

# PARTNERS

## in *Social Change*

A PUBLICATION OF THE  
SEXUAL ASSAULT  
PREVENTION RESOURCE  
CENTER, DEDICATED TO  
PROVIDING TECHNICAL  
ASSISTANCE TO THOSE  
ENGAGED IN SEXUAL  
VIOLENCE PREVENTION  
IN WASHINGTON STATE

WASHINGTON COALITION OF SEXUAL ASSAULT PROGRAMS

SUMMER 2007

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### **Community Development as a Foundational Framework:**

**An Overview for Sexual  
Assault Advocates**

**Making the Most of  
Opportunities for Action**

**Community Development  
in a University Setting**

**Things Don't Always Go  
As Planned!**

### **Plus:**

**Analyzing Qualitative Data**

**CSAP News From Around  
the State**

from the

## Director's Desk

BY LYDIA GUY

PREVENTION SERVICES DIRECTOR,  
WCSAP



Lydia Guy

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

— Margaret Meade [1901–1978]  
American-born anthropologist

**In** 1999, Washington State acknowledged the importance of community development as a social change strategy. The Sexual Assault Prevention Plan for Washington State included the following goal: ***To impact the underlying causes of sexual violence through the shifting of ownership of solutions from social services to the community using a community development approach.***<sup>1</sup> Over 40 rape crisis centers have facilitated community development initiatives in counties spanning the entire state.

Over the past decade, community sexual assault programs, community activists, social service providers and community members, in addition to the Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs and its funding partners, have engaged in the process of being that “small group of thoughtful and committed citizens” seeking to change our world. This issue of *Partners in Social Change* contains the stories of three of those communities and the challenges and successes along the way. ♦

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<sup>1</sup> Sexual Assault Prevention Plan for Washington State; Office of Crime Victims Advocacy; Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development; and Washington State Department of Health, by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy. The Evergreen State College, August, 1997.



*The mission of the Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs is to unite agencies engaged in the elimination of sexual violence through education, advocacy, victim services and social change.*

*The Prevention Resource Center is a project of WCSAP, designed to provide support and technical assistance to individuals, communities and agencies engaged in sexual violence prevention within Washington State.*



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*Managing Editor*  
Lydia Guy  
[lydia@wcsap.org](mailto:lydia@wcsap.org)

*Design & Layout*  
Nj Progar-Hayes  
[nj@wcsap.org](mailto:nj@wcsap.org)

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# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## As a FOUNDATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Community development is a specific community mobilization framework developed by sociologist William Loftquist. Washington State adopted this framework as a way of ensuring that social change remains an integral component of sexual violence prevention. The Sexual Violence Prevention Plan was developed in 1997 and included the following goal: *To impact the underlying causes of sexual violence through the shifting of ownership of solution from social services to the community using a community development approach.*

All community mobilization frameworks, including community development, have these features in common:

- They are community driven.
- They require authentic decision making.
- The goal is social change.
- They are facilitative processes.

This issue of *Partners in Social Change* contains summaries of three community development initiatives: 1) the Georgetown project, 2) the Pacific Lutheran University project, and 3) the Human Response Network project. Each of these summaries originally appeared in “Telling Our Stories,” published by the Prevention Resource Center in 2001. What is compelling about all of these stories is how they illustrate the beauty of adopting the community development approach as a guiding philosophy. Equally persuasive is the fact that two of these initiatives continue to be viable components of their communities in 2007.

# MAKING THE MOST OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

## Lindsay Palmer and the King County SARC

BY **GAYLE STRINGER, M.A.**

Some work in communities begins when there is a perceived crisis. To the community development specialist, the crisis can be an opportunity for action. Just such an opportunity arose for Lindsay Palmer, director of education for King County Sexual Assault Resource Center in Renton, Washington.

King County Sexual Assault Resource Center (KCSARC) provides crisis and prevention education services for all of King County. In partnership with three other Community Sexual Assault Programs in the county, KCSARC responds to requests for assistance by individual victims of sexual violence and to community requests for assistance. It is a community request for assistance that brought Lindsay and KCSARC together with the Georgetown Community. This was a community looking for allies and it found one in their community sexual assault program.

Georgetown is a community located in South Seattle. It borders Boeing Field, a busy airport and cargo hub, and as a result has, over the years, seen increased noise and air pollution. Recently, the residents of the neighborhood banded together to help preserve and resurrect the neighborhood. Still, the residents of Georgetown have felt over time that they've been asked to deal with more than their fair share of situations of negative impact.

Their newest challenge: Twenty-three registered sex offenders were housed in one apartment complex in the Georgetown. The residents of the apartment complex were alarmed when they discovered the presence of these released registered sex offenders. They reported their initial feelings to be of fear, helplessness, anger and the assumption that their community was "once again being dumped on."

