



LINKING COMMUNITIES NEEDS ASSESSMENT PLAN

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Introduction

Linking Communities is a collaboration consisting of My Sisters' Place (MSP), New York School for the Deaf (NYSD), and New York Presbyterian Behavioral Health Center, Westchester Division's Deaf and Hard of Hearing program (NYPWBHC-DHHP)¹. The collaboration is funded by the Office on Violence Against Women's Training and Services to End Violence Against Women with Disabilities Grant Program. The collaboration aims to overcome barriers to the provision of services by MSP, to address identified inadequacies in the local community-wide response to domestic violence and human trafficking, to extend the delivery of our prevention education program to students, teachers and parents at NYSD, and to recognize the mental health needs of survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking in the Deaf community. Linking Communities is in the Planning and Development phase and created a Needs Assessment Plan to collect information about each of our agencies and the Deaf/Hard of Hearing community in Westchester County. The Needs Assessment Plan entails coordination, recruitment, facilitation, and documentation of focus groups and interviews with staff, clients and students from the partner agencies. Additionally, we will identify the gaps in services for survivors in the Deaf community.

There are unique circumstances that may impact the information we collect in our Needs Assessment. We do not have an initial Performance Indicator for NYSD and NYPWBHC-DHHP, which may present challenges in measuring organizational change. We will rely on MSP's initial Performance Indicator to guide us in creating our focus group questions and interview questions. Another unique circumstance is that MSP does not have any present Deaf domestic violence or Human trafficking clients. We may not be able to collect Deaf client experiences that would give us insight into the limitations of accessibility and culturally-appropriate services at MSP. This led us to create a plan for a focus group for the community, where we plan to reach out to D/deaf individuals to learn more about their experiences in a social service organization.

Finally, our organizations are significantly different in the services we provide to the community. MSP provides services, support, education and resources for domestic violence and human trafficking survivors, whereas NYSD provides education and academic services for K-12 Deaf and Hard of Hearing students and NYPWBHC-DHHP provides mental health services for Deaf patients.

¹ NYP-DHHP is now called New York- Presbyterian Westchester Behavioral Health Center, or NYPWBHC-DHHP.

Member Agencies

My Sisters' Place

My Sisters' Place strives to end domestic violence and human trafficking through comprehensive services, advocacy, and community education. MSP works to create a world in which every individual has the basic human right to be free from gender-based violence and to engage in relationships that embrace the principles of respect, equality, and safety.

Through direct services, they support victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking and human trafficking, in seeking safety, self-determination, and justice. Through advocacy, we act as a force for social change in law and public policy. Through community education, we challenge public perceptions of intimate violence and the social inequities that give rise to it, and we promote prevention with a special emphasis on youth.

New York School for the Deaf

Founded in 1817, the New York School for the Deaf, the second oldest school for the deaf in the United States, is a private non-profit 501(c)3 organization operated in cooperation with the New York State Education Department. NYSD focuses on individualized instruction for Deaf students and students with additional disabilities through infant, preschool, elementary, middle school and high school age. NYSD currently serves 150 students from various counties, including: Westchester, New York City, Rockland, Orange and other counties in the Lower Hudson Valley. In addition to academic instruction, the school provides various IEP mandated related services such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, school counseling, Teacher of the Visually Impaired and orientation and mobility services. School staff includes Administration, Teachers, Teacher Assistants, Teacher Aides, School Psychologists, School Guidance Counselor, School Social Worker, Coordinator of Student Services, School Nurse, etc.

New York Presbyterian Westchester Behavioral Health Center, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program

New York Presbyterian is a Planetree designated "Patient-Centered" psychiatric hospital. Leading psychiatrists and mental health professionals in the field provide a full continuum of psychiatric care for children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly. Highly specialized services are

available for the full range of psychiatric illnesses, including personality disorders, eating disorders, anxiety and mood disorders, and psychotic disorders.

The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program (DHHP) at New York-Presbyterian Westchester Behavioral Health Center offers a variety of deafness mental health services for people of all ages and with any degree of hearing loss. These programs for deaf and hard-of-hearing people and family members provide a continuum of care at the hospital's outpatient department, on inpatient units, in day treatment and rehabilitation programs. The DHHP treatment team includes clinical social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, and psychiatric sign language interpreters who are fluent in American Sign Language (ASL) and trained to work with D/deaf, deaf-blind and hard-of-hearing people in a culturally sensitive environment.

Also, there are outpatient DHHP services, which includes comprehensive evaluations, medication evaluations and monitoring, individual, family, couples and group psychotherapy.

All inpatient and specialty services are accessible through the use of sign language interpreters and/or Assistive Listening Devices; consultations from sign fluent DHHP staff are available.

Vision Statement

Linking Communities envisions providing culturally appropriate and accessible services to D/deaf and hard of hearing (HOH) survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking. With help and support from the New York School for the Deaf (NYSD) and the New York Presbyterian Westchester Behavioral Health Center, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program (NYPWBHC-DHHP), we aim to bring full accessibility to My Sisters' Place's services in counseling, case management, outreach, and legal assistance. We envision MSP, NYSD and NYPWBHC-DHHP helping to ensure there are appropriate and inclusive resources about domestic violence and human trafficking for the D/deaf and hard of hearing community in Westchester County.

Mission Statement

Linking Communities will develop sustainable and organizational change to MSP's services for survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking who are D/deaf and hard of hearing. Further, this collaboration will assist NYSD and NYPWBHC-DHHP in identifying opportunities for policy and/or organizational change that will expand the resources for the D/deaf and hard of hearing community. By linking our individual agencies into one partnership, we want to ensure that there is safety, respect and shared learning in the D/deaf and hard of hearing community in Westchester County. We aim to create opportunities for D/deaf and hard of hearing

survivors of domestic violence to access enhanced and culturally-appropriate information and services.

Needs Assessment Goals

The partner agencies of Linking Communities are fully committed to working together to identify, develop, and implement needed organizational change that will result in fully accessible domestic violence and human trafficking services for D/deaf survivors. Here are our six goals throughout this phase:

To identify barriers and gaps in existing victim services that prevent full access and culturally appropriate responses to Deaf survivors

Identify the needs of Deaf-serving providers around domestic violence and human trafficking education and training in order to effectively serve Deaf Survivors

What makes training and educational resources culturally sensitive and accessible to D/deaf and hard of hearing individuals

To identify what would be needed to effectively work within and between our collaboration partners as it pertains to policies, procedures, and organizational culture

Identify what information the Deaf community needs around domestic violence, dating violence, and human trafficking

Identify the knowledge ASL interpreters and CDIs need to work in the context of domestic violence and human trafficking

Existing Information

Deaf women experience domestic and/or sexual violence at rates **twice** those of hearing women.² Data shows that we are behind in providing accessible services for D/deaf individuals in the social service system. For instance, in 2015, NYC's Department of Homeless Services settled a case that charged its shelters with failing to provide ASL interpreters for Deaf residents. Outside of NYC is Westchester county, and in the same year, Westchester claimed that two hospitals refused a deaf couple's requests for interpreters after the husband had a heart attack.³ This is a concern, since 9.1% of Westchester's population is living with disability, and 2.4% are deaf or hard of hearing, according to the Census data from 2015.⁴

There is also very little data about D/deaf children who witness domestic violence or experience abuse in teen relationships. As this collaboration is the first of its kind, we are planning to meet with D/deaf and hard of hearing students age 11 and older to learn more about their experiences and level of knowledge on this topic. A study conducted by Rochester Institute of Technology revealed that the incidence of neglect and physical and sexual abuse is more than 25 percent higher among deaf and hard of hearing children than hearing children.⁵ This is consistent with another research study, stated that hearing parents of deaf children are more likely to physically abuse these children than are parents of hearing children.⁶

In New York state there are two organizations that provide services for D/deaf and Hard of Hearing survivors. IGNITE is an organization based in Rochester that supports the needs of Deaf, DeafBlind, and hard of hearing survivors of domestic violence and sexual violence. Barrier Free Living, based in New York City provides services for survivors with disabilities, including D/deaf and Hard of Hearing survivors. D/deaf and hard of hearing individuals living in Westchester County may not be able to access either organization, as IGNITE is approximately 350 miles from Westchester County and Barrier Free Living only serves individuals residing in one of New York City's five boroughs. The existing organizations and their location led us to recognize the needs of D/deaf and hard of hearing survivors in Westchester county.

