INTERDISCIPLINARY CROSS-TRAINING FOR ADVOCATES AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE KIND OF COOPERATION NEEDED TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE SERVICES TO people impacted by multiple issues. Target audiences for cross-training include substance abuse treatment providers, mental health providers, disabilities advocates, law enforcement and other criminal justice personnel, child welfare caseworkers, private practice therapists and counselors, health care providers and staff at public health organizations.

Training providers in other agencies can go a long way toward helping victims of violence get their needs taken seriously, no matter where they enter the system. Shirley Moses, Shelter Manager at the Alaska Native Women’s Coalition in Fairbanks, AK, says:

“I think that’s one thing that has come up time and time again in the different trainings and the different listening sessions we have had, both with providers and women and extended family who deal with our women who come into shelter. Be open to hearing her story. Have her first responder, or her intake people trained to recognize basic domestic violence and sexual assault as being triggers for her other issues. If they see someone who is acting depressed or whatever, not to discount them as being mentally ill or having alcoholism and that being the only thing they focus on. To look at maybe having their intake people, especially their rural social workers, trained in domestic violence and sexual assault.”

This section offers ideas for providing cross-training on limited budgets, general training guidelines, tips for effective presentations, and sample training topics.

Training on a budget

Despite the tight budgets, staffing shortages and scarce resources many agencies have to work with, a little creativity can work wonders to expand training opportunities:

• Think outside the box. Training need not be limited to large conferences or seminars. Small in-house workshops, brown bag lunches and Peer Review while maintaining confidentiality can also be helpful. Continuum of care groups, community providers’ councils and consortiums can allot 15-20 minute time slots for member agencies to give short presentations about their issues and services.

• Create work groups to address training issues together. Sharing staff expertise is a very low-cost way to provide cross-training. Domestic violence/sexual assault programs,

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1 Shirley Moses, Alaska Native Women’s Coalition, Fairbanks, AK. Personal interview with Debi Edmund, December 2010.
Tribal organizations, mental health programs, substance abuse treatment centers, criminal justice organizations and other providers can lend their own staff to provide in-house cross-training for the staff at each others’ agencies.

• Collaborate with Tribal, State and other community partners for larger events. Several agencies can pool their financial resources and staff, and work together on all phases of the planning for large conferences and seminars, thus reducing the burden on each individual program.

• Seek sponsors. Solicit local businesses or organizations to sponsor training conferences or seminars. This can be a win-win situation in which the business gets a promotion opportunity and the agency gets extra funding for the event. Ways to recognize sponsors include space for a display table, listing on conference literature and announcements during the conference thanking the sponsors.

• Don’t limit requests to funding. Business or organizational sponsors may be able to provide in-kind donations as well. These can range from free or reduced-rate meeting space to printing or copying, and refreshments.

Paula Lee, Shelter Coordinator at South Peninsula Haven House in Homer, AK, says her agency frequently invites staff from other agencies to give in-house presentations:

“We’ll have them come in every year or so, or maybe twice a year, if the need is there, and have them explain their program. Then the advocates get to learn.”

Guidelines for organizing and conducting training sessions

Whether you’re conducting a small in-house gathering or a larger event, here are some ideas to help you attract participants and make them comfortable:

• Choose the location carefully. The room should be large enough to comfortably accommodate tables, displays and equipment as well as all the people, but should not dwarf the crowd.

• Provide food and drinks. Coffee, tea, water, healthy snacks and traditional foods add a nice touch, even for small in-house training sessions.

• Provide good handouts. Consider creating a packet for each participant. Items to go into the packet may include one-page fact sheets, a printout of any PowerPoint presentations, a brochure about your agency or service, a business card or contact information for each speaker, and an evaluation form. Packets need not be elaborate – photocopies and inexpensive folders work fine.

2 Paula Lee, South Peninsula Haven House, Homer, AK. Personal interview with Debi Edmund, December 2010.
• If possible, offer continuing education credits (CEU’s) that various providers can use to meet their licensing and/or certification requirements. This can be an important draw if you want to attract as many people as possible to your training sessions.

Preparation for trainings and presentations

Most public speaking pros will agree: The first, and most important, key to an effective presentation is adequate preparation. Start by asking yourself what you want your audience to take with them when they leave. What are the main points you want to make? Use these to create an outline.

You will want to pay particular attention to your introduction and your conclusion. The introduction is your “first impression” for your audience; it should get their attention and interest, reveal the topic of your presentation and establish credibility (why the audience should listen to you). An effective conclusion will signal the end of the presentation, reinforce your message and provide a sense of closure.

