



ACTIONALLIANCE

Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance

STRATEGIC PLAN

2008-2012

INTRODUCTION

The Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance formed in 2004 to carry forward the work of the previously separate sexual and domestic violence coalitions, Virginians Aligned Against Sexual Assault and Virginians Against Domestic Violence. A strategic plan was adopted in 2004 to guide the work of the new coalition through 2007. In 2007 the Governance Committee of the Governing Body initiated the process of developing this 2008-2012 Strategic Plan. They invited representatives from each of the Task Forces and Caucuses as well as the staff to join them in a planning process facilitated by one of the Co-Directors.

The Strategic Plan Work Group, comprised of 18 members, engaged in a process of reviewing data to frame needs and resources as well as “stepping outside of the box” using tools such as appreciative inquiry and generative thinking. A list of nearly 100 strategies was then circulated to the membership for feedback. The feedback provided by more than 100 members was carefully considered, and the present proposal was developed.

At the September 18 Membership and Governing Body meeting the full membership considered and adopted the Strategic Plan for 2008-2012.

This plan will guide the work of the Action Alliance for the upcoming four years. The Governing Body will assume the responsibility of ensuring that the work of the Action Alliance is consistent with this plan and for supporting committees, task forces, caucuses and the staff as they engage in the plan actions. The Leadership Development Committee will assume responsibility for promoting leadership in the Alliance to achieve these goals. The Principles and Process Committee will guide the coalition membership and staff to ensure that the actions taken as a part of our plan are carried out in a manner that is consistent with our Mission and Guiding Principles. Each Task Force and Caucus will play an active role in carrying out the actions identified in the plan—using this plan as a tool for guiding the activities of the Task Force/Caucus in the years ahead. The Co-Directors and staff will use the plan to guide public policy work, resource development, training, funding proposals and more as they move through the upcoming years. And the full membership of the Action Alliance can expect regular reports on our Actions!

ACTION ALLIANCE MISSION: The Action Alliance, a diverse group of individuals and organizations, believes that ALL people have the right to a life free of violence

We recognize that sexual and domestic violence are linked to other forms of oppression, which disproportionately affect women, children and other marginalized people, harming individuals, families and societies as a whole.

We will use our diverse and collective voices to create a Virginia free from sexual and domestic violence -- inspiring others to join and support values of equality, respect, and shared power.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:The following principles were created to guide our transformation into one organization, and our progression thereafter.

As The Alliance conducts its work, it is essential that survivors, the interests of survivors, and those impacted by sexual assault and domestic violence are at the forefront of all decision-making.

Related Actions include #31, formation of a speaker's bureau of diverse survivors trained to speak with media, public policy leaders and others; and #40, expanding the voices of survivors in decision-making with a variety of different strategies.

Recognizing that local agencies have been the foundation of coalition work by connecting communities and survivors to statewide advocacy, we are committed to an Alliance in which Sexual Assault Crisis Centers and Domestic Violence Programs continue to be the driving force of The Alliance.

Related Actions include #8, working together with the agency directors on a plan to increase resources so that every county and city in Virginia has basic advocacy services in place; and #22, holding regular meetings with sexual and domestic violence agency staff and directors to share information.

Recognizing the historical inequities between resources allocated to address sexual assault and domestic violence, we seek to create a change that includes an Alliance that equitably addresses the elimination of both sexual and domestic violence.

Related Actions include #13, developing a standard of care for health care professionals responding to sexual violence; and #36, seeking state funding for sexual violence prevention work.

Recognizing that sexual and domestic violence affects all Virginians, we seek to create an Alliance where those who have been traditionally oppressed in society and/or marginalized in anti-violence work have the opportunity to be full and active participants in The Alliance. The Alliance recognizes that representation of traditionally oppressed groups is only a beginning. Intentional diversity also involves an analysis of oppression and a commitment to challenging and changing the disempowering influences of dominant culture. Everyone must share responsibility for ensuring that ALL voices are heard and valued.