The US Department of Justice has found that only 5% of Deaf rape survivors report their assaults to police and 5% reach out for support rape crisis centers.⁷ It is believed that the percent is very low because of the communication and cultural barriers Deaf survivors face when seeking help. Also, it is believed that the percent is low because the abuse tactics in the

² Pollard, RQ, Sutter, E, and Cerulli, C, Intimate Partner Violence Reported by Two Samples of Deaf Adults via a Computerized American Sign Language Survey, *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 29.5 (2014): 948-965; Anderson, ML, and Leigh, IW, Intimate Partner Violence Against Deaf Female College Students, *Violence Against Women*, Volume: 17 issue: 7, page(s): 822-834 (2011); Porter, J. L., & McQuiller Williams, L. (2011a) and Intimate Violence among Underrepresented Groups on a College Campus. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 26, 3210-3224; Porter, J. L., McQuiller Williams, L, Auditory status and experiences of abuse among college students, *Violence and Victims*, 26, 788-798 (2011b).

³ <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/27/nyregion/deaf-and-hard-of-hearing-fight-to-be-heard.html>

⁴ "Population estimates, July 1, 2015, (V2015)." Westchester County NY QuickFacts from the US Census Bureau.

<http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/36119>

⁵ <https://www.rit.edu/news/study-abuse-rates-higher-among-deaf-and-hard-hearing-children-compared-hearing-youth>

⁶ Knutson, J. F., Johnson, C. R., & Sullivan, P. M. (2004). Disciplinary choices of mothers of deaf children and mothers of normally hearing children. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 28(9), 925-937.

⁷ <https://mcasa.org/assets/files/Sexual-Violence-in-the-Deaf-Community1.pdf>

Deaf community are different than in the Hearing community. For instance, Morgan Breese, an advocate at Abused Deaf Women’s Advocacy Services, stated “Financial abuse is a huge problem among the Deaf population. The abuser will take the SSI and, in some cases, still make them go to work. Or, they’ll limit access to transportation so they can’t work.”⁸

These statistics likely reflect the experiences of Deaf survivors in Westchester County. Our needs assessment plan and findings report will generate the information needed to identify and improve areas in our collaboration, and guide our work when developing our Strategic Plan.

New Data: Methods for Needs Assessment Information

Purpose

The purpose of Linking Communities’ Needs Assessment Plan is to gather information on My Sisters’ Place, New York School for the Deaf, New York Presbyterian’s Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program for organizational changes, policies and procedures, as well as information from D/deaf people who experiences social services system, Hearing survivors, and D/deaf youths. Linking Communities will identify opportunities for improvement at each partner organization. With that new information gathered, we will develop a Strategic Plan.

Linking Communities will conduct this needs assessment by focus groups, individual interviews, and surveys. Each partner agency and the community have its own method that will be conducted in a manner that maximizes participant accessibility, safety, and confidentiality.

Participants

The majority of the focus groups will be comprised of four to eight participants who will be asked six to eight open-ended questions. Participants include staff from MSP, students and staff from NYSD and staff from NYPWBHC-DHHP as well as Deaf individuals in the community. The focus groups will aim to assess service provider environment, access to effective communication, quality services, knowledge and understanding of teen dating abuse, agency policies and procedures, and partner agency collaboration.

Our questions will initially revolve around one theme per question. As participants answer, the facilitator will have prompts and follow-up questions to generate rich discussion around each topic. Prompts will only be used when necessary. A total of 32 focus groups and interviews will be scheduled for 60-90 minutes each. Student focus groups at New York School for the Deaf will be scheduled for 50 minutes each. The targeted number of total participants is 80 to 88. This number of focus groups is manageable for collaboration team staff to conduct while completing additional needs assessment activities and fulfilling regular professional duties and obligations. The following charts outline the expected focus group participants.

⁸ <https://www.domesticshelters.org/articles/statistics/the-deaf-endure-domestic-violence-more-than-hearing>

MSP

Participants	Approx. number of people	Data Collection Method
Direct Service staff (including the Shelter staff)	9	Focus Group
Community Education and Prevention and Development Teams staff	6	Focus Group
Legal and Human trafficking staff	6	Focus Group
Senior Directors and Directors <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Director of Family Services▪ Director of Community Education and Organizing▪ Director of Counseling Programs▪ Director of Pro Bono Project	4	One on One interview/surveys
Senior team <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Chief Executive Officer▪ Chief Program Officer▪ Managing Director Center for Legal Services▪ Chief Development Officer▪ Director of Operations▪ Senior Director of Prevention Programs	6	One on One interview/surveys
Project Coordinator	1	One on One Interview
Hearing Domestic violence/Human trafficking survivors	4	Focus Group

NYSD

Participants	Approx. numbers of people	Data Collection Method
Middle School Students	4	Focus Group *with permission
High School Students (Including ELL)	7	Focus Group *with permission
Seniors and Plus (18 years old to 21 years old)	2	Focus Group *with permission
Counselors	3	Individual Interview
Teachers (any grade) and the School Nurse	4 – 8	Individual Interview
Support Staff (any grade)	4-8	Individual Interview
Parents	4	Focus Group
Senior Administration	3 - 4	Individual Interview Or Surveys

NYP-DHHP

Participants	Approx. numbers of people	Data Collection Method
DHHP Staff	5	Focus Group
Inpatient Staff- Social Workers	4 - 8	Focus Group
Senior Management	6	Individual Interview Or Surveys

Community

In an effort to collect information safely from Deaf individuals in the community, Linking Communities will request organizations to advertise a call for Deaf focus group participants. The organizations include Westchester Community College’s Counselor for Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Sign Language Interpreter Coordinator; Westchester VR Office; Westchester Independent Living Center, and NYSD’s Alumni Association. We will offer two focus groups at two different times.

Additionally, we would like to collect information from ASL interpreters in the community. Linking Communities will hold a focus group or one-on-one interviews with our preferred interpreters and staff interpreters from our collaboration partners who have been working with us from the beginning of the grant program.

Participants will sign up for by either an online RSVP form or contact our Project Coordinator via email or videophone (Please see the Appendix 2). This will help us to secure the spots for a focus group, provide appropriate accommodations such as an interpreter for our recorder, and provide the necessary amount of the gift cards.

In addition to the online RSVP form, we will also distribute flyers at each organization's respective locations and create social media posts through MSP's social media accounts, Facebook and Instagram. Please see the Appendix 5 for our social media posts.

Recruitment Plan

In order to investigate strengths and gaps in services and opportunities of change, Linking Communities members will recruit individuals from all levels of the agency to participate in the Needs Assessment: people served by the agency, agency staff, leadership, and D/deaf and hard of hearing individuals in Westchester County.

Collaborative Partner Agencies' Responsibilities

The Linking Communities members will recruit focus group participants from each of their respective organizations. NYPWBHC-DHHP will not engage their patients to participate in the needs assessment due to federal law and hospital confidentiality policies.

MSP

The Project Coordinator and an MSP collaboration member will coordinate recruitment of MSP staff and leadership in via e-mail and in-person. Additionally, the MSP collaboration member will work with direct service staff to recruit Hearing Domestic violence and/or Human trafficking clients. The collaboration member will hand out Participant Fact Sheets (See Appendix 1) prior to the focus group.

NYPWBHC-DHHP

An NYPWBHC-DHHP collaboration member will coordinate recruitment of DHHP staff via e-mail and in-person. The copy of the Participant Fact Sheet will be provided to participants.

NYSD

The NYSD collaboration members will coordinate recruitment of students and staff in person or via email. Team members will provide the printed copies of Staff and Students Participant Fact Sheets to selected students, staff and administration.

Community

The Project Coordinator will coordinate recruitment at Westchester Community College, Westchester Independent Living Center, and ASL Interpreters with some assistance from these leaders at their respective workplaces. The Project Coordinator will provide the organizations with flyers and social media posts.

Recruitment Tools

Recruiters will utilize the following tools during recruitment.

RSVP Forms

All staff focus group participants will receive an RSVP form (Appendix 2). The RSVP form will ask for the participant's name and organization. The purpose of the RSVP forms is to track how many staff from each organization can attend a focus group/interview and to make interpreter requests accordingly.

The Project Coordinator will be the designated point person for keeping track of all RSVP responses and accommodation requests for focus groups and interviews. The RSVP forms for that particular focus group or interview will be destroyed within two business days of that focus group or interview.

For those invited via email, the RSVP form will be attached to the email and it will be requested that they email back the RSVP form by a due date selected by the collaboration.

There is also an online RSVP form for the Deaf community to use. (See Appendix 2).

RSVP forms will be not used for students at New York School for the Deaf.

