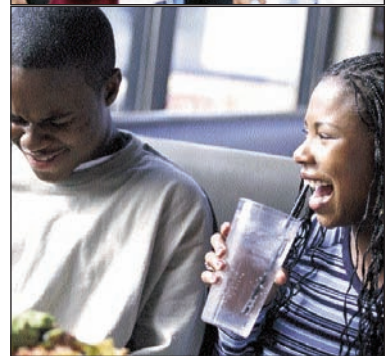


INSIDE THE CLASSROOM



SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION EDUCATION

ILLINOIS COALITION AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT
NOVEMBER 2004

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault thanks all the rape crisis center prevention educators for their efforts and diligence in educating the public on sexual assault. ICASA especially thanks the educators who took part in the 2001 prevention education evaluation project.

ICASA thanks Sean Black, Communications Coordinator, for editing, writing and designing the teaching guides. ICASA thanks Assistant Director Carol Corgan for editing, writing and providing guidance throughout the prevention education program evaluation project. ICASA also thanks staff Yvonne Bronke and Suzanne Knox for their work editing the guides.

ICASA extends a tremendous thank you to the following center staff who provided information on their programs: Jackie Smith, Call For Help, Sexual Assault Victims Care Unit, Belleville; Bobby Clawson, Rockford Sexual Assault Counseling Service, Rockford; Kathy Harris, YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago, Chicago; Rhonda Adair, Sexual Assault Counseling and Information Services, Charleston; Ami Lilley, Rape Crisis Services of The Women's Center, Carbondale; Patti Morris, The Center for Prevention of Abuse, Innerstrength, Peoria.

ICASA also thanks Cordelia Anderson of Minneapolis, MN. for her work in interviewing center staff and compiling the programs' information into these curriculum guides.

ICASA thanks Dr. Paul Schewe with the University of Illinois at Chicago for his direction and analysis on the evaluation project.



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This project was paid for by funds from the Illinois Department of Public Health.

Reprinted December 2009: Funding for this reprint provided through the Illinois Violent Crime Victims Assistance Program, administered by the Illinois Attorney General. The views and statements expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the Attorney General or the Illinois Violent Crime Victims Assistance Program.

INSIDE THE CLASSROOM

ILLINOIS COALITION AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT

INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS ICASA?

The Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault (ICASA) is a not-for-profit association of 33 rape crisis centers in Illinois. ICASA centers provide counseling, medical advocacy and legal advocacy to victims of sexual assault or abuse and their friends and family. Sexual assault prevention education is another key service provided by each center.

THIS TEACHING GUIDE

This guide is an overview of six ICASA centers' prevention education programs that showed significant positive outcomes in the evaluation project. The guide also highlights characteristics of successful prevention programs.

ICASA'S OUTCOME EVALUATION OF SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION PROGRAMS

In 2001, ICASA centers participated in an evaluation of the effectiveness of their sexual assault prevention programs in teaching high school students. Dr. Paul Schewe of the University of Illinois at Chicago directed the project.

GOALS

The prevention evaluation had three primary goals:

- Develop a common set of outcome measures that could be used to assess the effectiveness of ICASA's independent rape prevention programs.
- Identify the best programs in the state for improving the attitudes, knowledge, and behavioral intentions of male and female students, urban, suburban and rural students, and Caucasian, African American, and Hispanic students.
- Identify the content and characteristics of prevention programs that are most associated with success.

ICASA has developed step-by-step teaching guides for six of the top performing centers from the evaluation project. Other products of this project have included a description of existing rape prevention programs in Illinois, and a literature review of rape prevention outcome evaluations. The literature review was published in the book *Preventing Violence in Relationships: Interventions Across the Life Span* edited by Dr. Paul Schewe and published by American Psychology Association in June 2002.

PROCESS

During the 2001-2002 school year, prevention educators administered questionnaires pre- and post-intervention to more than 3,000 student participants in their prevention programs. Psychometric analyses of this data revealed adequate convergent validity, internal consistency, and test-retest reliability for each of the measures. A variety of regression and multivariate analyses were performed in order to identify the content and characteristics of programs that are most associated with success.

FINDINGS

Below are some of the key findings of the evaluation project regarding predictions improvement on the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance (IRMA) scale for male and female students.

