Strengthening Victims Services Partnerships
Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence

February 23, 2022

The mission of the PRC is to assist adult prisons and jails, juvenile facilities, lockups, community corrections, and tribal facilities in their efforts to eliminate sexual abuse by increasing their capacity for prevention, detection, monitoring, responses to incidents, and services to victims and their families.

Logistics

Mute
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Agenda  Strengthening Victim Services Partnerships

• Welcome & Introductions
• Corrections Culture
• The CT Department of Corrections MOU
• Laying the Groundwork
• Connecting with Corrections
• Problem Solving
• Planning for the Future
• Q and A
Training Series

- December 15th – PREA 101 (recording available)
- January 19th – Providing Services to Incarcerated Survivors
- January 28th – Coaching Session with JDI #1
- February 23rd – Strengthening Victim Services Partnerships
- February 25th – Coaching Sessions with JDI #2
- March 25th – Coaching Sessions with JDI #3

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JDI’s Mission

Just Detention International is a health and human rights organization that seeks to end sexual abuse in all forms of detention.

JDI carries out its mission by:
• Working with corrections officials, rape crisis advocates, and policymakers to make detention facilities safe
• Promoting public attitudes that value the dignity and safety of people in detention
• Supporting incarcerated survivors of sexual abuse and sexual harassment

JDI’s Core Principle

No matter what crime a person may have committed, rape is not part of the penalty.
When you think about “corrections culture” what comes to your mind?
Share your thoughts

- When you think about “corrections culture” what comes to your mind?
- When you think about the culture that exists at rape crisis centers and among advocates, what comes to your mind?

Corrections’ Role

- Enforce rules to maintain safety and security
- Supervise activities of people in custody
- Respond to emergencies
- Report and investigate misconduct of staff/people in custody
- Aid in rehabilitation and counseling of people in custody

Core Values

- Advocates’ Values
  - Survivors deserve support, good health, and safety
  - Improving public safety through changing culture
  - Survivors and perpetrators in their own healing

- Corrections’ Values
  - Improving public safety through rehabilitating people
  - Care, custody, and control lead to satisfaction
  - No one wants to be a victim

- Shared Value
  - Everyone should be held accountable
  - In a controlled environment co-residency matters

Quick Refresher: PREA Standards

- Keep people safe
- Protect survivors from abusers
- Provide multiple ways to report
- Offer medical and mental health care
- Increase accountability
- Provide survivors access to victim services

Types of PREA Defined Advocacy Services

- Provide forensic exam and investigatory interview accompaniment
- Receive hotline calls from incarcerated survivors
- Provide incarcerated survivors with confidential written correspondence
The CT DOC MOU at a Glance

• Established in 2014, with no term end
• Original text included access to RCC hotlines, but this was removed via amendment in 2015
• Lays out that CT DOC will notify CTSAEV for accompaniment when survivors are transported to a forensic exam
• Recognizes the confidential nature of communication between an advocate and a survivor, per CGS 52-146k
• Establishes that CT DOC will allow RCC advocates to provide in-person services at facilities

What’s your feedback on the current CT DOC MOU?
• How is it working in terms of providing services for survivors in CT DOC?
• Do you have concerns about confidentiality?
• Are there things you would like to change about the current CT DOC MOU?

PREA and Youth Facilities

• Same PREA standards regarding access to rape crisis center services
• Same confidentiality standards as in the community
Preparing to Partner with Your Local Prison, Jail, or Youth Facility

Assess agency capacity
• What services does your RCC already provide to incarcerated survivors?
• What additional services can your RCC provide to incarcerated survivors?
• Are your intake forms appropriate to capture information that might be needed from incarcerated survivors?

Bridge knowledge gaps
• What training will be needed for your staff to serve incarcerated survivors?
• Create space to openly discuss serving incarcerated survivors
• Listen to your staff’s concerns

Identify the team
• Which staff will provide services to incarcerated survivors?
### Preparing to Partner with Your Local Prison, Jail, or Youth Facility

**Information is power:**
- Learn about the PREA Standards and incarcerated survivors’ rights
- Understand the PREA compliance requirements to partner with victim advocates
- Identify the corrections facilities in your service area
- Identify the key people to work at each facility

### Know your roles and responsibilities:
- Define your role as an advocate working with incarcerated survivors
- Define your goals for collaboration with the corrections facility
- Anticipate and develop responses to common concerns you anticipate from corrections staff

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**Connecting with Corrections**
Connecting with Your Local Facilities

- Reach out via phone and email, documenting your attempts
- Use a concise and direct communications style
- If you are already working with another correctional location, refer to that in your outreach

Remember: Your agency is in a position to help facilities be PREA-compliant, as they are required to maintain an MOU with their local RCC.

