



Supporting Survivors: Improving Sexual Assault Prevention, Reporting in Oregon

February 11, 2021

We will get started shortly. Your lines are muted upon entry. This event will be recorded.

Where to Get Help



Welcome!

- Today's event is being recorded
- All participants are muted on entry
- Ask questions using the Q&A Box
- Please fill out satisfaction survey



About Oregon Health Forum



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- Affiliate of The Lund Report investigative news source

Upcoming Events



Under Pressure: Nursing Care During Community Crises

Feb. 15 • 10am • Zoom Livestream • Free



Vaccine Rationing and the Urgency of Social Justice

Feb. 25 • 10am • Zoom Livestream • Free



Oregon's New Medicaid Waiver: Policy and Budget Implications

Mar. 4 • 10am • Zoom Livestream • Free

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Supporting Survivors: Improving Sexual Assault Prevention, Reporting in Oregon

Feb. 11 | 2 – 3:30pm

Moderator: Martin Medeiros, J.D., Health Care
Business Attorney, Podcaster

Panelists:

- **Anna Trevizo**, MSW, QMHP, Therapist, Western
Psychological & Counseling Services
- **Mark Hidalgo**, Mental Health Peer Support
Specialist
- **Patricia Barrera**, MA, Victim Services Specialist,
Sex Crimes Unit, Portland Police Bureau



Martin Medeiros

J.D., Health Care Business Attorney,
Podcaster



Anna Trevizo

MSW, QMHP, Therapist,
Western Psychological &
Counseling Services

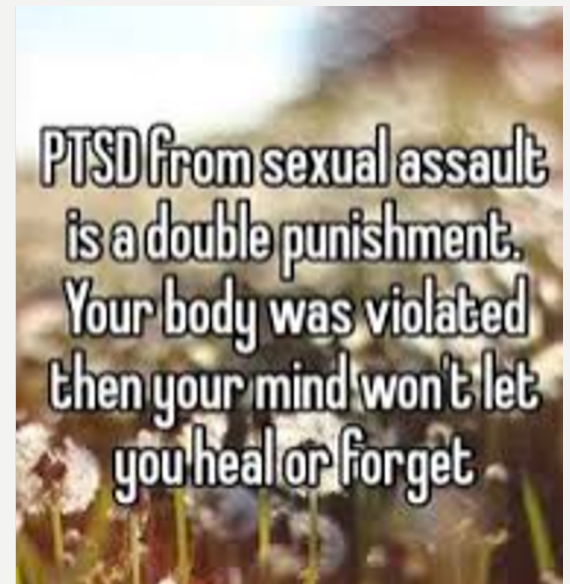


ANNA TREVIZO, MSW/QMHP

- Goals:
- Awareness of long term effects of sexual abuse.
- Mental health related to sexual abuse.
- Long lasting traumatic effects on victims of all ages but especially childhood sexual abuse
- Effects on individual, immediate family, extended family and communities.

THE LONG LASTING/DAMAGING EFFECTS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

- Sexual assault in childhood or adulthood impacts not only the victim, but also the victim's family and friends as well as society as a whole. In this regard, sexual assault is a public health problem that concerns everyone.
- Victims of child sexual abuse can face **immediate** psychological consequences as well as **chronic** effects that can impact their adjustment throughout their development.
- Clients that have been victims of sexual abuse in particular children tend to often develop PTSD symptoms, depression, suicide ideation and severe anxiety/panic attacks.
- PTSD explained.



MOST SEXUAL ASSAULT CASES CAN HAPPEN IN A PRESUMED “SAFE PLACE”

BREAKDOWN OF LOCATIONS WHERE SEXUAL ASSAULT OCCURS



55%
at or near the
victim's home



15%
in an open
public place.