Social Media/Flyers

Please see the Appendix 5 for two posts that we will post on MSP's Facebook and Instagram accounts and a flyer that we will send to organizations in the area such as Westchester Community College. We will link our online RSVP form and the Project Coordinator's contact information to these posts and flyers for any potential deaf participants to contact for more information.

Also, we would create several short videos in American Sign Language for our social media accounts to recruit D/deaf community in Westchester county. The person in a video will be fluent in American Sign Language. The information to be included in a video(s):

- Who are we looking for to join our focus group
- Why it is helpful to be a participant
- Incentives
- How to RSVP

Participant Fact Sheets

We will provide four Participant Fact Sheets to four different groups of people: Hearing clients at MSP, staff from each collaboration agency, D/deaf and hard of hearing individuals, and NYSD students. (Please see the Appendix 1).

The participant fact sheet will answer general questions about our collaboration and what the focus groups and interviews will entail.

Additionally, we will create an American Sign Language video based on this Participant Fact Sheet for NYSD students and D/deaf and hard of hearing individuals. This would be helpful for some students or D/deaf community participants who might not understand the full question or answer in English. We want to ensure that they understand consent, confidentiality and the purpose of the focus group/interview.

Online Survey

Following the focus groups, we plan to send an online survey to our partner agencies staff and participants in the event that they had additional information to share. We want to ensure that we do not miss any additional information for our Findings Report. Also, if our staff and participants want to share something that they did not want to say in their focus group, then it would be a useful platform to share additional feedback. (Please see Appendix 6).

Focus Groups Procedure

Each focus group will be staffed with a facilitator, a recorder, a support person, and certified American Sign Language interpreter(s). The Project Coordinator will be the facilitator for all focus groups, and if this person is unavailable to fill the facilitator position, another collaboration team member will substitute. A member of Linking Communities will not facilitate or be present for a focus group comprised of their own co-workers or individuals they supervises. The role of each focus group staff member is described below.

Facilitator

The Project Coordinator of Linking Communities will serve as the facilitator. The facilitator will be responsible for facilitating the groups and ensuring that participants are offered a safe and confidential environment that encourages respect, and where everyone has a chance to express their opinions. The facilitator will need to remain neutral and will not participate in the discussion other than ask questions provided in the script developed by the collaboration team members, and to offer prompts as needed to further a discussion. (Please see the Appendix 6 for the Staff Script and the Appendix 7 for the Participant Script).

Recorder

The recorder will be responsible for taking notes of the discussions, and a laptop will be provided. There will be no audio or video recording of the group. The data obtained will be saved on a flash drive and will be securely stored at the office of the Project Coordinator. In the event of technical difficulties, information from the session may be handwritten and formatted into computer notes at a later time. The recorder also may document responses using direct quotes and may also document an emotion that is expressed with a response.

The recorder will be responsible to document the date, the number of participants, the organization participants are from (if applicable), location and the number of gift cards distributed (if applicable). The Project Coordinator and/or the team members of Linking Communities will provide training to all note-takers related to issues of safety and confidentiality.

Support Staff

The support staff person shall be licensed in Social Work, Counseling, or another appropriate degree and provide emotional support to participants during or immediately after the focus group, if requested by the participant(s). The support staff person will have access to a private room or space outside of the focus group location for confidentiality and safety.

Individuals in all three roles will be responsible for attending a post-focus group debriefing session to compare notes and assess the results of the focus group.

For any focus group with students conducted at NYSD, the support staff should be a school counselor.

Incentives

A Visa gift card valued at \$25 will be provided to Hearing survivors at MSP and D/deaf and hard of hearing individuals in the community as an incentive and token of appreciation for participation in focus groups and interviews. For auditing purposes, the recorder will document the date, the number of participants, and the number of gift cards distributed. After each focus group or interview session, the facilitator will sign off on the tally as a witness. The facilitator

and a support person will be responsible to tell participants to use their gift card soon as possible. The value of a gift card will decrease over time if they have not using it right away.

At any time of recruitment, collaboration members will be responsible for informing potential participants of incentives. The gift card is for participants to keep whether they remain for the entire session or leave early. If a participant does not feel safe accepting the gift card when checking in, arrangements will be made for the card to be given at a later time.

Consent and Confidentiality

Consent

For all focus groups and interviews participants from all partner agencies and the community, will participate by passive consent. Passive consent refers to participants being informed of our project, and agreeing to participate unless they specifically decline to be included in our focus group. It is not a written consent form, rather it assumes consent by verbal agreement and by participation in a focus group or interview. We will hand out a participant fact sheet to the individuals, and ensure that they will know how information will be used in our Needs Assessment Report, and how it will assist us in developing our Strategic Plan.

For the focus groups with minors conducted at NYSD, we will send out a written consent written form (See Appendix 3) to the parents and/or guardians of the students. If the parent(s) or guardian(s) are providing permission for their child(ren) to participate in the focus group, we will make sure that the student participants understand what they are participating in. Additionally, we will hand out a student participant fact sheet (please see page 26) to practice informed consent.

Confidentiality

Linking Communities understands that confidentiality is crucial in terms of recruiting participants and staff from each partner agency. In addition, we will inform all participants of their confidentiality rights prior to participating in any focus groups or interviews.

To further safeguard confidentiality, no names and/or personal identifying information will be exchanged in any focus groups or interviews. No personal identifying information will be revealed and no information will be specifically linked back to any particular participant. The staff participants will be made aware that the collaboration members are not going to put their personal identifying information in our Needs Assessment Report.

For D/deaf and hard of hearing community and students, it is possible that focus group participants may recognize each other and we recognize the risk of participants sharing information discussed by other members of the group. The consent statement above and the

Participant Fact Sheet acknowledges this risk and asks participants to refrain from sharing any information shared during the discussion outside the group.

Mandated Reporting

If a student participant discloses information related to suspected child abuse, neglect or maltreatment, the Project Coordinator and the MSP collaboration member may be required to report it to the Central Registry, per Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) regulations.

NYPWBHC-DHHP and NYSD collaboration will continue to assume their roles as mandated reporters during focus groups.

Access and Safety Considerations

Several considerations related to the access and safety of participants must be taken into account when planning focus groups and interviews. Linking Communities will carefully recruit individuals who are D/deaf individuals and hearing client at MSP to ensure their safety, and will take steps to foster a safe, accessible and confidential space for participants to discuss their experiences and perspectives.

Access

- All focus groups and interviews will be conducted at the respective partner agencies where those participants are recruited. The participants under 18 years old will be conducted at the New York School for the Deaf. In part of our recruitment process, we encourage potential participants (clients, individuals from the community and staff) to contact a specific point-person at each agency with any questions related to accessing the focus group/interview space or request accommodations.
- Focus groups/interviews with D/deaf and hard of hearing individuals and NYSD students will be conducted in ASL by a facilitator who is Deaf. A social worker, who is fluent in ASL will also be on-site during these sessions as to provide emotional support to participants, if needed.
- Focus groups/interviews with hearing survivors and staff, a hearing support staff will be available during the session.
- Each partner agency will determine the appropriate date and time for focus groups/interviews according to the needs of participants. Collaboration members who are responsible for recruitment will ensure that all participants are aware of the date and time of their session.

Safety

- Staff and individuals served by each agency will be informed that participation in focus groups/interviews is voluntary and there will be no repercussions for individuals who choose not to participate.

- MSP collaboration members will use their best judgment in recruiting hearing clients and ensure that they are able to participate safely. Survivors will have the option to take part in an individual interview if a focus group does not feel like a safe way to participate.
- Focus group and interview questions will focus only on help-seeking experiences, gaps in service and opportunities for change. During recruitment and while obtaining individuals' consent, participants will be reminded that their focus group or interview is not intended to be a therapeutic activity. The questions for focus group and interviews have been developed to minimize triggering or traumatization. However, if a participant should become uncomfortable during the discussion, they are free to exit the room and/or cease participation. A support person will be available to provide support to participants in a designated private location.
- Agency staff may have concerns that something they say during a focus group or interview may negatively impact them at work. The facilitator will assure staff that the identifying information of participating staff will not be used in the Needs Assessment Report. Staff will be informed that only agency information will be included in the Needs Assessment Report in order to document needed organizational change to become more accessible and responsive to the needs of Deaf survivors. Focus groups for executive leadership will be conducted separately to maximize open honest responses and avoid any criticism or punishment of staff for sharing information.

Focus Group Questions

There are specific focus group questions for each organization and the community. Our goal is to gather all information we can receive regarding the organizational change, accessibility, the understanding of healthy, unhealthy relationship, and what gaps in our organizations that we can fill in during our implementation phase. Please see the Appendix 8 for our focus group questions; NYSD section is on a page 38; MSP section is on a page 41; NYPWBHC-DHHP section is on a page 49; and the Community section is on a page 51.

