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Practitioner Perspectives

Anna Marcy:

Bryan County Coordinated Community
Response Team Coordinator

Bryan County Coordinated Community Response Team

An interview with Anna Marcy, an Advocate for the Crisis Control Center, Inc., and the Bryan County Coordinated Community Response Team Coordinator in Durant, Oklahoma.

Q: How did the Bryan County Coordinated Community Response Team (CCRT) originate?

A: It originated in April 2009 under the coordination of an advocate at the Bryan County Crisis Center. She went to a training by the District Attorneys Council and they pulled together to form our original CCRT. They focused on how to bring the key players to the table to talk about and change some of the ways that domestic violence, stalking, and sexual assault cases have been handled in our area. We started out with domestic violence. It's more prevalent, it's more visible, and it is actually easier to charge than any type of stalking case. But we soon were able to train the players at the table that stalking is a major component of almost every domestic violence case, whether or not it is visible to the community at large.

Q: Do you have a goal or mission statement that guides the work of the Bryan County CCRT?

A: Yes we do. Our mission statement reads:

The Bryan County Coordinated Community Response Team will strive to provide the area community with an effective, efficient, and collaborative response to domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking in order to hold the

offender accountable for his or her crime against the victim as well as unanimously providing for the safety of the victim.

Each year we have different goals and projects that we focus on.

Q: Who is part of the Bryan County CCRT?

A: Our team is really small, just seven individuals: a couple of law enforcement officers, one of our SANE nurses, the District Attorney, and one of our tribal partners. We are very blessed to have our District Attorney on our CCRT. She has been instrumental in training and informing her employees and coworkers about what to look for when reports cross their desk as to whether the incident can be charged as stalking as well as something else. We also have the task force which is an offshoot of the CCRT. The task force includes other members of different organizations. They help the CCRT achieve our goals. It is more of an open forum where we discuss the dynamics of domestic violence, the dynamics of stalking, and what we can do more to include the community on

Anna Marcy serves as the Coordinator for the **Bryan County Coordinated Community Response Team**, overseeing the Bryan County Domestic Violence Task Force. The goals of the Bryan County CCRT include facilitating community education, identifying multidisciplinary training, coordinating public awareness and legislative education, identifying gaps in services, and building resources for victims to create a coordinated community response.

what's going on. The task force assists with community education, community awareness projects, and the members share their knowledge with their agencies and organizations. We have a good educated group. I think that is what has really held us together. We have really great community. They are available, they're interested, and they want to be active.

Q: What type of work do you do?

A: We're working on community education. We often talk about how domestic violence and stalking go hand in hand, and how stalking is often a lot of legal behaviors or legal actions that are used in a way to cause fear. It is just about educating, whether it is at a community event, teaching a class to law enforcement, speaking at a church, going into a hospital, and even educating our domestic violence task force.

Q: What materials has the Bryan County CCRT developed?

A: We have manuals, which are stalking protocols, for responding officers and investigating officers. We have a manual for 911 and emergency operators with what kinds of questions to ask and what to look for when you are getting phone calls. We have discovered that our emergency 911-dispatchers often know more about a particular case than our officers do because they get the calls from the victims. Finally, we have a manual for prosecutors and judges. To create the manuals, we started researching how each field should respond to stalking and how each person plays a different role in the charging and prosecuting of stalking cases. Each manual starts off the same, the middle part is specific to each discipline, and the end has different resources and forms and actual cases from our local area with timelines and reports.

Q: Can you talk about a time when your CCRT worked successfully together?

A: Last year, one of our goals was to create a Web site and billboard to bring awareness [about] our CCRT and the services available in our area for victims of these violent crimes. We were able to find individuals in our task force to volunteer for the creation of the Web site and the design of the billboard. But we all really contributed to that. It wasn't one individual who did the whole thing or got the whole thing going. Each person brought a different skill or idea or time to the table to offer to those two projects. It was a great visible showing of what teamwork can pull together and what we can do. The Web site and billboard help

get our faces out there to let people know that there is help, there are people who understand, and that law enforcement isn't the enemy. Through our Web site, we are able to have that open door so anyone can contact law enforcement, contact advocates, and find safety plans and resources online.

Q: What advice would you give to other groups who are looking to initiate a similar response to stalking?

A: It is going to start with your victim advocates. Find an advocacy center in the area and utilize those advocates there because they are the ones who are faced with many of the victims. And then form that partnership with the local law enforcement agency. We do our job better when we have law enforcement help and I feel that law enforcement are able to do their job better when they have advocate assistance.

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Stalking
resource center
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