



"No matter what people tell you,
words and ideas can change the
world."

-Robin Williams

Attempts To Address Challenges Within The Victim Service System

This section of the plan reviews a few attempts to address challenges which have been faced within the victim service system of Oklahoma. The plan is grounded in the premise outlined during the five (5) focus groups facilitated during the Needs Assessment phase. In short, we honor those who have come before and the foundation they created and “deposited” into our store consciousness. We recognize that these “deposits” have helped create the current environment, i.e. the collective consciousness in which we now work. We release any of the “unwholesome” thoughts and manifestations to the “truth” of what is so that they may be transformed into wholesome parts of a safe, secure, stable environment for all. We release all “wholesome” thoughts and manifestation to the “truth” of what is so that they may be nourished and strengthen the foundation of the safe, secure, stable environment we all wish to create.

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OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TASK FORCE

The Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) Domestic Violence Taskforce was created in 2012. Under the leadership of the Taskforce, collaborative projects to increase awareness and education are being developed. Current Taskforce activities include:

- the “Purple Ribbon” campaign for all OKDHS offices across the state; and
- a new domestic violence resources and training website (www.okdhs.org/purpleribbon)

In 2014, the OKDHS Director formed a child welfare-domestic violence committee for the purpose of enhancing child welfare practice related to children exposed to domestic violence. Since inception, the committee has created a “Child Welfare Domestic Violence Manual” providing guidance for Child Welfare Specialists. Domestic violence training is now being provided to child welfare specialists prior to working on their first case and statewide mandatory domestic violence training for all Child Welfare Supervisors and District Directors is well underway.

MENTAL HEALTH AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COMMITTEE

The Mental Health and Domestic Violence Committee is comprised of multiple mental health and substance abuse agencies/organizations in Oklahoma including the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (ODMHSAS), Oklahoma Psychological Association (OPA), Oklahoma Drug and Alcohol Professional Counselors Association (ODAPCA), Oklahoma State Board of Licensed Social Workers (OSBSLW), and the Oklahoma Association

for Marriage and Family Therapy (OKAMFT). Other committee members include the Office of the Attorney General Victim Services Unit, YWCA Oklahoma City, a Domestic Violence Service Provider, and the Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. The committee activities include:

- creating web-based online domestic violence training for mental health and substance abuse professionals;
- placing a Domestic Violence Liaison in all OKDMHSAS contracted agencies in Oklahoma; and
- development of a permanent “domestic violence track” at the annual state Alcohol and Drug Conference organized by ODAPCA

OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL - VICTIM SERVICES UNIT

The OAG-VSU in collaboration with the Oklahoma County Post Adjudication Review Board (domestic violence specific), work to address systemic gaps which negatively impact children exposed to domestic violence. The Post Adjudication Review Board, implemented by the presiding Oklahoma County District Court Juvenile Judge, review every case in which a child is adjudicated as deprived to determine if said child has been exposed to domestic violence. If so, steps are taken to ensure the safety of the family. The board members routinely make recommendations to the juvenile court and child welfare which include trauma evaluations and trauma intervention services for children exposed to domestic violence.

OKLAHOMA DISTRICT ATTORNEYS COUNCIL

On 21 April 2015, the Department of Justice recognized Suzanne Kay Breedlove with the Ronald Reagan Public Policy Award for creating clear policies for

crime victims' compensation in tribal communities, during the National Crime Victims' Rights Service Awards ceremony in Washington, D.C.

Ms. Breedlove, who has worked for the Oklahoma District Attorneys Council since 1983, developed a new crime victims' compensation policy which includes tribal cultural services, and has since been used as a model throughout the U.S. As the state's Director of Victims Services, she served as the Administrator of the Oklahoma Crime Victims Compensation and Victim Assistance Programs, and has increased the fund from a zero balance to more than a seven-million-dollar surplus. She also contributed to the first Mass Casualty Protocol Manual for Victims Compensation Programs, and oversaw the three-year Oklahoma State-Tribal Crime Victim Liaison Demonstration Program, which improved outreach and services to American Indian crime victims. [See <https://www.justice.gov/tribal/pr/justice-department-honors-oklahoma-victim-advocate-creating-crime-victims-compensation>, retrieved on 7 Nov 2017]



The Crime Victims Compensation Board embarked on a campaign to rebrand the program with a new logo, with the intent to bring more people to the program by offering a logo that is inclusive and friendly rather than the governmental state-seal appearance.