12%
at or near a
relative's home



10%
in an enclosed but
public area, such as a
parking lot or garage



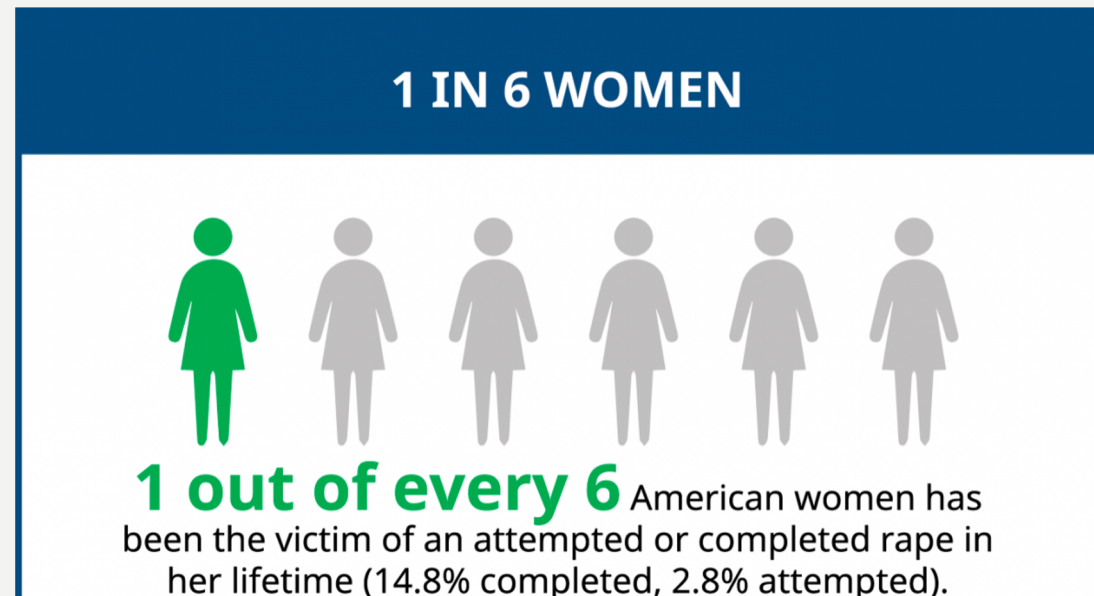
8%
on school
property

RAINN

National Sexual Assault Hotline | 800.656.HOPE | online.rainn.org
Please visit rainn.org/statistics/scope-problem for full citation.⁷

Dangerous Statistics

- Ages 12-34 are the highest risk years for rape and sexual assault.³
- Those age 65 and older are 92% less likely than 12-24 year olds to be a victim of rape or sexual assault, and 83% less likely than 25-49 year olds.⁴



Short and Long Term Effects

- Immediate: Shock, fear, anxiety, guilt, PTSD, withdrawal and isolation
- Long lasting: Depression, stress, distorted self-perception
- The effects of child sexual abuse can be long-lasting and affect the victim's mental health. Victims are more likely than non-victims to experience the following mental health challenges:⁵
 - About 4 times more likely to develop symptoms of drug abuse
 - About 4 times more likely to experience PTSD as adults
 - About 3 times more likely to experience a major depressive episode as adults

PHYSICAL EFFECTS

Chronic and diffuse pain, especially abdominal or pelvic pain, lower pain threshold, anxiety and depression, self-neglect, and eating disorders have been attributed to childhood sexual abuse. Adults abused as children are four to five times more likely to have abused alcohol and illicit drugs. They are also twice as likely to smoke, be physically inactive, and be severely obese.



SEXUAL EFFECTS

- Disturbances of desire, arousal, and orgasm may result from the association between sexual activity, violation, and pain. Survivors are more likely to have had 50 or more intercourse partners, have had a sexually transmitted infection, and engage in risk-taking behaviors that place them at risk of contracting human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) Early adolescent or unintended pregnancy and prostitution are associated with sexual abuse.
- Gynecologic problems, including chronic pelvic pain, dyspareunia, vaginismus, and nonspecific vaginitis, are common diagnoses among survivors. Survivors may be less likely to have regular Pap tests and may seek little or no prenatal care.

INTERPERSONAL EFFECTS

- Adult survivors of sexual abuse may be less skilled at self-protection. They are more apt to accept being victimized by others. This tendency to be victimized repeatedly may be the result of general vulnerability in dangerous situations and exploitation by untrustworthy people.



Sexual abuse in childhood is known to be a major risk factor in the development of long-term psychological and social adjustment problems **that can carry over into adulthood** and affect married life and parenthood.



Mark Hidalgo

Mental Health Peer Support Specialist



Today as we address this very delicate subject of trauma resulting from sexual assault my intent is not to offend or discredit any individual.

Our objective today is to spread awareness and prevention so that we may help as many people as possible.

Some individuals identify as:

- survivors
- victims
- workers
- advocates
- perhaps other self identifying terminology



- There are many different types of sexual abuse victims in addition others have experienced trauma vicariously.
- Our goal today is specifically to focus on the VICTIMS of these malicious acts that have harmed so many. We must also address negative results it has on Mental Health.