CHARACTERISTICS OF PREVENTION PROGRAMS ASSOCIATED WITH SUCCESS

- More sessions are better than fewer
- Shorter sessions are better than longer sessions
- A male/female team of prevention educators produces the overall best results for both male and female students
- Younger students exhibit more change than older students

CONTENT OF PREVENTION PROGRAMS ASSOCIATED WITH SUCCESS

- Discussing how to help a friend who has been assaulted
- Addressing healthy relationship skills
- Teaching myths and facts about sexual assault
- Discussing gender roles

CONTENT OF PREVENTION PROGRAMS INVERSELY RELATED TO CHANGE SCORES ON THE IRMA

- Teaching statistics and sexual assault definitions
- Teaching about date rape drugs
- Addressing victim empathy
- Targeting respect and self-esteem

THE PREVENTION EDUCATOR

The ICASA study points out there is not a particular profile for an effective prevention educator. Educators from the top-rated programs varied by age, race and gender.

ICASA developed standards for its prevention programs based, in part, upon the statewide evaluation. (**Appendix A**)

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION EDUCATION PROGRAMS

TEACHING GUIDE

GETTING IN

Engaging schools as partners in sexual assault prevention education programs is a necessary first step for a center to have a successful program. Prevention programs must work to become part of school curriculum, whether school-wide or in individual classes. Collaborative efforts must be continuous and flexible to encourage schools to include sexual assault prevention as a vital part of the education program. In addition to schools, prevention programs can work with after-school programs, churches, youth organizations and other venues to reach youth.

MAKING CONTACT

There are a variety of methods available to publicize prevention programs to schools and other groups. Some techniques follow.

LETTERS

Send a letter to school administrators with basic program description, contact information and data supporting the program's effectiveness.

BROCHURES

A colorful brochure can grab attention better than a letter. The brochure can include a program overview and contact information.

PHONE CALLS

Contact the school personally. Ask for administrators and teachers in a specific department.

WALK-INS

Walk into a school and deliver a packet of information personally.

CONTACTS

Work with teachers and other school administrators to increase your program's visibility. You may start by working with one teacher or class and increase involvement over time.

SELLING THE PROGRAM

Schools can be resistant to the subject matter you will cover. Make sure the schools understand why their students need sexual assault prevention education. Use data on the incidence of sexual assault and sexual violence among the intended audience. Discuss school liability for sexual harassment on campus. Discuss the long-term impact of sexual violence, sexual assault and sexual bullying on students and the impact of victimization on school performance.

INSIDE THE CLASSROOM

If possible, the prevention educator should present a formal proposal when asking a school for permission to present. If you can offer examples of the program, a school is more likely to accept that program. A prevention program may need to be pre-approved by the school's administrators or board of education, so be prepared to conduct a sample education session for the administration, school board, parents or other groups.

The development of rapport and respect between rape crisis center educators and the school's teachers and administrators can defeat resistance toward your program. If the school administration is not receptive or decisive, it is often beneficial for educators to contact teachers directly and work to include the program within that specific teacher's curriculum plan.

FINDING A NICHE

A prevention program must develop a place for itself in the school system. Each school may choose a different department or curriculum area to place a sexual assault prevention program. Be prepared with suggestions and possible program variations regarding placement of your program. Often, health and physical education classes are used for prevention programs.

FLEXIBILITY

A prevention program must decide how to respond to a school that wishes to censor language or content. As the prevention educator, you must feel comfortable with your program, but you must also work to build a relationship with a school. If a school has asked for some restrictions or changes, decide how flexible you can be. Explain that this is the program you present at other area schools and offer to provide references. A prevention educator must be prepared to adapt to the needs of the schools. Explain that it is important to provide the students with reality-based education and to use the language they are already aware of, both to meet them where they are and to correct misconceptions.

Another area for negotiation may be the length and number of sessions a school utilizes. Prevention programs must be prepared to vary session lengths. A school might only offer time for one session, but once the prevention program is established, more sessions might become available.

PERMISSION SLIPS

Most schools and programs do not use or require permission slips to be signed by the high school students' parents prior to a presentation. If the school needs permission slips signed, the school should send the requests home. "Default" permission slips are the preferred method; if a parent does not respond with an objection, the student is permitted to participate in the prevention education session.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

ENGAGING THE TEACHER

Prevention programs need to develop mutual respect between teachers and educators. It is helpful for the prevention educator to remember that she/he is a guest in the school. If possible, meet with teachers as a group in advance of any classroom presentations. Use the meeting(s) to provide information about the center, the prevention program and your experience as an educator.