Here are some more pointers for the preparation stage:

• If you’re having trouble coming up with an outline, try writing your conclusion or summary first. It should emphasize the most important points you plan to make. Once you have visualized these points, it should be easier to build a presentation around them.

• Prepare note cards summarizing your major points. But use your notes sparingly. Avoid the temptation to write out your entire presentation beforehand, or you will invariably give in to the further temptation to read your presentation.

• Start your preparation early. If you’re like most people, you’ll probably be making small changes right up until you walk to the front of the room, but don’t wait till the very last minute to start planning your presentation.

• Practice, practice, practice. Rehearse your entire presentation out loud at least once before you get up in front of your audience, even if your “practice” audience is only your partner, your best friend or your cat.

• On the other hand, don’t memorize. Rehearsing is one thing; committing the entire presentation to memory and performing it by heart is another. You need to present, not recite.

• Choose your outfit with care. You will want to dress professionally but comfortably. This is not the time to break in a scratchy new suit or tight new shoes.
Visual aids

While effective presentations do not require visual aids, a few well placed visuals can add clarity and impact. For example, statistical information is easier for your audience to understand when presented visually through charts and graphs. More importantly, visuals can also help your audience stay focused and retain information. Examples of visual aids include posters, overheads, PowerPoint slides, computer graphics, videos and actual objects. Here are some suggestions for using visual elements effectively:

- Keep it simple. A simple visual aid used well is much more effective than a complex one used poorly.

- New technology is wonderful, but don’t break in new equipment 15 minutes before the presentation starts. And whatever you do, don’t have rented equipment scheduled to arrive 10 minutes before you speak. Check out everything in advance.

- Visuals should add to the presentation, not distract from it. Make sure your presentation has enough substance to equal your visuals so the audience focuses on your message. When the session is over, you want the audience discussing your ideas, not the special effects.

- Make sure your visuals are clearly visible to the entire audience. Everyone, including those in the back of the room, must be able to see, read and understand each visual.

- Speak to your audience, not your PowerPoint. Avoid the temptation to constantly look at or read from your PowerPoint script.

- Avoid distributing objects or handouts during your presentation. This distracts the audience and reduces their attentiveness. Distribute handouts either before your begin, or at the end of your presentation. One advantage of distributing handouts beforehand is that people will know they’re getting a printout of your PowerPoint presentation, and they will listen to you rather than feeling the need to furiously jot down notes.

- Rehearsing includes the entire presentation. If you will be using visuals, rehearse these along with the spoken portion of your presentation.

- Be prepared for disaster. Projector bulbs can burn out unexpectedly, posters can fall down and videos can jam in the machine. Always prepare an alternate plan so you do not have to depend on your visuals or other props to carry the presentation.

- Remember that visuals can only add to a good presentation; they cannot rescue a poorly developed one. Do not put all your time and effort into your visuals at the risk of ignoring adequate preparation of the message itself.
Engaging your audience

The good news is, most people come to a training seminar or workshop prepared to have a profitable experience and learn something, and they bring with them a great deal of goodwill toward those they listen to. So relax, and follow these suggestions when giving a presentation:

• Begin with a smile. This conveys to the audience that you are well prepared and have something worthwhile to say.

• Pick one or two people easily visible to you and “speak” to them. This will help you keep in touch with your audience minus the panic that can set in if you’re focusing on a whole sea of people. If some people in the audience seem especially attentive, focus on them. Your audience won’t know the difference.

• Keep it brief. The proper length of your presentation will depend on the subject, but don’t feel you need to ramble to fill in “space.”

• Keep an eye on how well your audience is following your presentation. Are they attentive? What about body language? Are they fidgeting or checking their watches? Taking naps? (Snoring is a bad sign.) If the audience seems distracted, you may need to pick up the pace a bit.

• In your conclusion, call for definite action on the part of your audience. Give concrete suggestions on what they can do to support your ideas or learn more about the subject.

• Leave time for a question and answer period. This allows you to provide more details or clarify major points in a setting with high audience attention.

Sample training topics and handouts

Here are some sample topics for use in training advocates and other community providers, along with suggestions for handouts to use with each topic. These are examples only! Nothing here is carved in stone – feel free to be creative with these topics and come up with some of your own.

