

The Governor's Advisory Council Against Sexual Violence (GACASV) Prevention and Public Education Committee (PPEC) – PPEC at a Glance

The Prevention and Public Education Committee (PPEC) is a committee of the Governor's Advisory Council Against Sexual Violence (GACASV). It was created to address the Governor's directive in the 2002 Executive Order 40 that established the GACASV "to recommend solutions in the prevention of sexual violence."

Since its inception in March 2004, the PPEC has strived to make the greatest impact possible in keeping sexual violence from occurring in our state. PPEC determined to shift the focus of prevention responsibility from potential victims to potential perpetrators. This shift in thinking was groundbreaking. There was much the committee needed to do to build their individual and collective capacity as well as build the capacity of New Jersey for effective sexual violence prevention planning; emphasizing prevention of perpetration rather than prevention of victimization.

In 2005, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced a funding opportunity to assist a limited number of states in building their capacity to conduct comprehensive sexual violence prevention planning, implementation and evaluation. Since the PPEC was poised to take on this work the Division on Women, jointly with the Office on Women's Health, partnered with the New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Violence and applied for this federal grant program. New Jersey was one of six states selected to participate in the CDC's six year EMPOWER Project (Enhancing and Making Programs and Outcomes Work to End Rape). EMPOWER served to shape the national direction of sexual violence prevention efforts and New Jersey, through the work of PPEC, has been identified by the CDC as a leader in the nation.

The PPEC includes membership from inside and outside state government, who serve as the state's sexual violence prevention planning team. The PPEC has been responsible for creating the NJ Sexual Violence Primary Prevention Plan and the NJ Evaluation and Sustainability Plan, which can both be accessed on this site. The goals of the Prevention Plan are:

- To create **social norms** in NJ that are supportive of gender equality and respect for women and girls by reducing rigid sexual stereotypes and increasing male accountability and other indicators of healthy sexuality.
- To increase public attention to the **impact of the mass media** on sexual violence by providing residents with messages that support media literacy and underline the negative social impact of sexualized media messages commonly available.
- To increase **by-stander intervention** by middle school and college age students in high risk social groupings/situations (including but not limited to fraternities and sports teams), including increasing interventions by those who surround the high risk youth such as caregivers, teachers, friends and other community supporters

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- To increase opportunities for healthy **community connectedness** for young males (middle, high school and college level) who have been exposed to family violence
- To increase **empathy** skills in young children and increase **parental/caregiver attachment** in targeted communities
- To create and implement **institutional policies/procedures and training that protect highly vulnerable populations** from victimization by increasing supervision and screening for potential perpetration. To create and implement educational programs for a wide range of caregivers (institutional, family and peers) on risks of perpetration
- To increase **funding** available for sexual violence prevention strategies, **data collection** and **system capacity upgrades**, and minimize negative financial impact on intervention activities. To maximize use of scarce resources by **integrating data collection** in NJ for all issues that have overlapping risk and protective factors
- To ascertain and develop clear **commitment of state agencies and communities** represented on the PPEC for the sexual violence prevention plan and its implementation
- To ensure a **coordinated system for data collection** and analysis in NJ
- To ensure there will be **sufficient skill, experience, leadership, information, human resources, evaluation tools and collaboration in funded sexual violence prevention providers** (RPE sub-grantees) to implement and sustain viable strategies for long term reduction and primary prevention of sexual violence in NJ
- To develop a baseline and **track changes for NJ** on societal perceptions, norms, behaviors and attitudes toward key risk factors of sexual violence

To support the work of sexual violence prevention:

- Become familiar with and support the work of the sexual violence prevention providers in their jurisdictions
- Encourage the participation of statewide and local leaders in supporting sexual violence prevention efforts
- Facilitate coalition building between sexual violence prevention providers and stakeholders within their jurisdictions

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- Facilitate the implementation of policies and procedures that protect vulnerable populations
- Assist with the coordination of data collection systems
- Become a spokesperson and leader for sexual violence prevention efforts
- Model positive bystander-intervention behaviors among colleagues, peers and constituents
- Become familiar with the social norms and media messages that create a culture that encourages sexually violent behavior, and educate others about the impact of these messages in creating a sexually violent culture
- Encourage the media to focus on positive messages that exemplify healthy relationships, respect, empathy, and consent, and to educate against the use of language and images that place blame on victims versus perpetrator behavior

For more information on the GACASV's PPEC, contact Vicki Lunde Rodriguez in the Division on Women at 609-888-7580 or Vicki.Rodriguez@dcf.state.nj.us.