

Envision Illinois:

Uniting Disability and Domestic Violence Services to Achieve Safety, Justice, and Healing



Envision Illinois

Uniting disability and domestic violence services for
people to achieve Safety, Justice, and Healing



July 9, 2024

Acknowledgements

This work is supported by Grant No. 2017-FW-AX-K003 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice



Envision Illinois

Uniting disability and domestic violence services for
people to achieve Safety, Justice, and Healing

Do you think domestic violence against people with disabilities and Deaf people is a problem?

Write your answer in the chat box:

- ☐ **Yes,** a BIG problem
- ☐ **Not Really,** RARELY occurs
- ☐ **No,** NOT a problem
- ☐ **Not sure**



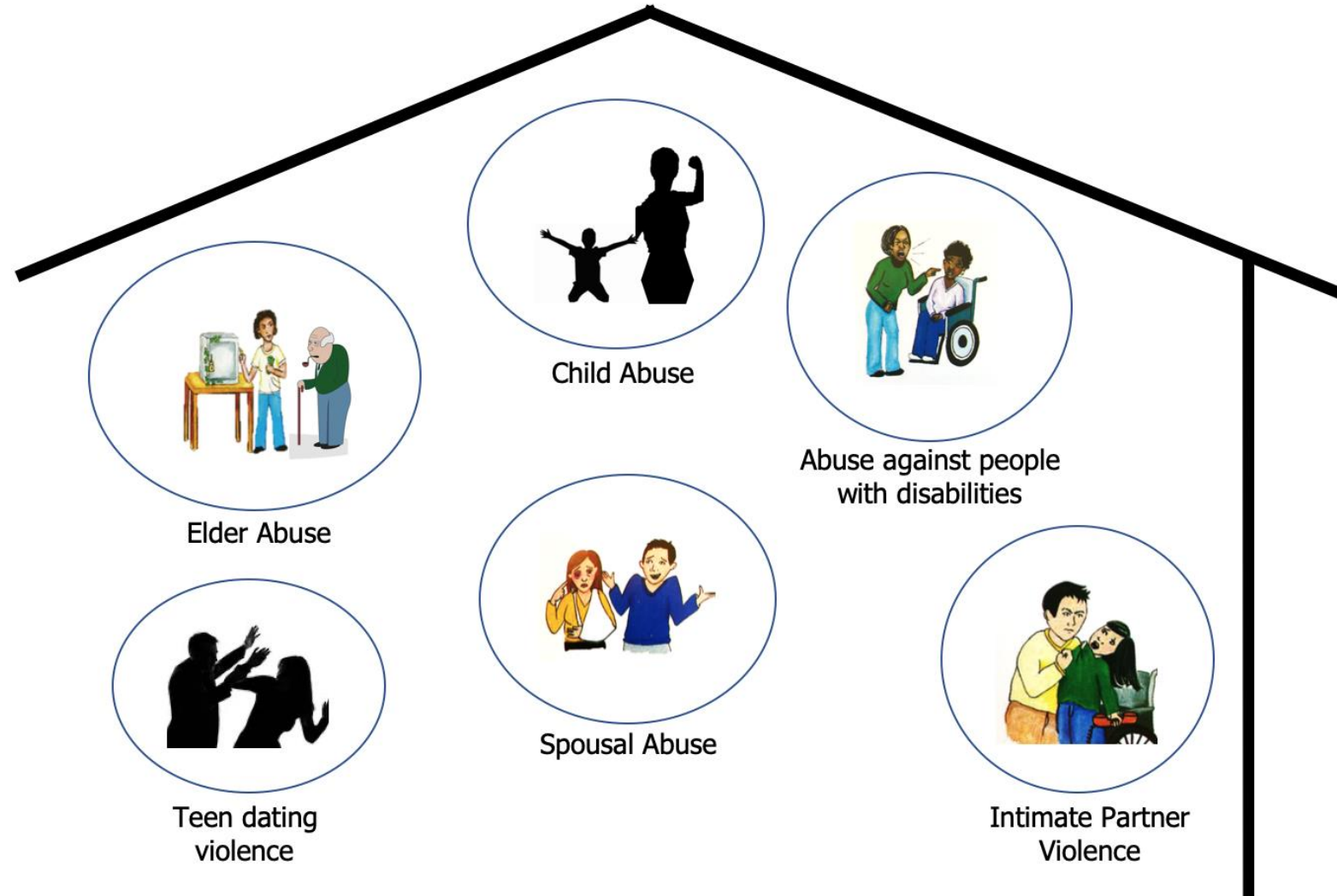
Domestic Violence and People with Disabilities

The Power of a Survivor's Words



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mKSS20IwQ_4

What is Domestic Violence?