Training Plans

Linking Communities has agreed that there will be a training for additional partner agency staff members and volunteers from our collaboration partners who would be our notetaker for a focus group, as needed. The additional partner agency staff members and volunteers will be required to review the needs assessment plan and confidentiality policy. They will also be required to attend an informational meeting with the Project Coordinator in order to be given an opportunity to have any questions answered prior to beginning the needs assessment.

Work Plan

Collaboration building/ Charter development	April 2019- October 2019
Create Needs Assessment Plan	November 2019 to February 2020
Conduct Needs Assessment	March 2020 to September 2020
Create Needs Assessment Report	September 2020 to October 2020
Strategic Plan Development	November 2020 to January 2021
Implementation	February 2021 to December 2021

Appendix 1: Participant Fact Sheets

Participant Fact Sheet: D/deaf individuals

What is Linking Communities?

The Linking Communities is a collaboration between three agencies: My Sisters' Place (MSP), New York Presbyterian's Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program, and New York School for the Deaf. Our goal is to create more accessible services and relevant educational tools to better support D/deaf and hard of hearing individuals.

Why have you been invited?

Linking Communities wishes to learn more about the experiences of Deaf individuals so we can understand how to better serve the community.

Please tell us about your experiences with social services agencies, hospital services, and with law enforcement.

We want to learn what works well, what does not work well, and any suggestions you may have for improvements.

Do I have to say something?

No. You don't have to say anything during the session. Your participation is strictly voluntary. You can leave if you feel uncomfortable staying. We sincerely hope that you'll choose to tell us about your experiences with organizations and how they can be accessible, welcoming and safe while providing you with services that you need.

If I say something, will you use my name?

No. We'll not use your name in anything that we write about the session or in our final report. We may write about your experience that you'll tell us in our final report.

How will I communicate during the focus group?

The facilitator will sign in American Sign Language (ASL). An interpreter will be present for voicing and for additional assistance as needed. If you have specific communication requests, please inform the facilitator prior to the beginning of the focus group.

Do I receive anything for participating?

Participants will receive a Visa gift card valued at \$25. If participants lose the gift card or if it is stolen, we are unable to give you a new gift card.

How are you going to use the information I share with you and who will see the information?

We will put all of the information we gather in a report that will be shared with our collaboration partners, My Sisters' Place, New York School for the Deaf and New York Presbyterian's Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program. The report will also be shared with our Technical Assistant, Vera Institute for Justice, as well as our funder, the Office on Violence Against Women. Also, this report may also be published on a website providing resources for communities wanting to do the same work. This report will help us develop a plan that will guide us in making necessary changes to accessibilities, policies and procedures, and services at our organizations.

What should I tell people if they ask about this group?

You can share that you are participating in a session about the experiences of Deaf individuals, however for confidentiality reasons, please do not share the discussions that take place in this group or identify anyone in the group publicly or to anyone outside of the group. Please respect everyone's privacy and information. We want everyone to feel comfortable and safe to share their experiences and ideas.

If I agree to participate and cannot attend for some reason, who should I contact?

You can contact the facilitator as soon as possible [\[enter contact information here\]](#)

If you still want to participate, we will see if we can re-schedule to speak with you another time.

Thank you. We truly appreciate your time and interest in helping us to make our organizations better places for everyone who contacts us for help.

Participant Fact Sheet for MSP hearing clients (survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking)

What is Linking Communities?

The Linking Communities is a collaboration between three agencies: My Sisters' Place (MSP), New York Presbyterian's Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program, and New York School for the Deaf. Our goal is to develop more accessible services and relevant educational tools to support D/deaf and hard of hearing survivors.

Why have you been invited?

Linking Communities wishes to learn more about the experiences of domestic violence and human trafficking survivors so we can understand how to better serve the community.

Please tell us about your experiences with MSP, its services and staff.

We want to learn what works well, what does not work well, and any suggestions you may have for improvements.

Do I have to say something?

No. You don't have to say anything during the session. Your participation is strictly voluntary. You can leave if you feel uncomfortable staying. We sincerely hope that you'll choose to tell us about your experiences with organizations and how they can be accessible, welcoming and safe while providing you with services that you need.

If I say something, will you use my name?

No. We'll not use your name in anything that we write about the session or in our final report. We may write about your experience that you'll tell us in our final report.

How will I communicate during the focus group?

The facilitator will sign in American Sign Language (ASL). An interpreter will be present for voicing and for additional assistance as needed. If you have specific communication requests, please inform the facilitator prior to the beginning of the focus group.

Do I receive anything for participating?

Participants will receive a Visa gift card valued at \$25. If participants lose the gift card or if it is stolen, we are unable to give you a new gift card.

How are you going to use the information I share with you and who will see the information?

We will put all of the information we gather in a report that will be shared with our collaboration partners, My Sisters' Place, New York School for the Deaf and New York

Presbyterian's Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program. The report will also be shared with our Technical Assistant, Vera Institute for Justice, as well as our funder, the Office on Violence Against Women. Also, this report may also be published on a website providing resources for communities wanting to do the same work. This report will help us develop a plan that will guide us in making necessary changes to accessibilities, policies and procedures, and services at our organizations.

What should I tell people if they ask about this group?

You can share that you are participating in a session about the experiences survivors of domestic violence and/or human trafficking, however for confidentiality reasons, please do not share the discussions that take place in this group or identify anyone in the group publicly or to anyone outside of the group. Please respect everyone's privacy and information. We want everyone to feel comfortable and safe to share their experiences and ideas.

If I agree to participate and cannot attend for some reason, who should I contact?

You can contact the facilitator as soon as possible [\[enter contact information here\]](#)

If you still want to participate, we will see if we can re-schedule to speak with you another time.

Thank you. We truly appreciate your time and interest in helping us to make our organizations better places for everyone who contacts us for help.

Participant Fact Sheet for Staff from our respective collaboration partners' workplaces

What is Linking Communities?

The Linking Communities is a collaboration between three agencies: My Sisters' Place (MSP), New York Presbyterian's Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program, and New York School for the Deaf. Our goal is to develop more accessible services and relevant educational tools to support D/deaf and hard of hearing survivors.

Why have you been invited?

Linking Communities wishes to learn more about your experience working with (DV and HT clients, D/deaf clients, or D/deaf and hard of hearing students), so we can understand how to better serve the community.

Please tell us about your experiences with the resources and services that you've seen in your workplace or in the community.

We want to learn what works well, what does not work well, and any suggestions you may have for improvements.

Do I have to say something?

No. You don't have to say anything during the session. Your participation is strictly voluntary. You can leave if you feel uncomfortable staying. We sincerely hope that you'll choose to tell us about your experiences with organizations and how they can be accessible, welcoming and safe while providing you with services that you need.

If I say something, will you use my name?

No. We'll not use your name in anything that we write about the session or in our final report. We may write about your experience that you'll tell us in our final report.

How will I communicate during the focus group?

The facilitator will sign in American Sign Language (ASL). An interpreter will be present for voicing and for additional assistance as needed. If you have specific communication requests, please inform the facilitator prior to the beginning of the focus group.

How are you going to use the information I share with you and who will see the information?

We will put all of the information we gather in a report that will be shared with our collaboration partners, My Sisters' Place, New York School for the Deaf and New York Presbyterian's Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program. The report will also be shared with our Technical Assistant, Vera Institute for Justice, as well as our funder, the Office on Violence

Against Women. Also, this report may also be published on a website providing resources for communities wanting to do the same work. This report will help us develop a plan that will guide us in making necessary changes to accessibilities, policies and procedures, and services at our organizations.

What should I tell people if they ask about this group?

You can share that you are participating in a session about the experiences in your workplace and the outside community, however for confidentiality reasons, please do not share the discussions that take place in this group or identify anyone in the group publicly or to anyone outside of the group. Please respect everyone's privacy and information. We want everyone to feel comfortable and safe to share their experiences and ideas.

If I agree to participate and cannot attend for some reason, who should I contact?

You can contact the facilitator as soon as possible [\[enter contact information here\]](#)

If you still want to participate, we will see if we can re-schedule to speak with you another time.

Thank you. We truly appreciate your time and interest in helping us to make our organizations better places for everyone who contacts us for help.

Participant Fact Sheet for D/deaf students at NYSD.

(The facilitator will sign in American Sign Language (ASL). An interpreter will be present for voicing and for additional assistance as needed).

What is Linking Communities?

