Draft of Recommendations

Excerpted from:
“Recommendations to Prevent Sexual Violence in Oregon: A Plan of Action”
Recommended Strategies for Oregon

Having identified the components of promising sexual violence prevention programs, a comprehensive model for organizing efforts, and identified priority populations, we offer the following recommended strategies for guiding Oregon’s initial steps to prevent sexual violence. Although not a complete list, these recommendations provide a framework for action. It is hoped that as readers of the Plan, you will find the necessary information to take action to prevent sexual violence. Whether your efforts are for yourself or others, whether you become involved in prevention efforts where you work, play, worship or hangout, your efforts are important and valuable.

Recommended Strategies:
1. Increase the capacity of individuals, groups, and communities in Oregon to prevent sexual violence.
2. Increase the recognition that sexual violence is preventable.
3. Increase prevention efforts that recognize the unique cultural aspects of specific communities and groups.
4. Build upon existing expertise and promote community organizing on issues related to sexual violence.
5. Encourage healthy, non-violent interactions and dismantle aspects of society that promote and support sexual violence.
6. Use evidence-based strategies, promote promising practices, and support model sexual violence prevention programs.
7. Broaden the scope and increase effectiveness of current prevention efforts through partnerships.
8. Support efforts to increase knowledge about effective prevention efforts through program evaluation.

Each recommendation is followed by five components:
A. Rationale – Why this recommendation was selected
B. Objectives – Measurable aims for achieving the recommendation
C. Strategies – Overarching methods for accomplishing objectives, with levels of the Ecological Model addressed in parentheses
D. Implementation activities – Examples of specific interventions, existing projects, ideas for future work
E. Indicators of success – How to know when the project is successful; describes possible evaluation components or how objectives and activities can be achieved
**RECOMMENDATION 1:** Increase the capacity of individuals, groups and communities in Oregon to prevent sexual violence.

**Rationale:**
- Sexual violence is a complex social phenomenon perpetuated and supported throughout society.
- Individuals, organizations, and communities often recognize the seriousness of sexual violence and want to play a role in preventing it although they may not know how to proceed or have the resources to succeed.

**Objective:**
- To develop resources and technical assistance for individuals, organizations, policy makers, and communities who are motivated to end sexual violence.

**Strategies:**
- Assess needs for sexual violence prevention technical assistance throughout the state. (Community, Institutional)
- Assess resources and sources of prevention expertise to respond to the needs of the potential audiences. (Individual, Community, Institutional)
- Develop and promote funding collaborations and activities that support increased prevention efforts. (Individual, Community, Institutional, Societal)

**Implementation Activities:**
- Develop a list of expert sexual violence prevention trainers
- Use a “Train the Trainers’ model to expand the pool of qualified trainers in communities and institutions.
- Use available resources, such as Rape Prevention Education grants, to fund capacity-building efforts.
- Look for sources of technical assistance such as local experts and other state/national agencies.
- Create a statewide sexual violence prevention training institute and resource center available to all.
- Identify resources to link sexual violence prevention experts to audiences needing prevention consultation.

**Possible Indicators of Success**
- Technical assistance/resource centers have been established. Lists of technical assistance providers have been compiled.
- Increased numbers of people, institutions, and communities have received tools to improve their capacity.
- Sexual Assault prevention agencies and specialists have received an increase in the number of requests for technical assistance around preventing sexual violence.
- Technical assistance consultation needs have been met by experts in sexual violence prevention.
**RECOMMENDATION 2:** Increase the recognition that sexual violence is preventable.

**Rationale:**
- Sexual violence is so common, it is perceived as a norm, and not often challenged.
- Public concern about sexual violence often focuses on myths or stereotypes that surround the issue, instead of actual risk factors.
- When the public understands that sexual violence is preventable, they are more likely to take action.
- Solely treating victims and punishing offenders will not end sexual violence.

**Objective:**
- To use community education methods to increase the understanding of the public’s role in preventing sexual violence.

**Strategies:**
- Plan prevention efforts for young men to impact their developing attitudes. (Individual, Relationship, Community, Institutional, Societal)
- Focus on key groups to change attitudes and behaviors to promote the belief that sexual violence is preventable. (Community)

**Implementation Activities:**
- Create a media-literacy campaign that educates youth on messages pertaining to gender norms and sexual violence.
- Develop materials that inform adults of the factors that lead to violent behavior and how to intervene.

**Possible Indicators of Success:**
- Social norms campaigns are based on clear understanding of prevailing social norms and; regular testing occurs for desired outcome(s).
- Young people are critical of media messages and can identify behaviors outside of the social norm (e.g., use of force or violence).
- Adults recognize the relationship between aggressive behaviors as a risk factor for future perpetration.
- Adults see it as their responsibility to intervene in sexually violent situations.
**RECOMMENDATION 3:** Increase prevention efforts that recognize the unique cultural aspects of specific communities and groups.

