its activities, as well as to add a fresh perspective that eliminates bias when conducting the audit.

*Second Objective - Develop and Provide Conceptual Framework for Training*

Project SAFE believes that the second step in achieving this initiative is to develop and provide a conceptual framework for training for staff members outside of the collaboration who will be a part of the Accessibility workgroup. This training will be developed by the Project SAFE collaborative team for non-collaborative workgroup members who have limited knowledge of our project and this initiative. The main purpose for this training is to provide non-collaborative members an overview of the main concepts of this grant process, a brief summary of all the activities completed in the planning and development phase, the strategic planning process, an outline for implementation, a review of each initiative, and the individual tasks and responsibilities of all. Nationwide statistics and the historical background regarding the intersection of domestic / sexual violence and disabilities, which forms the basis of this grant, will also be shared (October 2010).

Training sessions will be provided to all workgroup and audit team members who have not been part of the collaboration, together as a group, in order for them to fully understand the conceptual framework of the mission and activities of Project SAFE, the purpose and goals of this specific initiative, and their tasks and responsibilities. This training will be delivered in person by collaboration members of Project SAFE, supplemented by a power point presentation and handouts. It will be held at one of the partner agencies prior to any work or activities commencing (October – November 2010).



*Third Objective –Utilize the MOU to Assure the Protection of Health Information*

The third step in achieving this initiative is to incorporate a section into our existing MOU (memorandum of understanding) to ensure that both agencies agree to abide by HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) and to protect the health information of individuals through the use of releases authorizing the exchange of information (November 2011).

*Fourth Objective - Review and Selection of an Accessibility Tool*

The third step is to review and select an accessibility tool. The first task that the Accessibility workgroup will be responsible for is reviewing all accessibility findings from our needs assessment report (November – December 2010).

Once all the accessibility findings have been reviewed, the Accessibility workgroup will then explore, gather, and review several accessibility audit tools from UCP-Suffolk and other sources (November – December 2010).

Once all accessibility audit tools have been reviewed, a decision will be made as to which one would be most appropriate for our project. The audit tool(s) we select will be adapted to fit the needs of our project (December 2010 –February 2011).

This tool will then be shared with executive leadership at both agencies for their review, feedback, and agreement. Any changes suggested by the executive leadership will be incorporated and the final accessibility audit tool will be submitted to OVW for approval (February 2011).

*Fifth Objective - Conduct Accessibility Tool and Evaluate Findings*

Project SAFE believes that the fifth step is to conduct an accessibility review and evaluate its findings. The first task to be done for this objective is to have the Accessibility workgroup provide training on the accessibility tool to the members of the Accessibility Audit Team (March 2011). Since the members of the Accessibility Audit Team will not be involved in the selection and adaptation of the accessibility audit tool, they will need training on how to utilize and implement it.

Once the audit team has been trained, they will go ahead and conduct these accessibility audits at both organizations. Leadership will be engaged in this process to inform staff so that they are well aware of when the audit will take place, who will be involved, and what aspects of the agency will be incorporated. This audit will help to inform both agencies of the physical, programmatic, and attitudinal changes needing to be made based on accessibility concerns and issues (March 2011).

Upon completion of the accessibility audits at both organizations by the Accessibility Audit Team, the Accessibility workgroup will conduct a thorough review of the findings and a needs list will be prepared. Subsequently, a remedial plan to address the necessary changes will be developed (March – April 2011). The audit tool will be revised as needed during this process so that it remains a flexible, informative instrument (April 2010). The accessibility assessment findings and remedial plan will be presented to executive leadership at both organizations and OVW. Executive leadership will have the opportunity to review the findings and the plan, ask questions that may arise, and make recommendations. OVW will have the opportunity to review all proposed changes from a funding perspective to identify which short term objectives can be supported by the grant. All recommendations and suggestions given by leadership and OVW will be incorporated into a final plan as developed by the Accessibility workgroup. The finalized plan will then be submitted to executive leadership for agreement and OVW for approval (April 2011).

*Sixth Objective – Review and Revise Intake Paperwork and Relevant Clinical Forms at VIBS to Inquire More Directly of New Clients about Disability and the Need for Accommodations*

The sixth step in achieving this initiative is to review and revise intake paperwork and relevant clinical forms at VIBS to inquire more directly of new clients need for accommodations. The review of these forms will be a part of our agency audit and will be incorporated in our remedial plan. This inquiry is considered appropriate as it will not be used to discriminate in providing services, but rather to provide services to a broader population in a more accessible manner. It will also help the staff to become more cognizant of the potential for disability to co-exist alongside domestic / sexual violence, and to be

more aware of the need to make appropriate accommodations to a variety of disabilities. This in turn will serve to change the culture of the organization to include the intersection of domestic / sexual violence and disabilities. The accessibility workgroup will have direct communication and contact with the policy and procedure workgroup as the work of this initiative will inform and influence the work of the policy and procedure initiative. All revised forms will be presented to leadership at both organizations for review and approval (May 2011 – July 2011).

*Seventh Objective - Create a Work Plan to Ensure that Approved Changes are Implemented*

The seventh step in achieving this initiative is to create a work plan to ensure that approved changes are implemented. This work plan will dictate how these changes will occur, in what time frame, and who will be responsible. Executive leadership at both organizations will be presented with this work plan for review, input, and approval. The work plan will be presented to staff during regular staff meetings (May 2011 – September 2011).

*Eighth Objective - Debriefing Meeting with Members from All Workgroups to Share Their Experiences in this Process with Each Other*

The eighth step in achieving this initiative is to provide a debriefing meeting with members from all workgroups to share in their experiences in this process with each other. We feel that it would be beneficial for all members to have the opportunity to speak about both their work and personal experiences with this project and to discuss the end results of all activities. This meeting will also allow for long term planning for initiatives extending beyond the grant period, and will provide input to Project SAFE for the fine tuning of our activities and written documents. It will provide closure to the members and also stimulate buy-in for future projects (September 2011).

*Anticipated Systems Change, Results, and Sustainability*

Creating accessible, more responsive, and more welcoming environments for both organizations will reflect attitudinal, systemic, and physical structural changes which will be universally beneficial and transparent to staff and all individuals who seek services. Accessible environments will invite more people to avail themselves

of the good services already existing at both agencies. More accessible service environments lead to a greater confidence level and a better ability to focus on the services needed. Relevant policies and procedures and training programs will incorporate accessibility changes wherever possible, thereby helping to make them permanent and ongoing.