Galvanized into action, their first calls to KCSARC were about how to "get them [the sex offenders] out" of the apartment complex. They were concerned about the immediate safety of the community and the long-term safety of residents. Community members formed the Georgetown Safety Focus Group and invited King County Sexual Assault Resource Center to be a participant. The Department of Corrections, Seattle Police Department and community members served on the Safety Focus Group. At the group's first meeting, the following suggestions were made:

- Get offenders out of Georgetown
- Equip residents with guns
- Give every child a whistle
- Look for grants for self defense classes

The group's early meetings focused on the immediate perceived threat and ways to create safety. Members of the community vented their frustrations, and expressions that the community was "being dumped on again" were heard. It is often difficult for a thoughtful process to happen in the midst of such turmoil. However, initial ideas of arming the citizens were gradually replaced with a planning process that yielded a unique and constructive plan. The initial goals of getting information and personal empowerment were met in ways that more than met expectations. And new and community-specific responses were developed.

The community sexual assault program entered the process as an invited guest. The "Georgetown Safety Focus Group" had its own agenda and even though



**Gayle Stringer**

Lindsay had information and skills to facilitate a specific community development process, it was important that she work in the community's mode to contribute her gifts as a community member. And although the group did not utilize the very specific Loftquist model, she was able to participate in such a skillful way that all of the elements of the community development process were accomplished.

Initial stakeholders included members of the Department of Corrections, the Seattle Police Department, the King County Sexual Assault Resource Center and Georgetown community members. This particular combination of people had never before come together in this way. They tried to increase membership in the stakeholder group by inviting personnel from the schools that are fed by that community, but initially received no commitment.

The group had wide-ranging discussions that yielded two distinct conditions that members believed contributed materially to the potential for sexual violence in their community:

1. Lack of information about sexual violence, offender behavior and safety strategies;
2. Lack of connection — the community members to each other and identified offenders as members of the community.

They thought the condition they identified as “lack of information” could be addressed in a straightforward manner. They were more concerned about what they actually wanted in terms of the connection condition. They asked themselves:

- What do we mean by connection?
- How do we be friendly with the offenders, but not become friends with them?
- What kind of connection do we really want?
- If these offenders feel connected to the community, will they be less likely to offend against other community members?

Activities to address the information condition seemed to cluster around logical groups. They wanted to give to youth the skills to recognize a potentially dangerous situation and respond to it; families were also a focus. A family fair was planned and an empowerment group for girls was initiated. Meetings with mothers in the community ensued; their concerns for daughters emerged and were addressed. The girls in the empowerment group directed the stakeholder group to go to the high school and ask the school to join them in examining sexual harassment and other sexual violence at the school. A productive meeting followed, where KCSARC met with the school staff to address the community's conditions.

The following knowledge, skill and awareness-building activities resulted from new and very real collaborations between the community, KCSARC, the police, the corrections officers, schools and a local community center:

- Teen Health Day (school-based; sessions in classes)
- South Park Community Center set aside places in their group for girls and was willing to provide transportation to attend
- Family Health Fair
- Educational Support Group
- Self-defense classes
- Community Health Fair
- Prevention skill-building for kids
- Sexual assault information and prevention sessions for parents

The connection condition was addressed by the following activities:

### **Formation of a citizen patrol**

Small groups of citizens provided a safe presence in the neighborhood on Friday and Saturday nights. This group increased the community's contact with hotel and motel managers, with whom they worked



to discourage prostitution activities. The citizen patrol was trained and supported by the Seattle Police Department and provided the typical “block watch” benefits.

### **Formation of a “guardian” group**

This group met with identified sex offenders and helped monitor their progress in the community. The group hypothesized that this minimal connection with offenders would offer the offender a connection to the community, responsibility to the community and support to continue healthy behavior in the community. They wanted to be friendly and supportive of appropriate behavior without becoming “friends” with the offenders.

Lindsay sees the determination of community members to make a difference and not give up as some of the more exciting outcomes of this work in the community. Discouragement comes when there is minimal response from the community when new activities are initiated. She believes that the wider community does not realize or truly appreciate the hard work done by some of its stakeholders who have taken on the “guardian” role. She is concerned that burnout is a possibility if they are unable to recruit new community members to help with the work. And as the community begins to feel safer, there is less “motivation” to be involved.

