

The Source

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The Effectiveness of Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Programs

By Rebecca Campbell

Rape survivors who seek post-assault health care and medical forensic evidence collection from emergency rooms often do not receive basic services, wait long hours, and have evidence collection conducted by personnel that lack training and experience. Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Programs were created to alleviate these problems. This paper presents a brief summary of the structure and functions of SANE programs as they currently exist in the United States, and then reviews the empirical research literature on the effectiveness of SANE programs in three domains: psychological recovery of victims, forensic evidence collection and prosecution rates. This paper concludes with summary recommendations for future research and practice issues to help develop the most effective, evidence-based practices.

Because traditional medical care often leaves survivors feeling "re-raped," SANE programs have sought to provide care in an empowering setting that addresses survivors' emotional and medical needs. Although emotional care is a primary goal of SANE programs, there have been few studies that have systematically evaluated the psychological impact of SANE programs. The available literature is limited, but suggests that rape survivors perceive SANE nurses as helpful and supportive.

Another founding goal for many SANE programs was to improve the quality of forensic evidence collection relative to the methods traditionally used in hospital emergency departments.

The clinical case study literature suggests that SANE nurses are not only competent in forensic evidence collection, but they are actually better at it because of their extensive training and experience. Yet, clinical case reports, though

remarkably consistent in their conclusions, do not provide definitive evidence of the effectiveness of SANE nurses in forensic evidence collection. Empirical studies that directly compare the evidence collected by SANE nurses and physicians on objective criteria would better inform the debate over whether nurses are competent medical forensic examiners. To date, there have been only two such comparative studies conducted in the United States. Both studies found support for better evidence collection by SANE nurses. However, it is important to note that training and experience, not job title or professional degree, are the likely reasons behind these findings.

Finally, by meticulously documenting injuries and physical evidence, it is possible that SANE programs may increase prosecution rates in their communities. As with the literature on the quality of forensic exams, case studies suggest that SANE programs increase prosecution. To date, there has been only one study that included a direct comparison of legal outcomes for SANE cases versus non-SANE cases and found strong evidence that prosecution of sexual assault cases was higher in SANE cases.

From this body of work, it appears that SANE programs are having beneficial effects on rape survivors' psychological well-being and they are improving the prosecution rates of sexual assault crimes. However, such conclusions are tentative because most published studies have not included adequate methodological controls or comparisons to rigorously test the effectiveness of SANE programs. To address these research and practice needs, it is important that researchers and SANE program practitioners develop strong collaborative relationships.

In Brief: The Effectiveness of Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Programs is part of a longer document authored by Rebecca Campbell for the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, PCADV and VAWnet. This document and references are available online at www.vawnet.org.

In This Issue

- The Effectiveness of Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Programs.....1
- Book Review: Working with Women's Groups.....2
- HIV and Immigrants: A Manual for HIV/AIDS Service Providers.....2
- Preventing Pregnancy from Sexual Assault.....2
- Framing Abuse: Media Influence and Public Understanding of Sexual Violence Against Children.....3
- Updated Michigan Foundation Directory...3
- New Resource Available at the Resource Center...3
- Web Resources for SANE/SART Programs.....3
- FVPF's Toolkit: Making the Connection: Domestic Violence and Public Health.....4
- Book Review: Domestic Violence: Guidelines for Research Informed Practice.....4
- NCADV to Publish New Manual4

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National Domestic Violence Hotline
Linea Nacional sobre la Violencia Domestica
1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
TTY 1-800-787-3224

Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN)
1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

New Print Resources

- **Managing a Nonprofit Organization in the 21st Century**
- **Framing Abuse: Media Influence and Public Understanding of Sexual Violence Against Children**
- **Growing Beyond Survival: A Self-Help Toolkit for Managing Traumatic Stress**
- **Betrayed As Boys: Psychodynamic Treatment of Sexually Abused Men**
- **Domestic Violence Trial Manual**
- **Our Children: Child Sexual Abuse: A Resource Guide to Help Children, Parents, and Professionals**
- **Breakthrough Thinking for Nonprofit Organizations: Creative Strategies for Extraordinary Results**
- **Women of Southwest Detroit**
- **The Lobbying and Advocacy Handbook**
- **The Michigan Foundation Directory**