Note about copyright: All handouts referred to below are available from our Web Version of Real Tools: Responding to Multi-Abuse Trauma. People facilitating trainings are free to photocopy as many of the handouts as they wish for educational use. However, please make sure the copyright notices appear on each of the handouts. Please note, also, that the Power and Control Wheels appear here courtesy of the National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence, which credits the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project in Duluth, MN, for inspiring the wheels. The National Center requests that the Power and Control Wheels not be altered in any way.
**Topic: Brown Bag Series – Issues 101**

Invite community programs to provide in-house cross-training for the staff at each others’ agencies. Experts may include advocates from domestic violence and sexual assault programs, mental health providers, substance abuse treatment counselors, child welfare caseworkers, indigenous providers or anyone else with expertise that you want to learn from. The cross-trainings could be provided as a series: Domestic Violence 101, Sexual Assault 101, Substance Abuse 101, Mandated Reporting 101, Historical Trauma 101, etc. Add a sweetener to this series by arranging for continuing education credits (CEU’s) to be offered to staff in attendance at the various agencies.

**Topic: Multiple Layers of Trauma**

Explain the concept of multi-abuse trauma. Give examples of *active abuse* and *coping abuse*, and discuss how these different forms of abuse interact with each other to make safety, sobriety and wellness more difficult to achieve. Explain how co-occurring issues such as psychiatric illness, disabilities, social oppression, poverty and homelessness can complicate the picture, and discuss ways the social service system can avoid further traumatizing individuals.

**Handouts**

*Multiple Layers of Trauma*
*Trauma: The Common Denominator*
*Multi-Abuse Trauma Graphic*
*1+1=10 Tons of Trouble*
*Other Issues: What Else Impacts Safety and Sobriety?*
*Instruction Sheet for 10 Tons of Trouble Exercise*
*Abuses Endured by a Woman During Her Life Cycle (Wheel)*

The various Power and Control Wheels can also be helpful in illustrating the abuses of power involved in multi-abuse trauma.

**Topic: Examples of Abuse**

Discuss the different types of abuse that can happen to people with multi-abuse trauma issues. Examples include domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, societal abuse and oppression based on misperceptions about gender, race or ethnic group, disability status, sexual orientation, etc. Explore common elements of these different types of abuse. Examples of common elements may include physical abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse, spiritual abuse, economic abuse, use of privilege by a dominant group, etc.

**Handouts**

*Examples of abuse*
*Manifestations of Violence*
*Power and Control Wheel for Women’s Substance Abuse*
**Topic: Sorting Out Messages**

People with multi-abuse trauma issues may be receiving services from several different providers. For example, they may be seeing a victim’s advocate for domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking, a treatment counselor for substance abuse or dependence, a therapist or psychiatrist for mental health issues, and a social worker for assistance finding housing if they are homeless. In the process, people experiencing multiple issues may begin to acquire multiple labels. People receiving help from a variety of sources may also hear messages that seem to conflict or contradict each other.

In the skit, “Mary Has All Kinds of Troubles,” ask for several volunteers from the audience to play the part of the “helping professionals,” the part of “Mary” (the person seeking services), and the part of a volunteer who will tape labels on “Mary” while the “helping professionals” are speaking. Following this role-play exercise use the skit and the other handouts to discuss how to help people who use our services to better navigate conflicting systems and advice, as well as the pros and cons of using labels.

Note: You will need to do some advance planning for this skit. For each role, you may want to use a highlighting pen to highlight actors’ parts in their copy of the script to make it easier to follow. (For example, you will highlight the “substance abuse counselor’s” part in the copy of the script that you give to the person playing the role of the substance abuse counselor, the “mental health professional’s” part in the script given to the person playing the role of the mental health professional, etc.) Review the script and write assorted labels such as victim, drug addict, borderline, etc., on several sheets of 8 ½ X 11 paper. These can be taped on “Mary” by the volunteer while the “helping professionals” are verbally labeling this individual. Once you make up your labels you may want to laminate them for future use.

**Handouts**
- Skit: Mary Has All Kinds of Troubles
- Sorting Out Messages
- To Label or Not to Label?

**Topic: Unhealthy Social Messages**

Naomi Michalsen, Executive Director of Women in Safe Homes in Ketchikan, AK, shares an exercise she uses to help people understand social attitudes and their impact on the personal level. Make a list of a couple dozen or so behaviors and attitudes often seen in our society, or in movies or on television. Some examples may include:
A coach telling boys, “You’re playing like a bunch of girls.”
Assuming girls are not as smart as boys at math.
Insisting a woman’s place is in the home.
Mud flaps on a truck with a woman’s silhouette.
A billboard that says, “Come see hot young chicks” and has pictures of baby chickens.
Ads or movies or television shows with violent themes or imagery.