Her advice to anyone doing community development? “Hang in there. You never know what will work or be embraced,” Lindsay says. She describes her role in this community as ever changing, as the community changes. In her role as KCSARC staffer, Lindsay is now part of the Georgetown community in a way that the agency has never been before. They see her as an ally. They ask her to provide assistance when needed. Along the way, the community is developing its own leadership, which will mean they’ll need her less often, but they always know that KCSARC is there for them. And the Georgetown community continues to work actively to make their community free from sexual violence. ◆

*Gayle M. Stringer, M.A., is a consultant who has worked in the field of sexual assault prevention, advocacy and treatment for over 25 years. She has written and trained on issues related to sexual violence, its prevention and treatment, community development and social change work. She is a licensed mental health counselor in private practice in Washington State. Gayle previously worked as prevention services coordinator for WCSAP.*

**T**he community identifies the following concrete elements as indicators of its success:

- ◆ The Department of Corrections referred them for its Volunteer Award, an honor which was awarded to them in a ceremony held in Olympia, the state capitol.
- ◆ Several newspaper articles were written about their community initiative.
- ◆ There was interest from the television show “20/20” and several community members were interviewed.
- ◆ A sexual assault attempt was made on a community member by someone outside of the community. One of the identified sex offenders, now more of a community member, came to the victim’s rescue and prevented the assault.
- ◆ The mothers of the community Latina Dance Group asked for a girls empowerment group for their daughters, one that stresses prevention issues as well as healthy sexuality issues.



## Tamatha Thomas-Haas and Heather Fox at Pacific Lutheran University

BY **GAYLE STRINGER, M.A.**

The Sexual Assault Center of Pierce County (SACPC), a community sexual assault program in Washington State, started a community development project in February, 1998. The community selected was a small, private university in their area. The proposed project began because of a perceived need to coordinate the university community systems that were concerned about sexual violence. There was also a perceived need for better policy and implementation of policy on campus. This reflected both the need for policy and the need for training of staff.

SACPC believed this is to be a very important project, but knew it had no additional staff to support it. Education Director Tamatha Thomas-Haase designed an internship for a university student to staff the project. A university student applied for and was offered the internship position. At no cost to the CSAP, they had a sexual assault prevention program coordinator.

The following were examples of the prevention program coordinator's responsibilities:

- Work with representatives of the university campus community to develop a university Sexual Assault Prevention Task Force;
- Assist the Task Force in establishing goals and determining what conditions exist on campus that foster sexual assault;
- Coordinate specific prevention strategies developed by the Task Force;
- Assist the CSAP education program staff to conduct training specific to the university faculty and staff;
- Assist in the training of peer educators.

The education director also spent time with staff at the university to discuss ideas and support for the community development initiative. This initial planning and support gathering was essential to the prevention program coordinator's ability to do her job once she was a part of the project. The director and the coordinator met with a group of stakeholders from the university including students, teaching staff, administrative staff, support staff and others. These stakeholders supported the development of the proposed sexual assault task force at the university. In other displays of support, the university Women's Center supplied an office to house the project. The Vice President of Student Life offered to pay set-up charges for the office telephone. The owner of a local carpet store donated carpet for the office.







With the help of the university psychology department professors, the prevention program coordinator developed a student survey that was approved by the human subjects review committee. She then trained ten “researchers” to administer the survey to students. When completed, the results were delivered in various forums to faculty, staff and students. The information provided and the discussion generated on campus caused a ripple effect in the campus community:

- A group of 25 students led focus groups in the dorms on campus.
- Planning was begun to provide support group on campus.
- The university initiated a crisis response system.
- The CSAP provided an initial 30-hour training for the campus volunteers (and, as a result, now has a free space for training its own volunteers).
- Work began on crafting a campus policy regarding sexual assault and about education of students and staff.

The sexual assault task force continued as an ongoing community entity, even after the student who originally served as its prevention program coordinator went on to graduate. Because this is truly a community development approach, the community continued its work. New interns were recruited and new project goals developed. The student body contributed funds during the second year to help defray costs associated with the project.

Social change was happening in this campus community, with SACPC as the catalyst for change. However, the university community members remained the life force of the continued social change.

Fast forward two years after the last check-in with the university prevention initiative. During a visit to the Sexual Assault Center of Pierce County (SACPC) one day, a young woman named Heather Fox introduced herself. She was working part time in the education department of SACPC. When asked about how she came to do this work, she responded that she started doing this work on campus, with a program called the Sexual Assault Prevention and Education Team (SAPET). During the two years SAPET had become a stand-alone program (not part of SACPC), and after her graduation, Heather transitioned from a SAPET intern to SACPC staff. She described the training she had undertaken with SAPET, the kinds of activities that they had been engaged in, and the changes she had seen around the campus in the short time she had been involved in the program.

When asked if she knew when SAPET started and what initiated its development, she said she didn’t know. It had been around a long time, she thought. It was a part of the life of the community. Administration and faculty were quite supportive and the Women’s Center staff was key to the success of their work.

