



**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, June 30, 2016**

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

**Welcome / Introductions of Members and Guests:** Oren Alter, Belinda Barr, Nicole Bishop, Linda Brock, Susan Carlini, Crystal Conway, Ellen Craddock Day, Mark Ellis, Randy Foley, Tanya Fresneda, Ana Jimenez, Brandy Macaluso, Michelle Macy, Valerie Messineo, Leonard Mitchell, Kathryn Oleksy, Natalie Peralta, Kelly Roan, Susan Sims, Clifton Smith, Joseph Sophie, Liisa Spinello, Carrie Stone, JR Thicklin, Larry Uber, Julie Weil, Collura Yesenia, Juanita Edward, Stephanie Myron, Chase Picotle, Camara Hall, M. Ladda, Brittany Gutin, Stephanie Sejnoha, Brandon, Biedeman

**Review/Approval of minutes:** May 26, 2016

Members were emailed the minutes and the minutes were approved

#### **On-Going Business:**

##### **Clergy Workshop on Domestic Violence, JR Thicklin, Destiny by Choice**

- Palm Beach County Victim Services & Certified Rape Crisis Center, grant partner Destiny by Choice and Aid to Victims of Domestic Violence along with Riviera Beach Police Department came together to provide a workshop titled *'Family Strong, the Intersection between Domestic Violence & Clergy'*. The focus of the workshop was to build a stronger collaboration between clergy leaders and secular services with the common goal of keeping families safe and strong. The workshop spoke to the importance of Clergy and faith in addressing the issue of domestic violence and sexual violence, demonstrated the prevalence of domestic and sexual violence, and how it impacts women, children, men, and families. The intention was to ensure clergy and Faith leaders understand the dynamics and how to be a bridge rather than a barrier in addressing the issue with congregants. Clergy were educated on resources that can best assist them and the families in need. 31 Thirty one clergy and community resource individuals were in attendance. PBCVS created a 7 step clergy point card for clergy to refer to when assisting victims. Upon completion of the workshop clergy stated they recognized the vital importance of working with secular services to provide the safest outcome for their church members. The day after the workshop PBCVS advocates reported 3 referrals from clergy who attended the workshop.

## **New Business:**

### **Regional SART- Susan Carlini, PBCVS Grant Coordinator**

- This year's Regional SART will be hosted by the 19<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit SART and is scheduled for September 15, 2016. It will take place at the Port St. Lucie Community Center. Seating is limited to 150 people with breakfast and lunch provided. Registration is currently at 47. Members were emailed a flyer and the link to register. The agenda for the Regional SART will include PBSO and SANE on forensics, notifying victims of testing kits, cultural diversity-demographics, African American, LGBTQ and gender bias, and military.
- **Rape Kit Backlog legislation and subcommittee protocol review-** Carol Messam Gordon, PBCVS Program Coordinator
- *Senate Bill 636: Testing Sexual Assault Evidence, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2016, FLORIDA STATUTE §943.326:* Sexual offense evidence kits (SAKs) collected during a law enforcement investigation must be submitted to the laboratory within 30 days after receipt by the law enforcement agency, or within 30 days of a request being made by the victim or their representative. The request can be made to law enforcement or the medical provider.
- TESTING MUST BE COMPLETED WITHIN 120 DAYS by the lab.
- Effective January 1, 2017, all LEAs in coordination with the Florida Council against Sexual Violence shall adopt and disseminate guidelines and procedures for the collection, submission and testing of DNA evidence that is obtained in an alleged sexual assault. As a result of these testing guidelines we met with SART members on June 24<sup>th</sup> from the following departments here at SART: State Attorney's Office: SVU division Chief – Takisha Richardson, PBSO – SGT Keith, Palm Beach Gardens Police Department: Detectives Brashear & CESARK, Boynton Beach PD: Sgt. Wessendorf-Boynton Beach PD; Detective Rafferty; Daniel Cline, Forensic Department, United States Marines: Staff SGT. Ellis-US Marines, Jupiter Police Department: Detective Hirsh, North Palm Beach Police Department: Detective Collura, Palm Beach County Victim Services: Carol Messam Gordon, Program Coordinator; Ellen Craddock-Day, Team Supervisor, Grant Coordinator, Susan Carlini; Rene Boone – Lead Victim Advocate. We reviewed SB636 PowerPoint compliance strategy that was presented by Dr. Crouse, Director of PBSO Crime Lab. We discussed the protocols and members present were able to discuss the protocol and ask questions and gain a better understanding on how to proceed with this new law. The following protocols were identified, reviewed and revised:

#### **1. Protocol for Dispatch & First Responders**

#### **2. Sexual Battery Investigations, Recommendations regarding forensic testing and**

#### **3. Non Reporting protocol was reviewed and updated.**

#### **4. LE General Orders: will be reviewed at our next meeting**

Susan Carlini will make the changes to the protocol. Protocol revisions will be forwarded to the members that were present for a final review. Protocols will be forwarded to the appropriate agencies upon final approval from SART. Point cards will be made to assist the guidelines

We are scheduled for another meeting on Friday, July 8 from 1pm to 3pm.

