

Forensics *for* Survivors Healing. Justice.



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Introduction

- About the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center
- BARCC's role in forensics
- The development of the Access to Forensic Information Project "AFI"

This project was supported by Grant #2009-WF-AX-0014 awarded by the Violence Against Women Grants Office, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety & Security Office of Grants & Research and subgranted to the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center. Points of view in this document are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice or the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety Programs Division.





About BARCC

- 44 years and counting!
- Largest comprehensive sexual violence program in New England
- High volume direct services and prevention education
- External partnerships for system improvements



BARCC's Role in Forensics

Individual: Accompany about 425 survivors every year for the sexual assault forensic exam and provide a follow-up call with access to our other services.

State: Access to Forensic Information Project

National: OVC supported pilot project with National TeleNursing Center.



Late 90's: Maria's Case



Getting Information to Survivors

Statewide Toxicology Results Reporting Line
toll-free at 1-866-269-4265

- Used only for UNREPORTED cases to allow survivors the option to consider these results in their reporting decisions.
- Crime lab results faxed to BARCC then given to the survivor through the ANONYMOUS kit number.



Second case- Amelia





2009 Gap Study

To identify information gaps between what survivors want to know and what they are able to access.

Guiding Question: When survivors seek information online about forensics (DNA, rape kits, CODIS, etc...) what do they find?



Key Online Findings

1. Information focused on a professional/technical audience.
2. Inaccurate/inflammatory sites such as commercialized law sites
3. News about specific cases

What was missing was accurate, survivor-centered information about forensic issues.



Collaboration

- MA Executive Office of Public Safety
- MA State Police Crime Lab
- Boston Police Department Crime Lab and Sexual Assault Unit
- MA Department of Public Health
- Suffolk County DA's Office
- Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program (SANE)



Key Goals

1. Give survivors and families accurate information
2. Make information available online and by phone in English and Spanish with a survivor-centered approach.
3. Create additional resources, training, and outreach to promote the website.



MA Statewide Access to Forensic Information

AFI Includes:

- Toxicology Alert Line
- Survivorape.org
- Forensic Information Line

All AFI services are managed by
Katia Santiago-Taylor MA, Manager
of System Advocacy at BARCC



Toxicology Alert Line

- (866) 463-3799
- Statewide program for Toxicology Kits
- Unreported to the police ONLY
- 12 weeks for results



Toxicology Alert Line

Contact is survivor initiated

- About 7 calls per month to this line
- We offer perspective about the results in terms of what they do/do not mean
- Offer resources and possible next steps.



Surviverrape.org

- English, Spanish, Portuguese and French
- Accurate information for survivors and service providers
- FAQ



Survivrape.org Usage Data

Year	User Sessions
2013	7647
2014	37,431
2015	83,480
2016	116,555



Forensic Information Line

- (866) 463-3799
- Statewide program for MA
- Questions related to the evidence collection kit.







Thank you!

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