Working With Women's Groups

Working with Women's Groups, Volume 1, addresses issues which concern women across the country, including low self-esteem, poor self-image, health problems such as eating disorders and weight concerns, menopause, and empowerment. The sexuality and leadership sections of *Working with Women's Groups, Volume 2*, continues this exploration by offering workshops for lesbians and women of color who need their own support groups to explore their specific experiences. In these groups women can share their problems, compare their experiences, and explore new options. Both books present structured group exercises that will help women conduct their own personal search for identity more productively.

To borrow these materials, please contact the Resource Center at (517) 381-4663.

HIV and Immigrants: A Manual for HIV/AIDS Service Providers

Imagine this scene: A client who has tested HIV positive comes to see you. Besides worrying about testing HIV positive, she also fears what will happen to her because she is not a US citizen. You may wonder whether her immigration status will change the kind of services she can get. This manual is for anyone who works with HIV positive clients who may not be US citizens. This includes case managers, HIV test counselors, paralegals, social workers, health care workers, nurses, doctors, interpreters, and discharge planners in hospitals. We hope you will learn that many non-citizens with HIV/AIDS, regardless of their immigration status, may have some immigration options and may be able to work or receive some benefits.

Immigration law is complicated. Though this manual will not make you an immigration law expert, it will help you and your clients think about their choices and make informed decisions.

This resource is available online at www.nationalimmigrationproject.org.

Volunteer Opportunities available at the Michigan Resource Center!

The Michigan Resource Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence is seeking volunteers to assist with the day-to-day upkeep of the Resource Center. Please forward any inquires to Melissa Limon at (517) 381-4663, ext.17 or via email at mlimon@mcadv.org.

Preventing Pregnancy from Sexual Assault

Each year, an estimated 25,000 women become pregnant as a result of sexual assault. (Stewart and Trussell, 2000). Below, you will find facts and resources on rape, pregnancy and prevention.

- The American Medical Association, the American College of Emergency Physicians and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists all recognize Emergency Contraception (EC) as part of standard treatment for rape survivors to prevent pregnancy.
- Emergency Contraception (EC) is a safe and effective, FDA-approved method of preventing pregnancy after unprotected intercourse. (FDA, 1997).
- EC is time-sensitive. The sooner it is given the better it works. (Ellertson, C., Evans, M., Ferden, S., Leadbetter, C., Spears, A. and Johnstone, K. 2003).
- EC could be used to prevent as many as 22,000 of the pregnancies resulting from sexual assault each year. (Stewart and Trussell, 2000).

Resources on Preventing Pregnancy

- *Preventing Pregnancy from Sexual Assault: Four Action Strategies to Improve Hospital Policies on Provision of Emergency Contraception* (National Sexual Violence Resource Center, Education Fund of Family Planning Advocates of NYS and Clara Bell Duval Reproductive Freedom Project of the ACLU of Pennsylvania, 2003) This toolkit provides facts about emergency contraception for rape survivors, tools and strategies to assess the need for increased access, and four strategies to increase access. www.nsvrc.org
- Emergency Contraception educational materials for diverse audiences. The Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH) has created materials for public awareness in several different languages including: Amharic, Arabic, Cambodian, Chinese, English, Haitian-Creole, Korean, Laotian, Portuguese, Russian, Somali, Spanish and Vietnamese. www.path.org
- Emergency Contraception in the Americas. (Program on Women, Health and Development, Pan American Health Organization) This 2 page fact sheet provides information on what Emergency Contraception is and countries that are currently making it available. www.paho.org
- Emergency Contraception Services for Rape Victims in Pennsylvania Hospitals. (Clara Bell Duval Reproductive Freedom Project, 2002) This study was updated in the summer of 2002. It evaluated access to emergency contraception in Pennsylvania emergency rooms. www.aclupa.org

Framing Abuse: Media Influence and Public Understanding of Sexual Violence Against Children

Combining in-depth analysis of media representations of child sexual abuse with focus group discussions and interviews with nearly 500 journalists, campaigners and a cross-section of 'the public', *Framing Abuse: Media Influence and Public Understanding of Sexual Violence Against Children* reveals the media's role in contemporary society.

