

Creating a Community Resource List

This module helps service providers to do the following: (1) develop an understanding of the benefits of having a community resource list for sexual violence victims with disabilities; (2) understand the process for creating a list of local resources;¹ and (3) gain insight into the process of resource mapping.

Key Points

- Identifying community resources, also known as resource mapping, is a strategy for improving services to communities. It can be achieved by compiling a list of resources and/or by mapping out the resources, their physical locations, contact information and linkages with other resources.
- To help guide the work of identifying community resources and assets, the following questions should be addressed: What is the purpose of the asset assessment and how will the results be used? What is the size/scope of the community being assessed? What people are available to do the work? How much time do you have for the task or how much time can you allow? How much money and other resources are available for incidental expenses?
- There are two basic complementary approaches to identifying resources, with one approach focusing on the resources of groups that offer services in the community for sexual violence victims with disabilities and the other focusing on the resources offered by individuals in the community.
- Once you have collected resource information, it can be helpful to put it on a map. Maps are good visual aids—when data creates a picture, understanding and insight often increase. There are several possible approaches to creating a map: Mark the resources on a large community street map, use a computer program to create a more flexible and sophisticated map, or even diagram resources on a chart, rather than an actual map, to show linkages among the different categories of resources.

A4. Creating a Community Resource List²

Purpose

Resources available to sexual violence victims with disabilities are not always readily identifiable. For example, some services may not be widely advertised and instead be provided by an agency only upon request. Therefore, service providers must be aware of all of the available resources that sexual violence victims with disabilities might potentially need. Compiling a list of those available resources creates a tool to help provide victims with efficient, seamless service delivery, regardless of their point of entry into the system.

This module is designed to help service providers to do the following: (1) develop an understanding of the benefits of having a community resource list for sexual violence victims

with disabilities; (2) understand the process for creating a list of local resources; and (3) gain insight into the process of resource mapping.

Objectives

Those completing this module will be able to:

- Define resource mapping and identify the benefits of creating a community resource list;
- Understand the basic issues to consider when creating a resource list;
- Identify the different approaches for creating a resource list; and
- Convene a work group and create a resource list.

NOTE: Agencies may be concerned about the time required to create and maintain a comprehensive resource list for sexual violence victims with disabilities. Keep in mind that this resource list can first be created on a small scale and incrementally expanded in scope. *Part 2. Discussion* in this module provides participants with an opportunity to begin working collaboratively to create such a list. Also, you most likely are not starting from scratch—not only does your agency probably have a general resource list, but in the process of completing other modules in this toolkit, you may have already begun to gather information about resources for victims with disabilities and have initiated relationships with agencies that provide relevant services.

PART 1: CORE KNOWLEDGE

What is resource mapping?

Identifying community resources, also known as *resource mapping*, is a strategy for improving services to communities. It can be achieved by compiling a list of resources and/or by mapping out the resources, their physical locations, contact information and linkages with other resources (see below for more on different kinds of maps). The resulting “map” can be an excellent visual of what resources are available to the community and how to connect victims with those resources.

To help guide the work of identifying resources, the following questions should be addressed:

- What is the *purpose* of resource mapping and *how will the results be used*? Consider whether the list/map will be shared with other agencies and professionals or be available for in-office use only. Will it be used to initiate some type of action, and if so, what and how? Will it be used to improve services? Do you want to narrow the scope of the resource list to a specific group of victims (e.g., victims with cognitive disabilities) or establish criteria for including a resource on the list (e.g., only affordable housing options rather than all housing options in a community)? The answers to these questions will provide structure and direction for the mapping process.
- What is the *size/scope of the community to be assessed for resources*? It might be a specific housing development, a local neighborhood, a town or city, a region or the state. It might be necessary to identify resources outside of a particular community if victims living there seek services in a neighboring county or state due to the lack of local services and programs. The answer to this question can not only provide focus to your information-

gathering efforts, but also help you estimate the time commitment involved in the process. Obviously, with a larger size/scope, more work will be involved.

