

Goal #2:
Promote healthy LGBT sexuality and relationships to prevent violence against LGBT people.

LGBT people are at increased risk for sexual violence victimization as compared to their heterosexual peers.

ACTION STEPS:

1) Train programs to promote healthy LGBT relationships and sexuality and prevent violence against LGBT people.

2) Develop partnerships for additional research about sexual and domestic violence against LGBT people to inform prevention strategies.

Goal #3:
Promote healthy sexuality and relationships to prevent violence against people with developmental disabilities.

According to the majority of published reports, individuals with disabilities are more likely than those in the general population to experience sexual assault victimization.

ACTION STEPS:

1) The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) will identify needs and resources to improve healthy sexuality and relationship training and programming for DDS providers and people with developmental disabilities.

2) Develop cross-training and partnerships between sexual and domestic violence programs, sexual health programs, abuse prevention programs, and DDS-funded programs.



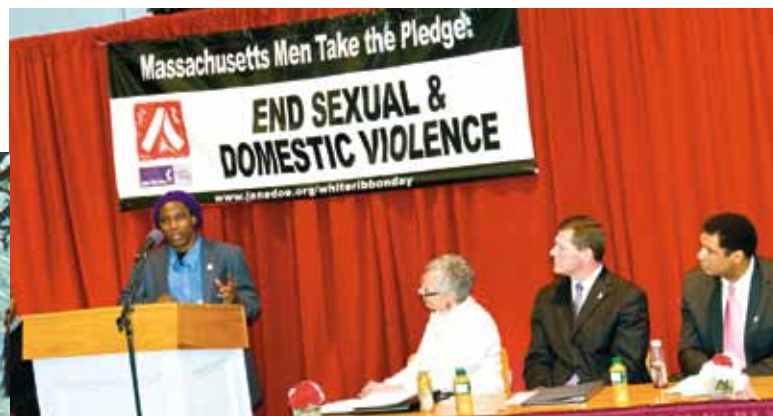
GOAL #4:
Government, community groups, and institutions will build leadership for the prevention of sexual and domestic violence.

ACTION STEPS:

1) Support staff and volunteers of organizations doing sexual and domestic violence prevention to plan, carry out and evaluate primary prevention. Focus on primary prevention with youth, racial/ethnic populations, LGBT people, Deaf people and people with disabilities.

2) Expand opportunities for males to engage in sexual and domestic violence prevention. Promote healthy relationships and sexuality through responsible fatherhood and other initiatives for men and boys.

3) Improve media reporting on sexual and domestic violence to include promoting healthy relationships and sexuality.



Here are some things WE ALL can do to prevent sexual and domestic violence:

(1) Talk about healthy relationships and sexual respect with our friends, neighbors and co-workers.

(2) Speak up and act when we see behaviors that worry us about someone doing harm or getting hurt.

(3) Listen to children, talk with them about healthy relationships and share what we hope for them.

(4) Write a letter to the editor or contact the sponsors of sexually violent messaging and marketing.

(5) Invite a local rape crisis center to discuss violence prevention with faith and/or community organizations.

(6) Ask school boards and other officials for policies that prevent violence and promote healthy sexuality.

(7) Be a mentor. Support local youth programs and ask about their sexual harassment policies.

(8) Contact local sexual or domestic violence programs to find out how we can get involved.

(9) Share this plan with someone else and take action together.

Everyone can help prevent sexual and domestic violence and promote healthy relationships and sexuality



How we will know if this plan works:

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Jane Doe, Inc., and the State Prevention Team will monitor the plan activities, to learn what is working and why. We are committed to continual and sustainable improvements.

Please contact us:

**MASSACHUSETTS STATE PREVENTION TEAM
MA Department of Public Health**

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To download the complete MA Sexual Violence Prevention Plan:
http://www.mass.gov/Eeohhs2/docs/dph/com_health/violence/sv_prevention_plan.pdf

For information about local sexual and domestic violence services in Massachusetts, please visit:
www.mass.gov/dph/sexualassaultservices or www.janedoe.org

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 **MASSACHUSETTS**
has a plan...

"...to keep children from developing problem sexual behaviors, help parents and educators teach children that sexual respect is expected, and assist adults in changing the climates in our diverse communities and institutions so that healthy relationships between all people can be the state norm...not only to improve our responses to incidents of sexual violence, but also toward shaping a safer, healthier future."

— Governor Deval Patrick, September 2009

Safety - Equality - Wellness
Healthy Relationships - Sexual Respect



Imagine a safer, healthier Massachusetts

Healthy Relationships – Sexual Respect – Equality

Vision:

To move beyond sexual violence, we must hold a clear vision for what is healthy in the lives of our families and communities. This is our commitment to healthy sexuality, healthy relationships, and equality.

