

# State Assessment and Comprehensive Plan for Sexual Violence Prevention in Oklahoma

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the Oklahoma Rape Prevention and Education program funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Oklahoma State Department of Health Injury Prevention Service worked with the Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault and the Oklahoma Sexual Violence Prevention Planning Committee to produce this report. The report is divided into two sections: the State Assessment and the Comprehensive State Plan for Sexual Violence Prevention. The State Assessment includes information gathered to examine the state's environment, capacity, and need for sexual violence prevention; it also describes the strategic planning process. The work was culminated with the Comprehensive State Plan for Sexual Violence Prevention. A state profile including population data, economic factors, and other influences are included in the State Assessment.

While the annual rate of rape reported by Oklahoma law enforcement officers to the Uniform Crime Reporting system has declined since 2002, the rate in Oklahoma has been consistently 35-45% higher than the U.S. rate for the past ten years. Because sexual assault is underreported to law enforcement, survey data provide a more accurate picture of the problem. In 2008, 7% of non-institutionalized Oklahomans 18 years of age and older surveyed in the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System had been sexually assaulted in their lifetime, including 12% of women and 1% of men. In 2007, 8% of high school students, including 12% of girls and 4% of boys surveyed in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey reported they had been forced to have sexual intercourse. In a 2006 survey conducted by the Oklahoma University Public Opinion Learning Laboratory, 31% of

women 18-34 years of age reported they had been raped or sexually assaulted, including 1% in the past year. Similar prevalence rates were found in surveys conducted in Ottawa County and Cherokee County.

There are 30 certified domestic violence and sexual assault (DVSA) programs in the state that provide services to victims. According to a survey of DVSA program directors, the majority (79%) conduct educational programs to address prevention in their communities. Nearly all of the directors surveyed believed that their current prevention activities were not adequate for the need in their communities. The Rape Prevention and Education program, administered through the Oklahoma State Department of Health Injury Prevention Service, provides funding to support four community-based primary rape prevention programs with a fulltime prevention educator in each program. Other prevention programs in the state were identified that address common risk and protective factors and provide positive youth development programs that could be useful in sexual violence prevention.

The comprehensive plan in this report utilizes a framework set forth in a summary of a 2006 *Strategic Planning Convening*. The comprehensive plan proposes to target the population of the state of Oklahoma (universal) as well as youth 10-24 years of age (selected population). The goals of the plan are to: 1) reduce first-time perpetration of sexual violence, 2) increase the number of non-violent interactions and healthy relationships, and 3) reduce cultural influences supporting sexual violence. The plan calls for working with existing resources, including local prevention specialists,

to determine what works in Oklahoma. Planned activities include:

- Fund local programs to conduct community-based sexual violence prevention programs that:
  - target youth;
  - reduce risk and increase protective factors for sexual violence;
  - incorporate evidence-based practices for addressing sexual violence in K-12 schools, colleges and universities, and faith communities; and
  - impact multiple levels of the *Spectrum of Prevention*.
- Collect quality data to monitor the prevalence of sexual violence and evaluate the effectiveness of programs.
- Support a statewide prevention coordinator to provide training, technical assistance and coordination of sexual violence prevention programs and activities to a wide range of stakeholders.
- Fund local prevention educators to provide comprehensive sexual violence prevention and healthy relationship education in K-12 schools using evidence-based curricula and evaluation.
- Provide training to professionals working in DVSA agencies, K-12 schools, colleges and universities, faith communities, and other professions to increase knowledge of primary prevention practice, the *Spectrum of Prevention*, the ecological model, and support for healthy relationship norms.
- Collaborate with colleges and universities in developing and implementing primary prevention programs through training and technical assistance.
  - Develop appropriate policies that support non-violence on campus.
  - Determine appropriate curricula for freshman orientation.
  - Disseminate information on evidence-based and promising models.
- Pilot test healthy relationship curricula in K-12 schools.
- Increase the capacity of DVSA programs to work with the media to encourage accurate representation of sexual violence, and promote positive social norms by providing training and technical assistance.
- Identify and support strategies to increase involvement of faith communities in sexual violence prevention and primary prevention programs.
- Sponsor education and training on best practices at faith community conferences.
- Fund informational brochures and other media aimed at reducing cultural norms supportive of sexual violence.
- Include agencies and organizations engaged in other types of prevention activities for youth (e.g., underage drinking, bullying, at risk youth) in professional trainings.
- Participate in annual Sexual Assault Awareness Month activities.
- Produce sample media materials regarding sexual assault prevention.
- Support use of healthy relationship media from state and national resources.