Someone’s partner calls frequently or drives by their house to check if they’re home.
Shoving someone during an argument.
Hitting someone during an argument.
Being forced to have sex while on a date.
Rape/sexual assault by a stranger.

For each attitude or behavior on the list, ask, “Is this harmful?” When the group has discussed whether a particular item is harmful or relatively harmless, point out how things that may seem harmless or even funny can chip away at the value that society gives women, or may increase societal tolerance for violence or abuse.

**Supplies**
*Newsprint paper and markers*

**Topic: Why Don’t They Trust Us?**

Few things are more frustrating than trying to work with someone who obviously doesn’t trust us. However, past experiences with interpersonal violence and other trauma may have made trust difficult for the people who seek our services. Discuss some of these experiences, and how they might impact a person’s ability to trust others – including advocates, counselors and other service providers, as well as institutions and authority figures. Discuss ways for helping professionals to earn the trust of the people they serve.

**Handouts**
*Trust Isn’t Always Easy*
*Gaining Trust*

**Topic: Safety Planning**

Advocates for victims of interpersonal violence encourage the people they serve to develop a safety plan. However, “safety” can mean different things for different people. For individuals with multiple issues, safety, sobriety, wellness and accessibility may all need to be priorities. Discuss how a safety plan can be modified to include issues such as recovery from substance use disorders, mental health concerns, accessibility for people with disabilities, unsafe environments in a dangerous neighborhood or prison setting, etc.

Mental health providers, substance abuse counselors, disabilities advocates and other providers may also help the people they serve develop treatment plans, recovery plans, or
other types of service plans. Discuss ways to incorporate safety issues into the plans created by these other providers.

**Handouts**  
Personalized Safety Plan  
What Does Safety Mean?  
Mini-Safety/Sobriety/Wellness Plan (With Instructions for Use)

**Topic: Power and Control Dynamics**

Judith Herman, M.D., author of the book *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*, emphasizes most interpersonal trauma is embedded in a social structure that permits the abuse and exploitation of people in subordinate groups. Use Power and Control Wheels to illustrate all the various ways power is used and abused in our society, and in our personal relationships, to dominate and control others.

In addition to educating others about interpersonal violence, the wheels can be useful for exploring issues such as mental health concerns, substance use disorders, disability issues and various kinds of social oppression, with an eye toward ways power dynamics can impact an individual’s ability to address these issues. The Wheels can also be used to explore the use and abuse of power in various settings ranging from intimate relationships to schools, social service agencies, other institutional settings and communities.

Use the “equality” wheels and community collaboration and accountability wheels as a basis for discussion of ideal behaviors and responses in personal relationships, institutions and the community.

**Handouts**  
Power and Control Wheel  
Abuse of Children  
Children Coping With Family Violence Wheel  
Power and Control Model For Women’s Substance Abuse  
People with Disabilities and Their Caregivers: Power and Control  
Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Trans: Power and Control  
Immigrant Power and Control Wheel  
Power and Control Wheel for Women Involved in Street Prostitution  
Violence Against Native Women: Battering  
Bullying Power and Control Wheel  
Power and Control in Dating Relationships  
Abuses Endured By A Woman During Her Life Cycle  
Equality Wheel  
Nurturing Children  
Mental Health System Power and Control: Empowerment  
People with Disabilities and Their Caregivers: Equality
The Benefits of Collaboration

Discuss the advantages when providers from different agencies/disciplines cooperate for the benefit of the people we mutually serve. Depending on the target audience, the Wheels can also be used to demonstrate characteristics of successful collaborations.

Handouts
- Advocacy Wheel
- Successful Collaboration Wheel
- Coordinated Community Action Model (Wheel)
- Community Accountability Wheel
- Community Faith Leaders (Wheel)
- Judicial Responses that Empower Battered Women (Wheel)
- Domestic Violence: A Cross-Cutting Issue for Social Workers (Wheel)

Topic: Parenting and Children’s Issues

Children may not talk about problems they witness in the home, so it can be tempting to think they don’t notice what’s going on, or that it doesn’t affect them that much. But research tells a different story. Discuss the impact of both substance abuse and violence on their children, as well as how to create a more positive environment for children.

Handouts
- Children Exposed to Domestic Violence and Substance Abuse
- Abuse of Children Wheel
- Children Coping With Family Violence Wheel
- Nurturing Children Wheel
- Safety Planning Interventions for Children

Topic: Working for Change

Many people who have survived trauma, especially trauma caused by interpersonal violence or social injustice and oppression, find working for social change aids their own healing process. People may call their efforts working for change, service to others, or carrying the message. Discuss contributions from a variety of social movements – the women’s movement, the recovery movement, the mental health movement, the disability rights movement and civil rights movement – that have made it easier for people to get help with problems that were once denied or stigmatized. Discuss how to help survivors work for change while maintaining their own safety.

