

Sexual Violence Primary Prevention in Hawaii...

a working document



*A Hawaii where people are
free from **sexual violence**
and where sexual respect and
healthy relationships flourish.*

2013

Hawaii State Department of Health, Maternal and Child Health Branch, Sexual Violence Prevention Program in partnership with the State Sexual Violence Primary Prevention Planning Committee



From Victim to Survivor

Allicyn

"I was a victim. Each time I am able to talk about my experiences, I take back a little more of the power my perpetrators had over me. I was molested from around the age 6 until I reported my abuse at age 16. My first experience reporting the abuse was not a good one. I told a family member and that person didn't help me. The second time, I told a high school friend. Though she couldn't do anything herself, she told me that she believed me and that I should tell someone who could do something. Kismet was such that a few weeks later I was given just that opportunity.

I was called into my counselor's office at school and informed that two of my teachers had contacted her to tell her I was missing school. They felt that it was unlike me because I was a good student and that something must be wrong. I remembered the conversation I had with my friend and thought that this was it, this was the person that I would be able to tell about my experiences. Everything that followed happened quickly—the police came that afternoon, I went into foster care that night, and had to tell multiple people what I experienced in detail. After a couple of months of therapy, I started to look back and wonder, 'What would have helped me to report my abuse earlier?' I figured it out the following April (Sexual Assault Awareness Month) when I read an article written by an anonymous sexual assault victim in my high school's newsletter. She said that she couldn't tell anyone, but that she was writing with the hope that another victim would read her article and get the courage to tell someone. I decided then that I wanted to be the person who would say publicly, 'I told. I survived. You can too.'

*I did not do this on my own. There were many people who have contributed to my empowerment. They include among others: my friend, who told me that I should tell someone; my teachers, who knew something was wrong; and my counselor, who despite my pleadings to forget what I just told her, did the right thing and reported the abuse. **I believe it is a community effort for one victim to come forward and take the first step to being a survivor. I am a survivor.**"*

background

In 2007, the Hawaii State Department of Health embarked on what would become a two-year statewide Sexual Violence Primary Prevention (SVPP) planning effort. In October 2008, a Planning Committee was convened. As part of the planning efforts, two needs assessments were completed. In the first assessment, at-risk groups were identified (youth and young adults, immigrants, people with disabilities, and Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgendered individuals), and barriers to prevention efforts were delineated. In the second assessment, a statewide profile was created, which showed risk factors related to poverty, as well as discrepancies by island in rates of rape offenses. The second assessment demonstrated that there was a need for general public awareness of sexual violence and a need to educate youth and young adults about healthy relationships. The Planning Committee utilized the information from the needs assessments to guide discussion, identify prevention goals, and generate strategies that could be implemented to achieve outcomes. A Steering Committee currently provides input and guidance for the tasks and meetings of the Planning Committee.

preventing sexual violence before it happens

Sexual Violence includes attempted or completed sex acts without the person's consent, including sexual contact, or non-contact sexual abuse, or involving someone who is unable to consent or refuse (e.g., due to fear and intimidation, age, disability, incapacitation through drugs or alcohol use or is physically helpless).

(adapted from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention definition)

Sexual violence affects all communities across our Islands. It is so pervasive that we are all connected to it through those we love and know. Violence shapes our health in ways many of us might never imagine: *chronic disease, teenage pregnancy, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), substance use, obesity, likelihood of having a preterm baby, among many others.*

This is intolerable.

Preventing violence before it happens is a necessary action to creating safety and improving health in our State. We must believe that gender equity is possible, and that we can change our social and cultural norms, as well as our individual values and beliefs that support violence.

The plan is intended to guide change at the individual, organizational, and systems level to prevent sexual violence. To create this plan, a partnership was formed with community organizations and agencies, experts in violence, and those that work with people in our community who are most affected. We are committed to ending violence and therefore will continue to partner and seek the guidance of experts, as together we implement this plan.

In the same way that the organizations in our community diligently continue to provide services for the victims and survivors of sexual assault, we must invest in prevention whenever possible to create safety. There is a role for all to play in ending sexual violence, and it begins with each individual, family, agency, legislator, business, and community.