INITIATIVE # 2 Create Accessible and Welcoming Organizational Environments																
	Who is Responsible?		Timeline (Months)													
	The Collaboration	Workgroup	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S		
<b>Objective and Activities</b>																
1. Convene two separate workgroups, one to develop accessibility tool and one to conduct review / audit.	X		X													
<b>Objective # 2 Develop and Provide Conceptual Framework</b>																
1. Project SAFE will develop conceptual framework based on needs assessment findings.	X		X													
2. Project SAFE will schedule training sessions to deliver conceptual framework training to non-collaborative members.	X			X	X											
<b>Objective # 3 Utilize the MOU to Assure the Protection of Health Information</b>																
1. Incorporate a clause in the MOU that assure the protection of health information for all clients / participants	X			X												
<b>Objective # 4 Review and Develop an Accessibility Tool</b>																
1. Review needs assessment findings from individuals with disabilities.		X		X	X											
2. Gather & review access review tools from other organizations.		X		X	X											
3. Adapt accessibility tool to our needs.		X			X	X	X									
4. Present newly created accessibility tool to leadership at both agencies for review and approval.		X					X									
5. Submit accessibility tool to OVW for approval		X					X									
<b>Objective # 5 Conduct Accessibility Audits</b>																
1. Accessibility workgroup will train Audit Team on tool								X								
2. Audit Team will conduct accessibility tool at VIBS and UCP.								X								
3. Evaluate findings and create a plan to address issues		X						X	X							
4. Revise tool as necessary		X							X							
5. Present findings and plan to leadership at both agencies and OVW for review and approval.		X							X							
<b>Objective # 6 Review and Revise Intake Paperwork and Relevant Clinical Forms at VIBS</b>																
1. Review and revise intake paperwork and relevant clinical forms at VIBS to inquire directly about disabilities and accommodations.		X								X	X	X				
2. Revised paperwork and relevant clinical forms will be presented to leadership for review and approval.		X										X				

<b>Objective # 7 Create a Work Plan to Ensure that Approved Changes are Implemented</b>															
1. Create a work plan that dictates how these changes will occur and who will be responsible for making these changes happen.		X								X	X	X	X	X	
2. Present work plan to leadership for review, input, and approval.		X												X	X
3. Present work plan to staff during regular staff meetings		X												X	X
<b>Objective # 8 Debriefing meeting with all members of all workgroups at the end of the grant period to share their personal and work experiences with each other</b>															
1. Offer a debriefing meeting for all members of all workgroups at the end of the grant period to share their personal and work experiences with each other.	X														X
2. Create a plan to address concerns regarding activities that were completed during grant period.	X														X
3. Create a list of long term planning endeavors that evolve from meeting.	X														X

*Initiative # 3 Policies and Procedures: Review, Revise, and Develop Relevant Policies and Procedures to Guide Collaborative Organizations' Staff in Serving Survivors with Disabilities*

*Rationale*

The third initiative of our strategic plan is the review, revision, and development of policies and procedures for both organizations regarding survivors with disabilities. We chose this initiative as a way to produce sustainable organizational changes for survivors with disabilities because of its potential to alter the structural foundation from which each agency views its principles and conducts its work practices. Policies and procedures supply structured guidance in a uniform fashion for the agency as a whole and for all staff in their roles as service providers. Our needs assessment revealed that policies and procedures relating to survivors with disabilities do not exist at VIBS. Likewise, many of the policies and procedures already in place at UCP-Suffolk for individuals with disabilities who have experienced domestic / sexual violence are state regulated by OPWDD\*\* and are reactive in nature. Project SAFE feels that the lack of proactive policies and procedures relating to survivors with disabilities is one area that needs to be addressed and corrected. Our collaboration feels that with the review, revision, and development of proactive policies and procedures at both agencies, the goals of our project will be met by providing structured guidance for all staff in knowing how to assist survivors with disabilities in a uniform and comprehensive manner.

The issues of consent, confidentiality, mandatory reporting, and accommodations are factors that we will specifically be focusing on as well as any other issues that may be raised during the review of VIBS policies and procedures. We anticipate that as we develop new policies and procedures for survivors with disabilities, this process may indicate the need for changes in other policies and procedures. The issues of proactive safety planning and consistent, uniform dissemination of policy and procedure information / changes, and mandatory reporting are factors that we will specifically be focusing on as well as any other issues that may be raised during the review of UCP-Suffolk's policies and procedures. We anticipate that as we modify existing policies and procedures for survivors with disabilities, this process may indicate the need for changes in other policies and procedures. In addition, we found that both organizations could benefit from establishing formal, comprehensive definitions of

disabilities, accommodations, domestic violence, sexual violence, and safety planning. This will enable us to standardize and strengthen the work of the collaboration and both its organizations through a shared vocabulary regarding these shared issues. This vocabulary will be reflected in all policy and procedure work done by our collaboration.

The projected time frame for accomplishing this objective is 12 months; initiating in October 2010 and completing in September 2011.

*Description of Objectives for Policies and Procedures:*

The following is a descriptive outline of the specific objectives and activities identified by Project SAFE in order to implement this initiative. The six objectives that we have devised for this initiative are:

- select two separate workgroups to conduct and complete all activities
- develop and provide a conceptual framework
- review, revise, and develop policies and procedures to respond to gaps in serving survivors with disabilities
- conduct trainings to support revised policies and procedures
- pilot policies and procedures to see the effectiveness in order to make changes as necessary
- debriefing meeting with members from all workgroups to share experiences in this process with each other

All activities and steps will be included along with who is responsible for each individual task, the period of time in which it will be accomplished, and a detailed narrative of the work process.

*First Objective – Selection of Workgroups*

Project SAFE believes that the first step in achieving the policy and procedure initiative is to convene two workgroups (one for each

*\*\* OPWDD is now the acronym for Office for People with Developmental Disabilities, formerly known as OMRDD – Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities.*



organization) to work on this particular initiative. These workgroups will consist of collaboration members and staff members who will conduct all activities and fulfill all responsibilities for this initiative. One workgroup will consist of the collaboration and VIBS Executive Director (VIBS Policy and Procedure workgroup). This workgroup will be looking at VIBS' relevant policies and procedures. The other workgroup will consist of the collaboration as well as some members of the UCP-Suffolk Policy and Procedure Committee who represent managerial and administrative staff (UCP-Suffolk Policy and Procedure workgroup). This workgroup will be looking at UCP-Suffolk's relevant policies and procedures. We have decided on these two workgroups due to each member's knowledge, experience, and organizational responsibilities. They will be responsible for reviewing all relevant existing policies and procedures at both agencies, creating new policies and procedures and enhancing existing ones, and conducting trainings to support all new and revised policies and procedures. Through the collaboration members on the workgroups, communication with the Organizational Knowledge workgroup will be maintained so that pertinent information can flow back and forth in a timely manner, and each can use the other for new perspectives and ideas. Through the collaboration members on these workgroups, other workgroups will also be kept apprised of progress so that any necessary adjustments could be made. (October 2010).