Heather began describing what activities were happening during the current year as well as the planning process for future activities. Professors invited SAPET team members to present information about sexual violence to their classes, which was a new development. Previous peer education work had been confined to residence halls and some staff training. While work in the living communities continued, the invitation into classrooms was viewed by team members as a sign that sexual violence was an issue much more freely discussed on campus. One journalism class was even assigned to report on sexual



violence. SAPET helped the class to see not only the facts around sexual violence, but its impact on victims and significant others. A documentary video was produced by the journalism class to be used on campus and shared with others.

As SAPET set goals for the upcoming year, its staff planned presentations to address sexual-assault prevention in area high schools in the belief that college-bound youth need to be thinking about and discussing the conditions that support sexual violence. SAPET felt it would be beneficial for young people to learn about sexual violence, to feel able to discuss the issue and learn skills to help keep them safe and healthy in relationships. The student body continued to include SAPET in its budget, and considered this group important to student life on campus.



When I asked how she came to work at the Sexual Assault Center of Pierce County, Heather described connecting through SAPET and taking the initial training there, after which she considered volunteering. Eventually, the job opportunity arose.

Even though Heather had no idea that SACPC had anything to do with the initiation of the group that would come to be called SAPET, the legacy of that prevention initiative continued. SACPC continues a relationship with the group, providing training and technical assistance when needed. And, as an agency, SACPC benefits from the input of young people who have been well trained in the university prevention initiative as they continue to do the work either with SACPC or in their communities of choice.

This community-owned initiative sustains itself because the commitment to preventing sexual violence, and the leadership needed for it, does not come from outside the community, but from within its membership. SAPET continues to be a self-sustaining project. ♦

BY GAYLE STRINGER, M.A.

Andrea Kiser heard this challenge in a community development and sexual violence prevention workshop at a conference: *Think about partnering with a community that you do not know well. Do the personal emissary work necessary to find allies in that community, to be introduced and to become involved there.* As she was deciding on a community to approach about a prevention initiative, she observed that there was a community within their service area in which many sexual assault victims served by Human Response Network lived. The community was a trailer park.

Before approaching this community, she did some research. She found that the sheriff's office took a long time to respond to calls from the area, that officers did not want to go there. This was a low-income community, a diverse population, many residents spoke languages other than English, and there were several identified sex offenders living there. The city bus did not even stop at the bus stop by the trailer park. People had to walk to the next stop to catch a bus.

Together, Andrea and the sheriff's office decided that they would have a community-wide meeting to talk about sexual violence and safety in their community. The logistics required to make this meeting happen were not easy. Much time and effort had been spent up to this point in conversation with allies and community members. They decided that the meeting should be held at a particular church at the edge of the trailer park. This was a known and trusted meeting place for the community. Through conversation with community members it was determined that

# DON'T ALWAYS GO AS PLANNED



## Kiser and the Human Response Network

both Spanish and Russian interpreters were needed. The community made clear that the Spanish interpreter should be a male in order to be considered credible to some members of the community. The gender of the Russian interpreter was not an issue. Following their advice, Andrea got the commitment of the needed interpreters for the meeting. The meeting date and time were set. Real progress had been made!

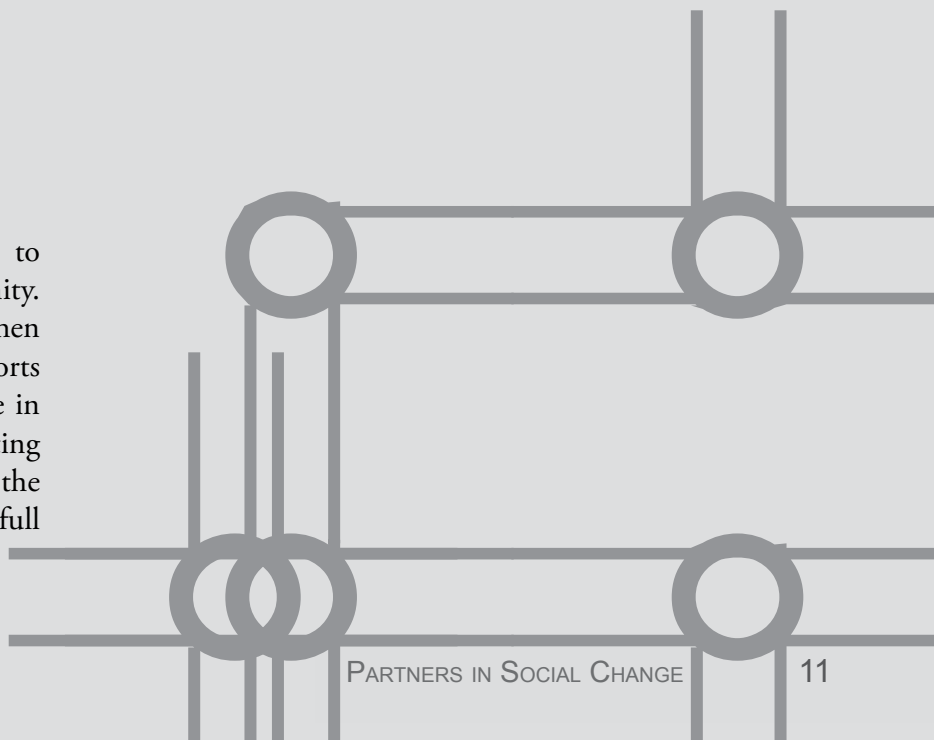
Then, disaster struck.

