

## Collaboration to Provide Training to Enhance Services for Sexual Assault Victims

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- By The Michigan Crime Victim Services Commission and the Michigan Domestic Violence Prevention and Treatment Board

Michigan's sexual assault service provider agencies endeavor to assist and support victims at every stage in their healing journey and from wherever they are located in the state. However, many victims do not have access to these services in their local area. Victims in rural areas may face specific challenges as there may be only one sexual assault service agency serving several counties, and local health and social service providers may be under-trained on these issues. Providing comprehensive services for sexual assault survivors throughout the state requires commitment, coordination and consistency.

To that end, the Sexual Assault Resource Analysis (SARA) project, located at Michigan State University, investigates, analyzes, and evaluates sexual assault service availability and assists with the development of a coordinated plan to enhance responses to survivors of sexual assault statewide. The SARA project is funded by the Michigan Department of Community Health Crime Victim Services Commission (CVSC). This project works collaboratively with the CVSC and the MDVPTB - Michigan's state agency working to eliminate domestic and sexual violence, which is administratively housed in the Michigan Department of Human Services. Contact information for the CVSC, MDVPTB and the SARA project is listed at the end of this article.

As part of these coordination efforts, the SARA project will soon be working with the Michigan Center for Rural Health and others to plan and implement trainings on

sexual assault response. Two face-to-face trainings will be conducted on sexual assault best practice models for allied professionals, with a special focus on health care providers in late summer 2010. More will follow by way of announcements and registration information for the trainings.

Other statewide collaboration goals to benefit sexual assault survivors include:

- Providing resource analysis and training in support of the state's efforts to improve post-assault care for sexual assault victims in Michigan.
- Providing evidence-based, best practice information in support of sexual assault service providers statewide.
- Assisting State government agencies and other stakeholders in coordinating service providers' responses to sexual assault victims.
- Compiling state-of-the-art, victim-centered sexual assault educational resources.

Information about the State of Michigan agencies mentioned in this article can be accessed via the Internet:

CVSC: [www.michigan.gov/crimevictim](http://www.michigan.gov/crimevictim)

MDVPTB:  
[www.michigan.gov/domesticviolence](http://www.michigan.gov/domesticviolence)

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