



Who Are Your Community Partners?

Questions to Ask: Think Outside the Box

- Has your organization collaborated with other sexual assault service providers?
- Has your organization collaborated with domestic violence service providers?
- Has your organization collaborated with service providers already engaging your target audience?
 - E.g., Youth organizations, immigrant organizations, LGBTQ organizations.
- How might for-profit businesses help?
 - Provide a forum in a place where survivors are already shopping or accessing commercial services (e.g., permission to post materials in a grocery store, nail salon, etc.).
 - Provide in-kind services (e.g., print copies of outreach materials).
- How might NGOs help?
 - Distribute your outreach materials to their clients.
 - Allow you to post your outreach materials at their offices.
 - Collaborate with your organization to conduct outreach or outreach events.
 - Tell you the most effective ways they have found to conduct outreach to your target audience.
- Can other agencies/organizations help you connect with survivors?
 - E.g., hang flyers, screen for sexual assault and make referrals, include your materials in information they provided to survivors, etc.

Why Collaborate with Community Partners to Connect with Survivors?

Questions to Ask: Benefits of Collaborating

- Have you considered how collaborating with community partners or other organizations in your community may help you gain access to survivors?



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Questions to Ask: We Can Help!


- Who in your community already has expertise in working with your target audience?
 - Who has already gained the trust of your target audience?
 - Who knows how to find your target audience?
 - Who speaks their language?
- Who in your community is most likely to be a first responder to your target audience (e.g. rape crisis center)?

Questions to Ask: Community Partners are Resources

- Who in your community can augment your services?
 - Who can provide support services that your organization does not offer?
 - Who can provide interpretation and translation services?
- Who in your community already has connections with your target audience?
 - With which organizations does your target audience already have a positive rapport?
- Who in your community can help distribute your outreach materials and refer survivors to you for services?

Educating and Reaching Out to Community Partners

Questions to Ask: Do your Community Partners Understand:


- Have you explored opportunities for cross-training:
 - To teach community partners about sexual violence and your services?
 - To learn about the services of community partners?
- Have you provided resources to community partners to facilitate referrals?
 - Do they understand the populations you serve (e.g. sexual assault survivors rather than domestic violence survivors; survivors on non-intimate partner sexual assault rather than survivors of intimate partner sexual assault)?
 - Do they understand which civil legal remedies your organization provides?
 - Do they understand in which legal areas your organization does not practice (e.g., criminal defense, torts, etc.)?
 - See **Sample Brochure** and **Sample Summary of Legal Services for Community Partners**. 




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Questions to Ask: Educate Community Partners

- Has your organization explained to community partners which cases you do and do not accept?
 - Can you provide them with a written summary or examples to help facilitate appropriate referrals?
- Have you established a referral process for community partners?
- See **Community Partner Referral Form**. 

Questions to Ask: Organize Your Outreach to Community Partners

- Has your organization designated a specific point of contact for each community partner within your organization?
 - Having a specific point of contact will help community partners feel comfortable reaching out with questions and cases.
 - Having a personal connection will foster a more meaningful and longer-lasting relationship.
- See **VRLC Outreach Planning Tools**. 

Questions to Ask: Make Effective Contacts

- Has your organization designated a specific individual or team to act as a point of contact to:
 - Attend partner meetings?
 - Maintain contact with key individuals at the community partner organization?
 - Follow up on outreach, meetings, etc.?
- Does your organization regularly take opportunities to share information with community partners about your services and theirs?
 - Community partners may experience a lot of turnover, so outreach and relationship-building should be an ongoing effort.



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Getting a Seat at the Table

Questions to Ask: Earn Your Seat at the Table

- When introducing new services or a new program, it can take time to gain community trust and acknowledgment. Has your organization identified relevant community meetings and requested an invitation? Or simply shown up?
- Has your organization provided examples of how your services can or already have benefited survivors in the community?
 - E.g., summary of the services your organization provides or sample case studies (being careful not to include any identifying information).
- If you are expanding your services, has your organization updated community partners about new programs/services?
- Does your organization have any contacts with another person or organization that is already trusted by the community? Can you collaborate with that trusted resource in some capacity?