Prevalence - 1

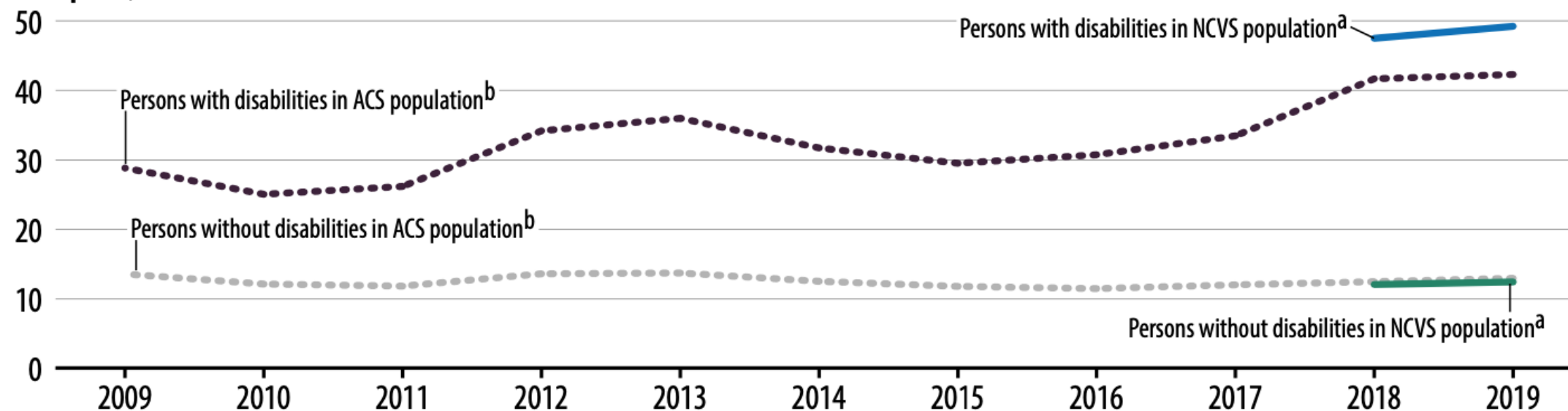
- 92% of women with disabilities ranked violence and abuse as the top priority of topics that affected their lives.
- The risk of being physically or sexually assaulted for adults with developmental disabilities is 4 to 10 times as high as it is for other adults.
- Some studies indicate the level of sexual victimization to be 50% of all Deaf individuals as compared to 25% of hearing females and 10% of hearing males prior to adulthood.

Prevalence - 2

FIGURE 1

Rate of violent victimization, by disability status, 2009–2019 (2-year rolling averages)

