

Strengthening Our Network

- ### What Organizers Need to Know
- Building relationships
 - Be aware of your assumptions across cultures
 - Acknowledge sexism and racism
 - Keep battered women's stories central
 - Go where the door is open
 - Don't embarrass people
 - Acknowledge the complexity of the issue
 - Think strategically

- ### Building Relationships
- Identify community allies for ideas and assistance
 - Educate yourselves on the organization where the problem is
 - Get to know the key people in the organization
 - Work to build long-term relationships

Three Kinds of Practitioners

- Resisters
- Status quo bureaucrats
- Allies

What is the Problem?

- How is the problem impacting victim safety?
- What is the extent of the problem?
- What is the source?
- Has the problem been documented?
- Is the problem a single incident or a broader pattern?

What Do You Want to Change?

- Will the change enhance victim safety or offender accountability?
- Will the change make the system more accountable?
- Could there be unintended consequences?
- Is the goal realistic?
- How will success be measured?

Planning for a Meeting

- Anticipate how the administrator thinks
- Acknowledge the tendency for the administrator to defend their staff
- Recognize that you may lack credibility in her/his eyes
- Consider who should be at the meeting
- Prepare and develop your message
- Remember change process is incremental

Finding Solutions

- Create a positive meeting environment (bring snacks!)
- Clearly state the objectives of the meeting
- State a willingness to keep meeting to resolve the problem
- State the problem
- Does the administrator agree there is a problem?

Finding Solutions CONTINUED

- Don't make claims you can't back up
- Stay focused, flexible and open to criticism
- Clarify differences and areas of agreement
- Need more information, research or documented cases?
- Brainstorm ideas and solutions so that advocates and administrators can work together

Questions

1. How effectively did the advocates present the problem?
2. What undermined their credibility?
3. What could have been done differently?

Next Steps

- What will you do in this meeting?
- What points will you make?
- How will you use the case files?
- What are some of the elements of your solution?
- Who should be at the initial meeting?
- What might the resistance to your position be?
- How will you deal with it?

The Golden Rules of Systems Advocacy

1. and Autonomy
2. Develop a Strong Knowledge Base
3. Use a Systemic and Social Change Analysis
4. Use a Model of Constructive Engagement

1. Centralize Victim Safety, Wellbeing and Autonomy

- Workers analyzing problems will drift towards a focus on increasing the system's efficiency
- Advocates centralize women and children's experiences; within their organization and in their system change work

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2. Develop a Strong Knowledge Base

- Don't assume anecdotes, advice from individuals, personal experience, statistics etc show the whole picture
- Research the issues and know:
 - The circumstances victims face
 - Institutional responses and their outcomes
 - How workers are organized to act on cases
 - Institutional assumptions, theories, and concepts

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3. Use a Systemic and Social Change Analysis

- Expose systemic problems, not individuals
- Examine weaknesses in case processing
- Know and recognize how institutions standardize their responses

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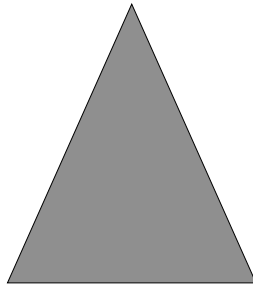
4. Use a Model of Constructive Engagement

- Be respectful; problem-solving rarely works in an atmosphere of criticism
- Assume that practitioners can/will help
- Build relationships and trust
- Understand consequences for survivors of using a judgmental approach
- Remain solution-oriented

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Your Interagency Hierarchy?

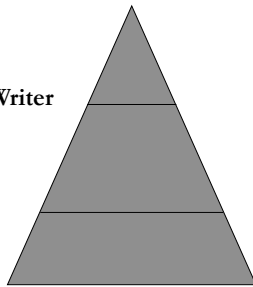
Judges
Court Administrators
Prosecution
Defense
Law Enforcement
Probation
Batterer Programs
Advocacy



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Advocacy Agency

Board of Directors
Executive Director
Accountant
Fundraiser/Grant Writer
Trainer
Program Manager
Advocate
Child Advocate
Office Help
Cleaner/Gardener



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