SPECIAL PROJECTS

WV S.A.F.E. Crosst raining Toolkit
The development, printing, distribution and training on this toolkit was one of the largest projects that FRIS has coordinated. It is available for free on FRIS’ website and is being utilized by service providers throughout the state. Currently the 27 modules from the toolkit are being ‘transferred’ into online, interactive modules and will be available in the fall of 2011. The toolkit will be presented by the state partners in September at a workshop at the National Sexual Assault Conference.

Website
In an effort to maximize the accessibility of the coalition’s services, FRIS’ website underwent a major redesign to make it user friendly for people who use screen readers. Most sections of the website were updated and a significant amount of additional information added.

Additional Resources
To add to the training modules in the disability crosstraining toolkit, FRIS’ Board and staff developed training modules on additional topics to help increase the core knowledge of advocates in the field. Modules were created on topics that included victim resources, sex offenders/power and control, stalking, cybercrimes, and primary prevention. Plans are underway for two final modules to be developed in 2011-12.

Two newsletters were developed and distributed to the state’s rape crisis centers. Each focused on a topical issue: one on DNA backlogs and the other on abuse in later life.

Several brochures as well as the comprehensive multidisciplinary protocol for working with victims were revised. Two new brochures were developed—one on working with victims with disabilities and the other on serving victims with disabilities.

Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP)
2010-2011 marked the first full year of implementation of the Sexual Assault Services Program, which significantly increased the number of available victim services in the state. Through this federal grant that is monitored by FRIS, the rape crisis centers were able to increase on-call services and outreach staff and provide services that are tailored to meet the specific needs of their communities.

Sustainability
FRIS continued its focus on creating a sustainable coalition with the development of an extensive Financial Operations Manual. The rape crisis centers created similar written procedures to ensure the continuity of their services.

WV Goes SANE Project
After years of struggling with the challenge of training SANEs both effectively and cost efficiently, FRIS secured a grant from the Benedum Foundation to explore the feasibility of conducting a component of the SANE trainings online. This project is utilizing a work group and surveys to determine the training needs and viable options in West Virginia as well as exploring available national prototypes. The results of the study and a recommended plan will be available in late 2011.

Key Legislative Issues
A bill requiring HIV testing upon arrest for anyone charged with a sex offense was passed in this session and hopefully will result in some peace of mind for many victims. A proposed sexual violence and stalking protection order was not passed but was referred for study in this session and hopefully will result in some peace of mind for many victims. A proposed sexual violence and stalking protection order was not passed but was referred for study in this session and hopefully will result in some peace of mind for many victims.

Sustainable Funding
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National Training Presentations
The expertise of FRIS staff continued to be recognized on a national level. The fiscal year began in July with a staff member as the featured presenter on a national webinar facilitated by the Prevention Connection on coordinating prevention educators. The fiscal year ended with a staff member serving as a presenter for the fifth time at the National SART Training Conference.
Intercollegiate Council Against Sexual Violence
The Council met twice during the year in addition to networking through the statewide listserv. Members of the Council provided feedback and input into the campus prevention resource toolkit that is in development. Council members are hopeful that a draft of the toolkit will be available for piloting in the fall. The May meeting of the Council centered around the Title IX guidelines that were released in April by the Office on Civil Rights.

Rural Advocate Network (RAN)
Quarterly meetings of the Rural Advocate Network were facilitated during the year. The seven advocates continue to serve a large number of victims (358 primary victims and 428 secondary victims in the past 12 months) in addition to their work in coordinating their local SARTs. The focus of their SART’s this year was on formalizing their SART’s practice through written protocols. In May the advocates began implementing a modified safety audit to help identify any gaps and barriers to services. Plans were finalized for a series of six regional SART trainings that will begin in July.

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Advisory Board
This partnership continues to work on the collection of forensic evidence in sexual assault cases. Two projects, major revisions to the instructions of the sex crimes kit and revisions to the state’s protocol for responding to sexual assault, were successfully completed. Several members of the Advisory Board are serving on a special project, WV Goes SANE, which was funded by the Benedum Foundation. The purpose is to address an issue that the advisory board has struggled with for several years: the feasibility of creating distance learning opportunities for SANEs in West Virginia. A feasibility study is currently underway and that question will finally be answered and a plan developed.

WV S.A.F.E. Partnership
Four years of work by the West Virginia Sexual Assault Free Environment disability partnership (FRIS, the Northern West Virginia Center for Independent Living, and the WV Department of Health and Human Resources) culminated in several activities. The state team and members of the three pilot site collaborative held a retreat, where numerous resources were reviewed and distributed. The cross-training toolkit on working with victims with disabilities, consisting of 27 modules organized into four sections (Collaboration 101, Sexual Violence 101, Disabilities 101 and Tools to Increase Access), was completed and printed. A training on the toolkit was held and follow-up regional trainings conducted with Adult Protective Services staff. This project, initially funded by the Office on Violence Against Women, has resulted in systems changes on multiple levels, improved the response to victims with disabilities, and increased access to services in the state.

WVS.A.R.T.T.
Our statewide S.A.R.T.—the West Virginia Sexual Assault Response Technical Team or W.V.S.A.R.T.T.—continued its efforts to improve the first responses to victims of sexual violence through targeted trainings (18 trainings reaching nearly 700 prosecutors, law enforcement officers, advocates, campus staff and magistrates) and technical assistance. Additionally three hospitals received trainings (reaching 160 staff) and five SANE trainings and advanced SANE trainings were coordinated. Eight counties plus the six pilot counties received technical assistance, with four new SARTS formed and a training coordinated for one of those SARTS. Six SARTs finalized their community protocols and began implementing a programmatic accessibility assessment of their services.

Additional Partnerships
In addition to the collaborations listed above that are coordinated by FRIS, staff participated in numerous additional multi-disciplinary initiatives including the Key Players in Sexual Violence Prevention, the Children's Justice Task Force, the Dating Violence Workgroup, and the Violence Against Women Collaborative.