Rate per 1,000



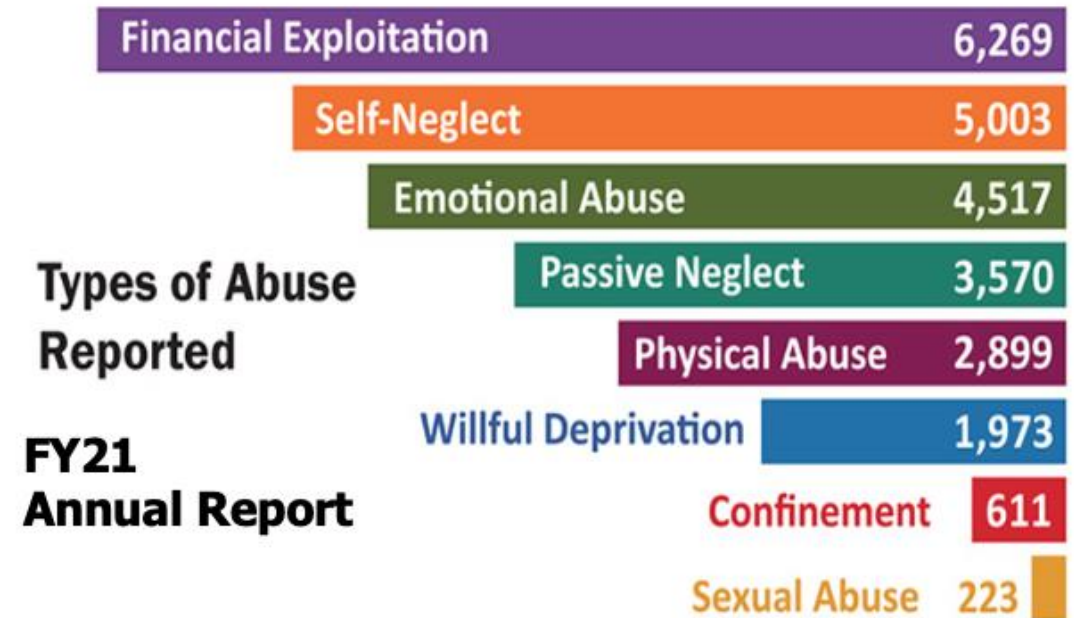
Prevalence - 3

- Women with disabilities, compared to women without disabilities, are more likely to experience violence that is more severe victimization, experience it for longer duration, be survivors of multiple episodes of abuse, and be survivors of a larger number of perpetrators.*

* J. Schaller and J.L. Fieberg, "Issues of abuse for women with disabilities and implications for rehabilitation counseling," Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling 29 no. 2 (1998): 9-17.

Prevalence - 4

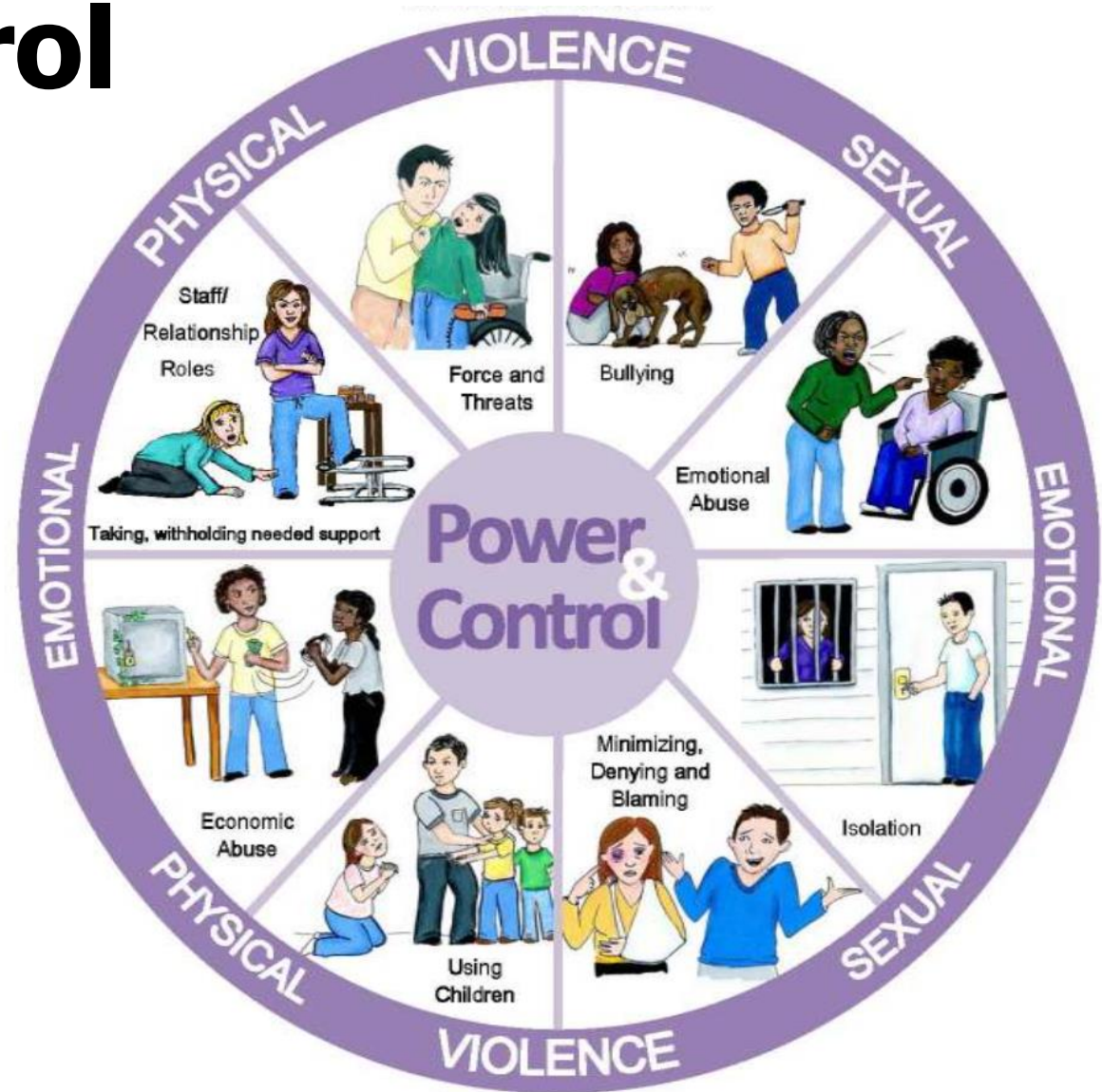
According to the Illinois Department on Aging Adult Protective Services' 2021 Annual Report, there were 20,567 reports of abuse, neglect and financial exploitation of older adults (60 or older) and people with disabilities.