*Second Objective – Develop and Provide Conceptual Framework for Training*

The second step in achieving this initiative is to develop and provide a conceptual framework for training for staff members outside of the collaboration who will be a part of these workgroups. This training will be developed by the Project SAFE collaborative team for all non-collaborative workgroup members. The main purpose for this training is to provide non-collaborative members an overview of the main concepts of this grant process, a brief summary of all the activities completed in the planning and development phase, the strategic planning process, an outline for implementation, a review of each initiative, and the individual tasks and responsibilities of all. Nationwide statistics and the historical background regarding the intersection of domestic / sexual violence and disabilities, which forms the basis of this grant, will also be shared (October 2010).

This training session will be provided to all workgroup members who have not been part of the collaboration, together as a group, in order for them to fully understand the conceptual framework of the mission and activities of Project SAFE, the purpose and goals of this specific initiative, and their tasks and responsibilities. This training will be delivered in person by collaboration members of Project SAFE, supplemented by power point presentation and handouts. It will be held at one of the partner agencies prior to any work or activities commencing (October and November 2010).

*Third Objective – Review, Revise, and Develop Relevant Policies and Procedures to Respond to Gaps in Serving Survivors with Disabilities.*

The third step in this process is to review, revise, and develop relevant policies and procedures at both organizations that relate to the intersection of disabilities and domestic / sexual violence. The Policy and Procedures workgroups will first gather and review existing policies and procedures relevant to survivors with disabilities respectively at both agencies (November 2010 – January 2011). This review should take into consideration the issues of consent, confidentiality, mandatory reporting, proactive safety and safety planning, accessibility, accommodations, and concrete definitions. We anticipate that as we develop new policies and procedures for survivors with disabilities and revise existing ones, this process may indicate the need for changes in other policies and procedures.

After this review is completed at both agencies, the Policy and Procedures workgroups will revise those existing policies and procedures that we feel are lacking key features important to the intersection of disabilities and domestic / sexual violence, and we will develop any new policies and procedures needed regarding survivors with disabilities (December – March 2011).

Throughout this process of reviewing, revising, and developing new policies and procedures for both agencies, the Policy and Procedure workgroup will be in direct communication with the Organizational Knowledge workgroup to ensure that all policies and procedures are aligned with and incorporated into the training curricula (November 2010 – March 2011).

Once those existing policies and procedures have been revised and new ones are developed by the Policy and Procedures workgroups, we will submit them respectively to the full Policy and Procedure Committee at UCP-Suffolk, the President / CEO of UCP-Suffolk, and VIBS Administration for review. This process will include any necessary legal reviews. If these entities recommend changes, they will be made by the Policy and Procedures workgroups and submitted for final acceptance. The approved revised policies and procedures, along with any newly created policies and procedures, will then be forwarded to OVW for approval (March – May 2011).

*Fourth Objective – Develop, Introduce, and Provide Training on Delivery Strategies to Support Revised Policies and Procedures*

The fourth step in achieving this initiative is to develop, introduce, and provide training on delivery strategies to support revised and new policies and procedures. The Policy and Procedures workgroups will develop delivery strategies designed to convey the modified and newly written policies and procedures for all staff members at VIBS and all staff in the Adult Day Services division of UCP-Suffolk (June 2011).

The next step in this process is to introduce these new and revised policies and procedures to all staff at VIBS and to all Adult Day Services managers at UCP-Suffolk and provide training to those staff members who will specifically be utilizing these new and revised policies and procedures in practice with survivors with disabilities. We plan to introduce these new and revised policies and procedures and provide training on them to all administrators and supervisors at VIBS and in the Adult Day Services unit at UCP-Suffolk. The decision to initially introduce and train administrators, supervisors, and managers first, prior to all staff members, is to ensure that all administrative staff is fully aware of and understands these new and/or revised policies and procedures before introducing and training their staff. Once all administrative staff is fully knowledgeable of and trained on these newly developed and/or revised policies and procedures, they will be responsible for training their staff on how to implement them. Collaborative members of Project SAFE will assist in this process during the duration of this grant period to ensure that all staff members at VIBS and all staff members in the Adult Day Services division at UCP-Suffolk have been informed and trained. A review of these new and revised policies and procedures will be

offered to all staff at VIBS and UCP-Suffolk on a routine basis and will be incorporated into the staff training programs at both agencies, so that new staff is well informed and existing staff is refreshed. This will allow for ongoing updates and modifications as changing circumstances at both organizations dictate (June – July 2011).

*Fifth Objective – Piloting Policies and Procedures to Ascertain their Effectiveness in Order to Make Changes as Necessary*

The fifth step in achieving this initiative is to pilot these new and revised policies and procedures to ascertain their effectiveness in order to make changes as necessary. Once all staff receives the initial introduction on these new and/or revised policies and procedures, the Policy and Procedures workgroups will assist administrators, supervisors, managers, and staff in fully integrating them into the values, culture, and practice of each agency to ascertain their effectiveness from theory into practice. This will be done by seeking feedback at regularly scheduled staff meetings from those using the policies and procedures. This feedback will be conveyed to the collaboration either by first hand meeting attendance or through a feedback loop that includes collaboration members (June 1011 – September 2011).

*Sixth Objective - Debriefing Meeting with Members from all Workgroups to Share Their Experiences in this Process with Each Other*

The sixth step in achieving this initiative is to provide a debriefing meeting with members from all workgroups to share their experiences in this process with each other. We feel that it would be beneficial for all members to have the opportunity to speak about both their work and personal experiences with this project and to discuss the end results of all activities. This meeting will also allow for long term planning for initiatives extending beyond the grant period, and will provide input to Project SAFE for the fine tuning of our activities and written documents. It will provide closure to the members and also stimulate buy-in for future projects (September 2011).

*Anticipated Systems Change, Results, and Sustainability*

Project SAFE believes that creating policies and procedures that support and guide staff in the delivery of services to survivors with disabilities is essential to establishing and maintaining uniformity and

quality at both organizations. By building them into the basic foundational structure of each agency, we are confident that while they may change over time as each agency changes, they will not disappear. Rather, they will remain as a significant part of each agency and will continue to guide and direct the staff in their ongoing efforts to provide quality services to survivors with disabilities.