- What *people* are available to do the work? Is this a project achievable by one staff person or a collaborative project involving multiple agencies? Is it possible to engage local government support or a college class for such a project, since knowing the community's resources is in the entire community's interest?
- How much *time* is available and allowable for the task?
- How much *money*, if any, and other supports are needed/available for incidental expenses?

Additional time and money to do resource mapping may enable you to increase the scope and depth. However, even with limited time and funds, much can be accomplished in identifying resources that will be helpful to victims with disabilities in the community.

What are the potential benefits of resource mapping?

The benefits of the resource mapping process to you and your agency can potentially include:

- Faster identification of relevant programs and services for victims;
- Increased interagency collaboration to serve victims;
- More networking and streamlined resources to allow better support for victims;
- Greater awareness of the community's strengths and gaps in serving sexual violence victims with disabilities, allowing agencies to work together to increase the frequency, duration, intensity and quality of existing services and supports in the community; and
- Ultimately, more flexibility and choice for victims, more victim support in navigating the system, and a more accessible and welcoming environment for victims.

Are there different approaches to identifying resources?

Two basic approaches to identifying resources complement each other, with one approach focusing on the resources of groups and the other focusing on individuals.

1. **Identify the resources of key GROUPS within a community.** The central task here is to take an inventory of the groups (agencies, organizations and institutions) that offer services in the community for the targeted group: sexual violence victims with disabilities. This process begins with creating a work group and generating a list.
 - Organize a brainstorming session to develop an initial list of community resources. First, *identify and involve key people*, including consumers, who have knowledge of the relevant systems and the community. For the identified target population, input should be sought from persons with disabilities, agencies providing services to sexual violence victims, disability service providers and key community organizations that serve either victims or persons with disabilities in other capacities, such as health care providers and the criminal justice system. Other possible points of entry into the service delivery system should be considered and input sought from those entities, such as the faith-based community or schools. Next, *establish a time and place for a meeting* (it might be face-to-face or via a

phone conference call). Allow for at least an hour, depending on the scope of the information-gathering needs, the scope of the community being served and the momentum of the group. Determine if accommodations are needed to make the meeting accessible to all participants (e.g., a physically accessible building, large print written materials, an American Sign Language interpreter). Be sure to *clearly define the objective(s) for the discussion, the information being sought and how it will be used.*

NOTE: See *Part 2: Discussion* of this module for a process to follow to conduct the first meeting of the work group.

- Use other sources of information to add to the list. For example:
 - o The *Internet* contains information about a variety of resources. Try using different key words to search for information (the name of the community or state, “disabilities services” and “sexual assault victim services,” etc.) or go to the websites of state level organizations as they often include links to additional resources.
 - o The *yellow pages* are free, comprehensive and often excellent sources.
 - o Town *directories*, published specifically for your community.
 - o Lists of *businesses*, available from the local chamber of commerce.
 - o *Existing lists of organizations*. Check with your library, ministerial association, Family Resource Network, Senior and Community Services, rape crisis centers, etc. Also see West Virginia 211, a general information and referral resource for community services (call 304-376-3102 or go to <http://www.wv211.org>).
 - o *Lists of organizations that are not generally published*. For example, the local United Way may have a list of non-profit agencies.
 - o The *local newspaper* may contain information, or provide a contact for other media outlets that may have an otherwise unpublished list of resources.
 - o *Bulletin boards and other community-calendar type listings* that might be found on the local cable television.
 - o *Friends and colleagues* may know of resources that are not on other lists.
- Think about how to categorize the list: alphabetically, geographically, type of services, size, free/fee for services, or other possible categories.
- Consider increasing the usefulness of the list by including a brief summary of the types of services provided and the process for accessing the services. A summary will enable anyone using the list to quickly determine the appropriateness of each resource for the specific victim being served.
- Periodically refine and revise the list.

