

Vermont Victim Assistance Academy Action Plan

Mission Definition:

The mission of your project has to do with the ultimate result that you are trying to achieve. It provides the focus for and parameters of your work. It conveys information about your beliefs and values, and it expresses an ultimate destination.

The mission of the Vermont Victim Assistance Academy is to better serve a larger number of victims/survivors of crime by developing and implementing a statewide structure that supports sustainable, innovative training on victim/survivor issues for all those working with victims/survivors.

Goals Definition:

Once you are settled on your mission, you must establish a critical path to follow toward your ultimate purpose. The things that must be successfully addressed along this critical path become specific goals for your project.

Objectives Definition:

Once you have identified the specific goals along your critical path that must be accomplished, you will then have to decide on the precise steps that must be taken to best achieve each goal. These steps are your project tasks or objectives.

1. Conduct a needs assessment to determine if key stakeholders around the state share the need behind the mission. Use qualitative and quantitative approaches (Freirian question posing, focus groups, interviews and observation, and written assessments).
2. Build positive relationships with key stakeholders by establishing credibility in training and training coordination.
3. Engage key stakeholders of influence in a collaborative visioning process.
4. Clarify roles among those parties delivering, receiving, and organizing the training process.
5. Establish a funding arrangement of shared resources to sustain the project.
6. Create a program plan based on training principles and practical strategies.
7. Create and implement an evaluation plan.
8. Plan for graduated implementation.

Goal 1: Conduct a needs assessment to determine if key stakeholders around the state share the need behind the mission. Use qualitative and quantitative approaches (Freirian question posing, focus groups, interviews and observation, and written assessments).

Objectives for Goal 1:

Conduct needs assessment for those being trained.

- Victim Services 2000 (VS2000) contracts with the Vermont Center for Justice Research to conduct a needs assessment of Vermont's victim service organizations. Those who participate (community-based victim service providers, law enforcement and medical communities, and advocates from the State's Attorneys' Offices) identify a clear need for training on victim-related issues (completed 1999).
- Create and distribute a needs assessment instrument in partnership with the Vermont Ecumenical Council to help determine the specific training needs of faith community members throughout the state (completed 2000).
- After a focus group meeting with the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (the Network), create and distribute a needs assessment instrument to the Network office and its programs (completed 2000).
- After a focus group meeting with several state's attorney victim advocates, create and distribute a needs assessment tool for these advocates (completed 2001).
- Meet with the following focus groups to determine their training priorities:
 - The Department of Corrections
 - The South Royalton Legal Clinic of the Vermont Law School and the University of Vermont School of Medicine
 - The Department of Education
 - The Office of the Court Administrator
 - Department of Prevention, Assistance, Transition, and Health Access (PATH)
 - The Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services
 - The State's Attorney Advocates
 - The Criminal Justice Training Council (completed winter 2000–01)

Conduct needs assessment for trainers.

Determine priority training issues for the victims' field, as identified by the stakeholders with content expertise. Also, determine who the following stakeholders want as priority audiences:

- Vermont Victim/Survivor of Crime Council
- State's attorney advocates
- Vermont Center for Independent Living/victim advocates for the deaf community
- Mothers Against Drunk Driving
- Parents of Murdered Children/Compassionate Friends
- Disability Project for Victim Assistance
- Trauma commission members
- Social and Rehabilitation Services (Child Protection Agency)
- Sexual assault nurse examiners (SANEs)
- Adult Protective Services
- Refugee Resettlement Program
(completed fall 2000)

Goal 2: Build positive relationships with key stakeholders by establishing credibility in training and training coordination.

Train entities throughout the state.

Objectives for Goal 2:

- Collaboration between the Civil Legal Assistance Project and VS2000 results in the Civil Legal Assistance proposal, which focused training efforts on the VVAA.
- Revise the *Reparative Board Training Manual* for the Department of Corrections.
- Codesign and present "Domestic Violence 101" to policy executives and the Department of Corrections' field and facility staff (completed 1999, 2000).
- For the Department of Corrections' Victim Impact Panel trainings, design and deliver segments of Training of Trainers (completed 2001).
- Design and deliver victim services training for the Center for Sex Offender Management (completed 2001).
- Redesign and deliver "Traumatic Grief: The Synergism of Trauma and Grief" to state's attorney advocates at their annual retreat (completed 2000).
- Plan, write, revise, and deliver two Training of Trainers on "Restoring Justice to Victims Through the Reparative Board Process" to victim advocates (completed 2000).
- Design and deliver a Training of Trainers on housing and bankruptcy to attorneys for the Legal Assistance for Women project. Design and deliver Social Rehabilitation

Services training for community advocates who deal with battered women (completed 1999, 2000).