Related Actions include #39, revising our mission to reflect our commitment to being an anti-racist organization; and #43, finding ways to make children and youth members and active participants in the coalition.

RAISE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: Increase the number and diversity of people who are aware of the dynamics of sexual and domestic violence, the resources available in their communities, and the work of the Action Alliance.

Action 1: Develop and implement a **communications plan** that includes media outreach strategies, communication and information sharing with the membership of the Action Alliance, and effective web-based strategies to support the overall success of the strategic plan.

Action 2: Publish and continue to update resources related to sexual and domestic violence; make these **resources available in multiple formats** and ensure that translated materials are culturally and linguistically appropriate.

Action 3: Organize **statewide observance of Sexual and Domestic Violence Awareness Month(s)**.

Action 4: Update the statewide Silent Witness display in collaboration with members from across the Commonwealth; make **Silent Witness and Beating Hearts** available to member agencies for display in their communities to **raise awareness of domestic violence**.

Action 5: Maintain, expand and update the **Art of Surviving**, including the online digital exhibition, as a vehicle to amplify voices of survivors and make connections between **surviving sexual violence, creative expression, spirituality and healing**.

Action 6: Increase the capacity of Virginia's high school and college students to effectively identify and respond to behaviors that are potential precursors to intimate partner and dating violence through continuing the **Red Flag bystander intervention Campaign** on college campuses across Virginia and developing a new Campaign for high school students.

EXPAND ACCESS TO SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES: Increase the capacity of diverse service providers to make services accessible, age-appropriate and culturally relevant for survivors of sexual and domestic violence.

Action 7: Operate the **Virginia Family Violence and Sexual Assault Hotline** as a resource for the public and for sexual and domestic violence advocacy agencies, linking people to safety, support and community services; ensure that at least two advocates are answering the hotline between the hours of 8am and 8pm, seven days a week.

Action 8: Work with sexual and domestic violence advocacy agency directors to develop a long range plan to secure **adequate funding to ensure that basic advocacy services are available in all Virginia Communities.**

Action 9: Expand support and resources, including promotion of promising practices, to sexual and domestic violence advocacy agencies related to working with **survivors who have mental health needs and/or chemical dependency.**

Action 10: Expand support and resources for sexual and domestic violence advocacy agencies and communities to **meet the needs of immigrant victims** including those who are not documented, those who have limited English proficiency and/or those who are afraid to report the violence they have experienced to law enforcement agencies.

Action 11: Expand access **language accessible services for victims with limited English proficiency** through additional Spanish-speaking advocates and access to phone language interpretation services on the Family Violence and Sexual Assault Hotline.

Action 12: Collaborate with the **Virginia Anti-Violence Project** and Equality Virginia to provide resources, technical assistance and training that will **expand services to the LGBTQ² community across Virginia.**

Action 13: Expand support and resources for sexual and domestic violence advocacy agencies and communities to meet the needs of **children and youth who have been exposed to sexual and/or domestic violence.**

Action 14: Convene a work group to analyze the data about the continued high rates of family violence **fatalities in the African-American community** and develop strategies to enhance access to safety and support that focus on **addressing the unmet needs of African-American victims of sexual and domestic violence.**

Action 15: Create a **tool for reviewing Action Alliance training curricula and public policy** positions to ensure that they will promote access to services for people of all races, ethnicities, mental and physical abilities, genders, gender identities, ages, sexual orientations, and those Virginians with limited English proficiency.

SUPPORT SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGENCIES: Increase the capacity of Sexual and Domestic Violence Advocacy agencies (including, but not limited to, those on college campuses, and those serving culturally specific communities) to effectively provide intervention and prevention activities in their communities.

Action 16: Coordinate the peer **Accreditation process for Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies** to promote accountability and consistency of services across the state, reviewing the criteria at least once in the planning period and expanding the anti-racism strategies included in administrative and service standards.