Facility Tour Checklists

This handy one-pager includes:
- What to bring
- What to see
- Who to meet
- What to ask

Who to Meet at the Facility

Speaking with people in custody helps you:
- Meet your clients “where they’re at”
- Show staff that you are serious about serving people in detention
- Clarify that you are not part of CT DOC
- Answer questions about your agency and your services
- Establish trust with people in custody
Where to Start: Initial Discussions

At the initial meeting discuss:

- Your shared goal of eliminating sexual abuse and supporting survivors
- Each person’s role and responsibilities within their agency (i.e. a day in the life of an advocate vs a PREA Coordinator)
- Each partner’s sexual abuse protocols
- Facility facts and figures
- Describe the work of the RCC
- Begin discussion of scope of services

Finding an Ally

- Connect with staff beyond the PCM
- Keep in regular contact
- Meet in person

Highlight the Benefits of Your Services

- Make clear that your services are not limited to incarcerated survivors
- As applicable, refer to the latest PREA audit’s notes for relevant Corrective Action
- Remember that services you offer will make their jobs easier
- When survivors trust that their safety is a priority, they are more likely to make an official report
Have a Plan, and Hold it Lightly

• Get feedback and ideas from staff
• Be consistent and reliable
• Be upfront about your concerns
• Be aware that conditions at the facility can require a change in plans
  o Lockdowns
  o Transfers of people from one CT DOC facility to another

Additional Considerations for Youth Facilities

• Have a regular physical presence at the facility
• Ensure that all your outreach materials are youth-oriented and appropriate
• Focus on other topics of concern (e.g., healthy relationships) rather than leading with crisis services

Problem Solving
## In an Advocate’s Own Words

“...would tell other advocates who are new to this kind of work that the struggle is worth it. Everyone deserves an advocate, deserves someone there if they have survived a rape no matter what their past is.”

Jesse, a Crisis Intervention Peer Counselor

## Staff Turnover

**Concern:**
- Turnover and promotions at both the facility and the rape crisis center

**Solution:**
- Partnerships that involve teams, not individuals
- Strong, clear, written policies and protocols informing the work

## Capacity

**Concerns:**
- Call volume (small rural centers)
- Working with incarcerated survivors

**Solutions:**
- Use existing hotline, limited hours
- Advocate training and ongoing education
Inmate Support Services

This agency has partnered with [advocacy organization name] to provide free, confidential support services to inmates who have experienced sexual abuse (in confinement or at any time in their lives). Inmates can access these services by:

- Dialing [insert number] on any inmate phone
- Writing to the organization at [insert address]

What Services Are Provided?

[Advocacy org. name] advocates can provide:

- Crisis intervention
- Information about reporting sexual abuse and sexual harassment
- Follow-up support
- Referrals for services post-release

Privacy

Calls to community advocates are not monitored or recorded. This is to ensure that the communications take place in as confidential a manner as possible. As with any other call, there is a 15-minute limit.

Advocates will explain to inmates that most calls will be confidential, but that they will notify the facility if an inmate is being inappropriate or says they plan to hurt themselves, someone else, or escape the facility. Services are not offered to inmates.

Hospital Accompaniment

Concerns:

- Hospitals not calling advocates
- Hospital location issues because of SANE availability and distance

Solutions:

- Facility staff call advocates prior to leaving facility
- Multiple centers working together to service one facility
Communication

Concern:
• Staff stretched thin on both sides, with competing responsibilities

Solutions:
• Better understanding of each other’s daily operations and limitations
• Have back-up contacts

Planning for the Future

What’s Your WOOP?

Wish Outcome Obstacle Plan

https://woopmylife.org/
Focus on What You Can Control

Examples:
- Make a plan to connect to your local facilities
- Revise intake forms to be inclusive for incarcerated survivors
- Document your outreach efforts
- Have a plan, and hold it lightly
- Keep the subject of your agency’s work in detention a living topic

A Survivor’s Strength

“The sexual assaults left me feeling devastated. But I also became committed to ensuring that no one ever has to go through what I did. To find the strength to fight back, I needed the support of a movement behind me — a movement made up of people on the outside who care about human rights. Thank you so much for believing in me!”

- Nicole, JDI Survivor Council Member
Questions & Answers

Additional Resources

OVW Webinar Series – Vulnerable and Underserved
https://justdetention.org/webinar/archived

Fact Sheets for Service Providers
https://justdetention.org/resource/publication/


Recommendations for Administrators of Prisons, Jails, and Community Confinement Facilities for Adopting the U.S. Department of Justice’s A National Protocol for Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Examinations, Adults/Adolescents
http://1.usa.gov/1LSIlD5
Additional Resources

JDI PREA Resources (No One Left Behind)
https://justdetention.org/resources/prea-resources/

FAQ: Are rape crisis centers or other victim service providers appropriate entities to serve as external reporting entities, pursuant to PREA Standard 51(b)?
https://www.prearesourcecenter.org/frequently-asked-questions/are-rape-crisis-centers-or-other-victim-service-providers-appropriate

Supplementary Questionnaire

Supplementary Questionnaire on Community Advocate Engagement

PRC library
Jurisdictions can request assistance by completing a web form on the PRC website under the “Implementation” tab and clicking “Request for assistance” under “Training”.

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For more information about the National PREA Resource Center, visit www.prearesourcecenter.org.  
To ask a question, please visit our Contact us page.

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