Our vision is freedom from sexual violence with respect and equality for all. Let's use this plan to work towards this reality for Hawaii.

the facts

Sexual Violence is about power, not sex: It is an act of violence, with or without force, that is used to control, humiliate, and harm another person.

Sexual Violence happens frequently

- ◆ In Hawaii, one in seven women has experienced a completed forcible rape during their life. ¹
- ◆ 10.3% of Hawaii high school students, grades 9 - 12, reported that they had been physically forced to have sexual intercourse when they did not want to, compared to 7.4% nationally. ²
- ◆ 10% of University of Hawaii at Manoa (UHM) students reported being sexually assaulted since they started school at UHM; of those, 40% reported that the assault occurred on campus; 25% told no one. ³

The perpetrator is usually a friend, acquaintance, or family member

- ◆ Seven in 10 rape and sexual assault victims knew the offender prior to the assault. ⁴
- ◆ According to Hawaii sex assault services data in 2004, nearly half of all the assailants were a friend or acquaintance, almost a quarter were a relative, 16% were a stranger, and 10% were an intimate partner. ⁵
- ◆ Approximately 90% of rape victims under 12 years old know the offender. ⁶

Sexual Violence affects people of all ages

- ◆ The Sex Abuse Treatment Center has provided services to victims from age two months to 98 years old. ⁷
- ◆ Females who received services at the Sex Abuse Treatment Center were an average of 18 years old when assaulted, and males were an average of 10 years old. ⁷

The costs are too high

- ◆ Sexual victimization is associated with severe and enduring consequences for victims, including increased drug and alcohol use, domestic violence, depression, suicide, PTSD, increased likelihood of having a premature baby, self-mutilation, risky sexual activity, failure to complete high school, obesity, chronic disease, increased medical visits, and teenage pregnancy. ⁸
- ◆ Childhood or adolescent sexual abuse is associated with a range of high-risk sexual behaviors, including likelihood of being battered; trading sex for drugs, shelter, or money; entry into prostitution; and less likelihood to use birth control. ⁹
- ◆ Rape had the highest annual victim cost at \$127 billion per year, followed by assault, murder and drunken driving. ¹⁰

creating safe and healthy communities

To create safe and healthy communities, it is important to reduce the presence of risk factors, such as violent media, and increase the presence of factors that promote positive behaviors, beliefs, and values. These factors are referred to as **protective** and are characteristics, variables, or conditions in individuals or groups that enhance resiliency, increase resistance to risk, and fortify against violence in a community. Protective factors provide a buffer so that it is less likely people will be exposed to or experience violence. The protective factors are organized below to demonstrate how taking action at multiple levels can create safety at an individual, family, community, and societal level. Increasing the presence of these factors can also reduce other violent behaviors such as child abuse and neglect, domestic violence, and bullying, among others.

It is also critical to identify the factors that make an individual or community more vulnerable to sexual violence; these are called **risk factors**. In addition, other factors called **social determinants** such as income; employment and working conditions; education; neighborhoods and housing; environment; transportation; food security; access to social support networks and health care services; and racism, as well as other forms of discrimination are important to understanding how conditions of daily life, working, and living affect a community's vulnerability or protection against violence. Identifying the role that social determinants have in sexual violence will help guide individuals working in prevention in how to determine key partners, as well as allocate limited resources most effectively.

P R O T E C T I V E

- Ethical and responsible media portrayal of violence against women
- Intolerance for all forms of oppression
- Awareness of intimate partner and teen dating violence as public health, criminal justice, and human rights issue
- Schools that teach healthy behaviors
- Community sponsors social, cultural, religious activities
- Connectedness with friends and adults in the community
- Neighbors that participate in monitoring young people's behaviors
- Strong sanctions against domestic violence
- Access to community support and services
- Healthy parent-child bonding
- Families that set clear standards for behavior
- Family life that provides high level of love and support
- Family standards of non-violence
- Even, resilient temperament
- Capacity for empathy and respect for others
- Ability to evoke positive responses in others
- Tendency to accept and take personal responsibility
- Anger management and conflict resolution skills
- Media literacy