**INITIATIVE # 3: Review, Revise, & Develop Existing Relevant Policies and Procedures to Guide Collaborative Organizations' Staff in Serving Survivors with Disabilities**

Objectives and Activities	Who is Responsible?	Who is Responsible?	Timeline (Months)												
	The Collaboration	Workgroups	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O
<b>Objective # 1 Selection of Workgroups</b>															
1. Convene two separate workgroups (one from each agency) to work on this initiative.	X		X												
<b>Objective #2 Develop and Provide Conceptual Framework</b>															
1. Project SAFE will develop conceptual framework for training based on needs assessment findings.	X		X												
2. Project SAFE will schedule training sessions to deliver conceptual framework training to non-collaborative members.	X		X	X											
<b>Objective #3 Review, Revise, and Develop Policies and Procedures to respond to gaps in serving survivors with disabilities</b>															
1. Policy and Procedures Workgroups will gather and review related existing policies and procedures from their respective agencies.		X		X	X	X									
2. Policy and Procedures Workgroups will revise & develop any new policy and procedures needed regarding survivors with disabilities.		X			X	X	X	X							
3. Policy and Procedure workgroup will be in communication with the Organizational Knowledge workgroup to inform each other of work and decisions.		X		X	X	X	X	X							
4. Submit new and revised policies and procedures to leadership & Policy and Procedure Committee at UCP-Suffolk for their review including any necessary legal reviews.		X							X	X	X				
5. Make revisions based on suggestions offered by leadership, Policy and Procedure committee at UCP-Suffolk, and legal review.		X									X				
6. Send final draft of new policies and procedures to OVW for approval.		X									X				
<b>Objective # 4 Develop, Introduce, and Train on Delivery Strategies to Support Revised Policies and Procedures</b>															
1. Develop delivery strategies to support revised and new policies and procedures.		X									X				
2. Introduce and provide training on delivery strategies to leadership, supervisors, managers, and staff at both agencies.		X									X	X			
<b>Objective # 5 Piloting Policies and Procedures to Ascertain Their Effectiveness in Order to Make the Necessary Changes</b>															
1. Policy and Procedures workgroups will assist administrators, supervisors, managers, and staff in fully integrating them into the values, culture, and practice of each agency to ascertain their effectiveness from theory into practice.		X									X	X	X	X	
2. Obtain feedback from staff on the effectiveness of these piloted policies and procedures through regularly scheduled staff meetings and relay information to Project SAFE.		X									X	X	X	X	
<b>Objective # 6 Debriefing Meeting With Members of All Workgroups to Share Their</b>															

<b>Work and Personal Experiences With Each Other</b>													
1. Offer a debriefing meeting for members of all workgroups at the end of the grant period to share their personal and work experiences with each other.	X											X	
2. Create a plan to address concerns regarding activities that were completed during grant period.	X											X	
3. Create a list of long term planning endeavors that evolve from meeting.	X											X	

## Initiative # 4 Enhance Organizational Knowledge

### Rationale

The fourth initiative of our strategic plan is the enhancement of organizational knowledge for staff at VIBS and UCP-Suffolk in relation to survivors with disabilities. We chose this initiative as a way to produce long standing sustainable organizational changes because of its potential to provide all staff with ongoing education and knowledge of diverse issues regarding survivors with disabilities. We expect this to result in a better informed and better equipped staff. Providing comprehensive training on a consistent basis regarding issues that have a profound impact on the individuals we serve is imperative in producing long standing organizational changes within both agencies. Our needs assessment revealed that training at VIBS regarding the intersection of domestic / sexual violence and disabilities is virtually non-existent. At UCP-Suffolk it is limited, not consistent, and very basic. Project SAFE feels that the lack of comprehensive knowledge regarding survivors with disabilities is one area that needs to be addressed and corrected. Our collaboration feels that the initial and ongoing, comprehensive training on domestic / sexual violence is needed at both organizations.

The projected time frame in accomplishing this objective is 12 months; initiating in October 2010 and completing in September 2011.

### Description of Objectives of Organizational Knowledge Initiative

The following is a descriptive outline of the specific objectives and activities needed to implement this initiative. The seven objectives of this initiative are:

- convene a workgroup
- develop and provide conceptual framework
- review and adapt existing trainings
- deliver these trainings to staff at both agencies
- evaluate these trainings regarding their effectiveness
- debriefing meeting with members from all workgroups to share experiences in this process with each other
- utilize the MOU to assure continuation



All activities and steps will be included along with who is responsible for each individual task, the period of time in which it will be accomplished, and a detailed narrative of the work process.

### *First Objective - Selection of Workgroup*

Project SAFE believes that the first course of action in achieving this initiative is to convene a workgroup. This workgroup will consist of collaboration members and staff members who will conduct all activities and fulfill all responsibilities for this initiative. It will consist of one collaboration representative from VIBS, one collaboration representative from UCP-Suffolk, a community educator and a direct service delivery staff member from VIBS, and two Adult Day Services managers from UCP-Suffolk. Project SAFE chose these particular individuals due to their position in the agency, their knowledge and work experience, and their prior experience as trainers. This workgroup will be referred to as the Organizational Knowledge workgroup. They will be responsible for reviewing and adapting all existing relevant training curricula, scheduling dates and times for trainings, delivery of trainings, and the evaluation and review of training effectiveness. Through the collaboration members on this workgroup, communication with the Policy and Procedures workgroups will be maintained so that pertinent information can flow back and forth in a timely manner and each can use the other for new perspectives and ideas. Through the collaboration members on this workgroup, other workgroups will also be kept apprised of progress so that any necessary adjustments could be made. (October 2010).

### *Second Objective- Develop and Provide Conceptual Framework for Training*

The second step in achieving this initiative is to develop and provide a conceptual framework for training for staff members outside of the collaboration who will be a part of these workgroups. As was stated in the previous initiative, this training will be developed by the Project SAFE collaborative team for non-collaborative workgroup members who have limited knowledge of our project and this initiative. The main purpose for this training is to provide non-collaborative members an overview of the main concepts of the grant process, a brief summary of all the activities completed in the planning and development phase, the strategic planning process, an outline for implementation, a review of each initiative, and the individual tasks and responsibilities for all. Nationwide statistics and

a historical background regarding the intersection of domestic and sexual violence and disabilities, which forms the basis of this grant, will also be shared (October 2010).

This training session will be provided to all workgroup members who have not been a part of the collaboration, together as a group, in order for them to fully understand the conceptual framework of the mission and activities of Project SAFE, the purpose and goals of this specific initiative, and their tasks and responsibilities. This training will be delivered in person by collaboration members of Project SAFE, supplemented by power point presentation and handouts. It will be held at one of the partner agencies prior to any work or activities commencing (October and November 2010).

### *Third Objective- Review and Adapt Existing Trainings*

The third step is to review all relevant existing training curricula at VIBS on domestic / sexual violence and safety planning, and a review of the relevant existing training curricula at UCP-Suffolk on disabilities / accommodations. Such a review, will inform us about training that is already in place and training that is missing. It will also tell us what specific training we need to develop regarding domestic / sexual violence and safety planning for UCP-Suffolk staff and disabilities and accommodations for VIBS staff (January 2011– March 2011).

The next step in this process is to develop a new training curriculum or adapt the existing training exclusive to domestic / sexual violence and safety planning for UCP-Suffolk staff, and training exclusive to disabilities / accommodations for VIBS staff. These trainings will include issues of consent and rights v. responsibility, as expressed during our needs assessment by staff at VIBS and UCP-Suffolk, respectively (January 2011 – March 2011).