Linking Communities is a collaboration between three agencies: My Sisters' Place (MSP), New York Presbyterian's Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program, and New York School for the Deaf. Our goal is to develop more accessible services and relevant educational tools to support D/deaf and hard of hearing students.

Why have you been invited?

To tell us about your experiences in learning at your school and how you learn and understand what healthy and unhealthy relationships are.

We want to learn what works well, what does not work well, and any suggestions you may have for improvements on developing educational workshops.

Do I have to say something?

No. You don't have to say anything during the session. Your participation is strictly voluntary. You can leave if you feel uncomfortable staying. We also have a guidance counselor in the sessions, if you want to talk with someone in privacy.

We sincerely hope that you'll choose to tell us about your experiences with organizations and how they can be accessible, welcoming and safe while providing you with services that you need.

If I say something, tell anyone what I said or use my name?

No. We will not tell anyone about what you said or use your name in anything that we write about the session.

How are you going to use the information I share with you?

We will put all of the information we gather in a report. This report will help us develop a plan that will guide us in making necessary changes to your educational experience at school. This will be seen by our collaboration partners, our Technical Assistant, Vera Institute for Justice, as well as our funder, the Office of Violence Against Women. Also, this report may also be published on a website providing resources for communities wanting to do the same work. This report will help us develop a plan that will guide us in making necessary changes to accessibilities, policies and procedures, and services at our organizations.

Who will see the report?

The Linking Communities collaboration members and the organizations that we are working with to help us with this project, the Vera Institute of Justice and the Office on Violence Against Women.

What should I tell people if they ask about this group?

You can share that you are talking about your learning experiences in school. As this is a small school, please be considerate of others' feelings and privacy. Do not share any stories or information that is shared by other students in your group, since that would not be respecting their privacy.

We want everyone to feel comfortable and safe to share their experiences and ideas without worrying that someone will talk about them outside of the group.

If you want to discuss more about your feelings and thoughts, please talk with your school counselor.

If I agree to participate and then, for some reason, cannot come, who should I contact?

You can let your teacher or other school official know. If you still want to participate, we will see if we can re-schedule to speak with you another time.

Thank you. We truly appreciate your time and interest in helping us to make our organizations better places for everyone who contacts us for help.

X

Student's Name- Print

X

Student's Name

X

Date

Appendix 2: RSVP Forms

Staff and Potential Participants

RSVP FORM

If you are interested in participating in a focus group conducted by Linking Communities (My Sisters' Place), please provide the following information to help us accommodate your needs during the session as best we can. The information provided on this form will remain confidential and will be shredded after the focus group session. Thank you for participating!

What is your first name?: _____

I would like to participate in a Focus Group (check one): Yes _____ No _____

Are you hearing or Deaf/Hard of hearing (check one): Hearing _____ Deaf/Hard of hearing _____

Which date and time are you available:

(Insert date and time details)

Can we send you a reminder about coming in for a focus group? (check one): Yes _____ No _____

In order to participate, I will need the following accommodation:

_____ ASL/ Voice Interpreter

_____ Assistance with Written Materials

_____ Large Print _____ Help with Reading

_____ Other Accommodation Needs? Please Specify: _____

What Focus Group are you participating in:

_____ Staff _____ Executive Leadership

How do you know about this focus group sessions?

_____ Staff _____ Word of Mouth

Email Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Deaf Community

RSVP FORM

If you are interested in participating in a focus group conducted by Linking Communities (My Sisters' Place), please provide the following information to help us accommodate your needs during the session as best we can. The information provided on this form will remain confidential and will be shredded after the focus group session. Thank you for participating!

What is your first name?: _____

I would like to participate in a Focus Group (check one): Yes ____ No ____

Are you hearing or Deaf/Hard of hearing (check one): Hearing ____ Deaf/Hard of hearing ____

Which date and time are you available:

(Insert date and time details)

Can we send you a reminder about coming in for a focus group? (check one): Yes ____ No ____

In order to participate, I will need the following accommodation:

____ ASL/ Voice Interpreter

____ Assistance with Written Materials

____ Large Print ____ Help with Reading

____ Other Accommodation Needs? Please Specify: _____

Which county are you living in? Please circle one

Westchester Rockland Orange Putnam Other: _____

How do you know about us?

____ Social Media (Facebook, Instagram) ____ Friends/Family

Email Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Appendix 3: Consent Form for NYSD Students



Dear Parents and Guardians:

My name is Jacqueline Mamorsky and I am the Project Coordinator at My Sisters' Place. I oversee Linking Communities, a collaboration with New York School for the Deaf (NYSD) and New York Presbyterian Hospital's Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program in White Plains. Linking Communities is conducting focus groups with Deaf and Hard of Hearing students at NYSD, age 11 and up. We want to develop an appropriate educational workshop on healthy teen relationships for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students and seeking their feedback. The focus groups will be taking this Spring 2020 at a classroom in NYSD, and it will take approximately 45 to 60 minutes to complete.

Privacy

All responses we collect will be used for data purposes only and will be kept confidential. The surveys that are administered will not have your child's name on them.

Freedom to Withdraw

Your child's participation in this focus group(s) is completely voluntary. He or she may skip any question that is asked and may discontinue answering the questions during the focus group at any time.

Support Available

There will be questions about their knowledge of a healthy and unhealthy relationship. If your child is curious about healthy and/or unhealthy relationships further, after our survey ended. NYSD school counselors are available to talk with your child and provide support.

Benefits

Your child's participation in this focus group(s) will increase our understanding of the needs for community education practices for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students. This information will be used to inform improvements in educational approaches in our organization.

More Information

If you would like more information about this project, you may contact Kandace Morris, Guidance Counselor at 914-259-8007, or Diana Segre, School Social Worker at 914-949-7310, ext. 8411.

Please sign and return the attached consent form by (input date).

We hope that you will allow your son or daughter to participate in this project.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Mamorsky

If you agree to have your child participate, please sign and return the consent form enclosed with this letter by (date).

If you have read the above information, asked any questions and received answers, and allow your child to participate in the survey, indicate your response and sign below.

Student's Name: _____

I give permission for my child (_____) participate in the focus group

X

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Appendix 5: Social Media Posts



DEAF & HARD OF HEARING COMMUNITY

Tell us your experience with
support services and we will
give you a \$25 Visa Gift Card!

Contact Jackie at 914.259.8799 (VP)
jmamorsky@mspny.org for more information

This would be post on MSP's Facebook page and as flyers in external organizations, where D/deaf community often attend.



DEAF & HARD OF HEARING COMMUNITY



Tell us your story and we will give you a \$25 Visa Gift Card!

Contact Jackie at 914.259.8799 (VP)
jmamorsky@mspny.org for more information

Also, this would be a second flyer for D/deaf individuals with low literacy, as we will send these flyers in different external organizations that are working with D/deaf people.



DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING
MEETING

**Tell us your experience receiving
support services and you'll get a
\$25 Visa gift card.**

This post would be on MSP's Instagram account and Instagram stories.

Appendix 6: Online Surveys for Post Focus Groups

Evaluation Form

Date: _____ Time: _____ Facilitator: _____

How do you rate this focus group session? Pick a number between 1 to 10; as 1 in poor and 10 in excellent: _____

Did you have any additional feedback, comments or questions after you attending the focus group?

Did this focus group raise any concerns for you?

Appendix 6: Staff Script

Staff Script

Welcome and thank you for agreeing to participate in our discussion! My name is _____ and I will be leading the focus group/discussion today. We appreciate you taking the time to share your experiences, knowledge, and opinions with us. We are meeting with you and with others to learn what our organizations do well and what are your hopes for accessibility, and organizational changes for D/deaf and hard of hearing individuals impacted by domestic violence or human trafficking. In addition, we want to learn what you believe to be quality services and suggestions you may have for how our organizations can work together.

Confidentiality:

Your participation in this focus group/interview will not affect your status as an employee. Your personal identity will be kept confidential, the opinions and perspectives you share may be used in a needs assessment report that will be reviewed by the Collaboration. We highly encourage that you respect others' confidentiality needs. Additionally, our collaboration team members of your organization will be not involved in your focus group.

We would like to ask you to refrain from using names in this process. For example: if you mention an experience that involves a colleague or survivor, please do not say that person's name when describing it.

What is shared in this focus group will stay in this focus group; please do not speak about anyone's involvement in the group as that would break their confidentiality.

General:

The focus group will last for approximately 45 minutes to 90 minutes. You do not need to answer to every question, but your participation is encouraged and appreciated. If a question or another participant's answer triggers your trauma, please talk with our support person and he/she will escort you to a privacy location to talk about it. Finally, if you need to take a break please feel free to do so.