R I S K

- Poverty
- Societal norms that support sexual violence
- Societal norms that support male superiority and sexual entitlement
- Societal norms that maintain women's inferiority and sexual submissiveness
- Weak laws and policies related to gender equity
- High tolerance levels of crime and other forms of violence
- Lack of employment opportunities
- Lack of institutional support from police and judicial system
- General tolerance of sexual violence within the community
- Weak community sanctions against sexual violence perpetrators
- Association with sexually aggressive and delinquent peers
- Family environment characterized by physical violence and few resources
- Strong patriarchal relationship or familial environment
- Emotionally unsupportive familial environment
- Alcohol and drug use
- Coercive sexual fantasies
- Impulsive and antisocial tendencies
- Preference for impersonal sex
- Hostility towards women
- Hyper-masculinity
- Childhood history of sexual and physical abuse
- Witnessed family violence as a child

local reflections

In 2008, service providers working in sexual violence, substance abuse, child welfare, adult mental health, and related service areas on the islands of Maui, Hawaii, and Kauai (due to limited funding, Oahu was not represented in focus groups) were included in a series of focus groups to discuss sexual violence in their communities. The focus groups provided important information and perspective on sexual violence in Hawaii from those working in the field. While sexual violence often affects communities in different ways, it is a pervasive problem that exists and needs to be addressed in all communities.

M a u i C o u n t y

“... families are not having conversations about healthy sex. If you were able to have the conversation about healthy sex, then you can have the conversation about abuse...but if sex is taboo, as it is in lots and lots of cultures, then you can't talk about abuse very easily.”

“I read a statistic that 77% of unplanned teen pregnancies in Hawaii involved alcohol, and I am pretty sure a percentage of those also involved sexual violence.”

“I don't think that men and women travel the same way...I think that women certainly think ‘I could be raped’ a lot more frequently than men.”

“I think maybe there is a little bit of a lack of awareness about how frequently it happens and how quickly it can happen, and that sexual assault doesn't have to be penetration; it is a boundary thing.”

H a w a i i C o u n t y

“They're seeing it [SV] on TV, they're watching videos, they're seeing it on MySpace and YouTube.”

“Several times a year I've talked to different students who are in relationships and I've said, ‘Have you ever witnessed or seen a healthy relationship, where two people, you know, talk to each other, they can work stuff out?’ They look at me stunned, like ‘I don't know anybody who has that kind of relationship.’”

“[Teachers] can make sure that we are always modeling safe and healthy interactions with other adults. And if we see inappropriate behavior in class rooms we need to stop it right away. I think that would help our students who have been victimized or are thinking about disclosing—to feel like adults on this campus do promote a safe environment in which they will be protected from inappropriate language and behaviors.”

“I think it's difficult to be that voice and take a stand when we live in a small town, many times, and many of us are related to many others.”

K a u a i C o u n t y

“I think they [parents] just lack the tools. Even if you talk to your kids, I mean, how can you talk to your kids about sex at all, let alone, criminal coercion, and older adults?”

“Beliefs about what I have a right to and what you have a right to—where my boundaries are, where your boundaries are—what I have access to, with or without your consent. It comes from our society—we have not intervened very successfully in dealing with equality, racism, gender bias, you name it, and breaking through some of those things and making sure that people understand their rights. It's not just about ‘this is a crime,’ but you have a personal right.”

goals: making it happen

Youth and Young Adults—ages 10-21 years

Goal 1: To increase awareness of sexual violence—*break the silence about sexual violence*

Strategy : Engage community leaders in selected communities who can break the silence

Goal 2: To support healthy, respectful, non-violent relationships by increasing positive social norms and eliminating negative social norms that tolerate sexual violence

Strategy : Support grades 6-12 and college level SVPP education in public schools and universities statewide

Strategy : Cultivate bystander action (both community level and in school settings)

Strategy : Engage community leaders (with an emphasis on male leaders) in selected communities who can break through social/cultural norms that perpetuate SV

Chuukese and Marshallese Communities

Goal 1: To increase awareness of sexual violence—*break the silence about sexual violence*

Strategy : Examine gatekeepers and community leaders' current understanding of SV