The next step in this process is to review existing training on the intersection of domestic / sexual violence and disabilities that is available (April 2011 – June 2011). Wherever possible, the Organizational Knowledge workgroup can adapt these existing trainings to formulate new training curricula that incorporate the intersection of disabilities and domestic / sexual violence, comprehensive and universal language and definitions, and the use of people first language (April 2011 – June 2011). This task will help to

generate a broader knowledge base and enable all staff to be more familiar with the issues of survivors with disabilities. We believe that these trainings will bring about a new way of thinking at both agencies with an emphasis on changing the organizational culture to not automatically separate disability from domestic / sexual violence. We believe that it is imperative for both issues to be seen through the same lens and not be dealt with as two separate issues.

Throughout this process of reviewing, adapting, and creating new training curricula for both agencies, the Organizational Knowledge workgroup will be in direct communication with the Policy and Procedure workgroup to ensure that all areas of training is incorporated into and aligned with policies and procedures (January 2011 –June 2011).

Executive leadership at both agencies will have the opportunity to review all training curricula and make revisions accordingly. The final versions will be submitted to OVW for approval (June 2011).

#### *Fourth Objective - Deliver Trainings on an Ongoing Basis*

Project SAFE believes that the fourth step is to deliver these trainings to all staff members at VIBS and all staff members in the Adult Day Services division at UCP-Suffolk. The first step in this process is to designate individuals from each organization who will deliver trainings in person and to coordinate a train-the-trainer model. Project SAFE decided that both the VIBS and UCP-Suffolk collaborative members, together as a team with the Organizational Knowledge workgroup, will provide the educational training in person, supplemented by power point presentation and handouts. It will be presented to both VIBS and UCP-Suffolk staff members in the Adult Day Services division. We believe that this dual cross-training method reflects our collaboration's commitment to utilize each other's expertise. It was also decided that those VIBS and UCP-Suffolk Organizational Knowledge workgroup members who are not part of the collaboration will fulfill the role of trainee during the scheduled training for supervisors. They can then provide the trainings in person to others in the future on an ongoing basis (June 2011).

The VIBS and UCP-Suffolk collaborative members of the Organizational Knowledge workgroup will provide a two-part training to all of VIBS staff members. This two-part training will first be on

disabilities and accommodations, and the second part will be on the intersection of domestic / sexual violence and disabilities. The VIBS staff representative of the Organizational Knowledge workgroup will also be present at each of these trainings in the role of trainee, following the train-the-trainer concept. Logistically, VIBS can accommodate all day training as the best and most practical way to initially reach all staff members. VIBS has done this in the past and it has been quite successful (June 2011).

The VIBS and UCP-Suffolk collaborative members of the Organizational Knowledge workgroup will provide a two-part training to UCP-Suffolk supervisors / managers in the Adult Day Services division. This two-part training will first be on domestic / sexual violence and safety planning, and the second part will be on the intersection of disabilities and domestic / sexual violence. The UCP-Suffolk staff representative of the Organizational Knowledge workgroup will also be present at each of these trainings in the role of trainee, following the train-the-trainer concept. Once all supervisors / managers have been trained, then all staff members in the Adult Day Services division will be provided these same trainings by the newly trained Adult Day Services representative. This representative will be assisted by a Project SAFE collaboration member who will be present and will participate in each training session. Logistically, the best and most practical way to reach all staff members at UCP-Suffolk in the Adult Day Services division is to offer several training sessions of approximately two hours' duration over the course of a few work days (June 2011 – August 2011).

These initial trainings at both agencies will be offered within the time span of this grant period and will be incorporated into the ongoing staff training programs at both agencies, so that new staff members are well informed and existing staff are refreshed. This will allow for updates and modifications as changing circumstances at both organizations dictate. Incorporating these trainings into the routine training programs will also help to assure that staff will continue to learn about the intersection of domestic / sexual violence and disabilities past the 3 year grant period.

#### *Fifth Objective- Evaluate Training Effectiveness*

Project SAFE believes that the fifth course of action is to create a competency-based evaluation tool, preferably a pre / post test, to

provide to all training participants. The Organizational Knowledge workgroup will review tools already in existence at either or both organizations and will modify them to reflect our project's purpose. The reason for this tool is to gain feedback regarding the effectiveness of the training and to learn how we can make it better. The training presenters will administer this tool at the beginning and the end of every training session. After receiving these evaluations, the Organizational Knowledge workgroup will review them and will in turn discuss the results with the full collaboration. Changes may be made to the curricula based on input received from the training participants (June 2011 – September 2011).

*Sixth Objective - Debriefing Meeting with Members from All Workgroups to Share Their Experiences in this Process with Each Other*

The sixth step in achieving this initiative is to provide a debriefing meeting with members from all workgroups to share their experiences in this process with each other. We feel that it would be beneficial for all members to have the opportunity to speak about both their work and personal experiences with this project and to discuss the end results of all activities. This meeting will also allow for long term planning for initiatives extending beyond the grant period, and will provide input to Project SAFE for the fine tuning of our activities and written documents. It will provide closure to the members and also stimulate buy-in for future projects (September 2011).

*Seventh Objective –Utilize the MOU to Assure Continuation*

The seventh step in achieving this initiative is to incorporate a clause into our existing MOU (memorandum of understanding) to ensure that both agencies agree to continue offering these trainings to all staff on a continual basis beyond the life of this grant period (September 2011).

*Anticipated Systems Change, Results, and Sustainability*

Enhancing organizational knowledge will assist staff in becoming more flexible and well rounded in their ability to relate to their work of assisting diverse populations. Our staff will be better equipped to work with survivors with disabilities and have a better understanding of the resources that are available. They will be using a shared vocabulary that will empower them to communicate more effectively

with each other regarding the intersection of domestic / sexual violence and disabilities. Training provided will be ongoing rather than one time only, will be more comprehensive, and will be done in Power Point format. The initial training will be videotaped for critiquing and DVD copies can be made to supplement in-person future trainings for large numbers of staff. It can also be utilized as a review tool amongst staff. It will reside with entities at both agencies, rather than with individuals, which will both preserve its existence and allow it to be modified as changes at both agencies dictate. Increasing the knowledge of a particular issue on a continual basis will eventually ingrain it in the beliefs and values of each organization. This will lead to improved services for survivors with disabilities.

