Why Language Matters

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Why language matters
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Brainstorm/pop corn

• What do we think about when we say “Violence Against Women”
  – Domestic violence
  – Intimate partner violence
  – Sexual violence / rape
  – Battered women
What do we think about…. (con’t)

– Misogyny

– Sexism

– A patriarchal system that empowers men / male identified people to oppress or control women / female identified people
Question

- What do we mean when we say “Violence Against Women”
  - The ways in which violence specifically impacts people because of their gender
  - The ways in which sexism and misogyny make violence against women, who are often oppressed by men, distinct and dangerous
  - The ways in which individual men and systems that are often male dominated are non-responsive to women’s needs
What would it mean if…

• We said violence against women when we meant violence against women?
  – (Identity based language)

• We said intimate partner and sexual violence when we meant intimate partner and sexual violence?
  – (Behavior based language)
Cost / benefit

• Behavior-based language is more inclusive than identity-based language
• Behavior-based language is more accurate than identity-based language for some people
• Specific language can provide shared assumptions that are more clear
• Behavior-based language can dilute the impact of violence against specific populations, including women
• Behavior-based language can obscure the work that the “battered women’s movement” has accomplished
• Over the years the phrase “violence against women” has become synonymous with “domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking,” the crimes that VAWA was created to address.

• In 1994, this language was critical to raising the awareness of how violence specifically impacts women and how sexism and misogyny acted to protect abusive partners from reprisal.
Limitations of VAW

• Ultimately, though, the real problem is many of the interventions we use as our national response to violence are predicated on the idea that (heterosexual, non-transgender) men abuse (heterosexual, non-transgender) women, which makes the models difficult, if not impossible, to use when working with LGBT survivors.

• We can change that by explicitly including LGBT survivors (and, really, all survivors) in VAWA—and by shifting the conversation from ending “violence against women” to ending “domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking” against all survivors.
Reasons we still need VAW

• It isn’t that we shouldn’t continue to talk about how domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking disproportionately impact women—they do, and we need to keep talking about this. But it's not the only conversation we need to be having about this violence.
Expanding language

- To meet the needs of LGBT survivors of violence – or any other identity-based survivors that are not exclusively women (or, sometimes, specifically white women) - we need to explicitly include each community in the national discussion about ending domestic and sexual violence.
Expanding Strategy

• I believe we are smart enough to include all survivors of violence—and that there is, in fact, enough safety to go around.

• We need to expand our strategies
Expanding strategy
Strategies

• **Human rights framework**
  – Which includes and highlights the ways in which misogyny has impacted women (and, frankly, non-gender conforming gay men, lesbians and transgender people)

• How should anti-violence **work change** as a result?
  – Assessment
  – Reporting/data

• How will we get more ‘data’ to take our **understanding further**?
Expand language

Promote opportunities for community-led discussion & learning from the grassroots up

• Field informed discussions and reflection.
• Community based organizations brought to the table.
How would our work change?

See the work as legitimate and integral to our national anti-violence work and give the LGBT-specific work the time, attention and money it deserves.

- Community based engagement & prevention efforts
- AND effective service system responses.
- Share a positive vision for LGBT communities by shifting culture to be inclusive.

Provide TTA to eliminate discrimination and barriers:

- Adopt Anti-discrimination policies PLUS training and mentoring commitments to develop staff capacities to serve LGBT people
- Remove barriers (legal and social) for LGBT people to access services & tools. (protection orders, support groups, built environments etc)
- Inclusion, not isolation
Getting more data

• How do we address the problem if we can’t name/identify the problem?
  – CDC’s NISVS (SO, not GI)
  – BJS’s NCVS (no SO or GI)
Getting more data

• Promote inter-disciplinary, field-informed, research that “matters,” especially regarding bisexual, transgender and gender non conforming people.

• Gather gender identity & sexual orientation data across city, state and federal agencies.

• CBO’s should ask about gender identity & sexual orientation. (& get TA to do it well)

• Fund LGBT-specific programs and orgs to do the work to reach the clients to get the data
What kind of data do we need?

- Data on gender identity
- Consistent data on sexual orientation
- Data that distinguishes SO at the time of the survey and SO at the time of the violence
- More data on bisexual people
- Data that shows differences in IPV (where most perpetrators were same gender in same sex relationships and opposite gender in opposite sex relationships) and SV (where most perpetrators across all identifies of “woman” were male)
- What does prevention look like for LGBT communities?
NCAVP’s demonstration initiative
• The goal is to make all services available to LGBTQ survivors and to provide support for all service providers and community-based organizations to do this work

• Evaluative component will help us understand if our training and technical assistance have resulted in changes within organizations

• Make this information available to the field
What we are doing

• Our National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) is working with the Vera Institute (Vera) and the National Center for Victims of Crime (NCVC). NCAVP’s local organizations, mainstream partners, and a national advisory committee, to create, test and evaluate models of TTA to create equal access to mainstream service providers for LGBTQ survivors that can be easily adapted across the country.
What the demonstration initiative is