**Rationale:**
- A disproportionate number of sexual violence victims are from groups and communities that are marginalized.
- Specific communities of color and cultural groups have unique needs that should be addressed by tailoring strategies to cultural nuances to enhance effectiveness.
- Marginalized communities have more underreporting of sexual assault than the general population.

**Objective:**
- To support and embrace efforts of local communities and cultural groups developing their own prevention efforts.
- To promote prevention strategies that fit within cultural distinctions of specific groups and communities.

**Strategies:**
- Identify key leaders and groups within specific communities to develop and establish culturally specific prevention programs across the ecological model. (Individual, Community, Institutional)
- Provide training and technical assistance to support culturally specific prevention planning and implementation efforts. (Community, Institutional)
- Identify resources for specific prevention strategies within culturally specific communities. (Community, Institutional)
- Involve community and cultural groups in program planning efforts. (Community, Institutional)

**Implementation Activities:**
- Create a database of stakeholders, leaders and interested members wishing to work on sexual violence prevention within specific groups.
- Gather culturally specific, evidence-based prevention information to share with interested groups.
- Attend meetings and events of cultural groups who have an interest in sexual violence prevention.

**Possible Indicators of Success:**
- Increased numbers of culturally specific projects that address sexual violence.
- Increased numbers of community members participating in sexual violence prevention planning and implementation activities.
RECOMMENDATION 4: Build upon existing expertise and support community organizing on issues related to sexual violence.

Rationale:
- Community members are the most knowledgeable about the values, traditions, and practices that support and perpetuate violence in their neighborhood— as well as those that can be used to intervene and stop it.
- Community residents and leaders have the willingness and capacity to develop skills needed to conduct sexual violence prevention and intervention activities.
- Often communities need the assistance and support of expert consultants to translate their knowledge of community and motivation into effective strategies for violence prevention – community organizing offers this type of consultation.

Objective:
- To promote and support established community leaders to organize around sexual violence prevention.
- To gather information about how sexual violence is perceived and experienced within particular communities, and to determine the communities’ readiness to take action to prevent sexual violence.
- To develop collaborative partnerships among community-based violence prevention initiatives.

Strategies:
- Identify leaders, both formal and informal, who are connected to the community and are invested in the issue of sexual violence prevention (Individual, Community)
- Use a community development process to understand the assets, needs, and associated prevention activities of the community. (Community)
- Identify and draw upon existing expertise within the community. (Individual, Community)

Implementation Activities:
- Survey the community to identify experts in sexual violence prevention
- Identify and collaborate with existing violence prevention initiatives within the community.
- Conduct surveys and focus groups in the community around sexual violence and how it can be prevented.

Possible Indicators of Success:
- The level of participation of community members (# of members in the group, # of community groups represented, # of meetings attended over time)
- The number of experts identified initially and after any program implementation
- The number of new community partnerships
• The number of community assessments completed
**RECOMMENDATION 5:** Encourage healthy, non-violent interactions and dismantle aspects of society that promote and support sexual violence.

**Rationale:**
- Knowledge regarding healthy sexuality and relationships offers individuals the ability to make informed decisions.
- Commonly accepted negative attitudes and beliefs about traditional gender roles and masculinity support sexual violence.
- Individuals may be at greater risk of victimization because they lack power, status and credibility – often on the basis of gender, class, race, sexual orientation or ability.
- Individuals and society cannot be expected to change their behavior when their environment supports and encourages violence and disrespect.

**Objective:**
- To increase knowledge regarding healthy, non-violent interactions and relationships.
- To address the laws, institutions, policies, practices and belief systems based on attitudes, behaviors and actions that may lead to sexual violence.
- To identify the underlying causes of violence directed against marginalized groups.

**Strategies:**
- Promote positive media images and messages of healthy, non-violent interactions and relationships. (Individual, Institutional, Societal)
- Support legislation and protocols to eliminate sexism and other forms of oppression (e.g. U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women). (Societal, Institutional)
- Develop social marketing and social norms campaigns that counter oppressive views. (Societal)
- Support and strengthen programs that teach families non-violent problem-solving skills. (Community, Institutional)

**Implementation Activities:**
- Pioneer a letter-writing campaign in support of advertisers that promote positive images and messages regarding healthy relationships.
- Advocate for legislation that eliminates discrimination and violence in the media.
- Identify high-quality curricula to teach that address healthy, non-violent interactions and relationships.

