



Welcome

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Safe Havens Interfaith Partnership
against Domestic Violence and Elder Abuse

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Why Faith-Based Organizations?

- One of first places to turn for help
- Form community norms and values
- Faith is a critical resource for survivors
- Social location
- Only resource available
- Unique opportunities for early intervention and prevention

The Georgia Commission on Family Violence



“Victims, survivors, and surviving family members consistently turn to their faith communities for support and safety.”

Georgia Commission on Family Violence and
Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence,
2009 Georgia Domestic Violence
Fatality Review Annual Report, p. 15.



Faith in older and underserved communities

“respondents, especially minorities, often indicated that their ‘first stop’ would be a member of the clergy if they were to discuss their [abuse] with anyone.”

Richard Beaulaurier, Laura Seff, and Frederick Newman,
*Barriers to Help-Seeking for Older Women Who Experience
Intimate Partner Violence: A Descriptive Model*,
Journal of Women and Aging, Vol. 20(3/4) 2008, p. 240-241.



Focused conversations with rural advocates

“Churches, scriptures, faith leaders, and traditions are manipulated by the abuser to control the victim. Faith is misused to support abuse.”

“BOTH service providers AND faith communities need to do work and get training and make changes to make this happen.”



Faith Community Challenges

- Inconsistency and funding issues
- Outreach is time- and labor-intensive
- Minimizing
- Spiritualized solutions
- Distancing
- Denial
- Silencing
- Stigmatizing
- Resistance to work in faith communities



Responses to Outreach Challenges


Rural and Non-Rural Outreach
and Partnership Guides

Rural and Non-Rural Toolkits



Faith Community Training

- Learn about dynamics of DV, dating violence, elder abuse
- Build active relationships with FJCs
- Encourage conversation
- Make referrals
- Support safety and options for survivors
- Involve FJC partners in training team
- Develop protocols



81% of faith leaders said they would “take appropriate action if they had the training and resources to do so.”

(IMA World Health, 2014)



Responses to Training Needs

Catalyst Trainings



Guidelines for Faith Communities

- Listen, listen, listen
- Be survivor-centered
- Prioritize safety
- Be non-directive
- Do not blame or judge
- Welcome everyone
- Refer, refer, refer
- Respond to those who cause harm
- Take a stand



To-Do List for Faith Communities

- Break the silence
- Develop and strengthen relationships
- Avoid couple's counseling
- Maintain confidentiality
- Respond to faith-based crises
- Refer and engage in coherent community-wide response
- Build congregational team



Lessons Learned

- Scheduling is critical
- Language is key
- Permission granted
- Be patient
- Celebrate accomplishments, big & small
- Be inclusive
- Clergy make a difference
- Strong team members = strong team
- Take good care



Additional Resources



Additional Opportunities

- Webinars
- Community Conversations
- Office Hours
- TA by phone, email, zoom
- Safe Havens website and TA2TA site





What Is Your Vision?

- How could stronger partnerships with faith leaders help survivors of domestic and sexual violence in your community?
- Could faith leader involvement strengthen your community's responses to sexual and domestic violence? How could that work in your community?
- Would you like to know more about working with faith-affiliated survivors?



Questions



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