The Victims' Compensation Program, housed within the District Attorneys Council, has on-going interaction with district attorneys and victim witness coordinators. Law enforcement officers receive on-going training, materials are supplied to all entities, and judges receive cards showing the amount of VCA and what the VCA goes toward. Each Federal Victim-Witness Specialist organizes two state/tribal/federal roundtables per year. These meetings bring together: tribal leaders, tribal victim advocates, state victim advocates, local victim programs, state victims compensation, tribal prosecutors and judges, tribal court clerks, Indian child welfare personnel and others interested in crime victims' issues. These roundtables were started through an OVC discretionary grant which funded a State-Tribal Crime Victim Liaison. The former Liaison, now with the Secretary of State's Office as Deputy of Native American Affairs, also attends these meetings along with tribal liaisons from other state agencies.

Additionally, Victims Services Discussion Groups are held three (3) times per year to bring together top-level managers from state coalitions and the criminal justice system discuss issues impacting various victim groups. Representatives from the following agencies attend the discussion groups: U.S. Attorneys Victim Specialists, FBI Victim Specialist, VOCA Assistance & Comp Administrator, Public Info Officer for Victims Comp, Deputy Secretary of State for Native American Affairs, the Oklahoma Coalition Against DV/SA, Native Americans Against Violence, Corrections, Medical Examiner's Office, the Courts, Department of Mental Health, OAG-VSU, Department of Health, Victim-Survivor Degree Program through a local university, OSBI, and the DAs System.

The District Attorneys Council developed and submitted the 2017-2020 VAWA Implementation Plan. The development of the plan included distribution of a survey, facilitation of listening meetings, and a review of data sources. As part of the process, the Federal Grants Division Director and Grant Programs Specialist held a meeting with representatives of state agencies which oversee FVPSA, VOCA, and RPE Programs. A draft of the 2017-2020

VAWA Implementation Plan was provided to each representative prior to the meeting. The OAG-VSU, in coordination with the OCADVSA, was working on the FVPSA Strategic Plan at the time of this meeting. During this meeting, discussion was held on the types of projects funded by each federal grant, the distribution processes, the potential overlap among the programs, and the ways that these federal grant programs can improve gaps in services and increase coordination. As a result of this meeting, the State of Oklahoma S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women Act Grant Implementation Plan for 2017-2020 includes consideration of ways to expand outreach to tribal programs, fund prevention activities coordinated with RPE, and use S.T.O.P. VAWA funds to complement VOCA-funded agencies or fund those who may not receive any other federal funds.

OKLAHOMA COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

On 22 August 2017, the OCADVSA adopted new bylaws for the corporation which have expanded its membership. Now, three (3) membership classes exist: Individual, Corporate, and Program. The Governance Committee is now a standing committee comprised of a Chairperson and a minimum of three (3) members, at least one of whom shall be a Board Member. The Governance Committee will aid the Board in continual Board Development. The intent of these membership changes is to include community members, non-certified domestic violence programs and others, including professionals who can offer expertise in critical functions which will foster a healthy, long-term, sustainable organization.

The OCADVSA Prevention Leadership Team continues outreach efforts to foster relationships of underserved communities. Outreach has been

successful with some Latina groups, members of the African American community, some Native American organizations and programs, and the Turkish community. Work toward a collaborative relationship with the Cimarron Alliance (LGBTQ+) is underway. Further, OCADVSA appoints five representatives to the Office of Attorney Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Advisory Committee. This committee provides advice on the administration of domestic violence and sexual assault services in Oklahoma, reviews and makes recommendations related to standards and criteria for certified agencies, and reports to the OCADVSA Steering Committee meetings.

OAG DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT ADVISORY BOARD

The OAG's Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault advisory board has amended the Oklahoma Administrative Code to state all certified programs shall assess the risk and needs of the children accompanying primary victims, and provide children's services to address the impact of violence and trauma in their lives. It should be noted that half of the board are OAG-certified Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault program personnel. The Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault programs are mandated to conduct trauma screenings which assess the impact of trauma to children and to refer for trauma intervention counseling services as appropriate.

The activities listed above are but a few of the activities which have taken place over the past few years. The Threshold of Transformation advisors realize ongoing efforts to address the challenges we all face in providing trauma-informed services to victims are taking place in almost every community across the state. One intended outcome for the Strategic Visioning process is to improve methods of communication, data collection, reporting, and celebrating these efforts.