*The following are **examples of community resources as they might be listed** in the local yellow pages or by city/county planning departments, the chamber of commerce and volunteer placement agencies. The resources are organized by sector.*³

- **Community-based organizations**

- o Community service providers, including victim service agencies and agencies serving persons with disabilities
- o Advocacy groups for victims, persons with disabilities, drug abuse reduction, etc.
- o Food kitchens and distribution centers
- o Housing organizations
- o Emergency housing shelters, halfway houses, substance abuse homes, domestic violence shelters, transitional housing, etc.
- o Residential/day programs for persons with disabilities
- o Churches offering community services
- o Mental health treatment/counseling centers
- o Transportation services
- o Legal services

- **Grassroots or citizens' associations**

- o Local neighborhood organizations
- o Coalitions
- o Community centers
- o Groups for seniors
- o Advocacy groups
- o Political and leadership organizations

- **Institutions**

- o Educational institutions
- o Hospitals and health clinics
- o Short- and long-term care facilities
- o State or federal agencies
- o Medical facilities
- o Law enforcement agencies and other agencies providing emergency services

- **Private sector**

- o Chamber of commerce
- o Business associations

- o Local businesses
- **Specific populations**
 - o Persons with disabilities
 - o Victims of sexual assault
 - o Senior citizens
 - o Ethnic/racial groups
 - o Recipients of public assistance, food stamps, Medicaid or Medicare or MR-DD Waivers
 - o Youth
 - o College students

*The following are **sample questions you might ask when gathering information to create a list of organizational resources.** The extent of information you choose to gather on each organization may depend on factors such as the purpose of the resource list, the size/scope of the community being assessed, and the time and resources you have to conduct this inventory.⁴*

- What is your contact information? Seek the name of the person being interviewed, occupation, address, phone number/e-mail and organizational name, brief description and website.
- How many people make up your organization (e.g., staff, volunteers, members or contributors, board members and clients)?
- Is your organization non-profit or for profit?
- What services, products and supports does your agency provide? What are the hours of operation? How do clients access your services (e.g., drop in, call, etc.)?
- How does your organization make its services, products and support known to the public?
- What written media materials/newsletters does your organization publish? How does your organization keep its members/clients up to date on organizational activities and changes?
- What type of equipment and adaptive technology does your organization use for information dissemination/exchange or client support (e.g., computer, audio, audio-visual or video, mechanical and other)? (See *Disabilities 101. Accommodating Persons with Disabilities.*)
- What costs are associated with your services and products for clients/community members?
- Are there eligibility criteria for becoming a client/using your organization's services, products and supports?
- What other organizations do you work with/are you associated with? What other organizations does your group sponsor events with, share information with or share resources or equipment with?

- What other projects does your organization participate in that involve persons with disabilities and/or victims of sexual violence?
- What new projects would your organization be interested in taking on, directly or indirectly, related to your mission?
- What changes would you like to see in the community in the next five years related to serving victims of sexual violence with disabilities? How would you affect these changes?

2. **Identify the INDIVIDUALS within a community who could be considered resources.**

Another approach to identifying community resources is to compile a list of individuals who are resources. Particularly in rural communities, individuals (in addition to organizations) may be viewed as assets. Identifying these individuals might be challenging because there are many more people than groups in a community and surveying them all is time intensive. Talking directly to persons representing specific populations can also take a great deal of time and energy. For example, you would need to talk with people who are deaf in your community to find out if they might contact specific individuals within their community (such as a sexual assault survivor who is a therapist and is deaf) as a resource for support.

Because of these challenges, identifying individual resources often (but not always) takes place in smaller areas within a community—a neighborhood, for example, where the task is more manageable. But regardless of the size of the targeted area, the information gained from individuals can be valuable. Below is a process for identifying individual community resources.

- Answer the five questions in the “What is Resource Mapping?” section on page A4.2 of this module. (Purpose? Size? People? Time? Money?)
- Determine how many people you want to gather input from in the community. Everyone? A specific sub-population? A few representatives that can speak to a specific population’s needs rather than the entire population?
- Draft questions that elicit the information you need. Are you interested in skills or roles within the community? If it is skills, which ones? If it is roles, what specific roles are you looking for? These too come in many and varied types.
- Design a method by which these questions can be asked. For example:
 - o Will you use a survey? How will the survey be administered (mailed paper or electronic survey, face-to-face or telephone interview, etc.)?
 - o Will you use interviews of key community leaders and/or community members?
 - o Will you meet people in groups (e.g., by creating focus groups, attending a parents’ meeting of the local Special Olympics organization, etc.)?
 - o Will you use a combination of the above?
- Test your questions on a sample group to make sure they actually obtain the data being sought. Based on the sample group’s answers and suggestions, revise your questions

accordingly.