Remember that teachers may have their own victimization issues. If you are meeting with a teacher for the first time, you should ask if the subject is comfortable for them.

Share information with the teacher(s) about sexual assault and the objectives of sexual assault prevention education. Emphasize the importance of this issue to the high school students and how knowledge of this issue can help the teacher handle issues that might develop during the school year. If a presentation can leave a lasting impression on the students, it might reduce the number of altercations (i.e. sexual bullying) that occur later in the year.

Also, this is a good time to explain any expectations you have of the school staff. Assure the teacher that you can handle the classroom, and why students might react in a variety of ways to the subject. Establish a cue system with the teacher to inform her/him when help is necessary. Encourage teachers not to reprimand students sitting with their heads down, because that is how some youth will deal with the topic.

It is very helpful for teachers to remain in the classroom during a prevention program. The teacher's presence in the classroom tells the students that the session matters and that the teacher is informed about the material shared with the students. A teacher may also limit student disruptions and can help orchestrate activities presented by the educator. Ask the teacher not to sit in the back of the room and work on other material. This could suggest to students that the material being covered is not important.

Some teachers hold rape myths themselves. Encourage them to hold back their own thoughts and opinions in order to allow students maximum opportunity to voice their thoughts and ideas.



GENERAL TIPS

Set the tone for your presentation immediately. Tell the students who you are, what you will discuss and what you expect of them. Describe how the presentation will work. Tell them you want their involvement in discussion.

Help students understand you are receptive to differences of opinions.

Model what you want to see by treating students respectfully and listening to opinions that differ from your own. Clarify that you expect students to do the same by saying, “I respect and value your comments and will do all I can so when people speak up they are not put down in any way. I also ask that you respect each others’ opinions. It’s okay to disagree, but do it by talking about your own views rather than putting down others.”

If students are talking, use basic classroom management techniques. For example, stop and wait until everyone is listening, so everyone can hear each others’ comments.

When students say things that are inaccurate, victim-blaming or in some other way offensive, it is important to correct the information. One common technique is to keep the dialogue going and enlist other ideas. Redirect intentionally inflammatory or sensational comments with something like, “It’s not unusual to hear that it was her fault she was raped because of the way she acted, but the fact is, it’s never the victim’s fault.” or, “Thanks for sharing your opinion, what do others think?” If the discussion does not bring out the correct answers, then you need to.

DISRUPTIONS

With disruptive students, refer back to the ground rules or expectations set at the beginning. You probably do not want the teacher to take quick action to discipline or remove a student. It is important for you to handle the situation yourself and to allow the student to respond to the material. If disruptions are serious, most prevention educators ask for and expect help from the teachers.

It is generally a good rule to keep all students in the classroom. Do not take it personally when students are disruptive. Keep in mind that students’ behavior is about their age, their experiences and how they cope with the topic – not about you. Alternatively, intentionally offensive comments need to be addressed. You could say, “I know you said that as a joke, but rape isn’t funny.” You may really bring your point home through anecdotes that show the harm of such attitudes.

ONE-UPMANSHIP

Students may try to outdo each other with who can say the most inappropriate things. Handle this by referring to the standards and expectations you set at the beginning, by redirecting when possible and by directly addressing any offensive comments. For example:

- “Thanks, Bobby has just given us a perfect example of what some people think.”
- “Remember the ground rules we set at the beginning to respect the opinions of others?”
- “It is okay to disagree, but I expect you to do it respectfully.”
- “It is okay to challenge an opinion. It is not okay to attack the person who expressed the opinion.”

INTERRUPTIONS

When students are interrupting by talking to each other and holding side conversations, you should try to be playful yet direct, “Did you have something to say about this? We don’t want to miss this!”

If several students are talking, a common technique is to stop and wait until they are quiet. Or, at a normal volume say, “I’m not going to talk over you.”

SILENCE

Quiet students can be quite challenging. Techniques vary for handling quiet students. If students are not joining the discussion, try several methods to engage them.