**Possible Indicators of Success:**
- Number of individuals participating in healthy relationship trainings.
Changes in media protocols to limit violent and oppressive messages.
Increased number of individuals with accurate attitudes about healthy, non-violent interactions and relationships.

RECOMMENDATION 6: Use evidence-based strategies, promote promising practices, and support model sexual violence prevention programs.

Rationale:
- Research provides increasing information on risk factors related to sexual violence that can indicate the specific form that prevention strategies should adopt.
- Promising public health prevention approaches for other issues (smoking, substance abuse, etc.) have been found to be successful. Successful strategies may be applied to sexual violence prevention.
- Because little research has been conducted on sexual violence prevention efforts, the need to develop new strategies.

Objective:
- To prioritize resources to address specific populations known to be at risk of becoming sexual violence victims or offenders.
- To increase the effectiveness of sexual violence prevention programs.
- To identify and implement successful and replicable sexual violence prevention activities across the ecological model.

Strategies:
- Develop and disseminate information that outlines evidence-based and promising prevention approaches in sexual violence and other behavioral risk areas. (Community, Institutional)
- Support policies that direct funding to areas or groups in greatest need of prevention services. (Institutional)

Implementation Activities:
- Develop materials that identify key risk factors related to sexual violence.
- Require funded programs to use evidence-based models.
- Create avenues for networking and sharing information about promising practices.

Possible Indicators of Success:
- The adoption of funding policies that require working with priority populations and using evidence-based practices.
- The number of evidence-based prevention programs active in Oregon.
RECOMMENDATION 7: Broaden the scope and increase effectiveness of current prevention efforts through partnerships

Rationale:
- The causes of sexual violence cannot be eliminated without investment by a broad spectrum of society.
- Collaborations can provide a foundation for developing better-coordinated interventions and prevention curricula.
- Establishing relationships with individuals, organizations, and companies not currently associated with sexual violence prevention can enrich existing prevention programs and foster the development of new and innovative programs.

Objectives:
- To broaden the scope of prevention work by establishing new collaborative relationships with individuals, organizations, and agencies who represent both traditional and non-traditional sexual violence prevention partners.
- To increase power and leverage of prevention efforts at many levels by identifying needs and benefits that could be addressed through the establishment of collaborative relationships.

Strategies:
- Create coalitions and partnerships of groups working on violence prevention (Community, Institutional).
- Establish relationships with other agencies that provide services to your target audience (e.g., sexual violence survivors) (Community, Institutional).
- Educate business and policy makers on the value and economy of prevention (Community).
- Identify traditional and non-traditional collaborations that may be effective in addressing sexual violence. (Community, Institutional)
- Identify role models, media spokespersons and elected officials to publicly promote collaborations to address sexual violence. (Individual, Community, Institutional)

Implementation Activities:
- Collaborate on grant submissions or staff training around sexual violence prevention with other agencies involved with rape prevention education.
- Invite the participation of diverse organizations and multi-disciplinary professionals to generate effective community strategies that address the causes of sexual violence.
- Identify the types of expertise and services that organizations can share as part of a collaborative relationship.

Possible Indicators of Success:
- The number of collaborations established within the sexual violence prevention field
- The number of collaborations between victim and treatment organizations and agencies
The number of collaborations established with organizations outside of the sexual violence prevention field
Measurable increase in the scope and effectiveness of sexual violence prevention efforts.

**RECOMMENDATION 8:** Support efforts to increase knowledge about effective prevention efforts through evaluation.

**Rationale:**
- Evaluation offers a means of assessing the strengths and weaknesses of prevention programs.
- Evaluation allows programs to tailor prevention efforts and track progress for particular community groups and types of sexual violence.

**Objectives:**
- To incorporate an ongoing program evaluation component in all sexual violence prevention programs.
- To utilize evaluation feedback in the modification, tailoring, and improvement of prevention strategies.
- To increase the understanding of and ability to implement program evaluation.

**Strategies:**
- Advocate for funding and establish requirements for program evaluation to be a part of all prevention efforts. (Community, Institutional)
- Encourage the dissemination of evaluation findings that would offer directions for improving prevention programming. (Community, Institutional)

**Implementation Activities:**
- Require funded programs to set aside a certain proportion of their budget (e.g. 10%) for evaluation purposes.
- Conduct workshops to educate program providers on evaluation techniques and methods.
- Provide technical assistance related to evaluation.

**Possible Indicators of Success:**
- The number of prevention programs with ongoing program evaluation components
- Number of evaluation trainings offered to prevention programs
- Number of requests for and hours of technical assistance on evaluation provided to prevention programs.
- Measurable increase in effectiveness of funded prevention programs.