

MultiDisciplinary Team Work: SANE's and Law Enforcement

Responding to Sexual Assault of
Victims
with
Developmental Disabilities

Prevalence of Sexual Assault of Children and Adults with Developmental Disabilities

- Children with developmental disabilities become victims of abuse at 3.4 times the rate of their generic counterparts
- Adults with developmental disabilities are estimated to become victims at approximately twice the rate of their generic counterparts.

Data are Skewed

Many cases are not reported

Even when reported, may not be thoroughly or effectively investigated

Cases involving victims with communication disabilities may not result in prosecution, convictions or even “founded” status with APS or CPS.

Maltreatment Comparisons

1 million substantiated child abuse cases

2 million elder abuse cases

5 million vulnerable adult abuse cases

Conclusion: Vulnerable adults are
abused more than children and elders
COMBINED.

FILM CLIP

SANE examination of adult with Down Syndrome portraying victim of sexual assault.

Film: VICTIMS WITH DISABILITIES:
Collaborative Multidisciplinary First
Response.

Case Examples of Excellence in MDT

- > 3 year old child with D.S. suspected CSA by the father while mother away for emergency with adult child. Further suspicions of attempted homicide.
- > Police, Qualified Forensic Interviewer, Forensic Psychologist, SANE, Prosecutor, Forensic Laboratory
- > Conviction of father when arsenic residue found in child's hair brush.

Case Example

- > 24 year old non-verbal male with ASD, reported S.A. by group home staff
- > APS, Sheriff, Forensic psychologist and interviewer
- > Victim qualified for Victim of Crime support for relocation and therapy. Crime never proven due to death threats of the victim and his family by perpetrators.

Case Example

- > 15 year old boy with Autism and Tourette's, and mild intellectual disability sexually assaulted at school
- > Law enforcement, school speech and language teacher, SANE examiner
- > Criminal charges not made as victim could not identify perpetrators
- > Civil litigation against school for violation of IEP stipulations for 1:1 supervision throughout the school day won.

Case Example

- > 5.5 year old preschooler detained for possible CSA by bio father and accomplice bio mother
- > Sheriff, SANE, investigators, preschool teacher (to interpret child's speech), CPS, prosecutor
- > Both parents convicted, parental rights terminated, victim released for adoption

National Resources for Best Practices

IAFN - International Association of Forensic Nurses

Child Advocacy Centers

The Arc of the United States

SafePlace

Disability and Abuse Project

Centers for Independent Living

THANK YOU

Stay in touch with others around the nation and the world:

www.disabilityandabuse.org

www.disability-abuse.com

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www.norabaladerian.com

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