- Arrange for a Victim Impact Panel, composed of members from the Vermont Victim/Survivor of Crime Council, to appear before law students at the Vermont Law School (completed 2001).
- Design and deliver “How Can I Be of Service? The Faith Community in Support of Victims of Crime” to the Vermont Ecumenical Council and the Bible Society’s annual board of trustees meeting (completed 2000).
- Design and deliver faith community training to pastors in collaboration with the Vermont Ecumenical Council (completed 2001).
- Create a training Web site for all advocates and collaborators in victim assistance efforts funded through the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services (completed 2001).
- Codesign and present training to first-year medical students at the University of Vermont Medical School on “How to Save Another Life: Identifying and Treating Victims of Domestic Violence” (completed 1999, 2000).
- Meet with Social and Rehabilitation Services to plan and deliver a collaborative creation and delivery of a Training of Trainers for juvenile reparative panels (completed 2001).
- Codesign the community outreach effort of the Windsor County Domestic Violence Task Force (completed 2000).
- Design and deliver training at the Vermont Police Academy Basic Recruit Training on “The Victim Assistance Program and Death Notification” (completed 2001).
- Deliver the U.S. Department of Justice’s “Hate Crime Investigation Curriculum for Patrol and Responding Officers” at the Vermont Police Academy’s inservice training (completed 2001).
- Present “Domestic Violence and Welfare Reform” at PATH training (completed 2000).

Goal 3: Engage key stakeholders of influence in a collaborative visioning process.

Introduce concepts; meet and assess needs.

Objectives for Goal 3:

Initial Contacts:

- Send introductory letter to advocates and nonprofit programs.
- Invite victims/survivors of crime to collaborative meeting.
- Meet with the executive director of the State’s Attorney’s Office and sheriff’s office to determine depth of participation in process, including the possibility of shared legislation if the advocates want to pursue certification. Also, discuss continuing legal education credit for attorneys and the creation of a victim services track at the state’s attorney annual retreat.
- Meet with the Network’s steering committee to determine representative group and the process for participation. Plan for December presentation to directors.

- Meet with the Network's Youth Advocate Task Force and Court Advocate Task Force to discuss and to receive feedback on the academy model.
- Speak with the executive director of Vermont Protection and Advocacy to ensure participation in the process and determine her priorities.
- Speak with the Disability Project for Victim Assistance advocate and the SANE nurse coordinator to ensure their participation in the process.
- Meet with the Police Academy director to determine interest in the process. Secure participation of one of the Police Academy's trainers.
- Meet with the Department of Corrections' human resources director and victim services director to strategize the department's involvement in the process.
- Meet with the director of the South Royalton Legal Clinic and project attorney to outline the clinic's involvement in the process.
- Speak with the assistant director of Vermont's Department of Mental Health and designees to the Trauma Commission to determine involvement in the process.
- Meet with Vermont Ecumenical Council leaders to ensure participation in the process.
- Contact the Vermont Center for Independent Living to determine representation in the process.
- Meet with the Attorney General's Office victim advocate and the human resources director at Social and Rehabilitation Services to determine their participation in the process.
- Speak to a representative from the Department of Education.

Followup:

- Send out basic needs assessment to all parties, except for the Network and state's attorney advocates, who were sent assessments separately.
- Communicate via e-mail background and updates. Send "Academy blurb" to all parties.
- Determine a date for process (determined February 2, 2001, at the Vermont Law School in South Royalton) (above completed between August 2000 and January 2001).
- Hold collaborative planning meeting to determine draft mission, advisory and coordinating responsibilities, location, audience, trainers, scope, topics, and timing. Form subcommittees that will focus on Tri-State Consortium efforts, training and curriculum, and credentialing and standards. Invite and convene Advisory Group to focus on implementation and quality assurance (completed February 2001).

Goal 4: Clarify roles and agreements among those parties delivering, receiving, and organizing the training process.

Meet with trainers and receiving agencies.