• The project:
  – determines primary indicators for success;
  – involves a national advisory committee in review and feedback at all project stages,
  – implements baseline and annual evaluations;
  – develops and implements strategies for addressing gaps in services and barriers to accessing these services in mainstream organizations;
  – creates a compendium of strategies and materials for national TTA; and
  – develops protocols for outreach, advocacy, and services that will increase LGBTQ competency.
Where we are--Process

Year 1
• Develop performance indicators
• Collect baseline evaluation data
• Conduct needs assessment within each mainstream organization
• Develop training and technical assistance plan
• Work with NAC
• Begin providing training and technical assistance

Year 2
• Continue training and technical assistance
• Continue work with NAC
• Collect annual evaluation data

Year 3
• Continue training and technical assistance
• Continue work with NAC
• Collect annual evaluation data
Examine each of the demonstration sites by looking at 5 assessment categories and **25 performance indicators** regarding their capacity to serve LGBTQ survivors.

Data collected summer of 2012 set the baseline for each organization. Will be used to measure progress, *if any*, over the next two years, associated with TTA.

We will review **one indicator per category** for this webinar using data from each of the demonstration sites.
Examples of indicators

- What follows are five of the 25 indicators (one from each of the five assessment categories) that we are measuring through this project.
Category 1: Organizational capacity

• **Indicator 5: Strength of relationship**
  Agency $\leftrightarrow$ LGBTQ org/group as reported by most Agency staff (i.e., $>50\%$).

• **Finding:** 4 of 12 staff (33.3\%) reported either that they know who the contact people are at an LGBTQ organization and have some interaction.
Category 2: Organizational Culture

• **Indicator 6:** Agency has written non-discrimination and anti-harassment policy that includes:
  – 1) sexual orientation,
  – 2) gender identity, and
  – 3) gender expression.

• **Finding:** Agency has written non-discrimination and anti-harassment policy that includes 1) sexual orientation and 2) gender identity. It does not include 3) gender expression.
Category 3: Outreach

• **Indicator 11:** Agency has annual LGBTQ-specific outreach plan.

• **Finding:** Agency *did not have a written outreach plan* with details on outreach to LGBTQ communities on domestic violence and/or sexual violence, including:
  – (1) outreach activities to be done,
  – (2) where activities will be conducted,
  – (3) when they will be conducted, and
  – (4) with whom.
Category 4: Service delivery

- Indicator 17: LGBTQ survivors reporting that they are 'somewhat' or 'very satisfied' with how the Agency addressed their needs in counseling. Current agency staff reporting that they address LGBTQ specific needs in counseling.

- Finding: 3 of 5 staff said Agency did work with LGBTQ survivors and address specific needs in counseling.
  1 of 5 staff said this work was not done.
  1 of 5 staff did not know.
Category 5: Advocacy

- **Indicator 24:** Current Agency staff reporting that Agency has worked with a) police, b) courts, c) prosecutors and d) victims’ advocates in criminal justice system to address barriers for LGBTQ survivors in the last 12 months.

- **Finding:**
  - 11 of 16 staff (68.8%) reported that Agency has worked with all of the above.
  - 3 of 16 staff (18.8%) reported that the Agency has worked with two of the above.
  - Remaining 2 staff did not know.
Where we are going

• **TTA ongoing** – a needs assessment has been done and TTA is being provided

• **Annual evaluation** May 2013 – August 2013 to determine if TTA results in any changes to baseline. We’ll present information on results in the Fall of 2013
How you can get involved

Use this project to think about creating an LGBTQ inclusive environment in each organization you work with.

Contact our OVW-funded LGBTQ TTA Center for training or technical assistance.

1.855.AVP.LGBT (1-855-287-5428) or info@ncavp.org

Look for future webinars or conference workshops about this project.

Connect to LGBTQ organizations in your area (TTA Center can point you in the right direction).
Q & A / Feedback

• Questions?
• Feedback?
Join our list serve!

Get tips, information and resources on LGBTQ anti-violence work!

Join NCAVP’s national technical assistance list serve for current and potential OVW grantees.

For more information contact: info@ncavp.org
Want more information on this topic?

- NCAVP’s annual reports on intimate partner violence and hate violence in LGBTQ and HIV-affected communities (15 years of reports available) [http://avp.org/resources/reports/term/summary](http://avp.org/resources/reports/term/summary)
- NCAVP and NCVC’s *Why It Matters: Rethinking Victim Assistance for LGBTQ Victims of Hate Violence and Intimate Partner Violence* [http://avp.org/resources/avp-resources/136](http://avp.org/resources/avp-resources/136)

THANK YOU!
NCAVP is a collaboration of 40+ member organizations in twenty-four states working to end anti-LGBTQ violence through peer support, technical assistance, public responses, advocacy, training and education, and documentation.

Warm line for the National LGBTQ Training and Technical Assistance Center: 1.855.AVP.LGBT (1-855-287-5428)

Deaf/Hard of hearing accessible AIM: AVPIgbt
Prefer e-mail? Join NCAVP’s national technical assistance list serve for current and potential OVW grantees. For more information contact: info@ncavp.org.