- Use a reward system for students who answer. Toys or other treats are proven methods.
- Draw quiet students out by continuing to ask questions of the entire class. Ask them something they can easily answer, like a definition that has been covered. Or personalize it by asking something general like, “How many of you have walked down the street and had someone say something offensive to you of a sexual nature?”
- Draft a student: “I’d like more participation and I’m going to draft you.”



DISCLOSURES

Often, schools don’t specify what the prevention program educator is expected to do in case of a disclosure. Be prepared for disclosures by taking the following steps.

- In advance of any classroom sessions, ask the school how it wants you to proceed in the event of a disclosure. Gather information on the school personnel students can talk to and include the information in the prevention presentation.

- Make a point of telling students that prevention educators are mandated reporters. Explain what a mandated reporter is.
- Emphasize that rape crisis centers provide free 24-hour services.
- Begin the session by stating that it is likely someone in this class, or someone they know, has experienced sexual assault, sexual abuse or sexual harassment.
- Leave rape crisis center contact information. Encourage all students to take the information. Add benign reasons for contacting the agency such as, "Don't hesitate to call if you need any information for a school paper or project."



PRESENTATION TIPS

“We need to be down to earth, not uptight. We need to hear what the kids have to say – stop and listen to them; don’t just get through your material. Don’t bore the kids – I used to do that in the beginning, but I learned how to bring them in and make it real for them. Try to get them involved. As an adult, I get bored at conferences if I have to sit and listen to a lot of talk and can’t be involved. To help them learn, we need to make even this serious topic fun.”

Jackie Smith, Prevention Educator, Call for Help in Belleville

PREPARATION

BEFORE THE TRAINING

- Know who the contact person is and how to contact her/him.
- Clarify goals and objectives with contact person.
- Prepare and review the presentation. Put your own notes on colored paper or note cards for easy retrieval if you put them down.
- Discuss audiovisual needs and room arrangement with the contact person.
- Know the location of the training and make sure you have directions.
- Be familiar with handouts, case studies, role-plays, videos, PowerPoint slides and other training tools.

DAY OF TRAINING

- Have directions and all contact information with you.
- Be rested, and dress professionally and comfortably.
- Arrive early enough to prepare audiovisuals, write a greeting on the flip chart, etc.
- Be aware of session beginning and end times. Start and end on time.
- Wear a nametag.

SPEAKING AND MOVEMENT

- Mix in humor and serious moments.
- Do not have anything in your mouth.
- Do not cover your mouth with notes or your hand when speaking.
- Modulate your voice for emphasis.
- Vary the pace of the presentation.
- Avoid acronyms. If you must use them, explain them.
- Avoid using slang.
- Clarify regional particulars.
- Use personal anecdotes to illustrate a point.
- Try to face all parts of the group equally.
- Don’t speak with your back to any participant or block one participant’s view.
- If you must read, keep it short.
- Don’t pace, but don’t stand frozen in one place.

VIDEOS

Videos can be an excellent catalyst for discussion. You can use a brief video clip as a starting point or to break up the session. However, you must weigh the amount of time a video will take, how quickly a video can be outdated and the reliance on equipment.

HANDOUTS

Many programs leave a variety of handout information in the classroom. Observe the following cautions with handouts.

- Unless they are part of an activity, wait until the end of the presentation to distribute the handouts so students are not reading instead of listening.
- Many handouts simply become materials for recycling without ever being looked at.
- Reading levels vary widely, and many handouts are not written for the average ability of the readers or have too much information on them.
- It can help to have a summary sheet and at the end point out, “If you save nothing else – save this.” The “this” may include core definitions, contact information for victim assistance or more information.
- Information from Planned Parenthood or another comprehensive sexuality resource is often used, because of the large number of students with questions about healthy sexuality.

STAYING CURRENT

Current events can be a catalyst for discussion and provide opportunities for teachable moments. They can also be diversions or reinforcers of stereotypes or myths. Local cases, particularly sensational ones, can grab students’ attention. However, it is crucial that you keep the focus on preventing sexual assault and challenge the stereotypes and myths that an audience can fixate on with a specific case. If you choose to proactively integrate current events, you must know the facts and be prepared for discussion.

A center may choose not to actively incorporate current events, but when students bring up recent news, it is important to follow their lead. Whether current events are core to the curricula or not, it is important to be flexible with the students and address what is important to them. You also need to be up to date on the latest trends and fads preferred by students.