**All law enforcement agencies will be provided with the new Victims Rights and Services brochure as required by law (chapter 794, F.S.).**

**Member Highlight:** Staff Sgt. Mark Ellis, 4<sup>th</sup> ANGLICO, Uniformed Victim Advocate

- The Marine Corps has an absolute zero tolerance policy in regards to Sexual Assault as it goes against their core values of honor, courage and commitment. This policy can be found in Marine Corps Order 1752.5B. The maximum punishment under the Uniformed Code of Military Justice is confinement for life without the possibility of parole, total loss of all pay and allowances, dishonorable discharge or dismissal from service, and reduction in rank.

But beyond the judicial side, the Corps is committed to fostering an environment that encourages victims to report sexual battery. They want victims to feel comfortable coming forward knowing their report will be taken seriously and they will get the help and support they need, while being treated with respect. This is where the Sexual Assault Prevention & Response (SAPR) Program comes in. The SAPR Program is dedicated to assisting victims and, through training, eliminating the crime of sexual assault from within the Corps. We are here to assist victims of sexual assault regardless of their age, gender, rank, or circumstances of the assault. The main goal is to always ensure the victims get the help they need and deserve. The program is operational 24/7, 365 days a year in both the garrison and deployed environments.

The Marine Corps has some similarities in the way it handles Victim's Assistance with those on the civilian side. First and foremost, the SAPR program offers two reporting options for victims, Restricted and Unrestricted. Unrestricted reporting initiates an official law enforcement investigation and provides the full support of the command. A restricted report allows the victim to report confidentially & receive help without an investigation or command involvement. Regardless of the reporting method they choose, all victims have access to medical treatment, Sexual Assault Forensic Examinations, Advocacy and counseling services. Another similarity is the retention of SAFE kits. For a victim who is conducting a restricted report, those kits are maintained for 5 years. For unrestricted reports, they are maintained for 50 years. A victim can choose to change their report from restricted to unrestricted at any time, and if within the first 5 years, those kits will then be available for the full 50 years. Every unit within the Marine Corps has a Uniformed Victim's Advocate (UVA). We are 1 of 4 people a Marine can talk to in their Chain of Command without the risk of losing their confidentiality. The other three are medical personnel, Chaplains and Victims Legal Counsel. The UVA's primary responsibility is to advocate for the victim. We act as a liaison to victims for referrals to services whether it is for medical, mental or legal services. We help to ensure that the victim is safe and can provide them with the ability to request an expedited transfer out of the unit or assist them in obtaining Military or Civilian Protection Orders. We also provide services to family members of Marines who are over the age of 18. Anyone under the age of 18 that is a victim of sexual assault, we are mandated to report to law enforcement. As a UVA, we also provide training to the Marines within our unit. Every Marine across the entire Marine Corps is required to take SAPR Training courses annually that can only be given by a UVA or SARC (Sexual Assault Response Coordinator). This training begins at the entry level and progresses with those Marines as

they become leaders themselves. Every Marine receives courses that teach and develop techniques for actively preventing sexual assault including bystander intervention; as well as ensuring all Marines know the profound impact that sexual assault has on the Marine, the unit and the entire Corps; and also ensuring that the leaders know the policies and procedures for reporting a sexual assault so that they can educate their junior Marines as well. We want our leaders to be able to foster a climate of trust so that victims will be more likely to seek help and report assaults. The Marine Corps and Department Of Defense recognize that not every person who is a victim of sexual assault will report to their unit's UVA or anyone affiliated with the Military. The DOD has set up the Safe Helpline which is available 24/7 from around the world. They offer assistance and guidance over the phone and online in safe working group chat rooms. Both of these methods are completely anonymous and no one within their command is ever notified.

**SANE Report:** Sherry Britton-Susino, PBCVS SANE Coordinator

- SANE report for the month of June 2016: There were 26 Sexual Assault call outs, 20 exams completed and the SANE response was 100 % for this reporting period. There were a total of 60 call outs between May and June; all sexual assault exams were performed by SANEs. The SANE nurse coordinator presented at the nurses forum. The SANE nurses conducted mock trial to help enhance their examination skills. SANEs were introduced to a new protocol for victims of sexual assault who have experienced strangulation. The protocol includes assessment of strangulation injuries and specific discharge instructions related to the warning signs of potential complications of strangulation.