Objectives for Goal 4:

- Meet with trainers to determine priorities and clarify possible structures. Send out needs assessments to trainers. Choices for trainers will include (not in order of preference) a skilled trainer who identifies as a survivor, a skilled trainer who does relevant direct service or who has had a background in relevant direct service, a skilled trainer who is representative of the audience being trained, and a skilled trainer who is representative of the underserved victim/survivor populations who are the focus of our trainings.
- Generate possible structures within agencies receiving training. Clarify with Social Rehabilitation Services, Cyprian Learning Center, Department of Corrections, the Police Academy, PATH, Court Administrator's Office, Department of Education, Vermont Law School, and Department of Developmental and Mental Health Services.
- Curriculum and Training subcommittee meet to finalize topics and allot hours and identify general learning competencies.
- Draft Training Principles Curriculum for approval.
- Solicit commitment from a variety of trainers.
- Arrange a Training of Trainers for all academy trainers (above completed spring 2001).
- Meet with trainers to plan training sections.
- Deliver training of trainers and Gathering of Trainers for all academy trainers.
- Secure commitment from all trainers to abide by Training Principles and themes for VVAA.
- VVAA Advisory Group determines number of participants from each agency that will attend VVAA pilot.
- Followup with implementation plan for all participating agencies to identify individuals (the Network, child advocacy centers, state's attorney advocates, advocates for people with disabilities, law enforcement, court personnel, mental health agencies, Department of Health, Department of Corrections, PATH, Social Rehabilitation Services, and Violence Against Women Act or Legal Access for Women project attorneys) (above completed between June 2001 and December 2001).

Goal 5: Establish a funding arrangement of shared resources to sustain project.

Clarify financial needs; make reciprocal arrangements; seek grants.

Objectives for Goal 5:

- Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services commits 8 hours of staff time support for text research and writing (completed summer 2001).
- Write academy into Fee Bill Proposal and Arrest Grant Proposal (completed spring 2001) (not funded).
- Create a start-up cost outline and sustaining cost outline for foundation-level efforts (completed 2001).
- Secure agreement from the Network to use Civil Legal Assistance for Women grant (completed spring 2001).
- Adjust VS2000 training coordinator's job description to assist with academy training and development (completed summer 2000).
- Request and disseminate chapter review work from large audience of experts at no cost (completed spring 2001).
- Gain training commitment from a variety of trainers statewide at no cost (completed spring 2001).
- Secure agreement from the Network to commit a portion of its new training funds to VVAA advanced trainings (completed fall 2001).
- Secure funds from the U.S. Attorney's Office to support advanced training on trauma response (completed spring 2001).
- Secure agreement from Vermont Legal Aid, Inc., to write text research and revision into the Civil Legal Assistance for Women grant (completed fall 2001).
- Write academy into Arrest Grant Proposal (completed winter 2002).

Goal 6: Create a program plan based on training principles and practical strategies.

Plan trainings with broad-based training group.

Objectives for Goal 6:

- Gain approval of Training Principles from all academy trainers.
- Share themes and approaches across sections at Gathering of Trainers.
- Secure commitment from all trainers to abide by Training Principles and themes for VVAA (completed summer and fall 2001).

Goal 7: Create and implement an evaluation plan.

Evaluate process, learning objectives, and outcomes for VVAA project.

Objectives for Goal 7:

- Research planning and evaluation design methods (completed 2000, 2001).
- Write measurable learning objectives for each VVAA course section (completed 2001).
- Once in the institutionalized stage, create/contract for an evaluation plan that—
 - Indicates to what degree diverse crime victims' and survivors' perspectives are being integrated into the curriculum process.
 - Identifies and analyzes the emergent approaches, challenges, and possibilities being shaped by the collaboration and the resulting training.
 - Measures change in participant behavior, environment, and victim/survivor quality of experience.
 - Makes specific recommendations for incorporating its findings into future plans.

Goal 8: Create plan of graduated implementation.

Place implementation within the Advisory Group.

Objectives for Goal 8:

- Secure commitment of Advisory Group (completed summer 2001).
- Specify adoption and implementation of performance objectives within Advisory Group (completed summer 2001).
- Specify job determinants (summer 2001).
- VVAA Advisory Group determines number of participants from each agency that will attend VVAA pilot.
- Followup with implementation plan for all participating agencies to identify individuals (the Network, child advocacy centers, state's attorney advocates, advocates for people with disabilities, law enforcement, court personnel, mental health agencies, the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Corrections, PATH, Social Rehabilitation Services, and Violence Against Women Act or Legal Access for Women project attorneys) (above completed between June 2001 and December 2001).