Author, Jenny Kitzinger examines feminist initiatives to challenge sexual violence, the emergence of incest as a social problem and the development of new survivor identities. She also explores stereotypes around sex offenders, interrogates protests against 'pedophiles-in-the-community' and presents a detailed analysis of the impact of scandals about disputed abuse allegations.

Which stories attract attention and why? What strategies do journalists and campaigners use to persuade people and how do we respond? Answering these and other questions, the author demonstrates how media reporting can impact on people's knowledge of the 'facts', perceptions of risk, sense of appropriate policy responses and even how we interpret our own experiences.

This book is essential reading for anyone interested in theories of media influence, identity and social change. It is also a key resource for anyone concerned about sexual violence, involved in designing intervention strategies and the protection of children or who is attempting to design intervention strategies. To borrow this resource, please contact the Resource Center at (517) 381-4663.

Updated Michigan Foundation Directory Now Available!

The Council of Michigan Foundations, in partnership with The Foundation Center, is pleased to announce the release of the *New and Improved* Michigan Foundation Directory, 14th Edition. Since the last edition of the Directory, over 100 foundations have been created in our state, including family, private, public, corporate and community foundations. This manual explains the purpose of a foundation and lists various types of grantmakers. A sample grant application form is also included. To borrow this resource, please contact the Resource Center at (517) 381-4663.

The Michigan Resource Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence is a collaboration of the Michigan Domestic Violence Prevention and Treatment Board and the Michigan Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence

New Resource Available at the Michigan Resource Center!

Betrayed as Boys: Psychodynamic Treatment of Sexually Abused Men by Richard B. Gartner, examines how sexual betrayal affects boys and the ways they carry this hurt into adulthood. Blending psychoanalytic understanding with insights from trauma-oriented theory and practice, Gartner presents effective strategies for meeting the unique therapeutic needs of men with sexual abuse histories.

Filled with evocative clinical material, the book draws readers into the direct experience of these clients, the therapists who work with them, and the constantly shifting relational world they inhabit. It serves as an indispensable guide for clinicians and educators in a range of settings.

To borrow this resource, please contact the Resource Center at (517) 381-4663, ext.17.

Web Resources for SANE/SART Programs

Evidence Collection and Care of the Sexual Assault Survivor: The SANE-SART Response (Linda E. Ledray, RN, Ph.D, LP, FAAN, 2001).

This Violence Against Women Online Resources commissioned document outlines the components of a coordinated Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) model and illustrates the techniques and implementation strategies that should be utilized when gathering forensic evidence post sexual assault. www.vaw.umn.edu

Sexual Assault Response Team Guidelines

(Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape, 2002)

These guidelines provide a comprehensive set of recommended practices for multidisciplinary teams responding to sex crimes. It also includes course outline for Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners. www.pcar.org

Developing A Sexual Assault Response Team: Resource Guide for Kentucky Communities

(Kentucky Association of Sexual Assault Programs, 2002)

This guide describes an eight step process for developing sexual assault response teams and focuses on responding to sexual assault victims that are fourteen or more years old. www.kasap.org

Minnesota Model Sexual Assault Response Protocol

(Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault: Minnesota Model Protocol Project, 2000)

This guide was created to help effect a more victim-centered approach toward sexual assault crimes. It is intended for those interested in developing a multidisciplinary protocol. Excerpts are available online. www.mncasa.org

