

STAAR

STOP Technical Assistance to Administrators Resource Project

Hello!

We hope you and your families are taking care and staying safe during these difficult times. We, the STAAR Project, are still here for you to provide support, guidance, resources, and technical assistance. Please don't hesitate to reach out.

This newsletter includes a variety of resources that address the victimization of people with developmental disabilities in honor of **Developmental Disability Awareness Month**.

If you have any questions about how to address this in your STOP planning and implementation, please contact us at ALSOSTAARProjectTA@also-chicago.org.

-The STAAR Project Team

In this newsletter:

Resources for Developmental Disability Awareness Month including:

- Prosecution of sexual assault
- Promising practices in the field
- Data and service gaps
- Resources for law enforcement to effectively serve survivors with disabilities

STAAR Project Announcements



[Support and Guidance from the STAAR Project regarding COVID-19](#)

[Prosecution of Sexual Assault](#)

Prosecutors working on sexual violence cases are no strangers to the unique challenges such cases present. Most prosecutors specializing in cases of sexual violence have developed not only the skills to meet the many evidentiary challenges, but also the necessary empathy to work with vulnerable victims. One category of sexual violence crime requires additional skill beyond the usual high level of

[Promising Practices in the Field](#)

Interested in best practices for local implementation? The [National Center for Victims of Crime](#) provides a [Directory of Resources for Developmental Disabilities Service Providers](#) for a variety of articles, tools, and research from around the nation.

In rural communities, many barriers exist

expertise: those in which the victim has an intellectual disability. While any type of disability can increase a person's vulnerability to sexual violence and impact their interactions with the criminal justice process, [The Prosecutors' Resource on Sexual Violence Cases Involving Victims With Intellectual Disabilities](#) provided by [AEquitas](#) explores some of the challenges that commonly arise in cases involving victims with an intellectual disability and suggests practices to effectively address those challenges during the investigative, pre-trial, and trial stages of a case.

for sexual violence survivors who have physical or cognitive disabilities. A lack of nearby services and resources, confidentiality and privacy challenges, and inadequate transportation systems all contribute to the obstacles these survivors may face in seeking supportive and healing services. The [Serving Sexual Violence Survivors with Disabilities](#) webinar discusses how rural advocacy programs can best support sexual violence survivors with disabilities.

Data and Service Gaps

How does your state's data on crimes against individuals with disabilities compare to national rates? A yearlong investigation from National Public Radio (NPR) found that there is little recognition of a group that is one of the most targeted: people with intellectual disabilities. [The Sexual Assault Epidemic No One Talks About](#) includes the following Key Findings:

- People with intellectual disabilities are sexually assaulted at a rate seven times higher than those without disabilities.
- People with intellectual disabilities are at heightened risk at all moments of their daily lives. The NPR data show they are more likely to be assaulted by someone they know and during daytime hours.
- Predators target people with intellectual disabilities because they know they are susceptible to manipulation and will have difficulty testifying later. These crimes go mostly unrecognized, unprosecuted, and unpunished.
- Police and prosecutors are often reluctant to take these cases because they are difficult to win in court.

When it comes to the health of people with disabilities, it's important to know statistics among racial and ethnic groups when looking for intersections of vulnerabilities.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)) released an infographic, [Adults with Disabilities: Ethnicity and Race](#), which is an example of ways that you can visually represent your own local data when creating goals, objectives, and priorities. For example, the CDC infographic shows that American Indian and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) have the highest rates of disabilities, indicating a need for additional services and supports for this population.

The [National Indian Country Clearinghouse on Sexual Assault](#) (NICCSA) is one resource for information on [Victims with Disabilities](#). As STOP Administrators continuously collect data, it's essential to examine local gaps in order to create action plans for meeting the needs of our most targeted and underserved populations. The STAAR team can provide assistance with data collection strategies, finding quantitative and qualitative data gaps, and engaging partners in data collection.

Law Enforcement

Newly released: *Serving Safely Webinars on Enhancing Policing for Persons with Mental Illnesses and Developmental Disabilities* from the [Bureau of Justice Assistance National Training and Technical Assistance Center](#) (BJANTTAC).

The Serving Safely webinar series is now available on the [Bureau of Justice Assistance's \(BJA\) YouTube page](#). Each webinar features speakers from the [Serving Safely: The National Initiative to Enhance Policing for Persons with Mental Illnesses and Developmental Disabilities](#) team, which is a collaborative effort between BJA, the Vera Institute of Justice, and partners in the fields of policing, mental illness, intellectual and developmental disabilities, crisis intervention, peer advocacy, emergency medicine, technology development, and prosecution.

The series includes the following webinars:

1. [“Serving Safely: Enhancing Policing for Persons with Mental Illnesses and Developmental Disabilities”](#) provides participants with a synopsis of the Serving Safely initiative.
 2. [“Victims, Witnesses, and Defendants with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: Key Information for Prosecutors”](#) provides an overview of intellectual and developmental disabilities, prosecutors’ legal obligations when interacting with the disability community, and concrete strategies to effectively serve this population using real-life case scenarios.
 3. [“Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: 10 Facts Law Enforcement Officers Need to Know”](#) provides 10 practical tips law enforcement officers can use to effectively serve people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Additionally, the webinar presenters share information on how officers can seek further training through the "Pathways to Justice" law enforcement module.
 4. [“Research to Improve Law Enforcement Response to Persons with Mental Illnesses and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities”](#) presents models of mental health crisis response, including crisis intervention teams, mobile crisis, co-responder, and stand-alone mental health response training. It also discusses how research addresses the effectiveness of models for responding to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and directions for future research.
 5. [“The Case for Police-Mental Health Collaboration: What Every Law Enforcement Executive Should Know”](#) discusses the interactions between people living with mental illnesses and intellectual and developmental disabilities and police. Speakers share real-world experiences in developing Police-Mental Health Collaboration programs, which are comprehensive approaches to these situations and consist of partnerships, policy and practice redesign, training, data collection, and program maintenance.
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