

PreventConnect

TEXT CHAT TRANSCRIPT

PEER LEARNING FORUM

Shaping Perception of Sexual and Domestic Violence for Prevention: The Power of Public Narratives – Session 2

May 14, 2014

11 AM Pacific (2 PM Eastern)

Presenters and Guests

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Ati Nasiah, AWARE, Inc.
Julia Smith, Sitkans Against Family Violence

Host

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California Coalition Against Sexual Assault

Participant names have been removed from this chat record, unless provided by the participant in text.

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- Where have you see the dominant narrative showing up in your work?
 - <http://www.mainefocus.bangordailynews.com/domestic-and-sexual-violence/not-asking-for-it/>
 - People think DV/SV are "inevitable" and even the well-intentioned usually respond with pity for "those poor women"
 - bystander actions mean intervening in the middle of a violent incident
 - I get a lot of "preventing SV isn't possible...violence just happens. Always has, always will."
 - Two or three requests for TA in the last week on difficulty with outreach and prevention in rural communities - communities subscribing to the narrative that "sexual assault doesn't happen here so we don't need you"
 - I think the dominant narrative around men and IPV/SV prevention is that men want to protect and save women, i.e., damsels in distress.

- (vs. all the other kinds of social change-y bystander actions)
- There are also powerful narratives about individuality, and it leads to "its none of my business"
- We assume that our work necessarily must collude with the prison industrial complex in order to seek "safety" and justice."
- We had a SART team discussion about how we sometimes say "victims stories keep changing". A prosecutor suggested we should use a polaroid metaphor for how the story details get clearer with time
- So, so true Jen P!
- I'm still seeing the delimitation between "good rapes" and promiscuous girls in college.
- how do I print the slides?
- I think the narrative also focuses on silencing violence issues rather than looking at the full person (ie social determinants)
- yes, Tomei!
- I've recently seen a resurgence in the "dangers of youth hook-up culture" messaging...as if the youth are out of control doing wild things and rape and violence didn't exist back in the day....it's just this morally disruptive hook-up culture to blame.
- Right on Rose!
- we see individual incidents, rather than a social problem. we think that we have sufficient plans for individual incidents.
- Slides for today (and the previous Peer Learning Forum) can be found at <http://www.preventconnect.org/2014/04/peer-learning-forum-shaping-perceptions-of-sexual-and-domestic-violence-for-prevention-the-power-of-public-narratives/>
- I think a lot of victim blaming comes from narratives about how everyone should be individually responsible for their own destiny (the bootstrap thing), so victims must have somehow invited or allowed the abuse
- Lori Grassgreen ANDVSA <http://www.andvsa.org/>
- Info about DELTA FOCUS <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/deltafocus/index.html>
- What are some settings in which you'd like to discuss public narrative?
- That was Rose, Ashley
- What are some settings in which you'd like to discuss public narrative?
- urban, multicultural youth
- Men and boys
- we see it playing out quite often with our public policy work
- In DE, we've actually been discussing public narrative in the context of the "narrative" within our DV and Public Health systems.
- College students

- Discuss narratives with partner non-profits
- I have them at starbucks once a week with the folks next to me in line
- rural school administrators
- Shared risk and protective factor approach
- Rose - awesome!
- Parents
- faith-based communities
- with our multisectoral partners so that we can see the ways in which the dominant narrative impacts our work across social problems.
- Love it, Colleen! YES!
- internally in our own organizations so we can see how prevention fits in with direct services
- great point, bethany
- Yes, we are working on using public narratives to garner support from the DV advocacy community for prevention.
- love this, Lori!
- Feel free to ask questions along the way!
- did you find very divergent views during these conversations among partners?
- Cathy - I think Lori will answer that coming up. If not, we'll ask.
- Perhaps a large part of the value of these conversations is about relationship building?
- Right, and this is a good way to present a non-judgemental, structured forum for all participants
- Definitely, Cathy.
- America "knows" is good example of dominant narrative having historical groundings
- Our agency is located in the Virgin Islands and there is a difficulty engaging men and boys.... Our agency is mostly women. How can we open ongoing conversations?
- Can you say more about post-radical society?
- Yes, It's an interesting mix of individual rights vs the power structure
- oooohhhhhh
- I really like seeing the narratives framed from general society specifically to DV/SA . . .thanks for sharing!
- when the narratives were in conflict with each other, how did you discuss/ deal with that?
- In your community what would you add?
- DV/SA is seen as something that happens to the "other"
- I think of the fatigue that happens when we know that people do not remember or take in the facts but rely on the dominant narrative . Very frustrating.