A health problem arose in the neighborhood and the health department shut down the trailer park. The personal difficulties caused by the health problem were immense and all available energy went toward dealing with the most immediate needs of individuals living in that community. Addressing the issue of sexual violence at that point would have been a luxury. Immediate needs of housing and relocation took all the focus and energy of individuals in the community.



It will take regrouping and starting again to create a prevention initiative in this community. Human Response Network plans to do so when the community is ready once more. Andrea reports that, during the process, her greatest hope came in knowing that residents were excited about preventing sexual violence in their community, in seeing the eagerness of allies to help. This was an initiative full of possibilities.

Of course, most discouraging was having invested so much time only to have the started project come to an abrupt halt. Once the shock and discouragement of having the project come to such an abrupt end passed a bit, Andrea described some of the things her agency gained in having begun: The agency has learned about and become more connected with a community they did not know and thought of only as a “problem area” before. Now, the members of that community are seen as resources. She is aware of many of the challenges that the community faces every day. And she learned that this community wants to create safety for its members, engendering in the service providers a more positive attitude toward the community in general. It was difficult when the project was short circuited by forces beyond anyone’s control, yet it was an invaluable learning experience, with possibilities for the future. The Human Response Network has continued in its community development work and is currently facilitating a different initiative. ♦



# Analyzing Qualitative Data

BY ORGANIZATIONAL RESEARCH SERVICES

In past issues of *Partners in Social Change*, we wrote about how to collect data using online or paper surveys. You might also be collecting data through case records, interviews or focus groups. These are referred to as qualitative data. So, why would you want to collect qualitative data and what do you do with these data once they are collected?

This article provides additional information on what qualitative data are, where they come from, and why they are useful, as well as guidelines and considerations for analyzing qualitative data.

***What are qualitative data, where do they come from and why should they be collected?***

*Qualitative data* result from open-ended questions used to systematically collect narrative responses to particular items: respondents provide their views or opinions, in writing or verbally, and are not required to choose from a predetermined set of answers. This kind of data can be collected through open-ended questions on a survey or through case records, structured interviews or focus groups, or observations. Open-ended questions can provide rich data about individuals' attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or feelings.

(Qualitative data differ from anecdotal information in that they are collected through a systematic process, i.e., the same question is asked of a defined sample in the same time period. Anecdotal information, on the other hand, is collected informally, i.e., one or two participants may call you and share how much they enjoyed your presentation. Anecdotal information can

be helpful in illustrating and personalizing program outcomes, but it can not be analyzed like qualitative data, nor can conclusions be drawn that are attributable to all program participants.)

There are several instances when qualitative data might be useful for evaluation and learning purposes, including:

- **Tool Development.** Qualitative data collection can provide useful information when tools are being developed on the kinds of questions to ask, as well as options for closed-ended lists or other response categories.

- **Greater Understanding of Quantitative Data.** Providing space for people to provide narrative responses can help you better understand numerical, or quantitative, data. Closed-ended questions are the other common type of questions used for data collection. Closed-ended questions have predetermined answers, such as a survey question where respondents rate their level of agreement with a statement on a 1–5 scale. *Quantitative* analyses are used to analyze quantitative data collected

from closed-ended questions. Open-ended questions are often used to follow-up on, or to collect more information on, related closed-ended questions.

- **Guidance for Additional Data Collection.** Qualitative data can also generate findings that you might want test or explore further with closed-ended questions on a survey. Conversely, if results to closed-ended questions are surprising, you might want to learn more about an issue, topic or outcome with additional qualitative data collection, perhaps through a focus group or interviews, which can



provide richer and more detailed information from your population.

- **Respondents Perspective.** Qualitative data also helps better understand the issue at hand from the respondents' point of view, rather than that of the researcher or program.