<b>_INITIATIVE # 4 Enhance Organizational Knowledge</b>																										
	<b>Who is Responsible?</b>		<b>Timeline (Months)</b>																							
<b>Objective and Activities</b>	<b>The Collaboration</b>	<b>Workgroup</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>											
<b>Objective # 1 Selection of Workgroup(s)</b>																										
1. Convene a workgroup to work on this initiative	X		X																							
<b>Objective # 2 Develop and Provide Conceptual Framework</b>																										
1. Project SAFE will develop conceptual framework based on needs assessment findings.	X		X																							
2. Project SAFE will schedule training sessions to deliver conceptual framework training to non-collaborative members.	X			X	X																					
<b>Objective # 3 Review and Adapt Existing Trainings</b>																										
1. Review existing training curricula at VIBS on Domestic and Sexual Violence and on Safety Planning and at UCP-Suffolk on disabilities and accommodations.		X					X	X	X																	
2. Develop or adapt a training exclusive to domestic / sexual violence and safety planning and training on disabilities and accommodations.		X					X	X	X																	
3. Review available existing training on the intersection of domestic and sexual violence and disabilities.		X								X	X	X														
4. Adapt these existing trainings to reflect the goals of Project SAFE		X								X	X	X														
5. Organizational Knowledge workgroup will be in communication with the Policy and Procedure workgroup to inform each other of work and decisions.		X					X	X	X	X	X	X														
6. Present all training curricula materials to leadership at both agencies for review and submit newly revised training curricula to OVW for approval.		X										X														
<b>Objective # 4 Deliver Training on an Ongoing Basis</b>																										
1. Designate individuals from each organization who will deliver trainings and will coordinate the train-the-trainer model.	X											X														
2. Provide one day training session to all staff at VIBS		X										X														
3. Provide three training sessions to all staff at UCP-Suffolk in the Adult Day Services division of UCP-Suffolk		X										X	X	X												
<b>Objective # 5 Evaluate Trainings</b>																										
1. Provide all participants a competency based evaluation form to fill out on their training.		X										X	X	X												
2. Review all competency forms		X										X	X	X												
3. Evaluate and discuss all feedback given on training with Project SAFE and leadership		X										X	X	X												
<b>Objective # 6 Debriefing Meeting With Members of All Workgroups to Share Their Work and Personal Experiences With Each Other</b>																										
1. Offer a debriefing meeting for members of all workgroups at the	X														X											

end of the grant period to share their personal and work experiences with each other.																		
2. Create a plan to address concerns regarding activities that were completed during grant period.	X																	X
3. Create a list of long term planning endeavors that evolve from meeting.	X																	X
<b>Objective # 7 Utilize MOU to Assure Continuation</b>																		
1. Incorporate a clause in the MOU that assure the continuation of all training activities to all staff members at each organizations	X																	X



## Initiative # 5 Partnership Building: Enhance Organizational Partnerships between VIBS and UCP-Suffolk

### Rationale

The last initiative of our strategic plan is to enhance the partnership between VIBS and UCP-Suffolk. We chose this initiative as a way to produce long standing organizational changes because of its potential to provide networking opportunities for staff. It will also make staff members more cognizant of each agency's mission, service delivery system, the population served, and the differing disciplines of each organization. This will result in better informed referrals as well as increased services to a more diverse population. It was revealed during our needs assessment that staff at VIBS had limited or no knowledge of UCP-Suffolk's mission, service delivery system, and staff roles. Likewise, staff at UCP-Suffolk had limited or no knowledge of VIBS' mission, service delivery system, and staff roles. Our collaboration feels that by enhancing the partnership between VIBS and UCP-Suffolk, more service opportunities will be available for survivors with disabilities. Their needs will be met in a timelier, efficient, safe and accessible manner. We also believe that cross-training on each other's mission, service delivery system, staff roles, population served, and the differing disciplines should be ongoing, and networking opportunities should be offered on a routine basis as well.

The projected time frame in accomplishing this objective is 12 months; initiating in October 2011 and completing in September 2011.

### Description of Objectives of Partnership Building Initiative

The following is a descriptive outline of the specific objectives and activities identified by Project SAFE needed to implement this initiative. The six objectives of this initiative are:

- convene a workgroup
- develop and provide conceptual framework for training
- increase knowledge of each other's organization
- provide networking opportunities to staff
- create a work plan to ensure these events / activities are offered on a continual basis
- debriefing meeting with members from all workgroups to share their experiences in this process with each other

All activities and steps will be included along with who is responsible for each task, the period of time in which it will be accomplished, and a detailed narrative of the work process.

*First Objective- Selection of Workgroup*

The first step in achieving this initiative is to convene a workgroup. This workgroup will consist of collaboration members and staff members who will conduct all activities and fulfill all responsibilities for this initiative. The membership of this workgroup will consist of one VIBS collaboration representative, one UCP-Suffolk collaboration representative, a community educator at VIBS, the director of counseling services at VIBS, and two direct service delivery managers in the Adult Day Services division of UCP-Suffolk. This workgroup will be known as the Partnership workgroup. Project SAFE has decided on these particular individuals for this workgroup due to their knowledge and work experience, organizational responsibilities, and previous partnership experiences. They will be responsible for increasing the knowledge of each organization and for coordinating networking opportunities for staff. Through the collaboration members on this workgroup, other workgroups will also be kept apprised of progress so that any necessary adjustments could be made (October 2010).

*Second Objective- Develop and Provide Conceptual Framework for Training*

The second step in achieving this initiative is to develop and provide a conceptual framework for training for staff members outside of the collaboration who will be a part of this workgroup. As was stated in the previous initiative, this training will be developed by the Project SAFE collaborative team for non-collaborative workgroup members who have limited knowledge of our project and this initiative. The main purpose for this training is to provide non-collaborative members an overview of the main concepts of this grant process, a brief summary of all the activities completed in the planning and development phase, the strategic planning process, an outline for implementation, a review of each initiative, and the individual tasks and responsibilities of all. Nationwide statistics and the historical background regarding the intersection of domestic / sexual violence and disabilities, which forms the basis of this grant, will also be shared (October 2010).

This training session will be provided to all workgroup members who have not been part of the collaboration, together as a group, in order for them to fully understand the conceptual framework of the mission and activities of Project SAFE, the purpose and goals of this specific initiative, and their tasks and responsibilities. The training will be delivered in person by collaboration members of Project SAFE, supplemented by a power point presentation and handouts. It will be held at one of the partner agencies prior to any work or activities commencing (October and November 2010).

*Third Objective - Provide Networking Opportunities to Staff*

Project SAFE believes that the third step is to provide networking opportunities to staff at both agencies. These networking opportunities will help to strengthen our partnership by encouraging staff from both agencies to connect with one another through different mechanisms. The first task that the Partnership workgroup will complete is to designate a Project SAFE collaborative member from each organization to be the resource person who can give direction and guidance to the partner agency regarding difficult and/or new cases. This resource person will be knowledgeable about the different services available at their place of employment as well as the services available in the community. She will also have the professional experience in working with clients / participants as a direct service provider (October 2010 – April 2011). Toward the middle of the implementation phase, the collaboration members who are serving as the resource specialists will identify a non-collaboration staff member and transfer this responsibility to them (April 2011 – September 2011). Ideally we hope to have this resource person not only be available at their own agency through phone contact but also to be available on a quarterly basis at our partner agency for in-person contact and interaction.