The Bottom Line

“People with disabilities experience domestic and sexual violence at alarming rates. Yet they are less likely to receive services, supports, and justice that their counterparts without disabilities receive.”

Power and Control



Power and Control Wheel
by Project Peer, 2011

Domestic Violence

- Targeted victims
- Targeted environment
- Tactics customized
- Intentional
- Strategic
- Methodical
- Goal-oriented

Where are the Solutions?



Do survivors with disabilities and Deaf people access services designed for domestic violence victims?

Write your answer in the chat box:

- ☐ **No.** They do NOT access domestic violence services.
- ☐ **Rarely.** They only access domestic violence services RARELY.
- ☐ **Yes.** They DO access domestic violence services.
- ☐ **Not sure.**

Barriers

- Factors that contribute to victims with disabilities and Deaf victims not accessing services.
 - Victim does not know what happened to them is abuse.
 - People do not recognize caregiver abuse as domestic violence.
 - People often do not believe a victim when they report abuse.
 - Lack of accessibility and accommodations



Providing Equal Access

Dichotomy



Higher Prevalence



Numbers Served

What is Trauma? - 1

Trauma is the result of an event, sequence of events, or set of circumstances that an individual perceives as physically or emotionally damaging or life-threatening, resulting in lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and overall well-being, including physical and social spheres, emotional and spiritual aspects.

What is Trauma? - 2

- An emotional response to a disturbing event.
- Occurs when an event overwhelms the ability to cope.
- Trauma can occur with one large incident, an accumulation of smaller events or a combination of events.
 - Big T trauma
 - Little t trauma

What is Trauma? - 3

- Each person reacts differently to a specific event. There is no 'right' or 'wrong' way for a person experiencing trauma to react. What is trauma to one person is not necessarily trauma to another person; comparison and judgment need to be avoided.
- Trauma can have lasting effects on a person's physical, emotional, social and spiritual well-being.
- The earlier in life that trauma is experienced, the more lasting the consequences.

Trauma and People with Disabilities

- Trauma is widespread
- Many people with disabilities have endured a lifetime of trauma. These may include
 - A lifetime of people trying to fix them
 - A lifetime of people calling them names
 - A lifetime of invalidation (being ignored, left out, never having a voice)
 - A lifetime of having choices taken away or being denied choices

Effects of Trauma

- Lack a sense of safety
- Feel disconnected from others (and maybe self)
- Feel powerless
- May experience grief over the many losses endured
- May attempt to present a role of power in order to cover up personal vulnerability

A Trauma-Informed Approach is Key

Three key elements:

- 1) realize the prevalence of trauma;
- 2) recognize how trauma affects all individuals within the program, organization or system, including its workforce; and
- 3) respond by putting this knowledge into practice.