Action 17: Continue to **operate VAdata on behalf of local sexual and domestic violence advocacy agencies and state funders** and explore making the system a resource nationally; update the community services (training, technical assistance, public awareness) components of the system; add a prevention data collection tool and report; add a survivor feedback set of forms and reports; and publish annual reports for the public and for statewide policy use.

Action 18: Offer a wide range of training, including: interactive training that supports sexual and domestic violence advocates; expanding the **Basic Advocacy Training** to include a training on cultural competence; updating and possibly combining sexual and domestic violence **training for trainers**; continuing to offer an annual training **retreat**; and web-based and other **distance learning** options that make training accessible to a wider group of advocates.

Action 19: Provide **training, resources and technical assistance to sexual and domestic violence advocacy agencies** to enhance their ability to **reach diverse populations across the lifespan**, from pre-school children to the older adults, with a particular emphasis on strengthening age and culturally appropriate work with children and youth.

Action 20: Serve as a **clearinghouse and lending library** for resources, best practices and model policies that support the work of SDVAs, including **model policies on anti-discrimination** and other elements of becoming an anti-racist organization; **provide training on implementation** of best practices and model policies.

Action 21: **Collaborate with our statewide partners** to conduct **regular statewide meetings** for staff and directors of SDVAs, rotating the locations of the meetings to reach **each region of the state** and providing opportunities for networking, information sharing and training.

Action 22: Offer **on-site visits** to each **new sexual and domestic violence advocacy agency director** and provide a written resource packet on agency management, accreditation and the services of the Action Alliance.

Action 23: Honor and respect both the history and future of sexual and domestic violence agency work by spotlighting staff and the work of host localities at statewide meetings in each region of the state and holding the **annual Catalyst Awards event recognizing advocates and their community partners**.

Action 24: Promote the leadership of historically oppressed and marginalized groups of advocates by **increasing funding for training scholarships** and ensuring that at least 25% of scholarships are awarded to people of color.

PROMOTE EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY RESPONSES TO SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: increase the capacity of communities to coordinate an effective response to the needs of all victims of sexual and domestic violence, with an emphasis on populations that have historically been underserved.

Action 25: Assess the effectiveness of current laws and policies guiding the response to sexual and domestic violence in Virginia and develop **public policy priorities for 2011-2015** that will significantly improve safety, accountability and access to services for all people.

Action 26: Provide **strategic support for sexual assault response teams (SARTs), and domestic violence community teams**, particularly in rural communities.

Action 27: Continue the **Break the Silence campaign reaching out to African-American communities of faith** to strengthen the response of family and friends to victims and perpetrators of sexual and domestic violence.

Action 28: Collaborate with statewide partners that focus on older adults in order to address domestic, family, and sexual violence with community partners in a variety of settings where older adults reside, **promoting promising practices for services and outreach to victims in later life.**

Action 29: Collaborate with the Virginia Chapter of the International Association of **Forensic Nurse Examiners** to develop a **standard of care for the health care response to sexual violence**, to distribute the standard across the state, and to provide training and technical assistance on the implementation of the standard.

Action 30: **Collaborate with statewide partners engaged in activities that strengthen the community response to sexual and domestic violence**, including, but not limited to, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (fatality review), the Office of the Attorney General, the Virginia Department of Social Services Domestic Violence Action Team, the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund, Child Advocacy Centers (child sexual abuse), the Department of Education (family life education), and the primary funders of sexual and domestic violence intervention and prevention services (the Department of Criminal Justice Services, the Department of Social Services, the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Department of Health).

Action 31: Publish the **Revolution** journal as a resource for professionals working to end sexual and domestic violence.

Action 32: Create a **speaker's bureau of survivors** with diverse experiences trained in public speaking, media relations and activism to testify at government hearings, speak to the media and speak at community events.