Handouts
- Can One Person Make a Difference?
- Writing a Letter That Gets Attention
SAMPLE TRAINING LOGISTICS GUIDE

1. Focus where you will provide training based on community need, interest expressed by agency or local community service provider. Be intentional.

2. Create a folder for each site to be contacted. Document each contact, whether it is by e-mail, phone, fax, in writing or face-to-face.

3. On each folder indicate:
   - Training site name, address, phone and fax numbers, e-mail address.
   - Training site manager’s name and phone number as well as your contact information if different from the manager’s.

4. Once a training is scheduled, include the following in the file:
   - Directions to the training site and room number or location of the training.
   - Contact name and phone number of the person who will be present the day of the training should questions or problems arise. This person will also be responsible for helping the trainer collect sign-in sheets and evaluations.
   - The number of people to be trained and, when applicable, background on the participants. For example, are they advocates? Substance abuse, health care or mental health providers? An interdisciplinary team? Educators? Other?
   - Indicate whether the participants to be trained have indicated a particular area of interest. For example: Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault 101? Trauma Issues? Substance Abuse?
   - Note technical training needs and whether the training site has an overhead or slide projector, TV-VCR, laptop, PowerPoint projector, audio equipment (including microphones) white board, blackboard or paper and easel, as well as writing implements such as markers or chalk.
   - If the above is unavailable, advise the trainer to bring paper, markers and tape, a portable overhead/slide projector, or other equipment as needed.
   - If doing training over an hour long, be sure to consider at least some video or audio clips and request a VCR. Document your plans in the file. Plan to arrive early to check on your technical equipment and make sure it is working and ready for use. Always have a back-up plan.
   - Indicate whether or not participants will be eating a meal during training so the trainer can factor in how much time to allocate for the meal before passing out pre/post tests, etc.
   - Indicate the name of the trainer responsible for training.
   - All training should include both an advocate and someone from the community, most often someone drawn from the place where you are training.
• Be sure to schedule time to discuss input from your community partner prior to training. When the training is scheduled, indicate the name of the community partner who will co-train with the advocate.

5. Note in file whether this is first, follow-up or repeat training. Also indicate any special information which would be of use to the trainer. For example, health care staff want advanced training on domestic violence/sexual assault, advocates are interested in substance abuse and mental health issues and domestic violence/sexual assault, community wants training on working with special populations.

6. When the training is scheduled, send a confirmation letter or e-mail to your contact at the training site with all pertinent details summarized. A copy of this letter/e-mail should be sent to your co-trainer as well.

7. Following the initial training, training site contacts should be contacted regarding follow-up meetings to discuss how the training went and other training or community service goals or issues. A copy of training materials or brochures should be mailed to the training site manager and interested parties who may not have been able to attend your training. Additionally, encourage participants to explore volunteer participation in our programs. Make every effort to foster a relationship between the domestic violence/sexual assault program and the community agency you are providing training for.

8. Place training sites on a booster schedule and mail appropriate flyers and program information to them several times a year (every three months is often a good schedule). Booster material may include screening cards, pens, buttons or posters.

9. Create a tickler file to remind you to contact programs you have trained in the past so you can maintain your connection and prevent relationships from slipping through the cracks. Determine whether your staff needs more advanced or specialized training, and schedule as needed. Make phone calls to see how your training contact is doing. Encourage linkages between domestic violence/sexual assault and other community programs.

10. Whenever a training site receives training, check to see if they want to put information about the training in their newsletter or report it in the local press.

11. Trainers need to be prepared prior to arriving at a training site. They are responsible for having a proper number of handouts with them as well as brochures and information unless the training site agrees to make the handouts. Also before leaving to provide training, trainers should ask themselves: Do you have directions to where you are going, your video, overheads, zip drive or disc and projector? Do you have enough pencils, markers, a sign-in sheet, a driver if necessary, tape, large sheets of paper, posters, etc? Additionally, has the trainer found interesting articles or facts to supplement the basic curriculum? Another option is to assemble a list of additional articles for the training participants to explore on their own.

12. Routinely check on supplies on the first Friday of each month: folders, brochures, safety plans, books, pamphlets, and other materials such as pens and markers. Update your training calendar weekly.
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