The second activity for this objective is to launch a meet and greet for staff at both organizations. This “meet and greet” event will provide an opportunity for all staff at VIBS and all staff in the Adult Day Services division of UCP-Suffolk to get together for a meet and greet. This “meet and greet” will provide the opportunity for staff to meet each other in person, to exchange information about their roles in their respective agencies, and to exchange business cards and agency brochures. This is intended to be a fun, festive, and friendly

event, complete with Project SAFE oriented balloons, giveaways, and refreshments. We plan for it to be both an enjoyable and a memorable introductory event (January 2011).

Subsequently, this introductory launch event will evolve into quarterly informal "chat and chew" gatherings for the same staff and any additional staff members who wish to attend. Lunch will be provided and a variety of topics can be on the agenda, including but not limited to sharing about various job titles and roles people hold in both organizations, updates on events of importance in both the disability and domestic / sexual violence worlds, and general ways in which we can help each other's clients. This will promote the development of trust and confidence between the staff at both agencies and will contribute to making them feel more comfortable about working together. It will also impact the cultural change we wish to make in both organizations (February 2011 – September 2011).

The fourth activity that the Partnership workgroup will conduct is the coordination and development of a monthly staff meeting with the clinical / professional staff at VIBS and in the Adult Day Services division at UCP-Suffolk in an effort to explore ways in which both organizations can enhance their partnership with one another. These monthly staff meetings will offer the opportunity to:

- increase knowledge building amongst both staff by sharing each other's expertise and knowledge
- explore and discuss hypothetical client / participant cases in an effort to provide better clinical support services
- exchange and share resources / referrals
- build more cohesive professional relationships
- explore additional ways in which to enhance the partnership between VIBS and UCP-Suffolk
- explore possible sources of future funding that would support the continued work of this collaboration and enhance our achievements

A written tool will be established by the Partnership workgroup describing who will be involved in this process, the frequency of these meetings, the location, the purpose of these clinical / professional staff meetings, and how this process will enhance partnership building amongst both organizations (January 2011 – September 2011).

Lastly, the Partnership workgroup will coordinate and/or conduct joint educational events at both agencies. Both organizations offer various educational events throughout the year for staff members, other professionals, and the community. The Partnership workgroup will create a calendar of events that will be distributed to all staff members. Staff from both agencies will be invited to attend each other's educational events as a way to network and gain additional insight (January 2011 – September 2011).

#### *Fourth Objective - Increase Knowledge of Each Other's Organization*

The fourth step in this process is to increase the knowledge of each other's organizations. One way to do this is to have the Partnership workgroup coordinate and establish tours at both agencies. These tours will allow staff members from each organization to not only see the physical location of our partner agency, but to also have an opportunity to meet other staff and some UCP-Suffolk participants. This will promote an atmosphere of "at homeness" at each other's agencies and will strengthen the connection between staff at both organizations (January 2011 – September 2011).

Another way is to have the Partnership workgroup review the current website of each organization to incorporate our collaboration and to establish links on both organizations' websites. Once this is complete, staff at both agencies will be informed of the linkages via a routine staff meeting and will be directed to view the site themselves first hand. This will also provide a way for other organizations, community members, and potential clients / participants to become aware of our partnership (January 2011 – April 2011).

Another way will be to develop a shared brochure for Project SAFE. We feel that a Project SAFE brochure is essential in highlighting our partnership and in informing staff members and the community that services for survivors with disabilities need to be safe, accommodating, and responsive. This brochure will highlight our collaboration as well as address the intersection of domestic / sexual violence and disabilities. Since we are aiming to make organizational changes, this brochure will be geared more for the staff at both agencies rather than for the clientele (January 2011 – April 2011).

Any additions or modifications to the websites and the finished brochure on Project SAFE will be presented to executive leadership for review and acceptance. They will be forwarded to OVW for approval (April 2011).

*Fifth Objective – Create a Work Plan to Ensure that All Activities and Events are Offered on a Continual Basis*

The fifth step in achieving this initiative is to create a work plan to ensure that all activities and events are offered on a continual basis. This work plan will dictate how these activities / events will occur, how often, in what time frame, and who will be responsible. Executive leadership at both organizations will be presented with this work plan for review and input. The work plan will be presented to staff during regular staff meetings (January 2011 – September 2011).

*Sixth Objective - Debriefing Meeting with Members from All Workgroups to Share Their Experiences in this Process with Each Other*

The sixth step in achieving this initiative is to provide a debriefing meeting with members from all workgroups to share their experiences in this process with each other. We feel that it would be beneficial for all members to have the opportunity to speak about both their work and personal experiences with this project and to discuss the end results of all activities. This meeting will also allow for long term planning for initiatives extending beyond the grant period, and will provide input to Project SAFE for the fine tuning of our activities and written documents. It will provide closure to the members and also stimulate buy-in for future projects (September 2011).

*Anticipated Systems Change, Results, and Sustainability*

Enhancing organizational partnership provides a means of continual rapport between VIBS and UCP-Suffolk and offers networking opportunities that are encouraged, welcomed, and supported by leadership. It creates ways for staff at both agencies to stay in touch, learn about the intersection of disabilities and domestic / sexual violence together, and utilize each other's expertise. This new way of relating goes beyond simply making a referral and will cement the partnership and keep it going into the future.

<b>INITIATIVE # 5 Enhance Organizational Partnerships between VIBS and UCP-Suffolk</b>																
	<b>Who is Responsible?</b>	<b>Who is Responsible?</b>	<b>Timeline (Months)</b>													
<b>Objective and Activities</b>	<b>The Collaboration</b>	<b>Workgroup</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>		
<b>Objective # 1 Convene Workgroup</b>																
1. Convene a workgroup to work on this initiative and to complete all activities and tasks associated to this initiative.	X		X													
<b>Objective # 2 Develop and Provide Conceptual Framework for Training</b>																
1. Project SAFE will develop a conceptual framework based on needs assessment findings.	X		X													
2. Project SAFE will schedule training sessions to deliver conceptual framework to non-collaborative members.	X		X	X												
<b>Objective # 3 Provide Networking Opportunities to Staff</b>																
1. Designate a resource point person to contact for professional guidance regarding services and referrals.			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
2. Launch a "meet and greet" introductory event for staff at each agency		X				X										
3. Create and coordinate informal quarterly "chat and chews" for staff at each agency		X					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
4. Offer monthly staff meetings involving professional staff from both agencies (intra-agency) for discussion on various topics, to strengthen professional relationships, and to enhance the partnership between both organizations.		X					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
5. Invite staff from each agency to various educational events.		X					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
<b>Objective # 4 Increase Knowledge of Each Other's Organization</b>																
1. Offer tours to staff of their partner agency.		X					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
2. Review current website and incorporate our collaboration and links to each other's agencies on both websites.		X					X	X	X	X						
3. Develop separate brochure for Project SAFE that incorporates the intersection of domestic / sexual violence and disabilities and the partnership between both organizations.		X					X	X	X	X						
4. Present updates and additions to websites and Project SAFE Brochure leadership for review and OVW approval.		X							X							
<b>Objective # 5 Create a Work Plan to Ensure that all Activities and Events are Offered on a Continual Basis</b>																
1. Create a work plan that dictates how these activities and events will occur, where, how often, and who will be responsible in coordinating them and making them happen.							X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
2. Present work plan to leadership for review, input, and approval.																