### *How do I analyze qualitative data?*

Preparing qualitative data for analysis and reporting can involve some effort. Yet, coding open-ended responses can be very valuable. The process of coding open-ended items is as follows:

- **First, read the responses to open-ended questions item by item to identify "naturally" occurring categories.** If there are a large number of surveys, you may want to examine only a subset to identify the range of possible categories. The categories will emerge in the form of commonly mentioned themes. An easy way to do this is to transcribe open-ended results into Excel so that each column represents a question and each row includes an individual answer to each question. In this way, you can easily review all of the responses to a question at once.
- **Second, identify the response categories for analysis.** Once you've identified the commonly occurring themes, consider how many categories you want for your analysis. While there is no rule for choosing the proper number of possible response categories, the goal is to choose a manageable number that enables you to use these data in subsequent quantitative analyses. You also want to make sure that your categories are distinct from each other and do not overlap so that it is easy to code responses consistently.
- **Third, create a codebook, i.e., a set of definitions, rules and procedures that guides the process of coding the open-ended responses into the response categories.** Many

times there are multiple individuals involved in the data coding process. It is important that there are clear definitions of the response categories and a set of clearly specified rules so individuals will make consistent decisions about how to code qualitative information. You can imagine how problematic it would be if different individuals have varying interpretations of how responses should be placed into different categories. A codebook is important even if you are the only person doing the coding as it provides a record of your decisions. This will help if you want to use the data again later or if someone else wants to better understand your analysis and results.

If there is more than one person analyzing the data consider doing a **reliability analysis**. This involves having multiple individuals code the same response and examine whether there is agreement or disagreement over how the responses should be coded. In other words, you are looking for "inter-coder reliability." If there are many discrepancies, program staff should work together in developing a procedure to ensure more consistent coding. Your goal should be agreement in at least 95 percent of the cases.

- **Fourth, go back to the responses and assign each to one or more of the response categories in your codebook.** This process is called coding. Keep in mind that one survey response may actually represent more than one theme. If this is the case, those doing the coding should decide whether it is more insightful to code only the primary theme, or to code multiple themes. This decision should be considered in light of how you will use the results from the data collection.
- **Last, analyze and report the coded data.** After codes have been assigned to the narrative responses, you can report your data by listing the range of response categories and using words to describe the frequency with which they occurred (i.e., the majority of respondents listed X response or only a few respondents listed X response).



In some cases, it might be preferable to quantify your data (e.g., use numbers to describe it). This is especially insightful if there is some level of ranking that can be attributed to the data (e.g., higher to lower intensity).

If this is the case, you can calculate basic descriptive statistics (e.g., averages, frequencies), just as you might with quantitative data. In presenting your data, along with the summary statistics, you also might want to select two or three responses that best reflect each response category as examples. You can use these as quotes in your reports after removing any identifying information.

This approach to qualitative analysis provides a systematic way to treat open-ended information and offers an important distinction between qualitative data and anecdotal information. Using this suggested process will allow your stakeholders to have confidence that your findings and conclusions are believable and that multiple reviewers of the information would reach the same conclusions. ♦



*If you have questions about this or other evaluation topics, please contact Hallie Goertz at [hgoertz@organizationalresearch.com](mailto:hgoertz@organizationalresearch.com), or call (206) 728-0474.*

## EXAMPLE OF QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

A local CSAP asked the following open-ended question of community stakeholders attending a sexual assault/violence prevention project meeting: *What have you noticed that has changed in the community, if anything, since the initiative began one year ago?*

### The stakeholders provided the following responses:

1. Preventing sexual violence is talked about more at school board meetings;
2. A local youth agency organized a support group for victims of sexual violence that meets once a month;
3. The local grocery store is posting resource information on its bulletin board;
4. I heard a group of guys talking at the coffee shop about the editorial that ran in the local paper.

### Create Response Categories and a Codebook:

- **Response Category A: Increased awareness of sexual violence** is defined as talking about sexual violence and prevention.
- **Response Category B: Increased participation among community groups and organizations in activities oriented toward sexual violence prevention** is defined as changes in policies, procedures, behaviors, offered programs by local organizations to support prevention efforts.

### Coding:

RESPONSE CATEGORY	RESPONSE NUMBER
A	1, 4
B	2, 3

### Analysis and Reporting:

Stakeholders noted that the following changes have occurred in the community since the prevention initiative began one year ago:

- **50% cited examples of increased awareness of sexual violence**  
*“Preventing sexual violence is talked about more at school board meetings.”*
- **50% cited example of increased participation among community groups and organizations in activities oriented toward sexual violence prevention.**  
*“A local youth agency organized a support group for victims of sexual violence that meets once a month.”*



## SKAGIT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICES

Mount Vernon, Washington

By **Anne Pliska**, Volunteer Coordinator

Skagit DVSAS is part of a Domestic Violence Task Force in Skagit County and we have **distributed Sexual Assault Awareness Month posters**, bookmarks and informational materials to various police and probation departments, hospitals, our local DSHS office and tribal social services programs. Also, our agency has distributed these materials to other local agencies and Latino organizations in our community.