DEBRIEFING

A program can build in debriefings for prevention educators to talk about what is working and what is not working. The time should be used to review student evaluations and any new resources available for educators to use. Also, guest speakers can be utilized to provide information on a topic the educators are unfamiliar with. Since programs can have more than one educator in the field at a time, the debriefings help improve consistency, problem solving and staff development.

HOT TOPICS

Sexual assault issues can elicit a passionate response from students. Some topics can be particularly hot because of potential controversy with adults or sensational responses from students. The following are some of the hot topics prevention programs often encounter.

CONSENT

Inform the students that consent means that everyone involved in sexual activity says yes. If someone says no, or is too drunk or drugged to say yes, or is forced to say yes, then any sexual contact is a crime. Students also need to understand the role age plays in being able to consent. Talk to the students about what consent means when both people are under the age of consent. Discuss how consent cannot be given when one of the partners is under the age of consent and the other is much older.

DRINKING

This is a major talking point with older students. It is easy for the students to become overly engrossed in this subject. Usually conversation about drinking requires discussion of consent issues. Be prepared with information on consent and how a person under the influence of alcohol cannot consent. Alternately, be prepared to challenge students who assert that being under the influence is an excuse for perpetrating sexual assault.

EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION

Many students are interested in more information about the effectiveness of emergency contraception, its relationship to abortion, availability to the public and the latest changes in the law.

FAMOUS CASES

Inevitably, questions about national or local current events will be asked. Commonly the questions are directed at the topic of women accusing powerful men of sexual assault in what is assumed to be an attempt to extort money. Be prepared with information on the impact of rape on a victim and the rarity of false reports.

FEMALE OFFENDERS, MALE VICTIMIZATION

Despite the fact that the majority of perpetrators against both male and female victims are males, students may want to focus on the possibility of males being victimized by women. While it is okay to discuss this type of victimization, do not let it engulf the rest of the presentation. Be prepared with statistics and information to refocus the topic to the most common form of sexual assault, male perpetration against females.

Related issues include the homophobia that gets in the way of male victims reporting abuse by males. Boys need assurances that being raped by a male does not mean they are gay.

Another myth is that males are supposed to be ready to have sex with anyone at any time. Therefore if a female perpetrates against them “they got lucky” as opposed to being abused. Alternatively, just as some girls may perceive their relationship with an older male as consensual, some males perceive a relationship with an older female as consensual.

GENDER

Some boys may view sexual and dating violence only as an issue for girls. It can be a challenge to get them to consider how it relates to them.

- Boys can be victims, most often by males.
- The majority of offenders are male. That reality can be uncomfortable for a male audience.
- Boys probably know significant females in their lives (mother, friend, girlfriend, sister) who have been victimized or could be victimized.
- Boys can be leaders in the prevention of dating violence by being informed, and speaking out and supporting victims they know.

ON-LINE RISKS

Technology is rapidly changing the ways that youth meet and connect with each other, and it is changing relationships. While there can be many positives about meeting people on-line, there can also be risks. New research shows that a number of the youth on-line connecting with older people are not ignorant of the person's real age or intentions about sex. Indeed, a significant percentage of these youth are on-line looking for such connections.



UNEQUAL RELATIONSHIPS

Students need to be aware of the risk inherent in a “relationship” where one person has far more power and control by virtue of their age, position, authority or other factors. This is particularly challenging when a younger person states they are “in love” and are “consenting” to the sexual relationship.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

You need to know which questions are frequently asked in order to be prepared to answer them. The following are frequent questions the prevention educators in this study identified.

Question: What if you know it didn't really happen? Aren't most of the reports false?

Discussion: Focus on realities about consent, false reporting and the fact that only the victim and the assailant know what happened.

Question: If you are a victim, wouldn't your parents have to know?

Discussion: The answer is "no," but some police departments notify parents even though the law tells them they do not have to. It may also help to know that the State should pay the charges from the emergency room visit and the parents' insurance should not be billed.

Question: Is it sexual assault when...?

Discussion: Repeat or clarify definitions.

Question: Can it really be rape when it happens on a date or with a peer?

Discussion: Review the law; many students are amazed to think someone can be charged when the assailant is a peer or a date.

