

# Preventing Sexual Violence in Wisconsin

Strengthening Capacity of Local Partners to Stop Sexual Violence BEFORE it Occurs



The **Wisconsin Department of Health Services** is engaged in a number of innovative programs designed to build local readiness to prevent sexual violence and promote social change. With funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) **Rape Prevention and Education** (RPE) program, Wisconsin is working collaboratively with diverse stakeholders, including the **Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA)**, sexual assault service providers, child sexual abuse prevention professionals, youth-serving organizations, community-based groups, and other partners to **stop sexual violence BEFORE it occurs**.

## WHAT IS WISCONSIN DOING TO PREVENT SEXUAL VIOLENCE?

In 2010, Wisconsin engaged a diverse group of partners to develop a statewide strategic plan for the prevention of sexual violence. The state plan, titled **Forward Wisconsin: A Plan for the Prevention of Sexual Violence**,<sup>1</sup> articulates Wisconsin's vision for creating the social change necessary to prevent sexual violence. It also serves as a guide to local communities as they identify and implement **effective prevention strategies**, build **community support and leadership**, empower community members to actively **change social and cultural norms** that support violence, and seek additional resources to support **community-focused activities** to prevent sexual violence. The plan itself centers on six focus areas within which the plan outlines two synergistic recommendations: one for state-level activity, and one for local-level activity. **Building evaluation capacity** among local partners so the state has a clear picture of **what's working and what's not to prevent sexual violence in Wisconsin** is included in the recommendations. To that end, the plan prioritizes the development and maintenance of a clearinghouse for resources to assist partners in implementing and evaluating strategies for the prevention of sexual violence that are based on strong scientific evidence.

The CDC RPE program has been strengthening our communities and striving to reduce the burden of sexual violence since 1994. CDC provides RPE funding to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands.

## WHY IS WISCONSIN WORKING TO PREVENT SEXUAL VIOLENCE?

In Wisconsin:

**18%**

of women are raped at some point in their lifetime

**41%**

of women are the victim of sexual violence other than rape at some point in their lifetime

**24%**

of men are the victim of sexual violence other than rape at some point in their lifetime

Source: National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010. Available at: ([https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/nisvs/2010\\_report.html](https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/nisvs/2010_report.html))

<sup>1</sup>Available at: <http://www.wcasa.org/pages/Prevention-ForwardWisconsin.php>

## WHAT IMPACT IS THE RPE PROGRAM INTENDED TO HAVE IN WISCONSIN?

The Wisconsin RPE program aims to prevent sexual violence by promoting **non-violent social norms, attitudes, beliefs, policies, and practices**.



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## WHAT CAN BE DONE TO BUILD CAPACITY OF LOCAL PARTNERS TO PREVENT SEXUAL VIOLENCE?

Wisconsin is leading the way in the effort to build the readiness of local partners to prevent sexual violence. To equip local partners with the tools they need for strong prevention efforts, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services provides support to WCASA for the maintenance of the **online clearinghouse** that was identified as a critical component of the state plan. The clearinghouse is devoted to providing sexual assault service providers and other partners with information, tools, and other resources needed to evaluate prevention and advocacy programs and services, ensuring that Wisconsin residents benefit from programs with strong foundations and continuous quality improvement.<sup>2</sup> The evaluation tools and resources featured in the clearinghouse are organized around a series of **six evaluation steps**. Within each step, a comprehensive set of tools and resources are provided.

<b>Step 1: Before You Begin</b> Guidance on the basics of program evaluation, including common methods and ethical requirements.	<b>Step 2: Plan It Out</b> Determining what the program is intended to accomplish and identifying the best questions to ask to see if those goals are met.	<b>Step 3. Select Indicators</b> Learning to measure the answers to your central questions to determine if your program is working.
<b>Step 4: Select the Design</b> Identifying the best method(s) for collecting the answers to your questions.	<b>Step 5. Deal With Data</b> Tools and methods for analyzing the data you collect in order to answer your central questions.	<b>Step 6. Use Results</b> Translating the answers you find into a format that is understandable and useful for sharing your results with partners and for using your results to inform subsequent versions of your program or effort.

In addition to the clearinghouse, Wisconsin helps support local partner evaluation efforts by **conducting trainings** at conferences and workshops and providing **technical assistance** focused on the evaluation of sexual violence prevention strategies. The combination of tools, training, and peer-to-peer collaboration is intended to provide comprehensive support for state partners to determine what is working with their programs and how they can continue to improve for the benefit of Wisconsin's residents.

**How will we know if this approach is working?** Although Wisconsin's efforts to build capacity among local partners has not been formally evaluated, there has been increased interest from partners in accessing evaluation materials and seeking evaluation assistance from WCASA. As a result, local partners are incorporating new evaluation strategies and using new tools to assess the impact of their own sexual violence prevention strategies.

**What does this mean for Wisconsin?** Thanks to funding from the CDC RPE program, efforts are underway across the state to:



For additional information or to locate contact information for the state RPE program, please visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/rpe/states.html>

<sup>2</sup>Available at: <http://www.wcasa.org/pages/Prevention-CoreConcepts.php>