CLINICAL SETTING

As I've practiced Trauma Informed Care with full transparency with clients / peers together we've accomplished successful results with:

- learning new coping skills or mechanisms
- Crisis de-escalation techniques
- Impulse control techniques
- Critical thinking skills and or exercises
- Safety plans
- Life success plans
- And much more pertaining to an individuals needs for a healthy recovery



EXAMPLES: GROOMING

- 1. An individual in my care was utilizing community resources for recovery support groups. While attending these groups; AA (Alcoholics Anonymous), NA (Narcotics Anonymous) and MA (Methoholics Anonymous) there were actual predatory scouts participating in these recovery groups targeting vulnerable individuals.
- 2. On another occasion there was a client who shared with me (and gave me permission to share this experience to help others) that they were soliciting themselves to pay for their substance abuse habit. They shared with me in intense detail how they had downloaded an adult hookup / dating app. This adult hookup / dating app showed their precise location to view which persons utilizing the app was in their area.

TECHNOLOGY

- We live in a time where technology has increased so rapidly that what is available to the public can be very alarming once you've realized that you have been a victim or someone you know has.
- Some of this may not even be believable to some. It may be conceived as just a delusion that one has fixated by witnessing a movie. Perhaps some of you are very aware of what technology has to offer.



WHAT ARE SPY APPS?



EXAMPLE 3

- I can recall moments when individuals were experiencing psychotic episodes, under the influence of substances of some sort, whether legal or illegal, their mental capacity altered in addition to living with mental illness. Some affect shock while speaking incoherent. Yes, there were also moments when they had reported to me that they were just victimized.
- That's when I had to be knowledgeable of their diagnosis, know what their precipitating factor was that led to their most recent hospitalization, know the summary of their past trauma. All the while having to differentiate whether they were re-living a past sexual assault that they survived while sharing with me and or team members a most recent incident.
- Of course the team would brief and practice protocol. Protocol was to contact APS (Adult Protective Services), Law Enforcement, Call to Safety and or any other domestic violence resource provider available.

CLOSING THOUGHTS: MARK HIDALGO

Thanks and Gratitude



Patricia Barrera

MA, Victim Services
Specialist, Sex Crimes Unit,
Portland Police Bureau



THE PERFECT VICTIM... FOR A PREDATOR

- The perfect victim for any predator is someone who is either unable to protect themselves or does not have other people around who will step in to protect them.



THE PERFECT VICTIM... FOR SOCIETY

- People in general, and those who serve on juries, in law enforcement, and the justice system, often want victims who are strong and high functioning who fought back. We want a victim who is articulate, pro-social, not in any kind of relationship with the offender, or involved in any criminal activities.



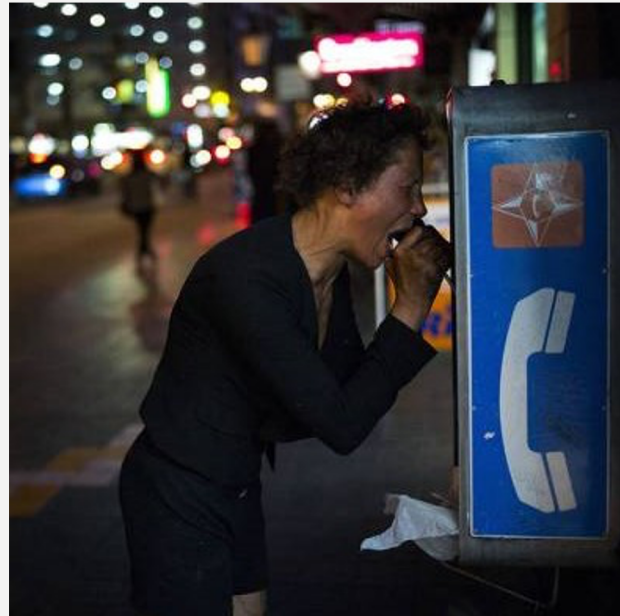
THE PERFECT VICTIM... FOR A PREDATOR

- People are overwhelmingly victimized by people they are related to and/or know.
- To speak out about the crimes may throw the victim into poverty/homelessness and substantially disrupt, if not end, relationships.



