
ENHANCING VICTIM SERVICES THROUGHOUT RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

2021-2023 FINAL REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

The “Enhancing Victim Services Throughout Rutgers University” project finished its sixth year on August 31, 2023. Generous funding from a Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grant, administered through the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General, allowed Rutgers to continue to expand its services and education to better address issues related to campus interpersonal violence. This funding has also allowed the university to continue to expand and refine the “Rutgers Model,” a comprehensive, whole-school approach[1] to addressing interpersonal violence on campus.

The VOCA grant has enabled Rutgers work to address interpersonal violence university-wide, on its four campuses, and within the state. On each campus, with support from the VOCA grant, an Office of Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance (VPVA) offers students counseling and advocacy services, educational programming and training, and consultation and policy development services. The VPVA offices also support student victims/survivors and promote active bystander behaviors through education and training to enhance safety on campus. Through the VOCA grant, Rutgers has also engaged in university-wide efforts to demonstrate its own commitment to addressing issues of interpersonal violence on campus.

[1] McMahon, S., Steiner, J. J., Snyder, S., & Banyard, V. L. (2019). Comprehensive prevention of campus sexual violence: Expanding who is invited to the table. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 1524838019883275.

PROJECT GOALS



Sustain and expand work on all Rutgers campuses to address campus interpersonal violence



Continue to build and strengthen a coordinated university-wide message about the Rutgers response to campus interpersonal violence

Victim Services

August 2021 - September 2023



378

Clients received services
(September 2021 -
August 2023)

64%

Clients used a VPVA
service on three or
more dates

145

New clients received services
(September 2021 -
August 2022)

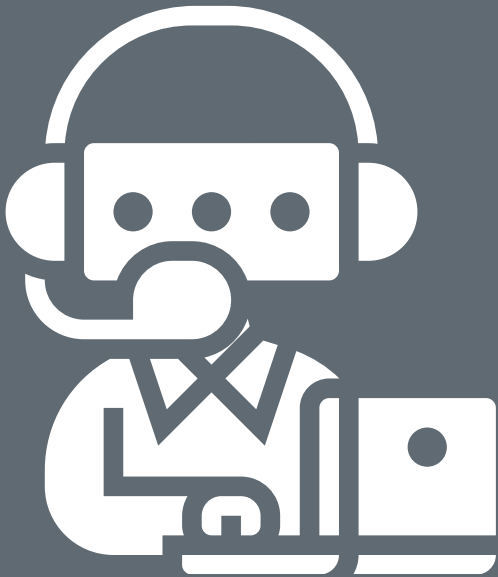
165

New clients received services
(September 2022 -
August 2023)

Note: A new client is defined as an individual who did not receive services in a previous project year.

Victim Services

August 2021 - September 2023



80%

Of all services were emotional support or safety services

70%

Of all services were individual counseling

13%

Of all services were personal advocacy/accompaniment services

Note: Clients can receive multiple service types and services from multiple service categories.

Victim Services

August 2021 - September 2023



42%

Clients experienced sexual assault as adults



40%

Clients experienced domestic and/or family violence



21%

Clients experienced stalking/harassment

Note: Clients can experience multiple victimization types.

SELECTED CAMPUS PROGRAMS

University-wide VPVA offices hosted regularly occurring training programs that equipped students, staff and faculty on how to intervene in potentially violent situations, respond to violence, manage disclosures of experiencing violence, and understand the experiences of survivors of violence. Together, these campus training programs forward a coordinated, university-wide effort to address and respond to campus interpersonal violence.

Camden

Up2Us Bystander Intervention is an anti-violence strategy that empowers people to stop attitudes and behaviors that contribute to violence. Up2Us features four primary intervention methods: direct, distract, delegate and delay. The intervention program has training workshops available to help students, staff and faculty become active bystanders in potentially violent situations.

New Brunswick

Rutgers CARES (Creating Allies to provide Resources and Empower Survivors) is a workshop that trains students to sensitively respond to and support peers who have disclosed being a victim/survivor of interpersonal violence and how to confidently direct them to appropriate campus resources. A student who completes this training is designated a VPVA ally.