3. Present work plan to staff during regular staff meetings																	
<b>Objective # 6 Debriefing Meeting With Members of All Workgroups to Share Their Work and Personal Experiences With Each Other</b>																	
1. Offer a debriefing meeting for members of all workgroups at the end of the grant period to share their personal and work experiences with each other.	X																X
2. Create a plan to address concerns regarding activities that were completed during grant period.	X																X
3. Create a list of long term planning endeavors that evolve from meeting.	X																x



## ***Long – Term Plans***

The initiatives described above are the five short term initiatives that will be achieved within the time frame of this 3 year grant period. However, Project SAFE envisions additional changes which are either beyond the scope of this grant or are not achievable within the remaining 14 months of this grant. Our collaboration has chosen to defer them to various points in the future when there may be more funding, more time, more personnel, and more favorable general conditions. These initiatives will also be grounded in our needs assessment and will be consistent with our collaboration's mission. Some of these will be natural extensions of our grant activities, whereas others will require other funding sources and are not directly related to our short-term initiatives. Our long term goals are as follows:

### *Grant Extensions*

#### *1.) Roll out Our Initiatives to Other Divisions of UCP-Suffolk*

Project SAFE realized how difficult and impractical it would be to implement changes within all divisions of UCP-Suffolk in the time frame allotted and opted to begin our work in one division of UCP-Suffolk because of its large size and multiple locations. As a future endeavor, we will be expanding our initiatives to include other divisions of the organization once we have completed Adult Day Services.

#### *2.) Sustain Project SAFE's Partnership*

We have valued the opportunity and experience in building a partnership and collaboration between both organizations and wish to continue strengthening this relationship. We plan to have this occur by sharing training and other relevant events between both agencies; continue to share intellectual resources and professional expertise; continue to keep leadership at both agencies informed of our activities so that buy-in and support can persist.

#### *3.) Brochures for Clients, Families, and Other Agencies*

The first brochure we plan to develop in the short-term is intended for staff use. It seems important to us to develop and provide the same or similar information to our other stakeholders. A brochure featuring our collaboration and the intersection of disabilities and domestic / sexual violence will be developed with a focus on reaching clients, families, and other agencies. Any materials

developed will be consistent with what we have learned about the importance of health care literacy.

#### *4.) Review and Revise Resource / Referral Lists*

VIBS and UCP-Suffolk both have resource / referral lists that we utilize in providing clients and/or other members of the community with telephone numbers and contact information regarding different services and/or organizations that could be helpful to them. Some examples of these are counseling, legal, and medical services; hotline numbers; government agencies; and various other services. We hope to review and revise these resource / referral lists for currency and accuracy. The review would include contacting each phone number listed for currency and would entail a staff member from either VIBS or UCP-Suffolk to physically visit each community resource to explore additional information regarding their facility and their services. We feel that it is extremely important that our clients be given resources and/or referrals to other community organizations that are current, accurate, safe, and accessible. These lists will then be shared so that staff at both organizations is prepared to provide information on support services which meet these standards.

#### *Alternative Funding for Related Projects*

##### *1.) Education for Participants and Families*

Providing education to participants, clients, and families was not within the scope and parameters of this grant program. We found and believe that individuals with disabilities need to learn more about what constitutes domestic violence, sexual assault, crime as it relates to these, and safety planning. Families need to better understand and acknowledge the sexuality of their loved one with a disability, and also need to be more informed about domestic violence and sexual assault. In order to have this happen and be successful, we plan to offer trainings at least annually at UCP-Suffolk for participants and their families.

##### *2.) Education for Other Domestic Violence / Sexual Assault / Disability Agencies*

Our collaboration feels that it is essential to offer training programs on the intersection of disabilities and domestic / sexual violence to other related agencies in the community. We feel that all domestic / sexual violence agencies as well as all disability agencies should be well aware and informed of our project and the changes we

have made to better the service delivery system to survivors with disabilities. Our hope is to begin in Suffolk County, and possibly branch out further to other local areas as conditions allow. This will not only strengthen our own collaboration, but will enable us to build and nurture similar collaborations between ourselves and our companion agencies.

3.) Grant Feasibility Studies: Our collaboration would like to look into the possibility of seeking funding for additional partnership projects that seem to be natural outgrowths of Project SAFE. Two examples are:

- *VIBS SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) Center at UCP-Suffolk Health Center*

VIBS and UCP-Suffolk would like to consider establishing a new collaboration that would partner VIBS' sensitivity in caring for sexual assault survivors with the fully accessible health center at UCP-Suffolk. Currently VIBS has three SANE Centers in Suffolk County, all of which are located within hospitals. Our wish is to have an additional SANE Center that specifically caters to survivors with disabilities, and whose goal is to provide medical services that are safe and fully accessible. The Health Center at UCP-Suffolk already has medical suites that are completely accessible, built on the principles of universal design, and meet the access needs of people with developmental and other disabilities. (As a result of Project SAFE, we are currently utilizing the expertise of a UCP-Suffolk GYN Nurse Practitioner for training VIBS Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners in their provision of care to survivors with disabilities.)

- *Accessible Shelter*

VIBS and UCP-Suffolk would like to consider establishing an accessible shelter for survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence who have disabilities. Currently there are none that are fully accessible in Suffolk County and individuals who have disabilities who need to vacate an abusive living situation must resort to respite services, which are often unsuited to their needs. If Project SAFE could establish an accessible shelter, this would fill a big gap in services.

## **Conclusion**

All of our initiatives will result in systems change and will be sustained in the future by deeply embedding them into the culture, values, and mission of each agency. This will be accomplished by formalizing/standardizing practices that may otherwise have been more loosely addressed; by building changes into the structure of the agency rather than leaving them with individuals who may come and go; by changing attitudes and perspectives; and by bridging the existing gap in our organizations' thinking of domestic / sexual violence as being separate from disabilities. When uniformity is achieved and quality is improved, the end result will be our project's mission: "... to promote a safe, accessible, and responsive service environment for women in Suffolk County who are survivors of domestic / sexual violence with a physical and/or developmental disability." This in turn will bring us a few steps closer to our vision: "Women in Suffolk County who are survivors of domestic and sexual violence with disabilities will have universal access to a network of organizations that promote a culture of dignity, respect, and acceptance. Service providers will work in a seamless and timely manner as partners with these individuals on their journey toward safety, empowerment, and economic justice.