Elder Abuse Electronic Resources

National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA)

Exists to provide elder abuse information to professionals and the public; offer technical assistance and training to elder abuse agencies and related professionals; conduct short-term elder abuse research; and assist with elder abuse program and policy development. www.elderabusecenter.org

National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life

NCALL provides training and technical assistance on issues that address the nexus between domestic violence, sexual assault and elder abuse/neglect. They also provide resource and facts sheets on abuse in later life. www.ncall.us

National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse

Promotes research, advocacy, public awareness, and training regarding the abuse and neglect of older persons and disabled adults. www.preventelderabuse.org

The Michigan Resource Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence is a collaboration of the Michigan Domestic Violence Prevention and Treatment Board and the Michigan Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence.

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**MICHIGAN
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
PREVENTION &
TREATMENT BOARD**



FVPF's Toolkit: Making the Connection: Domestic Violence and Public Health

How can we engage public health leaders to respond to family violence? The Family Violence Prevention Fund has developed a tool (available on CD with an accompanying guidebook) that makes the connection between family violence and leading public health concerns and presents effective strategies for responding. This evidence-based tool offers the most relevant research on family violence, implications for select public health programs, recommended clinical and policy strategies, promising practices and resources from around the country.

This PowerPoint Presentation and accompanying guidebook helps presenters by providing evidence and "speaker's notes" for each slide to make the case for violence prevention to public health leaders. A presenter may opt to present on any of the following areas and may mix and match sections depending on their audience:

- Overview & Epidemiology
- Women's Health
- Mental Health & Substance Abuse
- Family Planning
- Sexually Transmitted Infections & HIV
- Perinatal Programs
- Breastfeeding and Nutritional Supplements
- Child and Adolescent Health
- Injury and Violence Prevention and
- Regional and Local Data on Domestic Violence

To view the online version of the toolkit or to place an order, visit <http://endabuse.org/programs/display.php3?DocID=344> or call toll-free at 1-888-Rx-ABUSE

Domestic Violence: Guidelines for Research-Informed Practice

There is a growing concern that domestic violence has reached epidemic proportions. Existing services, developed by mental health professionals, frequently have minimal impact on reducing either the frequency or severity of domestic violence. As a result, science-practitioners in this field have developed new clinical research programs to inform key practice issues and improve these services.

Domestic Violence: Guidelines for Research-Informed Practice describes recently developed intervention programs which have been shown to be effective for reducing the incidence, severity or impact of domestic violence in particular populations. It also features assessment programs that identify risk profiles of potential perpetrators and victims. This new approach is designed to enhance the quality and effectiveness of service initiatives in domestic violence. To borrow this resource, please contact the Resource Center.

NCADV to Publish New "How to Lobby Manual"

The NCADV Public Policy Office is in the process of updating and revising its "How To" Lobby Manual. This legislative action booklet contains vital information for domestic violence advocates, and is designed to assist activists in becoming involved in the democratic process.

The manual addresses information related to the legislative process and community organizing. Topics include how a bill becomes a law, visiting with legislators, and tips for community organizing. The manual includes sample letters to assist activists when writing letters to legislators, as well as contact information for several key federal and state government agencies.

This resource tool and action kit will also contain information about motivating and organizing voting campaigns. NCADV will also provide the most current versions of our domestic violence fact sheets which may be duplicated and shared as an additional organizing resource.

NCADV's Public Policy Office encourages advocates not only to follow domestic violence legislation, but to also take action politically by utilizing the many tactics outlined in the manual. By expressing your views and contacting your legislators regarding your concerns, you will become part of social action to pass legislation which will better protect domestic violence victims and their families.

The "How To" Lobby Manual will be available later this fall in hard copy as well as a downloadable PDF document on NCADV's website. Participants in NCADV's Lobby Day events will receive a copy of the manual and have an opportunity to attend a "How To" Lobby Workshop.

For more information, email NCADV's Public Policy office at publicpolicy@ncadv.org.

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