Newark

In Their Shoes is a workshop that helps participants learn about interpersonal violence by stepping into the shoes of a victim/survivor of violence. Originally an in-person workshop, In Their Shoes was made into a video game experience. Participants assume the video game character's identity and make decisions as the character responding to experiences like sexual violence, partner violence, domestic violence and stalking.

Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences

Responding to Interpersonal Violence is a non-credit hour elective course offered by RBHS VPVA that trains Robert Wood Johnson Medical School students. Responding to Interpersonal Violence covered topics like trauma-informed care, screening for abuse, the neurobiology of trauma and managing patient disclosures.

UNIVERSITY - WIDE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance Offices

Stand-alone victim service offices on each of the four Rutgers campuses continue to provide a range of support services to victims/survivors as well as advocacy, education, and awareness-raising to the larger campus community. Staff members from each of these offices meet regularly and often to coordinate programs, events and other initiatives that work to enhance the Rutgers Model.

The Enhancing Victim Services Project Advisory Board

The Enhancing Victim Services Project Advisory Board continues to engage the highest levels of leadership on each campus and the University about issues related to sexual violence, dating violence and stalking. The board regularly provides counsel on issues and solutions related to sexual and dating violence and abusive behaviors on campus. Collaborations have been built throughout the university, among campuses, as a result of the Advisory Board, the Center for Research on Ending Violence, University Academic Affairs, and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. Some topics discussed at these meetings include University policy, sustainability initiatives, and developing the Rutgers Model for Addressing Interpersonal Violence on Campus throughout the University.

UNIVERSITY - WIDE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Faculty and Staff Training Coordinator

The training coordinator develops and administers ongoing training, consultation and assistance for faculty and staff related to their role in addressing and responding to sexual violence, dating violence, stalking and other forms of interpersonal violence. The goals of the training initiatives are not only to increase awareness of interpersonal violence and its impact but to equip faculty and staff with the tools to identify, support and report incidents among students and colleagues in order to foster a campus-wide culture of safety and respect. The training coordinator continues to offer trainings and consultation around issues of sexual, dating, and domestic violence. Trainings cover a wide range of topics from employee misconduct, supporting colleagues, responding to student disclosures and specialized training for medical professionals. The faculty and staff training coordinator has continued to work with partners on a bystander intervention training for faculty and staff.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Resource Hub

The Center for Research on Ending Violence (REV) continues to maintain a campus interpersonal violence technical assistance [resource hub](#). "Technical assistance" (TA) is used to describe the various types of resources and materials developed to support the work of our campus partners. Each item is, at its core, a resource to help providers stay up-to-date on research in the field and ensure their programs and procedures are evidence-informed. On this site, visitors are able to access all technical assistance resources that have been created since the inception of the Enhancing Victim Services Project. Here, campus and community partners and other institutes of higher education around the state can access resources on topics related to starting a victim services program on campus, resources for survivors, helping faculty and staff support student survivors, remote service delivery and engagement, and understanding the impact of violence upon specific student groups.

Black Women's Blueprint Training for Survivor Advocates

Collaboration amongst REV and campus partners resulted in Black Women's Blueprint Training for Survivor Advocates offered by Restore Forward--an organization that offers healing programs and harm reduction training. Black Women's Blueprint addressed the intersection of racial justice and interpersonal violence on campus. The two-day training examined the connection between institutional violence and interpersonal violence, expanded understandings of violence, its forms, and its impacts on diverse student communities. It engaged participants in a collaborative dialogue to help reimagine campus culture and inform institutional and individual responses to violence.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Mandatory Education Module

A collaboration among the Center for Research on Ending Violence and university-wide Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance offices and Title IX offices created an online educational module that will be used to educate students about interpersonal violence on campus across all of Rutgers University. This module is home-grown and Rutgers-specific and will meet all federal training requirements. It will provide Rutgers-specific data and resources to raise awareness of victim services on campus as well as share practical strategies for students to address and respond to interpersonal violence on campus.

