



**Mission:** *To promote a community-wide response to sexual violence by coordinating a multi-disciplinary team that will ensure victims receive comprehensive, compassionate care*

## **Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) General Meeting**

### **MINUTES**

**Thursday September 27, 2018**

**Call to Order:** Nicole Bishop, Director, Palm Beach County Victim Services & Certified Rape Crisis Center (PBCVS)

**Welcome / Introductions of Members and Guests:** Oren Alter, Vanessa Arriela, Monica Banks, Nicole Bishop, Robert Bragg, Jennifer Brashear, Sherry Britton-Susino, Dylan Brooks, Gary Caduallader, Carmeron Cook, Yvette Cueto, Laura Cusack, Sharon Daugherty, Holly DiBenedetto, Kat Duesterhaus, Randy Foley, Tanya Fresneda, Monica Gonzalez, Jannelle Henry, Bruce Hoffman, Cristy Johnson, Sarita Johnson, Winter Jones, Jennifer Kuipers, Alexa Lee, Todd Long, Aldric Marshall, Nicole Martinez, Tanya Meade, Carol Messam-Gordon, Valerie Messineo, Chrichet, Serenia Page-Beckton, Elisa Pisana, Samantha Poje, Jessica Porter, Clarice Redding, Tara Sessa, Christine Shaw, Deidreanna Soto, Liisa Spinello, Robert Volguardson, Rachel Zara.

Nicole began the meeting by acknowledging how the Senate Evidentiary Hearing about sexual assault allegations is impacting and transforming the work of the group. She also stressed the importance of our Start by Believing Campaign and that many of our survivors need our support more than ever at this defining time in the nation's history. She mentioned that many survivors may be reliving their own personal experiences and chose to remain in their private spaces rather than attend the meeting as a result—she cited an email that was sent from a SART member/survivor who shared how the hearing compelled her to remain home because of the emotional toll. Nicole asked all to be cognizant and especially sensitive during this time.

Nicole also recognized that many of our SANEs joined the SART meeting today. They were at the SART Center for a Colposcope Training. She gave them kudos as unsung heroes of SART, working tirelessly behind the scenes to exam survivors and meticulously collect evidence.

**Review/Approval of minutes:** August 2018, minutes were approved by members

**On-Going Business:** Nicole Bishop, Director

### **Regional SART 2018**

The training was held last Friday, September 21, 2018 at Boca Raton Police Training facility. It was facilitated by Battered Women's Justice Project with a topic focused on Identifying and Preventing Gender Bias in our response to cases. The intent was to examine our processes and our personal bias to ensure they do not interfere with handling cases and no intention of blaming any team or profession. It was well attended by Palm Beach County SART members; one hundred fifty-five people registered and one hundred fifteen attended. Therefore, it was an overall successful event. Evaluations and certificates of completion were

emailed to participants. Please complete to share thoughts about the training and help us continually identify trainings that SART may find beneficial. The survey monkey link was emailed to all attendees. All were given the opportunity to share their experience. One member shared positive feedback.

**SART Non-reporting protocol revision:** Nicole Bishop/Carol Messam-Gordon

Nicole update the group about her presentation at Law Enforcement Planning Council (LEPC) Meeting at 9am this morning. The Chiefs and other Department leaders received copies of the revised protocol and accepted to revision as presented.

Carol reminded group of the process to complete the revision. The initial meeting called by PBSO was held on July 11, 2018 at SART Center. Most Police Jurisdictions had representatives present during which time the PBSO victim notification helpline verbiage was developed and the group recommended changing the Sexual Assault Kit storage time period from 1 year to 4 years. State Attorney's Office approved the revision without any changes and the final step was to present it to LEPC which Nicole did prior to SART Meeting.

**New Business:** Nicole Bishop

**Seek Then Speak, Victim Link Presentation**

Nicole announced that Palm Beach County Victim Services will launch Victim Link on October 1, 2018. It is another communication tool that will be available for survivors to use to request assistance. Victim Link was developed by Florida Coalition Against Sexual Violence (FCASV) and End Violence Against Women International (EVAWI) and made available to Sexual Assault Programs in Florida by FCASV.

**Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office (PBSO) Victim Notification & Helpline,** Sargent Robert Bragg

The Sheriff's office has established a helpline phone number (561-688-4127) for anyone who had a rape exam done in Palm Beach County before July 1, 2016 and would like to know the status of their kit test results. The helpline number is on PBSO's website and PBCVS also has a link to it on its website. The phone line is not manned, but an Officer is assigned to regularly check the messages and call the victim's back to give a status update on their kit. The Officer will coordinate with PBCVS to see if an Advocate is available to assist with the notification and connect with services as needed.

**Member Highlight: Human Trafficking (HT) Task Force Updates,** Lieutenant Foley, Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office

Lt. Foley informed the group about the past two year progress. The Task force receives federal funds from Department of Justice which was increased this year to allow hiring of three more full time positions. The Taskforce has been conducting collaborative trainings with Victim Services and other community agencies, designed to educate survivors and the public about trafficking. The group has trained over 400 ER staff in the past year, trained many hotels management who now include HT in their new employee orientation. They are expanding their reach to additional community groups such as Business Partners Against Terrorism (BPAT) and will be training them in the near future. They are asking for community's help as they do work on long-term proactive approach to public awareness about HT as they begin preparation for two huge events coming to South Florida; Grand Prix and Super Bowl.

**SANE Report:** Nicole Bishop for Sherry Britton-Susino`, Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Coordinator

- For the month of August, Palm Beach County SANEs performed all sexual assault exams. There were twenty-four call outs for SANEs this month and they responded to all of those call outs. There were twenty-one exams. Twelve of the exams were done at the Butterfly House and nine were done in the emergency room. Twenty- three of the cases were reporting and one was non-reporting.
- **Case Disposition:** Sherry Britton-Susino`, Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Coordinator – Sherry shared dispositions of the closed cases this month and recognized the Advocates and the SANE involved with each of them.

**Committee Reports:** Standing

**Community Action Network:** Sharon Daugherty, PBCVS Outreach Coordinator

There are seven committees formed at this time to work on the upcoming events: 1) Campus Roundup 4 on November 16, 2018 at Palm Beach State College (PBSC) at 3:00pm. 2) Hispanic Outreach event on 1/6/2019 at John Fischer Church, 3) Pride Fest on 3/30/19, 4) Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) on 4/2/19 is the Day of Action and all were invited to join team for Field of Hope event; 5) Social Media Committee continues to publicize the events; 6) Start by Believing Committee is working on the Start by Believing Strategic Plan; and 7) Survivor Action Team continues to support all other committees. All were invited to become a part of one of the committees that are most appropriate for them.

**Training Committee:** Serenia P. Beckton, SART Grant Coordinator

There were no updates. The committee meets the fourth Thursday of each month. Next meeting is October 18, 2018 at 2pm at SART Center.

**Legislative Committee:** Christine Shaw

As a follow up to last SART Meeting when a member asked about telephone spoofing laws and liability of the companies that allow this to occur, Christine shared the Legislative team's findings. She found no laws that hold the companies responsible. It is legal to use the spoofing mechanism to maintain anonymity of businesses attempting communication with customers/clients. Officers reiterated that many cases become cold because they cannot trace the number to the original caller. There was discussion about the impact this mechanism may have on case outcomes.

**SART Case Staffings:** Carol Messam- Gordon, Program Coordinator

There was no update, the group did not meet this month.

**Green DOT Program update:** Clarice Redding, Program Coordinator

Clarice shared that the last Green Dot Training of the year is scheduled November 11<sup>th</sup>. There has been total of 20 trainings this year. They are scheduling Green Dot Booster trainings as a follow up to initial training. Receive a complimentary Yoga bag and mat when you sign up & participate in a "Yoga for Community Healing" class. All were invited to join Green Dot at the Green Screen event during which the movie the Witness will be viewed at Palm Beach State College.

**Member field discussion:**

- Palm Beach County Substance Awareness Coalition announced the Youth Summit on 10/13/18. They have spaces remaining for 30 teens. Visit [riseaboveyou.org](http://riseaboveyou.org) for more information.
- Compass shared that today 9.27.18 is National Gay Men's' HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. HIV continues to disproportionately affect gay men, join them to make others aware. Other upcoming events are: 11/20 Transgender Day of Remembrance, Smart Ride in November, and 12/1/18 is World AIDS Day.
- Nicole invited all to assemble in the Children's Play area behind the meeting area for a dedication and light afternoon snacks. The dedication commenced immediately following the meeting; starting with a Thank you to the Zonta Club for donating furniture and ribbon cutting.
- Next Meeting date: October 25, 2018 at 2:00pm to 3:00pm.