- Add the information gathered about individual resources to the information from the inventory of group resources to create a comprehensive resource list.

How do you visually map community resources?

Once you have collected resource information, it can be helpful to put it on a map. Maps are good visual aids—when data creates a picture, understanding and insight often increase. There are several possible approaches to creating a resource map.

- **Use a large community street map with few other markings**—sometimes available from your city or county planner. Mark with a dot/tag/push-pin (maybe color-coded by type of resource) the geographic locations of the services and resources you have found. The patterns that emerge may surprise you. You may see, for example, that certain locations have varying numbers or types of resources. Those areas where few assets exist may require additional research to learn where community members go for help. (For example, are clients accessing resources outside of the community or perhaps do individual resources exist?)
- **Use a computer program to create a more flexible and sophisticated map.** This process enables the creation of “overlays”—visually placing one category of map over another, and changing the visual patterns. This type of mapping can visually show areas where different services may be clustered in a community and clearly identify where few resources exist.
- **It is also possible to diagram your resources on a chart,** rather than an actual map, to clearly show the linkages among different categories of resources.

To stay focused when developing your resource list and map, ask yourself the following questions: Why am I collecting this information and what am I going to use it for? What might be some of the specific needs of a sexual assault victim with disabilities (accessible transportation, an interpreter, forensic medical care, crisis intervention, etc.) that will cause me to broaden my search for resources?

Once an extensive community resource list for service providers is developed, it can be transformed into resource material for victims. However, consider the scope of information to include on such material as too much data may overwhelm some victims and lead them to feel that getting help is too complicated or difficult.

Test Your Knowledge

Refer to the pages in this module as indicated to find the answer for each question.

1. What is another phrase for identifying community resources as a strategy for improving services to communities? *See page A4.2.*
2. What are important questions to ask to help guide the work of identifying resources? *See pages A4.2-A4.3.*
3. What are the potential benefits to service agencies of creating a community resource list? *See page A4.3.*

4. What are the two basic complementary approaches to identifying resources? How do these approaches differ from one another? *See pages A4.3–A4.7.*
5. What are some approaches to creating a map of community resources? *See page A4.8.*

Part 2: DISCUSSION

Projected Time for Discussion

2 hours

Purpose and Outcomes

This discussion is designed to help participants apply the information presented in the *Part 1: Core Knowledge* of this module to their collaborative work with sexual violence victims with disabilities. Specifically, it facilitates the first meeting of a work group tasked with developing a list of community resources for victims with disabilities. The anticipated discussion outcomes include an increased understanding of the benefits to agencies of creating a resource list for sexual violence victims with disabilities, a commitment to creating such a list, and a first draft of a community resource list.

Refer to the learning objectives at the beginning of this module for specific outcomes for this module.

Preparation

- Ensure that the meeting is held at an accessible location. Ask participants prior to the meeting if they need any accommodations—if so, work with them to secure accommodations.
- Select a facilitator. The facilitator should be familiar with resources in the community and any existing resource lists.
- Select a note taker.
- Make sure that the work group includes plans for obtaining input from consumers, either through representation on the work group or through focus groups, interviews or surveys. Persons with disabilities and victims of sexual violence are the true experts in identifying effective local resources.
- Participants and the facilitator should review *Part 1: Core Knowledge* of this module before the discussion.
- Participants should review and bring to the meeting copies of any resource list(s) their agencies utilize in providing services in the community.
- Bring the following supplies and materials to the meeting: flipcharts and colored markers, sufficient copies of participant materials, office supplies (tape, pens, paper, etc.) and a clock/watch to monitor time. Optional items include name badges or table tents.

Suggested Activities and Questions

A4.9 Collaboration 101. Creating a Community Resource List

These activities and questions are designed to guide participants (the work group) in creating a resource list. The product can be further developed through a series of work group meetings and activities. Participants' responses to the questions and suggestions should provide the foundation for creating a work plan to complete the resource list.