## PROGRAMS FOR PEACEFUL LIVING Washington Gorge Action Programs

Goldendale & White Salmon, Washington

By **Gretchen Olsen**, Program Director

*Programs For Peaceful Living* sponsored a dance for 7th–12th grade students at the Goldendale Grange on April 21, with the Sexual Assault Awareness Month theme “**Don’t Get it Twisted.**” DJ Sneakers from Portland, Oregon provided the entertainment. We engaged a group of teen girls who made posters and flyers for the event. We utilized an evening of fun and dance as the venue for continuing to get our message out there.

[more »](#)

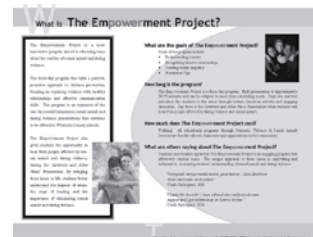


# WHATCOM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE and SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICES

## Bellingham, Washington

By **Jenn Mason**, Education Coordinator, Sexual Assault Program

1. **The Empowerment Project** began in Spring 2007. The Empowerment Project is a three-day program to address issues of sexual assault and dating violence in a positive, interactive setting. The first day of the program introduces the topic of sexual assault and students learn about consent. They also learn about the role of alcohol and other drugs in rape, and the effects of sexual assault, through a mix of exercises and discussion. The second day of the workshop addresses dating violence, including the “**power and control wheel**,” the violence continuum and tips for determining if you or someone you know may be an abuser. The third day of the workshop ends with the powerful **Survivors and Allies Panel Presentation**, when several survivors, secondary survivors and allies come into the classroom to tell their personal stories related to sexual violence. The speakers talk frankly about their experiences, how it has affected their relationships, why they did or did not report their experiences to authorities, and the ongoing effects the experiences have on their lives. Students have the opportunity to ask questions during the presentation. To close out the workshop, students are asked to **spend 5–10 minutes in writing about their feelings** after seeing the panel, their own personal experiences and any other thoughts they may be having. They are asked to turn in these writings if they are comfortable doing so, and nearly all students anonymously turn in something.



From these writings, we have been able to see the outstanding effects of this program. Many students noted that they didn't expect to be so interested in the topic area, but found they really enjoyed the workshop and would apply this information to their own lives. Some students wrote that they realized that some things they had been doing were harmful and realized how much they could impact others. The panel presentation has by far been the highlight of the workshop and most students said they would absolutely recommend this program to others. **The use of hands-on activities and discussion sessions, as well as bringing the issues into reality during the panel presentation, have made this program a success in the schools.**

2. In celebration of Sexual Assault Awareness Month, Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Services of Whatcom County hosted **Whatcom County's 2nd Annual Denim Day**. Denim Day originated as a global response to an extremely controversial Italian court ruling in 1999, when the Justices ruled a man “not guilty” of rape because the victim was wearing jeans. The Justices stated that because jeans are difficult to remove, the victim must not have been fighting with all her might, therefore “reasoning” that a rape did not occur. **To this day, thousands of people around the world honor sexual assault survivors and bring awareness to sexual violence by participating in Denim Day.**

This year, Denim Day was celebrated in Whatcom County on Wednesday, April 25. We asked businesses and organizations to encourage their staff to wear denim (jeans, shirts,

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hats, etc.) to work, regardless of what they usually wear to work. In addition, **“Why Denim?” buttons, Denim Day posters and other materials were delivered to offices. Nearly a thousand people signed up to take part in this campaign**, including the employees of the Whatcom Educational Credit Union, Food Pavilion, Cost Cutter’s, Village Books, Whatcom Community College, Everson City Hall, Ferndale Police Department and many more.

3. In addition to Denim Day, we also expanded the rest of our Sexual Assault Awareness Month agenda and **maximized our collaborations with other agencies**. We **created community calendars with all SAAM events listed (including Lummi Victims of Crime and Western Washington University) that we mailed to businesses, organizations and schools in the county**. We are also hosting several events of our own, including a **Women’s Assertiveness Training** and a **Sex Offender Treatment Panel Discussion**.



On Wednesday, April 25, Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services of Whatcom County hosted a community-wide event at Whatcom Community College to bring Sexual Assault Awareness Month to a close. **Faces of Change: A Portrait of Sexual Violence at Home and Abroad** was free and open to the community. It focused on educating the public about the sexual violence that occurs around the world as well as in our community and sometimes even in our own homes. Linnea Broker of the **American Red Cross** spoke about her experiences working with survivors abroad, and high school students read original poetry pieces. **Local artist** Amber Darland provided entertainment during the opening celebration, where attendees were also able to view displays of personal survivor stories submitted by local men and women, and gather information from agencies around the community. **Legislator Kelli Linville** was present to honor those people making strides in the anti-sexual violence arena both personally and professionally.