Appendix 7: Participant Script

Participant Script

Welcome and thank you for agreeing to participate in our discussion! My name is _____ and I will be leading the discussion today. We appreciate you taking the time to share your experiences, knowledge, and opinions with us. We are meeting with you and with others to learn what you already know about the healthy, unhealthy relationships, our organizations' services, and what changes we need to make to be accessible, welcoming, and safe for individuals impacted by domestic violence and human trafficking. In addition, we want to learn what you believe to be quality services and suggestions you may have for our organizations can work together.

We want you to be comfortable as possible. If there is something that you need, please ask. Restrooms are located _____. We do not have a break scheduled, but feel free to take a break if you need to do. If you have a cell phone with you, please set it to the "silent" mode to limit distractions during the session.

Your participation in today's group is appreciated; you will find a gift card from our support person at the end of focus group session (for the community and Hearing survivors). You are not obligated to participate in today's Focus Group; if you choose to stay it's important that all of us honor the statements and opinions of other group members.

I will be asking a variety of questions to guide our discussion. Our recorder is here to take notes on his/her laptop, and only take notes about the comments that are shared; she/he will not identify who made the comment.

We will only be discussing your experiences with the educational workshops, community agencies, and how can we improve. You are the expert in your experiences and we are asking you to share that information with us; you do not have to answer any questions if you don't want to. We have a support person here and she/he is available to speak with you privately anytime during the session or after our focus group ends, if you should need someone to talk to.

Participant Fact Sheet/consent/confidentiality/mandatory reporting statement will be distributed and read aloud to the participants. Ask if there are any questions regarding FAQ sheet, consent, confidentiality, or mandatory reporting related to participation in the discussion.

Collect the statement from the participants when all questions, if any, have been answered.

Appendix 8- Focus Group Questions

NYSD section

NYSD Middle School Students

1. How do you define a relationship? (Friends, Siblings, Parents, boyfriend/girlfriend, a partner)
2. What are the healthy elements of a friendship or a relationship? What are unhealthy elements of a friendship or a relationship?
3. If I say “boundaries” are important, do you understand what boundaries are?
 - a. Have you ever set boundaries in a friendship?
 - i. Give me an example?
 - b. Has anyone ever done that with you?
 - i. What did that look like?
4. When you are using social media, watching tv, or hanging out with your friends, what do you learn about relationship or see in relationship?
5. Think about a time you remembered something you learned in the classroom. What did that lesson look like?
 - a. What did the teacher do to make it memorable?
 - b. Outside of school, where else do you learn or get information about something that you’re interested in?
6. What makes a lesson more interesting?
 - a. Movies? Visual tools? Powerpoints? Drawing? Roleplays?
7. What does audism mean to you? (define it, what does it mean to you?)
 - a. How audism impacted your life? (How do you feeling as only one deaf person in your hearing family, or hearing friends?)

NYSD High School Students

1. How do you define a relationship? (Friends, Siblings, Parents, boyfriend/girlfriend)
2. What are the healthy elements of a relationship? What are unhealthy elements of a relationship?
3. Do you know what boundaries are in friendships or a relationships?
 - a. What do you define a boundary?
4. When you are using social media, watching tv, or hanging out with your friends, what do you learn about relationship or see in relationship?
5. Think about a time you remembered something you learned in the classroom. What did that lesson look like?
 - a. What did the teacher do to make it memorable?

- b. Outside of school, where else do you learn or get information about something that you're interested in?
- 6. What makes a lesson more interesting?
 - a. Movies? Visual Tools? Powerpoints? Drawing? Roleplays?
- 7. What do you define audism?
 - a. How audism impacted your life? (How do you feeling as only one deaf person in your hearing family, or hearing friends?)

NYSD Staff (Teachers, Teacher Assistants, Speech Therapists, and a School Nurse) *Interviews

1. How would you handle a disclosure of domestic violence?
 - a. Do you have written policies around this?
 - b. Where would you find these policies?
2. Do you know of any Deaf- Friendly services in Westchester community? What does that mean to you?
 - a. Is there any services that are more fitting to a specific group of D/deaf people in Deaf community? (high function Deaf people, Deaf and additional disabilities people, or vice versa)
 - b. What was the gaps you experienced? What did work?
3. Do you think your students have the understanding or the context of domestic violence or dating violence?
 - a. What is your students' learning style?
 - b. Can you tell me what is an appropriate response if you see or heard a student experiencing abuse?
 - c. Who would you refer them to?
4. What resources do you think that is helpful for deaf students?
5. Have you researched domestic violence or dating violence online? What did you see that are the gaps in providing information for the students?
 - a. Does the social media have a positive or negative impact on students?
6. What training do you have on DV/HT?
7. What do you know about MSP and their services?
 - a. Have you worked with MSP or NYPWBHC-DHHP before?
 - b. What makes you call MSP for help? Or Why did you decide to call MSP instead of other victim services?

NYSD Parents

1. Where would you go to get help if your child was in a mental health crisis or experiencing dating violence?
2. What information do you think your child receives about healthy and unhealthy relationships (school, friends, family, parents or social media)?
 - a. Where do they receive this information?
3. Does your child talk with you about their relationships? What conversations do you have around safety?

4. What does “deaf-friendly” services means to you?
5. How can you advocate for your child(ren) to get services they need?
 - a. What barriers do you see that prevents deaf children from getting services (internist doctors, mental health, and others)
 - b. Do you know about ADA law, interpreter and VRI services for your child?
6. What kind of workshops would your child most benefit from around relationships and violence? What topics would be most impactful?
7. Please list all languages you are using at your home.

NYSD Administration *Interviews

1. What resources or organizations are you aware of that addresses domestic violence and human trafficking? What has your relationship been like with those resources/agencies?
2. How do you handle a disclosure of domestic violence? If you’ve encountered this, what steps did you take?
3. What policies and procedures do you have currently on students’ abuse or teen dating violence?
 - a. What policies or procedures do you want to see developing in this school campus?
 - b. What workshops do you think will be beneficial for students as it relates to dating violence?
 - c. What resources do you think are helpful for deaf students around dating violence?
 - d. How often do you review your policies?
 - e. Where can these policies be found?
4. Do staff receive training on domestic violence and human trafficking regularly?
 - a. What resources are helpful for staff?
5. What do you know about DV/HT issue in Deaf Community?
6. What do you wish services would provide for you and your students?
7. How does organizational change happen here? What has your experience been in changing policies and procedures at NYSD?

MSP Section

DV Survivors and HT survivors (2 different focus groups)

1. Can you tell us about your experience receiving services at MSP?
 - a. What services help you the most?
 - b. What barriers did you experience?
 - c. What are missing from our services?
2. What helped you find out about MSP? Are there any resources you found in the community that attracted you to them? What encourages you to seek services (brochures, ads, commercials, word of mouth, etc?)
3. What do you define safe?
 - a. What could staff do and say to make you feel safe?
4. When you go places, what makes you feel safe?
 - a. Physically
 - b. Emotionally
5. What information do people need to make informed decisions around domestic violence or human trafficking?
 - a. What do you wish your support system could know to help you right now?

Shelter Residents

1. How was your experience on a hotline call or direct call with MSP?
 - a. Were people friendly?
 - b. Did you receive the information you needed?
 - c. What, if any, issues did you have?
2. What was your experience once you arrived at the shelter?
 - a. What services help you the most?
 - b. What are missing from our services?
3. What services or programs do you want but don't exist?
 - a. What barriers did you experience or are you experiencing?
4. What could staff do and say to make you feel safe at the shelter?
5. Do you feel that staff or other shelter residents support you through this process?
6. What is your primary language?
 - a. Do you use other languages and how do you prefer communicate with staff or other residents?
 - b. Do you feel safe to speak in your first language at the shelter?
7. Is there anything else you think we should know? OR do you have any other feedback for us?