THE PERFECT VICTIM... FOR A PREDATOR

- Compounded for people who have a mental illness
 - People who have a mental illness may also
 - Worry what they believe happened did not actually happen
 - Be met with skepticism from people in their lives concluding the crime did not actually happen
 - Have difficulty articulating what happened to law enforcement in an understandable manner



WHAT TO DO? ACCEPT AND PLAN FOR THIS REALITY

- Those who have mental illness, and for other populations of vulnerable people, will be faced with threats/attempts of sexual violence over and over throughout the course of their lives.



ACCOUNTABILITY WITHIN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

- Investigation: Portland Police Bureau
- Prosecution: District Attorney's Office
- Civil Protection: The courthouse/Gateway Center



INVESTIGATION: PORTLAND POLICE BUREAU

- Stats added here for Sex Crimes Unit
 - 12 Detectives for a city with 654,741 people
(<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/portlandcityoregon>)



ACCOUNTABILITY WITHIN OUR ORGANIZATIONS

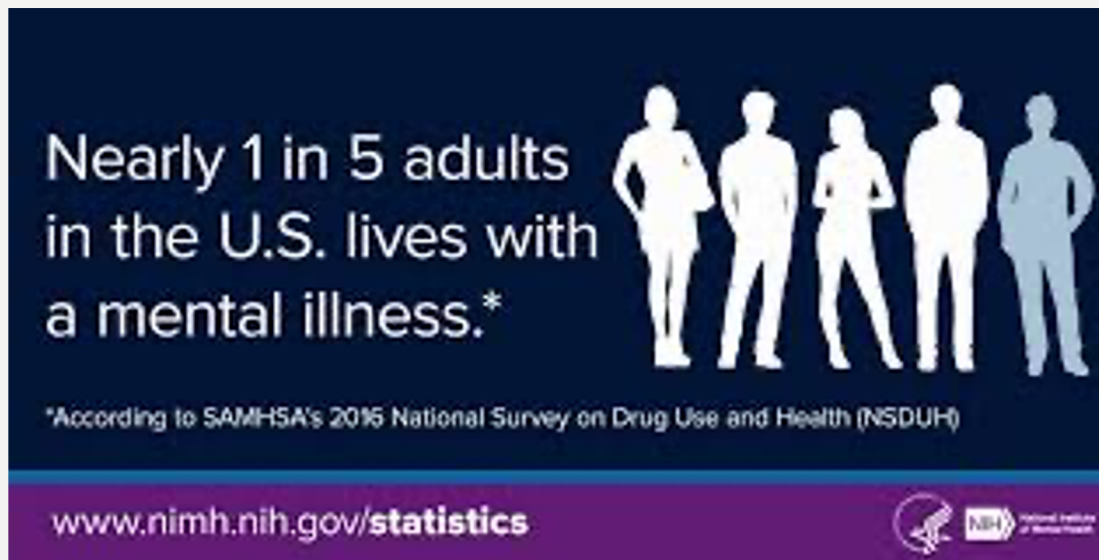
- Fold information about sexual violence into staff trainings and client case management
- Fold information about capturing evidence (SAFE, for example) into staff trainings and client case management
- Establish protocols regarding employee contact with clients
- Establish protocols regarding mandatory reporting

COLLABORATION WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT

- Mandatory supporters as well as mandatory reporters
 - Follow up on reports
 - Rethink how we look at HIPPA. Refusing to communicate with law enforcement is not pro-client or victim centered.
 - Offer to sit in on interviews
 - You know them far more than the detective does

CONCLUSION

- Thank you for your time and for the work you do every day...



CLOSING THOUGHTS: ANNA TREVIZO

- Sexual assault has numerous potential consequences that can last a lifetime and span generations, with serious adverse effects on health, education, employment, crime, and the economic well-being of individuals, families, communities and societies.
- Not only can childhood sexual abuse have **lasting effects** throughout adulthood, but the effects can **take new forms** in adulthood, affecting marital and parental life as well.

EXAMPLE

- Working at crisis centers, Marion County Suicide prevention unit and counseling agencies, I have seen a direct correlation between mental illness and sexual abuse victims. Over time, situations that tend to cause anxiety, depression and insomnia can turn into more serious mental health conditions.

CONCLUSION



- Some survivors will experience psychologic, physical, and behavioral symptoms as a result of their abuse that may end up affecting them throughout their entire life and may also manifest in the form of mental illnesses, health issues
- There are usually not enough resources to help victims of sexual abuse.
- Many victims continue living with the long-lasting effects of sexual abuse with little to no support. It is our hope today to raise awareness to this subject and hopefully open more doors to services that can be offered to victims.

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Audience Q&A

Thank you for attending!