Question: Face it, she was dressed sexy - she was asking for it wasn't she?

Discussion: Ask the class for input: "What do others think?" If the discussion doesn't bring out the correction to the myths, you do.

Question: Isn't this all sort of male bashing?

Discussion: Explain that you are not here to bash males, but to focus on the facts and the behaviors. Repeat that males commit 98% of sexual assaults.

Question: Can a person consent when they've had too much to drink? What if both are drunk?

Discussion: If a person is drunk, they are unable to give consent to sexual activity.

Question: I've heard the police/courts may not do anything. Is that true?

Discussion: There is never a guarantee that a case will be prosecuted. However, even if a case is not prosecuted, it does not mean that the rape did not occur.

Question: Can guys really be sexually assaulted?

Discussion: Yes, men and boys can be sexually assaulted. In fact, national studies show that 1 in 6 boys will be sexually abused before the age of 18.

Question: Have you been raped?

Discussion: Some educators feel strongly that they should not reveal personal information, since it can become the focus of the lesson rather than the intended content. Others believe it can be beneficial to model that it is okay to talk about. Appropriate educator disclosures can personalize the issue if they have been assaulted and choose to share it. Still others recommend redirection such as, "Prevention educators often get asked that question. Like the general population, some of us have had such experiences and some have not. Some choose to talk about it and some don't. While there is no reason to be ashamed of being victimized, this is private information and a person carefully chooses when and how to disclose it to others."

FAST FACT

80% of victims are raped or sexually abused by an acquaintance. (friend, relative, co-worker, neighbor, etc.)

*Bureau of Justice
Statistics, 1998*



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ICASA EDUCATION STANDARDS

ICASA has established standards for each ICASA center prevention education program. The standards help ensure consistent high-quality programs and provide a guideline for expanding services and supervision of educators.

Description

The center provides age and culture appropriate presentations to community groups on the subjects of sexual violence, myths associated with its origins and perpetuation, the impact of sexual assault on the victim, sexual assault laws and policies and the characteristics of offenders. Public education programs are designed primarily to inform an audience, in contrast to training programs which are designed to impart skills.

PROGRAM INDICATORS

Public Education Plan

1. Annually, the center develops an education program plan including service and outreach goals. The plan identifies schools, organizations and other current and new venues and audiences the center plans to reach and marketing strategies to reach those audiences.
2. The center monitors progress toward identified service and outreach goals included in its annual plan.
3. The center conducts institutional advocacy with public and private schools and other organizations to promote inclusion of sexual assault programs in those institutions.
4. The center conducts outreach into geographically, racially and socio-economically diverse communities and makes a concerted effort to reach marginalized populations in its service area.
5. The center periodically assesses the impact of education services on participants via satisfaction surveys and/or outcome evaluation.

Documented Public Education Program

1. The center has an identifiable and documented public education program. Minimally, the center has written education outlines and objectives for school-age audiences, civic organizations and faith-based groups.
2. The center utilizes specified curricula, resource materials and teaching strategies appropriate for populations served. These materials are on file at the center.

The center reviews materials regularly to purge outdated materials and add updated

3. The center reviews materials regularly to purge outdated materials and add updated resources.
4. The center provides brochures, handouts and/or fact sheets appropriate for audience participants.

Orientation and Supervision for Sexual Assault Educators

Prior to public presentation by a newly hired sexual assault educator, the center provides orientation that includes, at a minimum:

- review of annual plan;
- review of documented education program;
- observation of presentations representative of those that will be conducted;
- practice presentations representative of those that will be conducted;
- observation by supervisor when presenting within 90 days of first presentation and annually thereafter.

Education for Staff and Volunteer Sexual Assault Educators

1. 40-Hour Training – All staff and volunteer sexual assault educators must complete 40-hour sexual assault training prior to presenting education programs.
2. Continuing Education – Sexual assault educators attend 12 hours of continuing education annually. Continuing education topics focus on sexual assault prevention programs and related issues, and/or public speaking skills. Attendance must be documented.

*“NEVER DOUBT THAT A SMALL GROUP
OF THOUGHTFUL, COMMITTED
CITIZENS CAN CHANGE THE WORLD;
INDEED, IT’S THE ONLY THING THAT
EVER DOES.”*

MARGARET MEAD