*Response to the **Individual** *How we set up **Services**
* How we set up the **Organization**

Survivors Need to Know

- Will I be safe with you?
- Can I believe in you tell me the truth and be honest?
- Will you tell me what to do, or will you work with me?

How to Respond to Disclosures - 1

Provide privacy

Listen without interrupting

Explain options

Support choices

Ensure safety

How to Respond to Disclosures - 2

Do

Believe

Support

Respect

Assist

Don't

Doubt

Blame

Judge

Punish

How to Respond to Disclosures - 3

Say:

I'm sorry this happened to you. Thank you for telling me.
I believe you.

Support:

How can I help you? What do you need right now?

How to Respond to Disclosures - 4

Tell:

I am a mandated reporter. I will need to report information you share with me about abuse, neglect or mistreatment to OIG/APS for investigation. You get to choose what information you share with me. I want to be sure you are safe and know about the choices you have to get help.

How to Respond to Disclosures - 5

Offer Choice:

Would you like to make the report with me?

Support:

There is a crisis center in town that could help you. Would you like me to help you connect with them?

How to Respond to Disclosures - 6

Reminders...

- Disclosures are judgement free zones.
- Listen first, then offer support and choices.
- Reactions are not always visible.
- Our expectations and judgement influence how we respond.
- Abuse, neglect and financial exploitation takes away power and control. Our informed response is based on supporting the person to take power and control back.

System Response – Mandated Reporting

- **OIG – Office of Inspector General**
- **APS – Adult Protective Services**
- **IDPH – Illinois Department of Public Health**
- **Criminal Justice System**

Who Do You Call?

Reporting abuse of a person is an important role, but it isn't always clear who you should call to report abuse. The following chart can be utilized to clear up the distinctions of who should be contacted to make a report.

In cases of sexual violence and domestic violence, contact information for local programs is listed below.

Who was abused?		Where did the Abuse Happen?		Report To
Person 60 years or Older	If Yes →	Community or Domestic Setting	Then Call →	Adult Protective Services 1-866-800-1409
Person with a disability 18-59 years old	If Yes →	Community or Domestic Setting	Then Call →	Adult Protective Services 1-866-800-1409
Person 60 years or older or a person with a disability 18-59 years old	If Yes →	Licensed Long Term Care Facility	Then Call →	Illinois Department of Public Health 1-800-252-4343
Person with a disability 18-59 years old	If Yes →	Licensed Facility	Then Call →	Office of Inspector General 1-800-368-1463

Rape Crisis Centers are also available to assist victims of sexual violence. Services at rape crisis centers are free and confidential. You can reach your local center by visiting www.icasa.org or call 800-656-4673.

Domestic Violence Centers are available to assist victims of domestic violence. Services at domestic violence centers are free and confidential. Local centers can be reached by visiting www.ilcadv.org or call/text 877-863-6338.

Remember: All crimes may be reported to the police. If the victim would like to contact law enforcement, please assist them with the process.

Victim Services Response

Illinois Domestic Violence Programs

- Advocates
- Counseling
- Shelter services

All services are free and confidential

Illinois Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-877-863-6338

<https://www.ilcadv.org/>

**“People need to take time and listen, to be there.
It is not something that just takes a few minutes
but rather you need a long time to talk about it.
People should listen and let you talk
and not interrupt or stop you or ask a lot of questions.”**

~ self-advocate victim of domestic violence

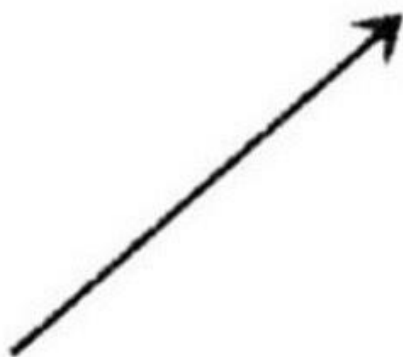
Healing is Possible

- People are resilient and can recover even severe trauma with supports.
- The survivor is the expert on how they feel.
- It is hard to give up a behavior that kept them safe in the past.
- Ask the person what you can do to make them feel more comfortable and how you can best work with them. Get to know the person.
- To heal the person needs: safety, empowerment and connections with others
- Maintain boundaries.

