

PREPARING YOUR COMMUNITY FOR SUCCESSFUL SEX OFFENDER RE-ENTRY

Presenter

- Karen Ziegler, LCSW, CASAC, Director
Albany County Crime Victim and Sexual Violence Center
- Robin Belanksy, LMHC, Clinical Supervisor
Albany County Crime Victim and Sexual Violence Center
- Lisa Smith, Director
Sexual Assault and Crime Victims Assistance Program, Northeast Health

Audience

This topic pertains to both adolescents and adults.

Level

Intermediate

Workshop Description

In a round table forum, a panel consisting of Karen Ziegler and Robin Belansky of the Albany County Crime Victim and Sexual Violence Center and Lisa Smith of the Sexual Assault and Crime Victims Assistance Program for Rensselaer County will present on the topic of the critical yet sensitive requirement for all conference participants to develop a plan of action to prepare their communities for successful sex offender re-entry. We are all aware that community stakeholders need to be educated as to the key components of successful reintegration: safe housing, productive employment, community supervision, and treatment. We are also aware of the challenging need for community members to be educated as to the important role they play in ensuring a safe environment for all. Specifically, offender myths need to be revealed and dispelled, offender registration needs to be clarified, and the delicate process of getting the community to invest in personal and community safety as well as sexual violence prevention as a priority. As victim advocates, the three panel members are uniquely positioned to lead this conversation. We recognize the vital need to reach out to community members who will likely be resistant to this message. The more comprehensive our actions, the safer our communities will be for all.

Learning Objectives

1. Participants will acknowledge the most common reasons key stakeholders in their community are reluctant/resistant and be able to identify three methods to engage them in a dialogue on critical reentry issues.
2. Participants will be able to collaborate with other supervision and treatment providers, as well as victim advocates, to utilize a multidisciplinary team approach to promote stakeholder investment.