Victim Advocacy 101:

WHAT TITLE IX COORDINATORS SHOULD KNOW TO WORK EFFECTIVELY WITH ADVOCATES

JYL SHAFFER
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
Overview

- History of advocacy
- Advocacy philosophy
- Types of advocacy
- What do advocates do?
- How can advocates and campuses partner?
Communities of Color & LGBTQ Activism

- Historically marginalized by mainstream feminist movements (and other civil rights movements)
  - Movement is not immune to racism, homophobia, ableism, etc.
- Disenfranchised from mainstream movement's emphasis on use of criminal justice system
- Community-specific program expansion, with emphasis on culturally relevant
Rise of the Victim Rights/Violence Against Women Activist Movement

- US history of feminist movements from end of the 19th century to present*
- Post-WW2 led to development of victimology
- The private is political philosophy of 60s and 70s
- 1960s- development of organization of battered women's shelters and programs
- 1972- major growth in shelter programs and victim services across the country
- 1980s-90s: Mandatory arrest laws become common (previously police “mediated”)

*Note: The history includes significant moments in the 19th and 20th centuries relating to feminism and victimology.
Key Dates

- 1984: Victims of Crime Act
- 1994: Violence Against Women Act
- 1990s- “no drop” policies begin in district attorney's offices
- 1994: Nicole Brown-Simpson murder
- Marital rape laws: 13 states still have a difference in how they prosecute marital rape compared to other types of rape (only 4 of those states are Southern)
2014 and Beyond Challenges

- Dependency on state & federal funding
- Changing priorities
- Inclusion
- Proactive vs. Reactive
- Professionalization vs. Grass Roots
- Digital advocacy
Advocacy Philosophy

- Empower survivors
- Support survivors' choices
- Confidentiality
  * Challenge systems that support oppression
  * Change cultural norms that perpetuate violence
  * Break the cycle of violence
Professionalization

• Away from consciousness raising/survivor run programs

• Toward calling survivors "clients", social work, time limits to service

• Toward advanced degrees and licensure
Types of Advocacy

- Local programs (rural vs. urban vs. suburban)
- State & National Organizations
- System-specific
  * Campus
  * Law Enforcement
  * Courts
- General vs. Specific Populations

What is an Advocate?
What Do Advocates Do

• Crisis services
• Support
• Navigating official systems
• Long-term
• Education and outreach
Partnering with Advocates

- Contract with local agencies
  - Hospital response
  - Court advocacy
  - Counseling
  - Crisis line
- Hire confidential advocates
- Hire non-confidential advocates*
- Student advocacy programs
- Programming partnership
- Connect with system advocates (courts, police)
First Steps

- Offer to talk about your Title IX efforts
  - Treat your Title IX process like any other system
- Ask for training through their program
- Put your Title IX/campus resources on their resource page
- Brochures, cards, etc. so they can make referrals
- Add “Are you a student at ...” to their hotline questions
- Hiring a new Title IX-affiliated person? Invite a local advocate into the interview process
Challenges

- No matter how good you try to be, advocates will likely never fully trust you (it’s part of the job)
- Advocates will always critique you (it’s to make you better so survivors receive better services)
- Your purposes will sometimes conflict
- Money
- At times, you will be tired of the advocate being involved in your cases (they expect that)
- Sometimes you will want them to do more, or do something in a different way
Why you need to work with advocates

- It’s better for survivors
- It’s better for survivors
- It’s better for survivors
- It’s better for survivors
- It will help you too.
Jyl Shaffer
(503) 201-5597
jylshaffer@gmail.com
Twitter: @jylshaffer