Direct Service Staff

1. Have you experienced working with D/deaf clients before?
 - a. If yes, what went well? Not so well?
 - b. How did you determine the client's communication preferences?
 - c. What were the barriers that you experienced working with them?
 - d. Are you aware of procedures for getting Sign Language Interpreting services?
2. If you have not worked with D/deaf clients, what do you think that experience would be like? Do you feel prepared to have that conversation? Where would you find information about how to have that interaction?
3. Are you aware of accommodations needed to better serve Deaf survivors? (Technology, Interpreters, Cultural considerations)
 - a. Do you know how to meet those accommodations?
 - b. Are you aware of specific safety issues that are unique to Deaf survivors?
 - c. Have you had any training on Deaf culture or any type of training in serving a Deaf client?
 - d. What do you know about DV/HT issue in Deaf Community?
4. If a staff person comes to you requesting assistance on behalf of a client's accommodation need, what do you do?
 - a. Are there policies to assist you in making your decision?
 - b. If there are budget implications, what do you do?
 - c. Does your program/agency have a specific line item dedicated to providing accommodations?
 - d. What are some ideas about how your intake and service delivery processes can create an opportunity for a person who is Deaf to get the accommodations they may need in order to receive services?
5. What do you consider a safe and inviting agency environment for survivors?
 - a. How would you make Deaf survivors feel safe, comfortable and welcome?
 - b. How would you reduce feelings of isolation?
6. What services do you want to see that could be exist at MSP that we don't have right now?
 - a. What do you think the gaps in our services for our future D/deaf clients?
 - b. What services could we improve?
7. What do you know about NYSD and/or NYPWBHC-DHHP?
 - a. What do you hope to see from working with NYSD and NYPWBHC-DHHP?
8. Tell us about your experience on the hotline and in general how communication goes with the hotline caller
 - a. Have you experienced any barriers in communication?
 - b. What types of barriers? Have you experienced language barriers? What was that like?
 - c. Do you ask on the hotline or at intake whether a new client require an accommodation because of a disability?

9. What connections/relationships do you have with organizations that serve survivors or people with disabilities?
10. (For shelter staff)
 - a. What barriers do you see a client experienced in the shelter?
 - b. What services do you want that could be exist that we don't have right now?

MSP Legal and Human Trafficking Team

1. Have you experienced working with D/deaf clients before?
 - a. If yes, what went well? Not so well?
 - b. How did you determine the client's communication preferences?
 - c. What were the barriers that you experienced working with them?
 - d. Are you aware of procedures for getting Sign Language Interpreting services?
2. Are you aware of accommodations needed to better serve Deaf survivors? (Technology, Interpreters, Cultural considerations)
 - a. Are you aware of specific safety issues that are unique to Deaf survivors?
 - b. How does the ADA play into your work? Do you know it well or know where to look it up?
 - c. Do you know how to use ADA law when advocating for D/deaf survivors?
 - d. Have you had any training on Deaf culture or any type of training in serving a Deaf client?
 - e. What do you know about DV/HT issue in Deaf Community?
3. If a staff person comes to you requesting assistance on behalf of a client's accommodation need, what do you do?
 - a. Are there policies to assist you in making your decision?
 - b. If there are budget implications, what do you do?
 - c. Does your program/agency have a specific line item dedicated to providing accommodations?
 - d. What are some ideas about how your intake and service delivery processes can create an opportunity for a person who is Deaf to get the accommodations they may need in order to receive services?
4. What do you consider a safe and inviting agency environment for survivors?
 - a. How would you make Deaf survivors feel safe, comfortable and welcome?
 - b. How would you reduce feelings of isolation?
5. What services do you want to see that could be exist at MSP that we don't have right now?
6. What do you think the gaps in our services for our future D/deaf clients?
 - a. What services could we improve?
7. What do you know about NYSD and/or NYPWBHC-DHHP?
 - a. What do you hope to see from working with NYSD and NYPWBHC-DHHP?
 - b. What connections/relationships do you have with organizations that serve survivors or people with disabilities?
8. Describe your experience using interpreters (any spoken language or sign language) in the courtroom.
9. What do you know about human trafficking in the Deaf Community?

MSP Senior Team *Interviews

1. Describe your partnerships with other organizations that serve at the intersection of DV/disability
 - a. What local or statewide partnerships does MSP currently hold that might be helpful to our goal of better serving people with disabilities or people who are Deaf who have experienced domestic violence or human trafficking?
 - b. Please share what you know about our relationship with the New York School for the Deaf and NYPWBHC's Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program.
 - c. What do you hope to gain from our collaboration?
2. What do you know about DV/HT issue in Deaf Community?
 - a. What are the gaps in services in MSP and Westchester county in addressing the needs of D/deaf survivors of DV and HT?
3. How can MSP staff, advocates, and volunteers do better serve D/deaf individuals and youths?
 - a. What services or programs do you want to see MSP to have?
4. Do you know and understand ADA law?
 - a. Why do you think ADA law has affected D/deaf survivors of DV/HT in victim services?
 - b. How do you think the ADA affects DV and HT survivors?
5. How does organizational change happen here? What has your experience been in changing policies and procedures at MSP?
6. How do you support staff in their work?
 - a. What types of training does the agency provide to staff to enhance their knowledge and skills?
 - b. What types of training are available for management staff to coach and lead employees?
7. In a time of limited resources, in what ways do you think MSP is able to support systems change to better serve people who are Deaf who have experienced domestic violence and/or Human trafficking?
 - a. How can the collaboration help? Who else can help?
 - b. Do these connections need to be developed?
 - c. How important is this initiative compared to others?
8. What challenges does MSP face in serving Deaf people who have experienced domestic violence and/or Human trafficking? (Examples: policies and procedures, budget and financial resources, other resources, training, staffing and accommodations).
 - a. Is there anything you wish you or your team had to better support Deaf survivors? (Training, resources, community relationships?)

- b. Where do you see opportunities for enhancing services? (In your policies, practice, training, hiring?)
 - c. Have your staff had experiences in working with Deaf survivors?
- 9. What is MSP's biggest strength in serving individuals affected by domestic violence and human trafficking?
 - a. What sets MSP apart from other community organizations in responding to and meeting the needs of its clients?
- 10. What additional comments or feedback for you have for our collaboration?

MSP Senior Directors and Directors *Interviews

1. Describe your partnerships with other organizations that serve at the intersection of DV/disability
 - a. What local or statewide partnerships does MSP currently hold that might be helpful to our goal of better serving people with disabilities or people who are Deaf who have experienced domestic violence or human trafficking?
 - b. Please share what you know about our relationship with the New York School for the Deaf and NYPWBHC's Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program.
 - c. What do you hope to gain from our collaboration?
2. What do you know about DV/HT issue in Deaf Community?
 - a. What are the gaps in services in MSP and Westchester county in addressing the needs of D/deaf survivors of DV and HT?
3. How can MSP staff, advocates, and volunteers do better serve D/deaf individuals and youths?
 - a. What services or programs do you want to see MSP to have?
4. Do you know and understand ADA law?
 - a. Why do you think ADA law has affected D/deaf survivors of DV/HT in victim services?
 - b. How do you think the ADA affects DV and HT survivors?
5. How does organizational change happen here? What has your experience been in changing policies and procedures at MSP?
6. How do you support staff in their work?
 - a. What types of training does the agency provide to staff to enhance their knowledge and skills?
 - b. What types of training are available for management staff to coach and lead employees?
7. In a time of limited resources, in what ways do you think MSP is able to support systems change to better serve people who are Deaf who have experienced domestic violence and/or Human trafficking?
 - a. How can the collaboration help? Who else can help?
 - b. Do these connections need to be developed?
 - c. How important is this initiative compared to others?

8. What challenges does MSP face in serving Deaf people who have experienced domestic violence and/or Human trafficking? (Examples: policies and procedures, budget and financial resources, other resources, training, staffing and accommodations).
 - a. Is there anything you wish you or your team had to better support Deaf survivors? (Training, resources, community relationships?)
 - b. Where do you see opportunities for enhancing services? (In your policies, practice, training, hiring?)
 - c. Have your staff had experiences in working with Deaf survivors?
9. What is MSP's biggest strength in serving individuals affected by domestic violence and human trafficking?
 - a. What sets MSP apart from other community organizations in responding to and meeting the needs of its clients?
10. What additional comments or feedback for you have for our collaboration?

Senior Director of Prevention Programs *Interview

1. What do you know about DV/HT issue in Deaf Community?
2. What do you know about the accessible resources in MSP or in Westchester county?
3. How can MSP staff, advocates, and volunteers do better serve D/deaf individuals and youths?
 - a. What services or programs do you want to see MSP to have?
4. What are the gaps in services in MSP and Westchester county in addressing the needs of D/deaf survivors of DV and HT?
5. Do you know and understand ADA law?
 - a. Why do you think ADA law has affected D/deaf survivors of DV/HT in victim services?
 - b. How do you think the ADA affects DV and HT survivors?
6. In your work with NYSD and NYPWBHC, what do you hope to gain from our collaboration?
 - a. What kinds of relationships exist between your agency and the partner agencies?
7. How does organizational change happen here? What has your experience been in changing policies and procedures at MSP?
8. How does change happen in your organization?
 - a. What is the decision- making process?
9. Describe your partnerships with other organizations that serve at the intersection of DV/disability
 - a. What types of barriers have you encountered?
 - b. What would make the relationship stronger?
 - c. What are the barriers to these relationships? How can they be improved?
10. What kind of educated tools or workshops would you like to see in D/deaf community?