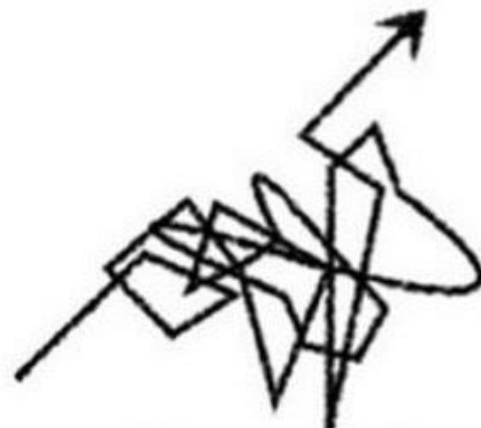
**“No intervention that takes power away from the survivor
can possibly foster his or her recovery.”**

~ Judith Lewis Herman

HEALING



What people think
it looks like.



What it actually
looks like.

Promising Practice Tip

“We need to presume the clients we serve have a history of traumatic stress and exercise “universal precautions.”

Modas, 2004

Envision Illinois



Bringing Disability Services and Domestic Violence
Programs Together

Our goal is to . . .

Reduce Prevalence



Increase Served



About Envision Illinois



Envision Illinois

Envision Illinois is a statewide collaborative project addressing domestic violence against people with disabilities and Deaf people in order to transform the service system, so survivors can have equal access to healing, safety and justice.

- Initially funded in 2013 by the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women (OVW)
- Focus Area: Domestic violence against people with disabilities and Deaf people
- Focus Area: Statewide



Voices from the Needs Assessment

- "A collaborative response which results in a warm hand-off would be ideal. Two providers consult with each other, and both work with the person together so there is an integration of services."
- "We need to be with people we can trust. We need comfortable, accessible, safe places."



Envision Illinois Partners

- Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS)
- Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA)
- Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence (ICADV)
- Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living (INCIL)
- Illinois Self-Advocacy Alliance (“The Alliance”)
- Blue Tower Solutions, Inc.
- Illinois Family Violence Coordinating Councils (IFVCC) at the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA)

Envision Illinois Accomplishments

- **Self-advocate engagement** from local to state planning levels
- **Responsiveness reviews** conducted by Centers for Independent Living (CILs) at domestic violence (DV) agencies
- **Community Engagement** through Immersion Project Pilot Sites
- **Trainings** for Domestic violence victim services and Multi-disciplinary
- **Resource Corner** on Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence website

Resource Corner




ILLINOIS COALITION
AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

(877) 863-6338
Illinois Domestic Violence Hotline

(800) 799-7233
National Domestic Violence Hotline
La Línea Nacional sobre Violencia Doméstica
TTY (800) 787-3224

QUICK ESCAPE

Envision Illinois


Privacy - Terms



Envision Illinois

Search by Type of Resource

Case studies and scenarios	Fact Sheets and Handouts
Presentation slides & training materials	Resource reviews and links
Role plays, activities & ice breakers	Sample forms and templates
Sample policies	Webinars
Mandatory Reporting Toolkit	

Enter a Topic You Want to Learn About

- **Link to the Resource Corner**

<https://www.ilcadv.org/envision-illinois/?type=14>

- **Safety Planning**

- Let's Talk About Boundaries
- I Can Be Safe Brochure
- Confidentiality: Know Your Rights
- Safety Planning Guide
- Am I Safe? Brochure

Collaboration is the Path Forward to Safety, Justice and Healing



“No one organization offers all the services survivors with disabilities need in the aftermath of violence or possess all the expertise needed to provide those services in a way that is safe and accessible.”

Your Support Can Make a Difference



Contact Information

Jessena Williams, Project Director for Envision Illinois
Illinois Department of Human Services

Jessena.Williams2@Illinois.gov

Questions? Comments?