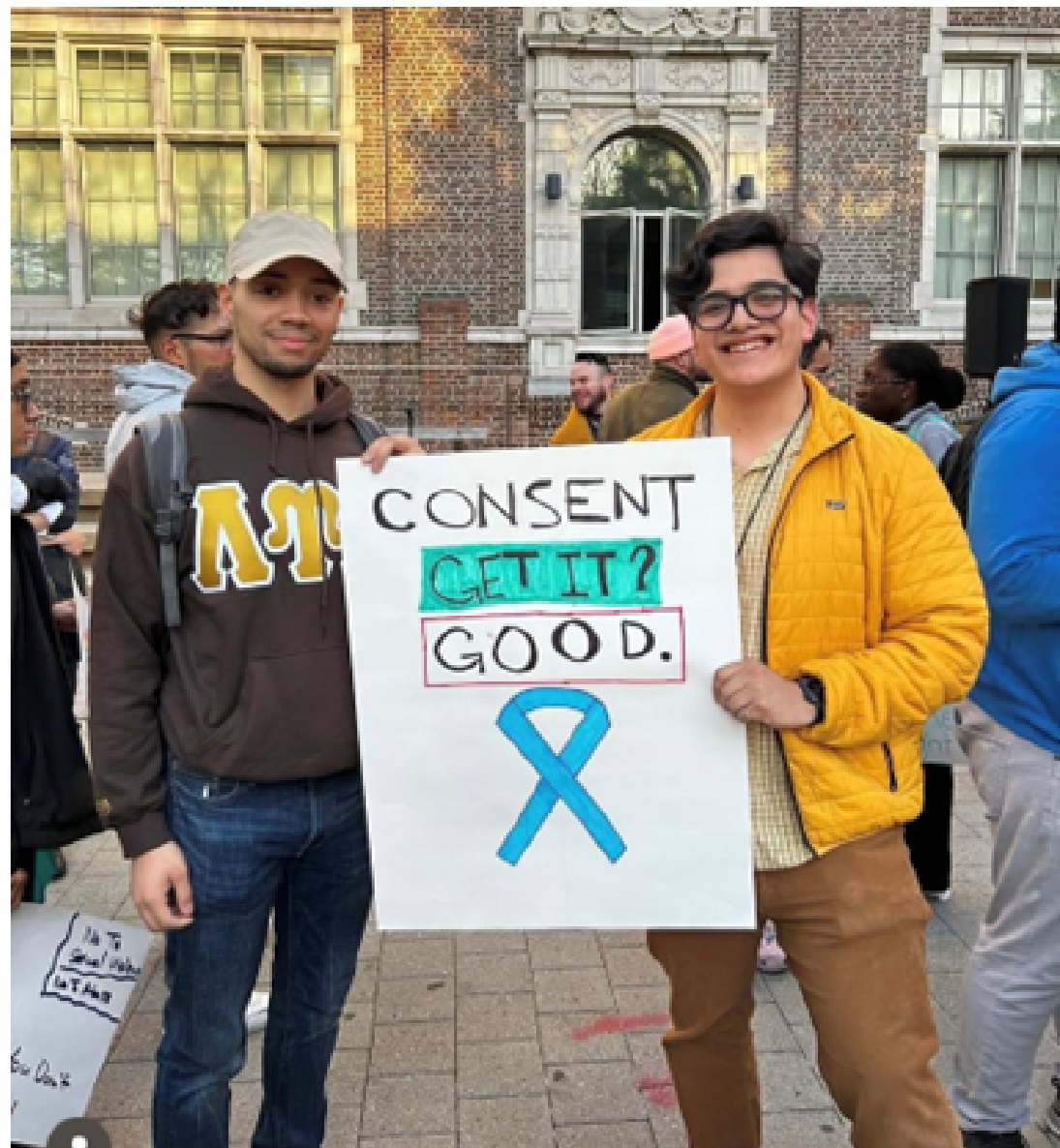
Evaluation Sustainability Workshop Series