## YAKIMA SEXUAL ASSAULT UNIT

Yakima, Washington

By **Kim Foley**, Program Manager

On what could not have been a more perfect day, Yakima held our first annual **“Walk a Mile in Her Shoes”** event Friday, April 27. It was a sunny and warm afternoon and everything went as smooth as could be. But the perfection was about more than weather and logistics. It was really something to see all these men “owning this event.”

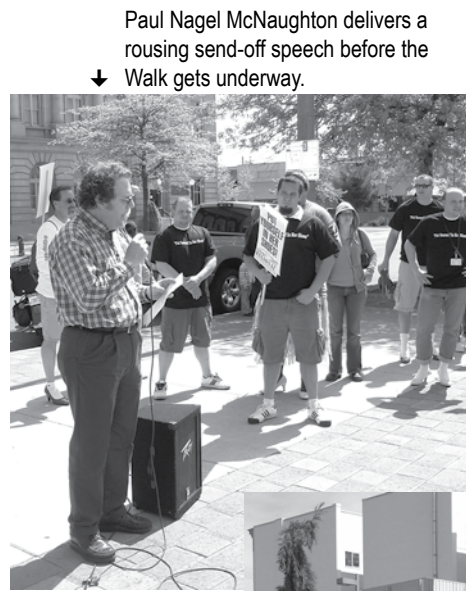
At noon, **approximately 150 walkers** appeared on the Plaza, including representatives from the **Yakima Police and Sheriff’s Departments, the Prosecutor’s Office, the Yakima Bears, as well as firefighters, male nursing students, mental health workers, councilmembers, Lions Club members and men pushing strollers**. To kick us off, Paul Nagel McNaughton delivered a speech citing statistics and cultural norms that allow sexual violence to occur, but his focus was on what men can do to end it. It was an inspiring send off!

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With band-aids and bottled water, our **high-heeled heroes** left the Millennium Plaza and headed to the courthouse. Passing the bullhorn as we walked, participants chanted the entire mile: “Stop the Abuse,” “No Means No,” “Men Can Stop Sexual Violence, Do What You Can,” “Report Rape,” and “We Support Victims.” **As an advocate, it felt fantastic** to have men there, lunch crowd horns honking, people waving, cheering us on, and survivors walking too, all proud to be there! What a perfect day! Resting aching feet at the courthouse gave us an opportunity to take more pictures and soon everyone made it back to the Plaza, blisters and all. As we parted ways, **many of the guys promised to return next year with buddies in tow.** We can't wait! And we hope the sun returns too, but even if it rains it will be another glorious day for this program because the men of Yakima will be there Walking a Mile in Her/His Shoes in an effort to stop sexual assault.



Members of Yakima's finest, including the writer's brother, Lt. Tom Foley (third from right), participating in Yakima's "Walk a Mile in Her Shoes" event on April 27.



Paul Nagel McNaughton delivers a rousing send-off speech before the Walk gets underway.



← Kenny, at far right, encouraged other Mental Health staff to sign up by proclaiming himself “the 300-pound Samoan — and if I can walk in heels, so can you!”



Sexual assault advocate Gretchen with her daughter — their first rally for the cause!

→ From left: Yakima County Prosecutor Ron Zirkle, Deputy Prosecutor Sam Chen and Victim Witness support Aaron Buchanan, all “Walk a Mile in Her Shoes.”



## CHILDREN'S RESPONSE CENTER Harborview Medical Center Seattle, Washington

By **Caroline Shelton**, Prevention & Education Coordinator

Children's Response Center has been working with the **Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE) Club** at Inglemoor High School in Kenmore on a sexual harassment awareness project. Students set the goal of putting on a concert at their school during Sexual Assault Awareness Month, deciding on **the socially conscious "Blue Scholars"** as the headlining performers. Staff worked with students to create interactive educational opportunities at the concert. Students created an information booth, the **"Wheel of Misfortune" game**, an art project for expression on the role of bystanders, and also invited the ACRS Eastside teen peer advocacy program to attend and participate with an informational booth. Other ongoing projects of the SAVE club sexual harassment project include a school-wide survey and peer education program for middle-school students. ♦



← The Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE) Club at Inglemoor High School in Kenmore, Washington. To help promote Sexual Assault Awareness Month, members staged an interactive educational and arts project to coincide with a concert they held in April.

Four young women sporting the popular "Can I Kiss You?" temporary tattoos that were featured at the SAVE Club's event. The tattoos were part of a campaign that emphasized consent.



← The information booth featured "Hip Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes," a documentary that explores gender roles in hip-hop and rap music, and SAVE club members provided education on sexual harassment.



**WASHINGTON COALITION OF  
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2415 Pacific Avenue SE  
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