Sexual respect means honoring the personal boundaries of every adult, teen, and child and ensuring that each has access to the nurturing connections they deserve. It requires basic respect for people, and our diverse cultures, disabilities, gender identities, sexual orientations and ages.

In many cases, preventing sexual violence will be linked to domestic violence issues. We will promote respect, mutuality, equality and open communications, in all of the ways we relate to other people.

Massachusetts now has the information and knowledge to make a difference. Here is what can be done:

- ◆ Work together with our families, social groups, workplaces, and government to promote sexual respect and healthy relationships.
- ◆ Help all communities in Massachusetts to get involved in sexual and domestic violence prevention efforts.

Individuals, communities and institutions have a unique opportunity to address the prejudices that can unintentionally promote violent ideas and actions, including sexual and domestic violence.

Sexual violence hurts us all. Someone you know has experienced it. Sexual violence can lead to serious health problems, including the main causes of death and disability in the U.S. The cost to each of us, our families, and our communities is unacceptable.

- ◆ Nearly 13% of adults ages 18-65 years old in Massachusetts have had unwanted sexual contact at some time in their lives.
- ◆ 18% of girls and 7% of boys in MA high schools report ever having unwanted sexual contact.
- ◆ Massachusetts residents with disabilities, who are LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender), all children and adolescents, and women of color, are at increased risk for sexual violence victimization.¹

Sexual violence can be prevented. We need to understand the problem, know what can be done, and have a clear vision for change.

Who developed this plan:

The Massachusetts Sexual Violence Prevention Team represents a range of state and community-based agencies. The Team is brought together by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, with support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Team heard from many people across the state to make a plan to prevent sexual violence.

Definition:

Sexual violence is any sexual activity where consent is not freely given. Consent cannot be given when someone is: underage, incapacitated, or has certain disabilities. 'Sexual violence' includes a wide range of behaviors from a violent rape to drug assisted sexual assault to sexual harassment to sexual exploitation (e.g., downloading child pornography from the Internet). It includes sexual harm to people of all ages, genders, sexual orientations, ethnicities and abilities. This harm is most often done by someone we know, who may be young or old, a trusted professional, or in our own family.

Domestic or dating violence is physical, sexual, psychological or financial harm caused by a current or former partner or spouse, household member or dating partner.

¹ Citations available online at http://www.mass.gov/EeoHhs2/docs/dph/com_health/violence/sv_prevention_plan.pdf.

NEED HELP? PLEASE CALL.

Sexual Violence Hotline: 1-800-841-8371

SafeLink Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-877-785-2020

Emergency: 911

Protective and Risk Factors for Sexual and Domestic Violence

Research suggests that we can prevent sexual and domestic violence by increasing factors that protect people from developing violent behaviors. We can also decrease factors that create risk for violence. Together, these are called protective factors and risk factors. Here are selected factors to focus on in Massachusetts:

Individual factors

- ◆ **PROTECTIVE:** emotionally healthy youth and adults
- ◆ **RISK:** knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors that see rape and other forms of sexual violence as normal
- ◆ **RISK:** traditional beliefs about men and women (examples: women are the weaker sex, men should be tough)

Interpersonal and family factors

- ◆ **PROTECTIVE:** positive connections with emotionally healthy peers and adults
- ◆ **RISK:** friendship with sexually aggressive peers
- ◆ **RISK:** marriage conflict

Community factors

- ◆ **PROTECTIVE:** community connections
- ◆ **RISK:** high rates of unemployment
- ◆ **RISK:** lack of or no enforcement of policies against sexual harassment

Societal factors

- ◆ **PROTECTIVE:** low tolerance for crime and for violence
- ◆ **RISK:** a sense of male entitlement over women
- ◆ **RISK:** cultural beliefs that violence can solve disagreements

GOAL #1:

Youth and caregivers will value and develop skills for respectful relationships.

Youth is a key period for development of relationship values, attitudes and behaviors. Therefore, there is a need to promote healthy, respectful relationship and sexuality norms—and behaviors—with children, adolescents, and young adults in Massachusetts.

ACTION STEPS:

- 1) Educate parents and caregivers to help them support children's healthy sexual development and safety.
- 2) Support organizations working with children and adolescents in their efforts to prevent violence through new policies, increased staff training, stronger parent involvement, and educational programs for children and teens. Specifically address the needs of youth with disabilities and LGBT youth.
- 3) Teach adolescents about healthy sexuality and healthy relationships through school policies and programming.
- 4) Strengthen college and university policies and programming on healthy relationships and sexual and domestic violence prevention.