The Evaluation Sustainability Workshop Series, comprised of three workshops, provided the tools and resources to continue evaluating and assessing programs and services for students experiencing interpersonal violence on campus. Dr. Leila Wood, associate professor at the Center for Violence Prevention, School of Nursing, at The University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB), facilitated the training series. She has extensive experience evaluating campus-based advocacy and programming efforts. Dr. Wood designed and facilitated these workshops based on her Campus-Based Advocacy Evaluation Toolkit. Training topics included logic model and listening sessions, fidelity and quality monitoring, and surveys and outcome assessments.

SELECTED CAMPUS EVENTS

- Turn the Campus Purple is an annual, university-wide domestic violence awareness campaign, hosted in October, that provides anti-violence education through activities, trainings and public exhibits of support for victims/survivors. Purple is the signature color of domestic violence awareness.
- Turn the Campus Teal is an annual, university-wide sexual assault awareness campaign, hosted in April, that provides anti-violence education through activities, trainings and public exhibits of support for victims/survivors. Teal is the signature color of sexual assault awareness.
- Take Back the Night is an annual event comprised of a student march around campus that reaffirms the university's support for victims/survivors of violence and its stance against interpersonal and sexual violence.
- The Clothesline Project (TCP) is a public display of collected t-shirts bearing hand-made supportive messages for survivors of violence made by both survivors and Rutgers community members who want to honor survivors.







EVALUATION FINDINGS

Client satisfaction was assessed by the Rutgers University VPVA offices. Findings from these assessments are used to build on strengths, seize opportunities for improvement, and adjust victim services according to client feedback.

HIGHLIGHTS

Client Satisfaction

Client satisfaction at Rutgers-Camden VPVA and Rutgers-New Brunswick VPVA was evaluated for the the Spring 2023 semester. Across campuses, all respondents strongly agreed that they would use VPVA services again if they needed a similar type of service, were satisfied with the service(s) they received, and would recommend VPVA services to a friend or peer.

“This program has probably saved more student's [sic] lives than you could imagine! This program is a gem to the Rutgers Camden campus and needs the support from the campus to continue to thrive for its students.”

“These services helped me to feel supported by the school during a troublesome time.”

“I found a really supportive counselor through VPVA that helped me get through a traumatic experience.”

“I believe I had a fulfilling experience with VPVA. I never left my meetings feeling like I wish we did more.”

EVALUATION FINDINGS

The Center for Research on Ending Violence evaluated a key training workshop at Rutgers University-New Brunswick. Training evaluation helps ensure that training workshops are yielding desired outcomes.

HIGHLIGHTS

Rutgers Creating Allies to Provide Resources and Empower Survivors (CARES)

Rutgers CARES trains students on the impact of trauma for victims/survivors, how to respond to a peer who have experienced interpersonal violence and how to direct peers to resources. Fall 2022, the Center for Research on Ending Violence evaluated three in-person Rutgers CARES trainings at Rutgers-New Brunswick.

Results show that, after training, knowledge about the impact of trauma on victims/survivors of violence and empathy for peer victims/survivors of sexual violence increased. Perceived confidence and helpfulness in supporting a peer, who disclosed being a victim/survivor of an unwanted sexual experience, also increased after training.

Rutgers CARES training participants said they used the following skills two months post-training.

“Many resources I referred them to were ones I remembered from the presentation. I knew not to push, and to let them tell me what they were comfortable with.”

“To not push your own ideas of ‘helping’ onto another person. Listen to what they need/ask for.”

“I made sure not to victim blame and allowed them to speak”

EVALUATION TOOLS

To evaluate outcomes of key training workshops, the Center for Research on Ending Violence developed an evaluation tool, based on a review of best research practices, for the Healthy Relationships Series at Rutgers-Camden.

