SAFE Start: A collaboration to better serve survivors living with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Miriam Siddiq, Bobra Fyne LMSW and Kira Laffe
Collaborative Partners

YAI/NIPD is a non-profit, health and human services agency providing a full range of residential, day treatment, training, counseling, employment, recreation, and family support services (e.g., case management, respite, crisis intervention, peer support, and in-home care) to people with learning and developmental disabilities and their families.

Project Shield is a program of the Kings County District Attorney’s Office which works to facilitate more effective investigations and prosecutions of sex crimes involving individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

The New York City Alliance Against Sexual Assault is a small non-profit that was started by New York City’s rape crisis programs. Through research, training, and policy advocacy we build the capacity of individuals and institutions to advance the right to live free from sexual violence and reduce the harm it causes.
Concerns Chart

What brought you to us today?
Concerns

Collaboration

- Have an Interdisciplinary task force?
- Collaborate with key stake holders on a regular basis?
- Starting from square one to enrich skills curriculum for responders?

Victim services

- Skills
- Perceptions
- Infrastructure
Objectives for Workshop

1. To explore best practices for working with persons with Intellectual and other Developmental Disabilities (IDD) if sexual assault occurs.

2. To explore the importance of collaboration between community-based agencies and the criminal justice system to facilitate an effective response to sexual assault crimes against people with IDD.

3. To promote a model of skills development which enhances positive outcomes for victims and their families.
Reflection

- Education
- Forensics Lab
- Traditional Healers
- Law Enforcement
- Medical
- Advocacy
- Prosecution

Victim
Reflection
How are we going to do this?

Looking at a collaborative case study
In 2003, collaborating with the Brooklyn District Attorney’s office she helped develop Project Shield training police, detectives, district attorneys, and emergency medical professionals in how to interview people with IDD who are victims of sexual assault and domestic violence.

Project Shield also provides staff training for IDD provider agencies on initial outcry protocol, evidence collection, negotiating the legal system and best practices in helping people with IDD if they become victims of sexual assault and/or domestic violence.

Bobra serves as an Expert Witness for people with IDD who are in abusive situations. This work has enabled her to provide people with IDD with a clearer understanding of what happens when a relationship breaks down and helps them to explore the breakdown from both a legal and cognitive point of view.

Her training in Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) and psychodrama helps her blend the intuitive with the concrete. And isn’t that what any relationship is all about.
There are up to 7.5 million Americans with developmental disabilities (Yale University School of Medicine, 2000)

It’s estimated that 90% of men and women with developmental disabilities will be sexually victimized in their lifetime with only 3% of the assaults reported (Sobsey and Doe, 1991; Tysika, 1998)

Almost half (46%) of the women reported assaults on more than 10 occasions, and 27.4% reported a single episode of assault (Sobsey, 1991)

26% of women who were assaulted were unable to access any services and 35% did not report the assault (Sobsey, 1991)
Project Shield – Kings County District Attorney’s Office

- Hosted by the Victim Services Unit
- Training and education, Crisis intervention and Criminal Justice Advocacy
- Program Coordinator role and relationship with Law Enforcement
- Challenges in prosecution
In 2000, after the passing of the Sexual Assault Reform Act (SARA), the New York State Department of Health developed the distinction “Center of Excellence” requiring 24-hour forensic health care for survivors of sexual assault.

Creating patient-centered health care services by training from a victim-centered perspective: the birth of the Training Institute.
If someone is sexually assaulted, who might they come in contact with?

- Police, this includes the person who answers the 911 call.
- ER staff, triage nurse, SAFE examiner, SART team if there is one, ER doctor, social worker.
- ADA, judge, stenographer (may have trouble understanding person’s speech patterns), jury.
A Match Made in Brooklyn

How did Project Shield meet NYCAASA?
A Match Made in Brooklyn

- Project Shield wanted to know what was happening in hospitals

- Sexual Assault Multidisciplinary Task Force: roundtable discussions about trends in victimization and perpetration, and case discussion.
  
  “We’re not seeing any cases where the victim is someone with a developmental or intellectual disability.” - participant in the Task Force.
  
  A red flag considering what we know about statistics of violence in the IDD community, and the help-seeking behaviors of survivors of sexual assault, in general.

- Questions about the criminal justice process, especially as it related to IDD population (Consent, Communication, etc)
Making the Connection

How to can we effectively serve individuals with IDD?
NYCAASA: Special populations and Continuing Medical Education

- Structure of the 40-hour introductory course, ability to retain knowledge, and increase awareness.
  - Special populations workshops served as a launching pad.

- Organizational and institutional accountability to vulnerable and disenfranchised populations.

- Proving the gap in knowledge and the ability to change medical practice – presenting our case to our accrediting bodies.

- What our course quizzes showed us and what our training participants told us.
A quick aside, I think I'm getting wittier as the night goes on. "showed us" "told us"

Kira Laffe, 8/14/2012
YAY! I brought this up earlier without knowing this slide existed! So glad we’re all on the same page. :)

Kira Laffe, 8/14/2012
Outcomes of our collaboration

- Medical Records & Evidence-based prosecution
- Linkages to services
- Empowered service providers
- Families supported through the entire process
I have some fascinating quotes from SAFE examiners about their fears in working with survivors who are living with DD/ID from the last course. I’ll dig them up in them up and send them to you both, and I can bring it up here as well.

Kira Laffe, 8/14/2012
Logistics: Finances, Tools, and Champions

How can collaboration happen at home?
Think outside of the box.

Speech and language therapy resources

Who is already doing the work?

Child and adult forensic services
I'm not sure what "TK" stands for...but I like the link between Community and Criminal Justice. Maybe this is part of an activity? If not, I could certainly help fill the time.

Kira Laffe, 8/14/2012
Next Steps and Future Planning

- Where we are headed
  - 4 hour module

- Where we would like to go
  - Money, time, and limitations
I speak about this earlier when I touch on Continuing Medical Education credits but I can certainly expound on it here.

Kira Laffe, 8/14/2012
What does an Emergency Department visit look like now?

- Skills exchange is a two-way street
- Videos
- Flow Chart
- Medical resident trainings
Kitchen Capers

Use everything in the envelope, envelope optional, to create a never before seen tool to help address one of the concerns about collaborating discussed earlier. Once you have created the tool, create an infomercial to sell it to the rest of the group.