Goal 2: To support healthy, respectful, non-violent relationships by increasing positive social norms and eliminating negative social norms that tolerate sexual violence

Strategy : Partner with community-based organizations to facilitate the implementation of activities related to healthy relationships and social norms that reduce SV

Capacity Building

Goal 1: To gain and sustain public and private support for the SVPP Plan and its implementation

Goal 2: To develop and sustain collaboration among existing and potential partners to implement the SVPP Plan

Goal 3: To ensure the availability of data needed to implement and evaluate the SVPP Plan

Goal 4: To encourage the development of opportunities for sexual violence prevention education in middle school, high school, and higher education

Goal 5: To support community-based and non-profit organizations' capacity to participate in SVPP activities/initiatives/partnerships

we all have a part to play...

As a **state legislator**,
I support legislation
and policies to keep
our communities safe
by preventing
violence.

As a **school principal**, I mandated
training for all our teachers.

I called the police when I
saw someone slip a
pill in a stranger's
drink at a bar.

I believed my **friend** when
she told me she was
sexually assaulted and
went with her to find
help at the Sex Abuse
Treatment Center.

I told my **friend** he was
crossing the line by calling
his ex-boyfriend so much
despite being asked to stop.

As a **resident assistant** on
campus, I attend
trainings on sexual
violence and talk to my
residents about
violence.

I talk to my children
about their role as
bystanders.

As **chief of police**, I partnered
with another agency to
provide annual training
for all my officers.

As a **preschool teacher**,
I educated myself
about the warning
signs of sexual
violence.

As a **healthcare provider**, I
screen all my patients for
sexual violence.

As a **youth minister**, I talk to all of the
youth about respect and healthy
relationships.

kuleana-responsibility

What does taking action look like?

We all have a responsibility to understand the many forms of violence and abuse, and to take responsibility for creating a safe environment to talk openly about violence.

for all...

- Increase awareness to create an environment where the community can speak openly about sexual violence.
- Increase positive values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors.
- Eliminate the unhealthy thinking and acting that tolerate sexual violence by supporting healthy, respectful non-violent relationships.
- Collaborate with colleagues to expand opportunities & develop funding for sexual violence prevention programs.
- Gain & sustain public/private support from leaders & champions for sexual violence prevention.
- Develop & sustain collaboration among existing & potential partners to prevent the perpetration of sexual violence.
- Ensure the availability of data needed to understand who is most affected to target prevention programs effectively.

for community...

- Show youth they are valued.
- Implement a prevention curriculum and/or sponsor dating violence prevention efforts.
- Encourage youth to be leaders in ending abuse.
- Talk openly about issues of violence & abuse by engaging faith-based organizations to educate adults, youth, & staff about healthy relationships.
- Display educational materials & posters that reinforce the value of respect in relationships.
- Understand the many forms of abuse (emotional, verbal, psychological, and physical).
- Advocate for healthy relationships curricula to be taught in schools & youth organizations.
- Start a dating violence prevention club at your school, community center, or church.
- Encourage the development of opportunities in violence prevention education in middle school, high school, and higher education.
- Support & facilitate community approaches to engage organizations in prevention planning, initiatives, & partnerships.
- Meet with sexual violence experts & become familiar with primary prevention programs in your community & state.

for family...

- Teach your child about consent & how to treat others with respect.
- Teach non-violent ways of resolving conflict & model healthy relationships.
- Educate & re-educate your sons & other young men about their responsibility in ending men's violence against women.

as an individual...

- Be an attentive bystander & speak up when you see someone being disrespectful.
- Know your resources.
- Teach & model respect.

lokahi—working together

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references & resources

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For more information on how you or your group can get involved, please check out these resources:

Hawaii Department of Health, Maternal and Child Health Branch, Sexual Violence Prevention Program

Sexual Violence Prevention Program Coordinator: 808-733-9038

National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC)

www.nsvrc.org

The Sex Abuse Treatment Center

www.satchawaii.com

24-Hour Hotline: 808-524-RAPE (7273)

University of Hawaii at Mānoa, Women's Center

www.hawaii.edu/safecampus

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