DEVELOPING AN EVALUATION TOOL

The Healthy Relationships Series

The Healthy Relationships Series is a four-part workshop, developed by Rutgers-Camden VPVA, that trains students on healthy skills to use within romantic, intimate and/or sexual relationships as an anti-violence approach. Fall 2021, the Center for Research on Ending Violence developed an evaluation tool based on a review of best research practices to determine if the workshop was successful in obtaining specific outcomes, such as (a) knowledge of healthy relationship skills and qualities desired in a partner, (b) consent knowledge and behavior and (c) healthy relationship boundary behaviors.

Learning Outcome I

Relationship knowledge is an evaluation target that assesses perceived knowledge about relationship skills and perceived knowledge about partner selection. For example, workshop participants are asked to respond to statements, such as “I understand what it takes to have a healthy relationship” and “I can spot warning signs in relationships.”

Learning Outcome II

Consent knowledge and behavior is an evaluation target that is measured by four sub-components: (a) awareness and discussion of consent, (b) expectancies to seek consent, (c) expectancies to adhere to consent decisions and (d) expectancies to refuse unwanted sexual activity. For example, workshop participants are asked to respond to statements, such as “I would ask my partner for consent before engaging in sexual activity” and “I would feel confident refusing someone’s sexual advances.”

Learning Outcome III

Healthy relationship boundaries is an evaluation target that assesses knowledge and communication boundaries that are self-focused and partner focused. For example, workshop participants are asked to respond to statements, such as “I always let my partner know when I don’t like how they’re treating me” and “When my partner is upset, I ask questions to better understand what they’re feeling.”

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PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The project team thanks the many members of the Rutgers University community who contributed to the Enhancing Victim Services project. This report and the project as a whole are the result of the enthusiastic support and participation of administrators, faculty, staff, and students across Rutgers. This report is dedicated to all those who are survivors of sexual and dating violence. We hope our efforts can help contribute to creating campus communities that are free of all forms of violence.

2021-2022 AG-VOCA ADVISORY BOARD

The AG-VOCA Advisory Board was created including representatives from all campuses.

Those members include:

Harry Agnostak, Associate Vice President of Labor Relations, Rutgers University

Thomas Benjamin, Research Project Assistant

Enobong (Anna) Branch, Ph.D., Senior Vice President for Equity

Kerry Camerer, Director, RBHS VPVA

Nancy Cantor, Ph.D., Chancellor, Rutgers-Newark

Joan Collier, Ph.D., Assistant Vice President for Equity and Inclusion

Francine Conway, Ph.D., Chancellor-Provost, Rutgers-New Brunswick

Kenneth Cop, Chief of University Police & Executive Director of Police Services, Rutgers University

Mary Beth Daisey, M.Ed., Associate Chancellor of Student Affairs, Rutgers-Camden

Carolyn Dellatore, Associate Vice President of Workplace Experience, Rutgers University

Ingrid Fulmer, Ph.D., Vice Provost for Faculty Advancement and Faculty Affairs, Rutgers-New Brunswick

Lisa Grosskretz, Director of Employment Equity, Rutgers University

Sue Hamilton, Ph.D., Asst. Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs and Title IX Coordinator, RBHS

Kathleen Hickey, Senior Associate Athletic Director/Senior Woman Administrator

John Hoffman, J.D., Senior Vice President and General Counsel

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Jackie Moran, J.D., Director of Student Affairs Compliance & Title IX, Rutgers-New Brunswick

Kaylin Padovano, Faculty and Staff Training Coordinator

Cathryn Potter, Ph.D., Dean of School of Social Work, Rutgers-New Brunswick

Judith Ryan, J.D., University-wide Title IX Coordinator, Rutgers University

Simone Snyder, Senior Program Manager

Brian L. Strom, Ph.D., Chancellor, RBHS

Karen Stubaus, Ph.D., Vice President for Academic Affairs and Administration, Rutgers University

Corlisse Thomas, Ed.D., Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Rutgers-Newark

Rebecca Vazquez, Ph.D., Director, Rutgers-New Brunswick VPVA

*Chancellors and/or designees attended

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