1. **Using a flipchart to record the responses, have the group answer the following questions.** See *Part 1: Core Knowledge* for an explanation of each question. (20 minutes)
 - a. What is the purpose of the asset assessment and how will the results be used?
 - b. What is the size/scope of the community being assessed?
 - c. What people are available to do the work?
 - d. How much time do you have for the task or how much time can you allow?
 - e. How much money and other resources are available for incidental expenses?
2. **Determine the types of resources that will be included:** groups/agencies, individuals or both. Discuss the types of resources that are most commonly accessed by sexual violence victims with disabilities in your community and the benefits of including them on your list. See *Part 1: Core Knowledge* for a discussion of the types of resources and specific considerations when gathering the information for each type. (20 minutes)
3. **Identify the process that will be used to create the resource list.** Consider the following options: (20 minutes)
 - a. Will the work group provide the only input for the list?
 - b. Will surveys be used to gather information from other agencies and individuals?
 - c. Will focus groups be conducted with consumers?
 - d. Will work group members individually generate lists, collaboratively review and add to those lists, and then compile them into one master resource list? Or will one member be identified to compile a master list, review for duplications and then send the compiled list out to the group?
 - e. Does the group want to create a visual resource map? See *Part 1: Core Knowledge* for a discussion of different types of maps.
4. **Identify pertinent existing lists of community resources**, such as the Internet, phone book, chamber of commerce listings, Family Resource Network directories, lists already developed by the rape crisis center and disability service providers, United Way agency listings, and statewide resources serving the target population. *Note that many agencies actually offer their services statewide through outreach efforts but do not have local offices, particularly in the disability field.* See the examples provided in *Part 1: Core Knowledge* for categories of community resources as they might be listed in the yellow pages and other published listings and for sample questions to ask each organization. (20 minutes)
5. **Determine how the resource list will be distributed and regularly updated.** (10 minutes)
6. **Identify someone to serve as the coordinator of the project. Establish a timeline and**

identify the next steps in the process. (20 minutes)

7. **Taking the extra step:** Through this process you probably identified areas of need that sexual violence victims with disabilities have that are unmet by your community's current service delivery system. As a group, discuss the impact each of these unmet needs has on a victim's ability to access services and heal from the trauma of sexual violence. Examine the possibility of partnering to meet those needs. (See *Collaboration 101. Creating Social Change.*) (10 minutes)

Project partners welcome the non-commercial use of this module to increase knowledge about serving sexual violence victims with disabilities in any community, and adaptation for use in other states and communities as needed, without the need for permission. We do request that any material used from this toolkit be credited to the West Virginia Sexual Assault Free Environment (WV S.A.F.E.) project, a partnership of the West Virginia Foundation for Rape Information and Services, the Northern West Virginia Center for Independent Living and the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (2010). Questions about the project should be directed to the West Virginia Foundation for Rape Information and Services at www.fris.org.

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¹Partnering agencies refer to the persons they serve as “clients,” “consumers” and “victims.” For convenience, “victims” and “clients” are primarily used in this module. Also note that the terms “sexual violence” and “sexual assault” are generally used in this module to encompass sexual assault, sexual abuse and other forms of sexual violence.

²This module was adapted from the following resources: University of Kansas, *Community tool box: Identifying community assets and resources*, <http://ctb.ku.edu>; K. Crane & B. Skinner, Community resource mapping: A strategy for promoting successful transition for youth with disabilities, *National Center on Secondary Education and Transition Information Brief*, 2(1) (2003), through <http://www.ncset.org/default.asp>; and National Center on Secondary Education and Transition, *Essential tools: Improving secondary education and transition for youth with disabilities* (3rd edition) (Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota, 2005), through <http://www.ncset.org/default.asp>. These and other online documents referenced in this module were available at the links provided at the time the module was written. It is suggested you check the sites for any updates or changes. If you experience difficulty accessing the documents via the links, another option for locating documents is doing a web search using titles.

³Adapted from University of Kansas.

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