**Committee Reports:** Standing

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

- **Start by Believing Campaign (SBB):**  
SBB Posters are available for SART members to use at their events and agencies. The signed poster will remain with the event host (if applicable) for them to keep and display. We request a photo and short article. We will share with End Violence against Women International (EVAW) and other social media.
- **Survivor Action Team (SAT):**  
Survivors from all counties are invited to participate in an upcoming presentation for the Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> Regional SART. A different style of presentation using performance art & spoken word will be utilized. Three counties (Broward, Palm Beach & Martin) are represented so far for the Regional SART presentation. Two rehearsals are planned or have taken place: June 19<sup>th</sup> & July 31<sup>st</sup>. Anyone who is in the area on July 31<sup>st</sup> is invited to attend the one hour dress rehearsal as audience. If you know of a survivor who would like to participate, have them contact Sharon Daugherty at 561.625.2568 or [sdaugher@pbcgov.org](mailto:sdaugher@pbcgov.org). No theater or performance background needed.
- **Social Media:** Natalie Peralta (PBCVS Victim Advocate) & Clarice Redding (PBCVS Green Dot Coordinator) will be heading up the new Twitter account.

**Training Committee:** Susan Carlini, SART/OVW Grant Coordinator

- FDLE *Signal 35*, four hour block training is scheduled for September 30, 2016. The State Attorney, PBSO Detective, and CPT have been added to the agenda. Registration is open through Palm Beach State College criminal justice site and survey monkey. Law enforcement will receive CEUs. All SART members were send registration informational.
- OVW SART partner CILO has completed a responding to victims with disabilities hand book. There will be scheduled trainings to SART members and law enforcement by request. The booklets will be disseminated as part of the trainings. An email will be sent to all SART members with further information.
- Florida Sex Crimes Conference will be held at the Jupiter Resort August 1-5, 2016. Registration is still open.

**Campus Committee:** Sharon Daugherty

Nothing to report at this time

**Legislative:** Joseph Sophie, Palm Beach County Legislative Delegation Aide  
 Senator Kirstin Gellibrand's amendment to the 2017 defense policy bill, which would transfer from commanders to military prosecutor's decisions on whether to prosecute military sexual assault cases, was not given a vote. It was blocked by Senator Mike Lee who was protesting having one of his own amendments denied a vote. Her amendment fell five votes short in 2014 and 10 in 2015.

SB 636, establishing timeframes for rape kit submittal and testing, takes effect tomorrow, July 1<sup>st</sup>.

- **SART Case Staffing's:** Carol Messam Gordon  
 SART Case Staffing was held on June 10, 2016 here at the SART Center. We also had separate case staffing on June 17, 2016 in the Victim Services Office located in the Delray Beach Courthouse. At the case staffing on June 10, 2016 one victim was a runaway who was sexually assaulted in another county. The advocate assigned was unable to get in contact with the law enforcement agency in the county where the crime occurred and after multiple attempts could not get cooperation from any agency to assist. We agreed to have victim do a non reporting exam to preserve the evidence and to get a supervisor involved to assist with working out the details regarding jurisdiction. As a result of this case I will be getting together with key agencies to see how victims who are sexually assaulted in neighboring counties can receive assistance to report the crime when they return to this county. On another case a victim was in the emergency room and was non responsive. Law enforcement contacted our hotline and requested that a SANE and advocate respond to do a forensic exam. As a result consent procedures will be developed as it relates to SANE responding to non responsive victims. At the case staffing on Friday, June 17 we had participation from law enforcement and hospital staff. The staffing occurred in the Delray Beach Victim Services because participants worked in the south end of the county and it was more convenient for them to participate. Presenting problem was that there was conflicting information from victim and jurisdiction could not be determined. To assist the victim the doctor on call wanted to do the rape exam with or without a victim advocate. She also did not know that we had possession of the rape kits. She also did not realize that a SANE nurse was available to do the exam. SANE Nurse Coordinator was contacted and reviewed the SART protocol for

SANE response with the doctor on staff. At the case staffing we were able to educate the doctor on the procedure and she was able to get a better understanding of our county wide protocol. We will also be visiting the hospital to provide additional training. The lieutenant that responded will be meeting with his staff to review the information received at the case staff and also his department's protocol as it relates to responding to victims of sexual assault. Next case staffing is July 8 at 10am.

**AdHoc:**

- **Non-Reporting:** In progress
- **Walk in Their Shoes:** In progress

**Member field discussion:**

Nothing at this time

**Next Meeting:** August 25, 2016 from 2:00 – 3:00 PM