

## Illinois Imagines: 10 Years and Counting



### Project making a difference

The Illinois Imagines project is entering its 10th year of existence. The project, funded by the Office on Violence Against Women, recently received a continuation grant that will encompass years 10 and 11, ending in Sept. 2017.

The project has made great strides in 10 years, but none more than illustrated in the graphic on the right with the increase in the number of people with disabilities that have received sexual assault victim services. Opening up these corridors of help for victims of sexual violence is a testament to the work of the local teams, but there are more avenues to proceed and we are excited for what the next 10 years hold.

### Clients with Disabilities served at rape crisis centers in Illinois.

Only clients who self-report disabilities are listed.

○ FY08 - 254	○ FY12 - 585
○ FY09 - 298	○ FY13 - 803
○ FY10 - 347	○ FY14 - 756
○ FY11 - 359	○ FY15 - 707

### Education Sessions for People with Disabilities by local teams

- FY14 - 131 sessions, 1,460 participants.
- FY15 - 1,460 sessions, 5,755 participants.

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## A Timeline

A look back at some of the project's highlights from the previous grant cycles.

### 2006-2009

- Developed charter, strategic plan and responsiveness review documents
- Established five pilot-site community collaboratives
- Developed 5-module provider toolkit, including training DVDs featuring self-advocates
- Held Statewide Conference

### 2009-2011

- Established collaborative teams in 28 communities
- Held 16 regional trainings to increase awareness and enhance responsiveness
- Provided mini-grants to local teams

### 2011-2013

- Held Statewide Conference
- Hosted three regional Best Practice Academies
- Produced Parent and Guardian Module.
- Launched [www.illinoisimagines.org](http://www.illinoisimagines.org)
- Provided mini-grants to local teams

### 2013-2015

- Developed and produced Picture Supplement Guide to use with toolkit
- Developed and produced Picture Guide for Exam Following Sexual Assault
- Developed and produced Empowerment Guide
- Launched Illinois Imagines webinar series
- Provided mini-grants to local teams



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## The Products:



Illinois Imagines has produced a variety of products during the last decade. Below is a listing of some of the material available:

### **Our Rights, Right Now Toolkit**

**Module 1: The Overview Guide** – This module provides the foundation information and guidance to assist a local collaboration to improve responses to women with disabilities who experience sexual violence.

**Module 2: Guide for Disability Service Agencies** – This module provides educational and training material on sexual violence and trauma response for disability service agency staff. It also guides agencies regarding how to create a safe environment for women with disabilities to discuss sexual violence.

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## The Policy

Illinois Imagines has worked to change the policies and procedures of statewide and local agencies. Three important legislative changes in the past 10 years were:

### **○ Access to Health Care and Evidence Collection for Sexual Assault Victims with Disabilities**

Consent of a guardian, health care surrogate or health care power of attorney is no longer required in order for a victim to receive health care or release forensic evidence. 410 ILCS 70/5(b)

### **○ Rights of Adults with Guardians to Control the Privacy of Their Rape Crisis Center Records**

An adult with a guardian can decide whether his or her guardian can look at her/his rape crisis center records and decide whether or not to waive the rape crisis center privilege. 735 ILCS 5/8-802.1(c)

### **○ Rights of Adults with Guardians to Obtain Short-Term Counseling**

An adult with a guardian can attend up to five 45-minute counseling sessions without the consent of, or notice to, the guardian unless the counselor or therapist believes such a disclosure is necessary. 405 ILCS 5/2-101.1

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**Module 3: Guide for Rape Crisis Centers** – This module provides education and training material on a victim-centered rape crisis center response to women with disabilities who experience sexual violence. It also guides rape crisis centers regarding how to enhance their ability to serve women with disabilities.

**Module 4: Women with Disabilities and Sexual Violence Education Guide** – This module provides a step-by-step training curriculum for the rape crisis center and/or disability agency staff to use to educate women with disabilities about sexual violence, their rights, healthy sexuality and how to get help.

**Module 5: Multi-media** – The materials in Module 5 are intended for both rape crisis centers and disability service agencies. This module contains training material for agency staff, including two education videos on working with women with disabilities who experience sexual violence. A third video is intended for use when conducting educational sessions with women with disabilities.

### Toolkit Supplements

**Guide to Starting Empowerment Groups** - Module provides a blueprint for helping people with disabilities start empowerment groups in their community and the importance of speaking out for your rights.

**Guide for Parents and Guardians** - Materials provide program material for working with parents and guardians on the importance of teaching healthy sexuality and healthy relationship lessons to people with disabilities.

