ADVANTAGES OF WORKING WITH OTHER PROVIDERS

Addressing multiple co-occurring issues requires the inclusion of providers from diverse backgrounds and disciplines. Working in partnerships, collaborations and coalitions with other community providers offers several advantages for everyone involved:

- Working in partnership with others, while challenging, can be a powerful tool for mobilizing individuals and groups to action, bringing community issues to prominence and developing policies (Cohen, Baer and Satterwhite, 2002).

- Community coalitions and collaborations can help everyone remain up to date on what other providers are doing regarding a particular issue, as well as what resources are available in the community to address the issue (Cohen and Gould, 2003).

- Rather than creating new projects or programs, such associations can help everyone avoid duplication of services, and thereby avoid wasting scarce resources (Cohen, Baer and Satterwhite, 2002).

- Effective coalitions can accomplish a broad range of goals that reach beyond the scope and capacity of any one single institution or organization (Cohen & Gould, 2003).

- More and more, funders are requiring that provider groups work together to solve a problem (Cohen & Gould, 2003).

- Perhaps most importantly, establishing relationships with a variety of other providers can help all of us provide more and better services. A survivor shares the impact on her when a domestic violence agency developed an ongoing relationship with a dentist in the community:

  “There’s a program called Give A Smile Back, and it’s pro bono. You had to have damage done to your teeth by domestic violence. They are putting several thousand dollars worth of work in my mouth, and they are giving me my smile back.”

A survivor of multi-abuse trauma tells how she benefited from a relationship between a domestic violence agency and a dentist:

“There’s a program called Give A Smile Back, and it’s pro bono. You had to have damage done to your teeth by domestic violence. They are putting several thousand dollars worth of work in my mouth, and they are giving me my smile back.”
Partnerships and collaborations also can help us improve our outreach efforts. Erin Patterson-Sexson, Lead Advocate/Direct Services Coordinator at Standing Together Against Rape (S.T.A.R.) in Anchorage, AK, says:

“We go into the psychiatric institute and the correctional facilities, and work closely with our forensic nurses. We have great connections with our military branches. We have a strong partnership with our school district. Those have all been helpful tools in not only spreading our preventive education, but also connecting with survivors.”

References