11. Which changes do you believe would have the greatest impact in your organization serving D/deaf survivors with domestic violence or human trafficking?

Project Coordinator *Interview

1. In your opinion, what do service providers need to know and do to provide the most welcoming, responsive and accessible services to Deaf survivors?
 - a. How can Deaf service providers (NYSD or any partner agency) and hearing service provider's best work together when supporting a Deaf survivor?
 - b. What are interpreter considerations?
2. What kinds of relationship exist between your agency and the partner agencies?
3. What kind of changes do you hope to be happening in this collaboration and long term?
4. What is your experience working and seeing the interpreters in mental health field, domestic violence and human trafficking?
 - a. What barriers did you see in working with them?
5. What are the gaps in services in MSP and Westchester County in addressing the needs of D/deaf survivors of DV and HT?
6. How has your experience been working at MSP?
 - a. What positive aspects and/or barriers do you experience working in MSP?
 - b. Describe any positive and/or negative work experiences you've had at other workplaces.
7. What are your thoughts on MSP having a part-time interpreter on staff?

Community Education and Prevention Program and Development Department

1. Have you had Deaf students/participants in your workshops, presentations or trainings?
 - a. If yes, what was your experience like? How did you communicate? Were there any barriers and if so what were they?
 - b. Have you had any training on Deaf culture or any type of training in serving a Deaf students/participants?
 - c. What services could we improve?
2. If a staff person comes to you requesting assistance on behalf of a D/deaf student or participant's accommodation need, what do you do?
 - a. Are there policies to assist you in making your decision?
 - b. If there are budget implications, what do you do?
 - c. Does your program/agency have a specific line item dedicated to providing accommodations?
 - d. What do you know about the accessible resources in MSP?
3. What are some ideas about how your workshops or tools can be adapted for D/deaf community and D/deaf students?
 - a. What do you wish you can learn more about Deaf culture or Deaf community?
4. What services do you want to see that could be exist at MSP that we don't have right now?
5. What do you hope to see from working with NYSD and NYPWBHC?
6. What do you know about DV/HT issue in Deaf Community?

- a. What are the gaps in services in MSP and Westchester county in addressing the needs of D/deaf survivors of DV and HT?
7. What connections/relationships do you have with organizations that serve survivors or people with disabilities?
8. Are there Deaf-specific materials that are available to the community or available for workshops and trainings? Would this be helpful to have?
 - a. Is their Deaf-specific info, resources or language on the website? How do you think a Deaf person would navigate and understand our website?
 - b. Have you received training or information about making materials and the agency website more accessible for the Deaf community?
9. Are MSP events accessible to the Deaf community?
 - a. What do you think would make it more accessible?
 - b. Have you received training or information about making events more accessible for the Deaf community?
10. Have you come across funders or donors who are interested in supporting services, programs or resources for Deaf survivors?

NYPWBHC-DHHP Section

Direct Service Staff (DHHP)

1. Have you worked with Deaf clients at the intersection of domestic violence or human trafficking? What was this work like? Did you feel comfortable addressing this intersection? What information would you need to feel comfortable?
2. What is your experience collaborating with other local organizations regarding patients or issues related to DV/human trafficking?
 - a. How could this program collaborate more effectively with our collaboration's agencies to provide services to Deaf survivors?
 - b. What have we learned from our long relationship with NYSD that might help to strengthen interagency collaborations to service Deaf survivors?
3. What changes can be made at the agency to increase capability to serve Deaf survivors?
 - a. What resources are needed?
 - i. Texting, more information in emails, training regarding using VR (knowing when things are "lost in translation")
 - b. What kind of trainings do you want?
4. How could leadership support this effort?
 - a. What are the barriers to making these changes?
5. What are barriers to providing effective and comprehensive services to people Deaf people who have experienced DV/human trafficking?
6. If someone disclosed an instance of domestic violence or you suspected human trafficking, where would you refer them or go to get more information around working with them?
 - a. What services or organizations in Westchester county are you aware of or have you worked with?
 - b. If none, how would you go about finding out this information?

Inpatient Staff (Social Workers)

1. Have you worked with DHHP staff before?
 - c. What success do you have working with them?
 - d. What services do you wish that are exist with DHHP?
 - e. What do you want to improve your relationship with DHHP?
2. Are you familiar with the term "Deaf friendly" and what does it mean to you?
3. Do you think our program provides or could provide Deaf friendly services?
4. What have been the successes and barriers in your work with Deaf patients (survivors?)
5. Do you see the NYPWBHC values match service provision in terms of providing culturally and linguistically appropriate/accessible services to Deaf survivors?
6. What training do you need regarding providing services for Deaf survivors? (DV/human trafficking, using VP/knowing when things are "lost in translation," using interpreters)

7. What agencies have you collaborated with regarding Deaf survivors? What have been the successes and barriers/gaps?
8. Have you heard of MSP and their services?

NYPWBHC-DHHP Admin *Interviews

1. What does “deaf-friendly” services mean to you?
 - a. Have you encountered working with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing population? If yes, what have been the challenges?
2. What do you know about NYSD or MSP and their services?
 - a. What do you hope to see from this collaboration with them?
3. NYPWBHC has the stated values of providing linguistically and culturally appropriate services. What actions have we taken to operationalize these values?
 - a. What have been barriers?
4. What type of training does your staff receive to enhance their abilities in working with different communities and populations?
 - a. What types of trainings have your staff expressed interest in receiving?
 - b. Are there any trainings that your staff may need to address linguistic and cultural needs of Deaf survivors (for example, Planetree)?
5. Does leadership need training regarding how to serve Deaf survivors?
6. What agencies have you collaborated with regarding providing services for Deaf survivors?
 - a. What are you looking for in a partnership with other community organizations?
 - b. What have been the successes and barriers/gaps?
 - c. What systemic changes might benefit provision of services for Deaf survivors?
7. How does organizational change happen at your organization and/or within your department?
 - a. How do you address any changes in policies and procedures?
 - b. How are employees are empowered to act or makes changes in their processes?
 - c. What changes do you believe would have the greatest impact in your organization serving Deaf survivors of domestic violence?

Community Section

Deaf Community

1. How do you feel going into Hearing serving organization?
 - a. What skills or capacity do you want them to have to serve you?
 - b. What are your frustrations with direct service organizations?
 - i. Give me an example?
2. When you call a front desk or someone in a direct service organization, what are their response?
 - a. Have they asked you to bring a hearing person with you?
3. How do you define a relationship (friends, parents, boyfriend/girlfriend, partners)
 - a. What do you define a healthy relationship?
 - b. What do you define an unhealthy relationship?
4. If you find yourself in a bad relationship (or advising a friend/family member in a bad relationship), where do you go for support?
 - a. What advice would you give to someone you know who is in a bad relationship?
 - b. Are there resources you are aware of that will help you make decisions around next steps?
 - c. Do you know how to keep safe?
5. What a full communication access means to you?
 - a. If no interpreters, what is the best accommodation for you?
6. Do you know MSP's reputation in Westchester county or in your community?
 - a. Do you know where to go for help or any services in your area?
7. What do a young Deaf generation should know about relationships or anything else?
 - a. What do you wish you learned in school?
8. Are you familiar with ADA laws and using of interpreter services?
9. What workshops would you like to see in your area?

Interpreters

1. What challenges do you experiencing or imagining in working with D/deaf clients or survivors?
 - a. What about any challenges in a shelter?
2. What educational tools do you wish that the service providers know how to work with D/deaf clients better?
 - a. What barriers do you see in family services, social services and victim services with D/deaf clients?
3. What do you know about DV/HT issue in Deaf Community?
4. Do you understand specific DV/HT, mental health words that translate into ASL and that it does have different meaning for each D/deaf survivor?
5. Do you think there are services available for D/deaf survivors in Westchester community?
 - a. What are the barriers to these victim services?
6. What training do you want to learn?
7. How do you feeling about working with D/deaf survivors?
8. What are your legal or ethical responsibilities as an interpreter when you become aware of a potential domestic violence situation or if you feel that the Deaf individual is at risk of being harmed by their partner?
 - a. How do you feel about providing resources, information or referrals to assist the Deaf individual? Do you understand the differences between each of these things?
 - b. Did you receive training on how to handle situations like this?