### Prevention Education Programs

**Picture Supplement Guide** - Materials to be used in conjunction with Module 4 as a tool to promote better communication between presenter and audience.

### Other Material

**Guide to Exam after Sexual Assault** - Materials available for medical professionals, self-advocates and other advocates on the sexual assault exam and different ways to work with people with disabilities to explain the exam and make the process as smooth as possible.

**Statewide video: What Women With Disabilities Want** - Video created at statewide conference featuring women with disabilities explaining what they would like from service providers.

### Flyers/Handouts Not in Toolkit

- How to Build a Team
- Who Do You Call?
- How to Respond?
- Illinois Imagines Overview
- The Rules

*(All material is available at [www.illinoisimagines.org](http://www.illinoisimagines.org) or by calling 217-753-4117.)*

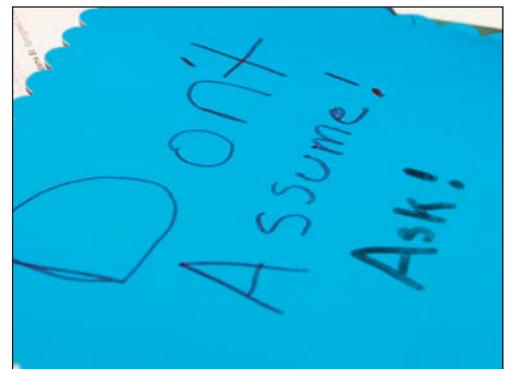
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# Illinois Imagines: A Look Back





“As a result of the Illinois Imagines project I have seen changes in the mindset of community members who work with people with disabilities. There have been increased requests for services and the community is more open to providing education on sexual violence and safety. While many agencies have not directly participated in the collaborative from my observation they have made changes in attitudes and within their agencies. While there is still a ways to go there are more individuals and groups leading the charge.”

**Maureen Mostacci, RSAC  
Rockford Illinois Imagines Collaborative**

“It has been an honor and an amazing journey to have been a part of Illinois Imagines from the beginning. Our sexual assault program had always provided services to survivors with disabilities but Illinois Imagines provided the education, structure, tools and support to do it better. Members of our collaboration truly benefited from the regional meetings and the tool kits. We used the plans and curriculum to educate hundreds of students and residents on boundaries, healthy relationships and keeping themselves safe from sexual abuse and assault. I can easily say that individuals, our agencies and our community has benefitted from Illinois Imagines through the years and we will continue to do so.”

**Julie Boland, Center for  
Prevention of Abuse,  
Peoria Collaborative**



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## Focus Groups: A Valuable Tool

By Rockford Illinois Imagines

The Rockford Collaborative was searching for ways to get information about Illinois Imagines, sexual violence and resources out into the community. In an effort to reach individuals outside of agencies we decided to do a series of focus groups with the goal of learning the best methods, formal and informal, of getting the information to people with disabilities and survivors. A series of questions was created asking individuals the common places they go, how they access information about events and trainings, their awareness of sexual assault services in the community, and whether they had ever been provided information on healthy relationships,

dating and safety.

Focus groups were held in three locations with 6-8 individuals in each group. As a thank you for their time, participants were given gift cards to a local store. The information from the groups was invaluable to the collaborative and helped the group make contacts and place informational materials in places such as bus depots, housing centers and day programs. We learned that interest in the topics was high but opportunities to participate were limited. The information continues to be used in planning for groups and awareness education. As usual, a byproduct has been increasing awareness for individuals without disabilities and other services providers.

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# Illinois Imagines Statewide Agency Partners

## Illinois Department of Human Services

- Lead agency
- Largest state agency
- Divisions of Developmental Disabilities, Family and Community Services, Mental Health, Rehabilitation Services
- State facilities and contracted community-based services

## Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault

- Training, technical assistance and monitoring
- Service standards
- 29 Rape Crisis Centers (RCC)
- Each RCC provides 24 hour hotline, advocacy, counseling and prevention

## The Self-Advocacy Alliance

- Statewide network of self-advocacy groups
- Supports local groups
- Mobilizes statewide efforts

## Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living

- Coordinates the activities of services of Centers for Independent Living (CILs)
- 22 CILS

## Blue Tower Training

- Self-advocacy leadership
- Training and technical assistance
- Resource development

## Illinois Family Violence Coordinating Council

- 23 Coordinating Councils
- Education, intervention, and coordination of services

## University of Illinois-Chicago

- Institute on Disability and Human Development
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