- Creates divisions and marginalizes potential allies.
- Our students are wrestling with the extreme social class differences in our community, and how the narrative about each prevents us from being able to really feel valued/part of the same community
- i think a big conversation here in MO is if programs expand their prevention efforts it means they must cut back on their direct services
- Honestly, I have to hear stories about individual "wins" Looking at the community as a whole can be very discouraging
- It can feel like we're treading water - never moving forward because we are constantly being confronted with the same narratives
- Fears of offending some of the community if we discuss root causes or oppression
- I'll get a lot of people initially on board about social change . . . but the more we talk and the more we bump into the narratives eventually I'll hear the comments of "well, we can't be that critical. No system is perfect." I think this is an impact of the fatigue I hear other folks mentioning . . .
- Thats me!
- Rose - that is the dominant narrative at work inside people's own heads - this demonstrates how insidious and powerful it can be
- Sarah - so true! I see a lot of that in my city as well and it really creates this separation and "us vs. them" mentality.
- Sarah - Exactly the same for me being from Belleville, IL! Same highschool situation, everything.
- Anyone else have similar experience?
- Dave - It's challenging because I'm not sure where we go from there . . . it's like we need to take a break for self-care before we can move on to anything else . . .
- Rose - hmmm, interesting idea that we have to heal from what we've been living within - people in the faith community talk about taking time to lament
- Great point.
- One thing that we are tackling, that is proving pretty interesting and challenging at the same time is getting adults to hear and respect youth perceptions of the community-level public narratives... we can illicit the perceptions, the stories, but it seems so easy for many adults to dismiss these perspectives/interpretations of the narratives as less valuable/less true/less important than the adult ones
- With what other sectors do you conduct DV/SA prevention?
- corporations, law enforcement, education, health care, social workers, government, homeless agencies
- policy makers and school administrators
- media

- Education
- tribes
- forensic medical examiners
- Tribal agencies
- Education, health, law enforcement, government, coalitions, businesses
- Education, campus/colleges, sexual health educators
- youth serving orgs
- adolescent health
- early childhood ed
- senators
- other coalitions, school administrators, college campuses
- Sitkans Against Family Violence (SAFV) <http://www.safv.org/>
- Youi can download all of the slides
<http://www.preventconnect.org/2014/04/peer-learning-forum-shaping-perceptions-of-sexual-and-domestic-violence-for-prevention-the-power-of-public-narratives/>
- The gender equality point is another I run into.
- Law Enforcement and Child Protective Services wants our agency to wave a magic wand and "fix" the victims
- Yup! Fixing these women is easier than than changing norms/contest/environment.
- I may not have caught this, but did you say these conclusions were reached by the staff following the community discussions?
- that was meant to be sarcastic!
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- Did you have a process of tying each of these back to dominant narratives?
- Yes Sarah, we did connect them back to the dominant narrative at several points
- Materials from this session can be found at
<http://www.preventconnect.org/2014/04/peer-learning-forum-shaping-perceptions-of-sexual-and-domestic-violence-for-prevention-the-power-of-public-narratives/>
- What's "I've got your 6" mean?
- I have your back?
- Thanks...I'm old
- Six O'Clock = Behind You
- It's a military/pilot thing.
- AWARE <http://www.awareak.org/>

- Some takeaways: public narrative is more about process than product; important to hold the tension of experimenting without know exactly what is next; and importance of engaging people on the ground in the conversation
- Yes to ALL of these!
- Ati, how much diversity of age, gender, race is represented by your staffs?
- Identifying our "pitch" for programming and social change work.
- How do you evaluate this work or assess progress that isn't a process assessment.
- Revisiting our strategic plan in light of a dominant narrative and desired "future" narrative.
- We'd like to move toward work on framing new narratives.
- What steps are you thinking about taking in your work?
- I love the reminder that its about process more than even product. I want to start engaging people in these conversation and would love more help on HOW to have the conversations. Tips and suggestions.
- What more would you like to learn?
- effective messaging
- we've been talking about how to engage in a narrative process but also use that to gather evaluation information. would like to know more about that.
- Concrete ways to go through this process.
- Developing "communication" plans that will help shape the dominant narrative.
- Second that, Yvonne. I've been thinking about the overlap between trauma informed care and response and dominant narratives . . .
- talking with constituents about where we are reinforcing the dominant narrative--mainly for the purpose of securing funding. How do we persuade people to give up those short-term gains when the cost is the long-term reinforcement of narrative ideas that are bad for our work/constituents?
- Ways to "answer" some of the dominant narratives that are raised in opposition to what we are trying to accomplish.