Action 33: Establish **membership positions on economic justice issues**, for example access to housing, health care and living wages, and develop partnerships to work in collaboration to achieve economic justice consistent with those positions.

PREVENT SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: Partner with communities to reduce risk factors and promote protective factors associated with the perpetration of sexual and domestic violence.

Action 34: Participate in the national **DELTA** project, **expanding Virginia's capacity to engage in intimate partner violence prevention** and implementing activities included in the statewide intimate partner violence prevention strategic plan.

Action 35: Continue to work with the Virginia Department of Health and the community and statewide partners who have been a part of **Virginia's Sexual Violence Prevention and Education (SVPE) program** to implement the SVPE strategic plan.

Action 36: Secure **funding for community-based sexual violence prevention** projects modeled after the DELTA intimate partner violence prevention project.

Action 37: Establish new **partnerships with education professionals, educators in faith-based settings, and community youth advocates** to build a foundation for substantially increasing education on prevention and early intervention with children and youth from pre-K through grade 12.

Action 38: Advocate for **promoting healthy sexuality and respectful relationships** in Family Life Education Standards of Learning (SOLs).

BUILD THE CAPACITY OF THE ACTION ALLIANCE TO CARRY OUT OUR MISSION: increase the resources that are available to carry out the mission, guiding principles and action priorities adopted by the membership.

Action 39: **Revise the mission** of the Action Alliance to reflect a clear commitment to being an **anti-racist organization**.

Action 40: Develop an Action Alliance **statement of commitment to anti-racism work** that addresses sexual and domestic violence and include a commitment to engage in the ongoing process of anti-racism work, including seeking designated funding to support anti-racism work.

Action 41: Take action to be an anti-racist agency by supporting regular **meetings of staff caucuses** for people of color and white people, by supporting a staff change team, by engaging in an **ongoing analysis of power and culture** within the agency, by supporting and **mentoring people of color** on the staff, and by implementing strategies recommended by the staff change team to **strengthen the foundation of anti-racism work**.

Action 42: Expand the ways in which we **bring the voices of those impacted by the experience of sexual and domestic violence into Action Alliance decisions and activities**, including, but not limited to, the Documenting Our Work component of VAdata, the Art of Surviving, the Statewide Hotline, and the Survivor Caucus.

Action 43: Create an organizational structure where our constituency includes children, youth and families, creating a **children and youth membership category** and facilitating the involvement of more youth in the governance and work of the coalition.

Action 44: Participate in **national strategies to address sexual and domestic violence**, maintain memberships in the national sexual and domestic violence policy organizations, and engage in federal advocacy work that supports resources for state coalitions and local sexual and domestic violence advocacy agencies.

Action 45: **Increase the membership of the Action Alliance**, including a **specific focus on the participation of men in the coalition** as members and as active participants in the work of the coalition.

Action 46: **Continuously improve** the work of the Action Alliance through evaluation of projects, staff development, and policies and practice that make coalition work more cost effective and environmentally friendly.

Action 47: Create a **fund development plan** to increase general funds to 25% of the total agency budget by 2012.

Action 48: **Expand the compensation package for all staff** to ensure a living wage, family leave, and health care benefits that are available to employees, partners and their dependents.

GLOSSARY

Sexual Violence:

Domestic Violence:

Family Violence:

Intimate Partner Violence:

Oppression:

Marginalized:

Survivors:

Intentional Diversity:

Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate:

Collaboration:

Capacity:

Sexual and Domestic Violence Advocacy Agency:

Gender:

Gender Identity:

Sexual Orientation:

LGBTQ²:

Accreditation:

VAdata:

Basic Advocacy Training:

People of Color:

Sexual Assault Response Teams:

Domestic Violence Community Teams:

Break the Silence:

Healthy Sexuality:

Healthy Relationship:

Risk Factors:

Protective Factors:

Partnerships:

Anti-Racist:

Documenting Our Work:

Art of Surviving:

Action Alliance Member: