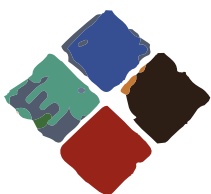




Reaching Out to Faith-Based Organizations to Address Domestic and Sexual Violence

Help for Service Providers



Pieces of a Bigger Picture

**Faith Communities and Service Providers Working Together
to Support Victims of Sexual and Domestic Violence**

Dear Service Providers and Advocates,

In early 2017, Safe Havens conducted 26 focused conversations with domestic and sexual violence coalitions, member agencies, and clergy in 22 states across the country. We wanted to hear about the successes, needs, and challenges you are encountering as you work to build partnerships between domestic and sexual violence agencies and faith communities. Some coalitions and agencies were just beginning the outreach process to congregations in their states and communities. Others had been collaborating for years or even decades.

Although the people we interviewed were in different stages of engagement, all participants affirmed the need for collaboration and partnership. One coalition staff member explained that, for some women leaving abusive relationships, “refocusing on their faith was key to their recovery and healing.” The agency’s connections to faith leaders helped facilitate this. Another advocate said that faith-based victims may seek assistance from their faith community rather than secular services due to the fact that they “often trust faith leaders even with their lives.”

Clergy, too, spoke of the need to build awareness. They recognize that healing often happens best in the context of a community. They want to work with domestic and sexual violence experts in their local agencies and coalitions. Several clergy also worked on domestic violence initiatives and understood at an even deeper level the importance of making these connections. They spoke of the importance of getting faith leadership on board and building relationships with individual leaders who can spearhead education and action within their congregations and communities.

Efforts to engage faith communities are important because **religious affiliation is significant for many Americans**. Over 75% of Americans are faith-based: 70.6% identify as Christian, 1.9% Jewish, 0.9% Muslim, 0.7% Buddhist, 0.7% Hindu, 1.5% other faiths (including Unitarian Universalist, New Age, and Native American), and 22.8% unaffiliated.¹ In many communities, faith leaders and organizations may still be the main source of guidance, direction, and hope for many Americans. Faith-based organizations are central to rural; immigrant and refugee; and ethnic, racial, and religious minority communities. Collaboration with local faith communities can help service providers reach these underserved communities.

In addition to being highly faith affiliated, the U.S. population is aging, and older adults are even more likely to be faith-affiliated. Also, research shows that many older adults would turn to their faith communities for help if they were facing abuse.² Domestic and sexual violence service providers can collaborate with faith-based organizations to reach older Americans who are facing elder abuse.

Faith communities and leaders are already being called upon to respond to victims of domestic and sexual violence. The 2009 Fatality Review compiled by The Georgia Commission on Family Violence comments, “Victims, survivors, and surviving family members consistently turn to their faith communities for support and safety.”³ Tragically, faith leaders (clergy and lay) often have not received the training, skills, and resources they need to respond to sexual and domestic violence safely and effectively. As a result, victim safety may be compromised because faith leaders are unaware of the potential seriousness of the situation, unfamiliar with local services, or unable to provide an appropriate response.

Faith leaders are often called upon to give advice. This long-established tradition can be counterproductive in the face of a victim’s need for non-judgmental, non-directive support. In addition, faith leaders may simply be stretched too thin, or overwhelmed by the complexities of responding to the needs of perpetrator, victim/survivor, and other family members. As one domestic violence counselor commented, “Here we have the luxury of only working with the survivor. Religious leaders have to figure out how to move forward when they have both the survivor and the perpetrator in their community.”

By reaching out to faith leaders through collaborative partnerships that offer training, skills, and resources, service providers can help faith leaders respond safely and effectively to victims. By building bridges of understanding and referral, service providers and faith leaders can improve access to services. And by working with these important community gatekeepers, service providers can strengthen a multidisciplinary, coherent, collaborative community response to domestic and sexual violence that supports prevention and intervention and reaches everyone, including older victims and underserved communities.

Cross-training between service providers and faith communities can help sexual and domestic violence service agencies understand and serve their communities more effectively. In addition, strong partnerships with local faith-based organizations can provide service agencies with critical community connections and credibility that increase visibility and community support.

Speaking about her outreach work with Spanish-speaking, immigrant communities, one advocate explained: “What we’ve realized and recognized is that when we’re doing work in underserved populations, it brings us to faith-based communities, and the other way around. Because we understand the role that the church community plays, especially for underserved immigrant communities, that’s kind of a go-to for them. We started really paying attention and thinking about how to partner in general and increase the work that

we're doing with faith communities." This goes for communities of all faiths, she affirmed. Historically, people have gone to religious organizations for a place of safety. "Why not work together now more than ever to increase that safety, to provide that safety for the people that need it."

Another important reason for faith community outreach comes from survivors and victims themselves. For many survivors (particularly older women and women in underserved communities) faith is a critical resource, a pillar of identity and community, and an essential element in decision-making and healing. For these women, faith cannot be "checked at the door." Work with faith communities is essential to meet the needs of victims and survivors.

Outreach to religious communities can be time and labor intensive. There is tremendous diversity within faith communities, and a broad spectrum of faiths and denominations. Different faith communities and faith leaders are in different places across the continuum of understanding sexual and domestic violence. The outreach process must be tailored to meet these individual needs.

Outreach may take the form of phone calls, letters with information about sexual and domestic violence, follow-up after community education events (such as a "Day of Remembrance"), site visits, responses to phone inquiries about your work, or a brief handout that explains your services. Above all, outreach should be as personal and face-to-face as possible. Get out into the community, attend faith community events, sit down for coffee, and get to know local faith leaders.

Agency affiliates who are involved in faith communities can also provide avenues for outreach. The issues of sexual and domestic violence are often difficult for people in faith-based communities to engage. It can be an effective strategy to map out your organization's web of connections. If you know of people among your agency board, staff, and volunteers who participate in faith-based communities, ask them to serve as community liaisons to your organization. Outreach starts simply: bringing some cards or brochures to the congregation's barbecue dinner, or integrating some thoughts about domestic and sexual assault into a committee meeting or scripture study. Look for common values. Many people do social justice work based on messages from their faith traditions. Build on these! For example, Jewish communities discuss liberation at Passover. Find ways to connect that message to victims who may be trying to liberate themselves from a violent relationship. Every faith community has unique and diverse ways to connect to your work. Take advantage of these. Please see *Safe Havens*' "Before You Start," "The First Visit," and other checklists and resources for more information (www.interfaithpartners.org).

At Safe Havens, we have been doing grassroots faith community outreach for many years. In this document, we have listed some of the outreach challenges we have encountered over the years, along with some of the strategies we have developed for overcoming these challenges. We hope these will prove helpful as you undertake faith community outreach and engagement.

In addition, Safe Havens is here to help you. Please contact us by phone (1-617-951-3980/3981) or by email (info@interfaithpartners.org) if you have ideas you'd like to discuss, successes or challenges to share, a model that works, or just need to "talk it through." We are always happy to hear from you!

Best regards,

		
Rev. Dr. Anne Marie Hunter Director	Alyson Morse Katzman, MPA Associate Director	Shireen Akram-Boshar Project Coordinator

Safe Havens Interfaith Partnership Against Domestic Violence

Overcoming Outreach Challenges

If you encounter this outreach challenge...

Time Constraints

Like service providers, faith leaders are extremely busy. They must address the many needs of the people in their congregations. They are first and foremost the spiritual leader, but they also can be the CEO, strategic planner, and financial manager. Many faith leaders serve more than one congregation, or work full-time jobs in addition to their duties within the congregation. Some may be geographically isolated, and/or deeply immersed in the pressing concerns of their communities.

... here are some strategies that may be helpful.

Reassure faith leaders that you know that they are stretched thin. Pledge to honor their time. As much as possible, start and end every meeting promptly. Assure them that once they are part of a community-wide effort to respond to sexual and domestic violence, their role will be more clearly and narrowly defined. They will be able to rely on other community services to take on much of what they might otherwise have done themselves. In the end, a team approach will save time and lives.

Express how desperately faith-based leadership is needed on this critical issue. Faith communities are often the first place that sexual and domestic violence survivors turn for help.

Acknowledge that faith leaders are on the front lines, and that you would like to make that easier by providing supportive and easy-to-use tools, training, and resources.

Encourage a proactive rather than a reactive stance that will allow the groundwork to be built for a more effective, less crisis-driven response. Before a member of the faith community asks for help in a crisis, the faith leader can learn more and gather resources. Acknowledge the time required but also the benefits to victims of a trusting relationship between faith communities and service providers. Offer to help them with resources and training.

If you encounter this outreach challenge...

Over-Commitment

Often, faith leaders and congregations are involved in many community issues. They may also be providing aid and relief in far-flung communities around the world. Although agreeing that sexual and domestic violence are important issues, they may not feel that they have the energy and time to become involved.

... here are some strategies that may be helpful.

Honor the congregation's visionary work and commitment. Connect that work to efforts to end domestic and sexual violence. For example, if the congregation is deeply committed to ending homelessness or poverty, point out that there is a direct link between poverty and sexual and domestic violence for many women. If the congregation is engaged in peace and justice initiatives, point out that sexual and domestic violence is a peace and justice issue that affects our homes and communities on a daily basis. If the congregation works to strengthen families, point out that sexual and domestic violence undermine and destroy families and communities.

If you encounter this outreach challenge...

Minimizing

The shame that is an intrinsic part of sexual and domestic violence often silences victims and survivors. In addition, many victims who turn to their faith leaders for help will not use the ugly language needed to describe what actually happened. As a result, faith leaders hear a “sanitized” version of the situation, which may not sound very serious. And, because they lack sexual and domestic violence training, faith leaders don’t know that victims typically minimize their experiences. Often, faith leaders have not yet developed the ability to “read between the lines” or to ask questions for clarification and more information. As a result, they may think that sexual and domestic violence are not serious or widespread problems.

... here are some strategies that may be helpful.

Be able to cite compelling and meaningful statistics or “head-snapping facts.” For example, “we know that there are currently [fill in your local number] restraining orders (orders for protection) in our local community,” or “a sexual assault occurs in the U.S every 98 seconds.”⁴ If reports of domestic or sexual violence have increased in your area over the last few years, include this at the start of your discussion. Any incident that is covered in the media can also provide an opening for discussion or training.

Know your local statistics. Many faith leaders are most concerned with what is happening on their immediate doorstep.

In addition, a personal story from a survivor may help faith leaders understand emotionally and intellectually the physical, psychological, and spiritual impact and prevalence of sexual and domestic violence. This may happen as part of an introductory training facilitated by a service provider, or may be available through a video presentation.

Sexual Assault Awareness Month, in April, and Domestic Violence Awareness Month, in October, may also provide opportunities for faith community engagement. Perhaps the faith community could host a community vigil, hold a special service or “Day of Remembrance,” or invite someone from your agency to speak during the service and hold a question and answer session after the service. Perhaps the faith leaders in your community could designate a particular week during these months when they pledge to incorporate sexual and domestic violence in some way in their worship or prayer service. You could even ask faith leaders to insert the hotline number in the footer in all service leaflets and newsletters.

If you encounter this outreach challenge...

Distancing

Sometimes, faith leaders are aware that sexual and domestic violence are important issues, but they haven't made the connection to their own congregations. Or they may fall prey to the impulse to distance themselves from victims. So they may say, "This isn't happening here!" or "I've never heard anyone in my congregation talk about this."

... here are some strategies that may be helpful.

Acknowledge the long history of silencing both within the wider culture and within faith communities. Acknowledge that sexual and domestic violence are crimes that cause victims to feel shame, confusion, and fear about speaking out. Until the ice is broken within the congregation, many victims and survivors will not feel safe coming forward. Many faith leaders have heard disclosures only after they break the silence in a public way, receive training, or in some way indicate that they are open to speaking about these issues.

Affirm that domestic and sexual violence affect people of all races, cultures, faiths, classes, physical abilities, sexual orientations, ages, etc. However, women of color and American Indian/Alaska Native women are more likely to experience sexual assault.⁵

Talk about how much victims and survivors need the opportunity to tell their story in their own words, and to be believed, respected, and supported. This is often a first step towards healing. Listening with support and empathy to a victim's experience is an important role for members and leaders of faith communities.

Affirm that victims and survivors report that they'd like to talk to their faith leaders about sexual and domestic violence. However, they may fear they will be judged, won't be believed, or will face repercussions from the perpetrator. They may be embarrassed or too ashamed, have a mental or physical condition that makes disclosure difficult, or be unready, unwilling, or unable to make changes. Survivors need faith leaders to take the first step by talking about these issues themselves.

In addition, sometimes people want to distance themselves from these issues due to their own unexplored experiences with violence. Because anyone can be a perpetrator or a survivor, it's important to be prepared for personal histories and issues to arise.

If you encounter this outreach challenge...

Distrust

Faith leaders sometimes fear that service providers may not honor marriages and families, may encourage divorce, may interfere in families, or may overlook essential religious or ethical considerations.

... here are some strategies that may be helpful.

Commit yourself and your agency to the long-term work of relationship and trust building. Attend faith community events when appropriate. Listen respectfully and learn all you can about the congregations in your community. Consult with faith leaders whenever possible.

Reassure faith leaders that domestic and sexual violence advocates do not tell victims what to do. They do not tell clients to file for divorce, and they do not encourage divorce. Rather, advocates prioritize safety and provide options and resources. Victims of abuse are encouraged and empowered to make their own decisions.

Acknowledge that when sexual and domestic violence occurs within an intimate relationship, survivors often don't want the relationship to end, they just want the violence to stop. Early professional intervention is the best hope for referring the abuser to services, minimizing trauma to the children, and supporting the victim.

Acknowledge that sometimes an abuser will not change his or her abusive behavior, even after batterers' intervention and much work. In these cases, victims and survivors of domestic violence within a marriage may be faced with the difficult decision to leave the relationship for their own safety and for the safety and wellbeing of their children. In this case, victims need support, the opportunity to mourn the loss of the relationship, and help on the journey toward healing. Note that **the person who uses violence in a relationship to maintain power and control breaks the covenant of marriage, not the person who seeks safety or help.**

Encourage faith leaders to understand that sexual violence, even within a marriage, is a crime. When a crime has been committed, accountability is an important first step in individual and community safety and healing, and is the foundation of justice.

Know and be prepared to explain your state's statute regarding rape and sexual violence within marriage. Victims of domestic violence may also experience sexual violence that remains unreported and may or may not be included in their request for a restraining order. Sometimes, pregnancy may result from a sexual assault by a husband or intimate partner, which creates further complications.

Help faith leaders understand the physical, emotional, and spiritual impact of sexual violence, whether perpetrated by a family member, spouse, friend, date, or stranger.

Discuss safety and its importance to families, children, and youth. Try to find common ground. Perhaps both your agency and the congregation would agree on values such as safety, justice, and respect for all.

If you are invited, or hoping to be invited, to provide training, offer to preview the outline, videos, or other resources with the faith leader. Discuss any concerns that the faith leader may have.

Acknowledge the difficulties that faith leaders and service providers have encountered in the past. Commit to working through difficulties that arise. Listen carefully and try to understand the concerns raised by faith leaders from within their faith and cultural context. However, continue to gently and respectfully affirm that you will remain victim-centered, and you will not compromise safety. When you and a faith leader disagree, try to explain your position through the lens of victim safety or the effect on the victim.

Note that although you can never count on a perpetrator to change, the earlier they are referred for services, the more likely they will be able to change. Although the relationship that the abuser is currently in may no longer be viable, disclosure and accountability now may mean fewer future victims.

Note that earlier detection and intervention are also better for victims. Without professional intervention, domestic violence will escalate in frequency and severity over time.

If you encounter this outreach challenge...

Concerns about Family Integrity

Congregations typically include extended families across several generations. Because they solemnize marriages, celebrate anniversaries, help to welcome, teach, and shape the next generation, perform funerals, and are in other ways involved, faith leaders are concerned about and invested in the integrity of families and relationships. At times, this can become a concern for the public unity of the family without due consideration for the private reality, which may include abuse.

In addition, many faiths and denominations have a highly developed theology about and/or sacramental understanding of marriage. This may also increase the importance put on maintaining family integrity.

... here are some strategies that may be helpful.

Note that the person who brings violence to the relationship to maintain power and control breaks the covenant of marriage, not the person who seeks safety or help.

Affirm that without professional intervention, domestic violence will escalate in frequency and severity over time. Even with professional intervention, many perpetrators will not change, or will only change gradually over many years. Domestic and sexual violence are dangerous, and can be lethal.

While clergy often value keeping families together, this must be balanced with the reality that perpetrators of domestic violence are by definition family members, and many perpetrators of sexual violence are also family members.⁶ Often, the violence, devastation, and trauma make it too difficult to continue or mend the relationship. Victims should not be blamed for being unable to stay in a violent or dangerous relationship. Instead, they should be helped to grieve the loss and supported in healing and rebuilding.

People used to think that children need both their parents no matter what. "For the sake of the kids," people chose not to divorce. However, current research on the long-term consequences of childhood trauma reveals the devastating effects that exposure to domestic and/or sexual violence has on children, including higher risk of drug and alcohol involvement, violent crimes, suicide, or becoming a victim or perpetrator. Domestic and sexual violence are crimes that can scar families "from generation to generation."

Assert that in the long run family integrity is best supported when abusers are held accountable and children are raised in homes free of violence. Stopping domestic and sexual violence today supports the ability of these children to have healthy families in the future. The more perpetrators are held accountable today, the stronger and safer our future families and communities will be.

If you encounter this outreach challenge...

Legal Issues

In some states, clergy are mandated reporters of abuse of children and dependent and older adults. However, reporting guidelines and protocols are sometimes poorly defined or confusing, and many clergy have not received training. Clergy wonder how to do the right thing.

... here are some strategies that may be helpful.

Make sure that faith leaders in your area know that domestic violence perpetrated against a competent adult is not usually covered under mandatory reporting laws. Instead, able-bodied adults who are victims of domestic or sexual violence are assumed to be able to make their own decisions about whether they will report or not. There are many factors (including safety concerns) that go into this decision. Victims should not be coerced or pressured.

As for other types of mandated reporting (child abuse or abuse of an older or disabled adult), laws differ by state. Learn and help to educate about local laws regarding faith leaders as mandated reporters of abuse. See www.childwelfare.gov (search under “state-specific resources”) for more information. Model how you speak to your clients about the limits on your confidentiality. Suggest that faith leaders let their congregants know what they are mandated to report so that congregants can make informed decisions about what to talk with their faith leader about.

Some states do not have mandated reporting statutes that apply to clergy.

Wherever domestic violence is present, faith leaders should be alert for both sexual and physical violence perpetrated against children living in the home.

Reporting may be complicated. There is significant potential for safety risks and increased trauma for family members. Offer to provide support to or partner with faith-based leaders as they respond to a victim or survivor. Be available to discuss the difficult issues and nuances that arise regarding safety and reporting. Encourage faith leaders who are obligated to report to do so only when there is a safety plan in place and, if possible, a domestic or sexual violence advocate is involved and supporting the victim.

Be prepared to answer any questions faith leaders may have.

Offer to help. Be available to hear about situations (with identities disguised) and provide your professional opinion. Encourage faith leaders to call your agency’s hotline when they have specific cases that they’d like to discuss anonymously (and with identities disguised).

Help faith leaders focus on the victim’s needs with regard to safety and reporting.

If you encounter this outreach challenge...

Confidentiality

Many faith leaders have not received training about confidentiality. In addition, congregations often encourage open sharing of personal problems so that congregants can pray for and/or support one another. Congregants may be more community-focused than people in the wider culture. From this viewpoint, the importance of confidentiality may not be immediately apparent.

... here are some strategies that may be helpful.

Be prepared with a clear and concise definition of confidentiality. Stress the importance of confidentiality as the cornerstone of victim safety. Explain why confidentiality is critical to domestic and sexual violence victims and survivors.

Share the confidentiality guidelines you use as a place for faith leaders to begin to develop their own guidelines around confidentiality and sexual and domestic violence. Encourage faith leaders to disclose the limits of confidentiality (for example, situations in which they are a mandated reporter) to congregants at the beginning of every counseling session.

As a general guideline, state that confidentiality should be maintained in all situations UNLESS the faith leader is mandated to report abuse of a child or a disabled or older adult OR someone is going to hurt another person or themselves. Otherwise, information received from a victim or survivor should be disclosed only with that person's permission.

Be prepared to answer any questions faith leaders may have. Offer to provide support when they are working with a victim or survivor.

Invite faith leaders to further discussion.

If you encounter this outreach challenge...

Professionalism

Many faith leaders have been through years of graduate school, been thoroughly screened by ordination committees or by congregational members, have had their calling and theology examined by religious authorities, and have worked diligently to deserve the confidence and respect of their congregants. They have many skills and have learned from experience while serving their congregation(s). Even well-intentioned suggestions may be viewed as disrespectful or unwelcome.

... here are some strategies that may be helpful.

Honor the work and skills of the faith leaders with whom you work. Be willing to learn from them; they often know the community well and are experts in cultural responsiveness. Offer to augment the skills and knowledge they already have with your “specialist” perspective. Work toward partnerships. Tell the faith leaders how much you need them, and what they can do to help you do your job more effectively and to keep community members safer.

Let faith leaders know how desperately you need them as partners and supporters in the overall work to end sexual and domestic violence. They have an important and critical role to play that no law enforcement officer or service provider will be able to fill. For many victims, the quest for justice, peace, and healing is ultimately a spiritual journey that requires the engagement of the faith community. In addition, faith leaders can speak to sexual and domestic violence as an ethical and spiritual crisis. They are moral leaders in the community and can influence community norms and set the tone for what is acceptable behavior.

Let faith leaders know that for a faith-based victim or survivor, a faith leader’s involvement is critically important for long-term healing and wellbeing. Work through local faith leader consortiums. Ask to be on the agenda, ask a faith leader with whom you have worked to introduce you, and say a few words about how important they are to your work.

Ask faith leaders with whom you have worked to help you reach out to other faith leaders. What faith leaders can’t hear from service providers, they may be able to hear from their colleagues.

Invite faith leaders to train other faith leaders.

Ask the faith leaders you are working with to recommend colleagues who would appreciate an outreach phone call and visit. Ask the faith leaders you are working with to set up the meeting, or to call their colleague and let him or her know that you are going to call. They could even provide a personal introduction by phone, email, or in person.

If you encounter this outreach challenge...

Past Mistakes

Once we know more about sexual and domestic violence, who among us doesn't look back on some situation or another and think, "If only I had known . . ." Faith leaders, too, may be concerned about past responses that, with additional information, they realize may not have been safe or effective. Some faith leaders become burdened by this guilt, and may have trouble engaging domestic or sexual violence training. Often, faith leaders remember for many years the individuals and families they wish they had understood more fully or responded to more effectively. These memories can be painful.

... here are some strategies that may be helpful.

Affirm that everyone makes mistakes, that there is much to be learned about sexual and domestic violence, and that good advocates and responders are always learning. Be prepared to tell about mistakes that you have made. Affirm that it is OK to have made mistakes in the past, and that we all need ongoing training and support in order to respond safely and more effectively in the future.

Offer to provide technical assistance by phone or email for faith leaders who are responding to a particular case, speaking out in the congregation, or breaking the silence about sexual or domestic violence within the community.

Provide information about a 24/7 hotline that can respond to faith leaders who have questions, need guidance, or want to talk about a case confidentially with the experts.

If you encounter this outreach challenge...

Crisis of Core Beliefs

Sexual and domestic violence are complex issues that may precipitate a crisis of core beliefs. No one wants to believe that bad things can happen to good people, or that seemingly good people can do very bad things. In addition, sexual and domestic violence may test understandings of core theological issues such as suffering, forgiveness, justice, or hope.

... here are some strategies that may be helpful.

Encourage and support a faith leader discussion group that allows for theological reflection around issues such as forgiveness, divorce, suffering, salvation, repentance, healing, justice, hope, and other questions that victims and survivors encounter. If you are hearing questions about these issues from your clients, let the faith leaders know that these are questions that are important to your clients, and that the clients need to hear answers from their faith leaders.

Acknowledge that domestic and sexual violence challenge our fundamental assumptions that 1) bad things don't happen to good people, and 2) good people don't do bad things. Provide time to talk about both these assumptions in light of what we know about perpetrators. Discuss how these assumptions can pressure victims to suffer in silence.

Provide opportunities wherever possible for faith leaders to hear directly from survivors about their experiences and how their experiences affected their faith journeys and their physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing.

If you encounter this outreach challenge...

Disengagement

Faith leaders may be interested and supportive, but not sure how to engage the issues of sexual and domestic violence. They may hesitate, knowing that they are not “experts,” and wanting to make sure that they don’t do the wrong thing or compromise a victim’s safety.

... here are some strategies that may be helpful.

Find a project that can engage faith leaders and your agency. For example, you could decide to develop a brochure about sexual and domestic violence that is specific to a particular faith or denomination. You can include the basic information, and leaders from that faith or denomination can help by selecting scriptures, prayers, or other materials from their tradition that will speak to people in their congregation. Ask them to help you, or to set up a short-term task force within the congregation to help you. Work together to make the resource informative, accessible, and inviting.

Plan an event to introduce the resulting faith-based resource to the congregation and/or community. You and the faith leader can both speak about the importance of your partnership in addressing domestic and sexual violence.

Organize an event for faith leaders (breakfast meeting, working lunch, etc.) that is chaired by the mayor, governor, town councilor, district attorney, or other high-ranking individual and focuses on faith and domestic and sexual violence. Bring in local experts, ask local clergy to speak on the issues, and solicit ideas from faith-based participants about programming or training they would like to receive.

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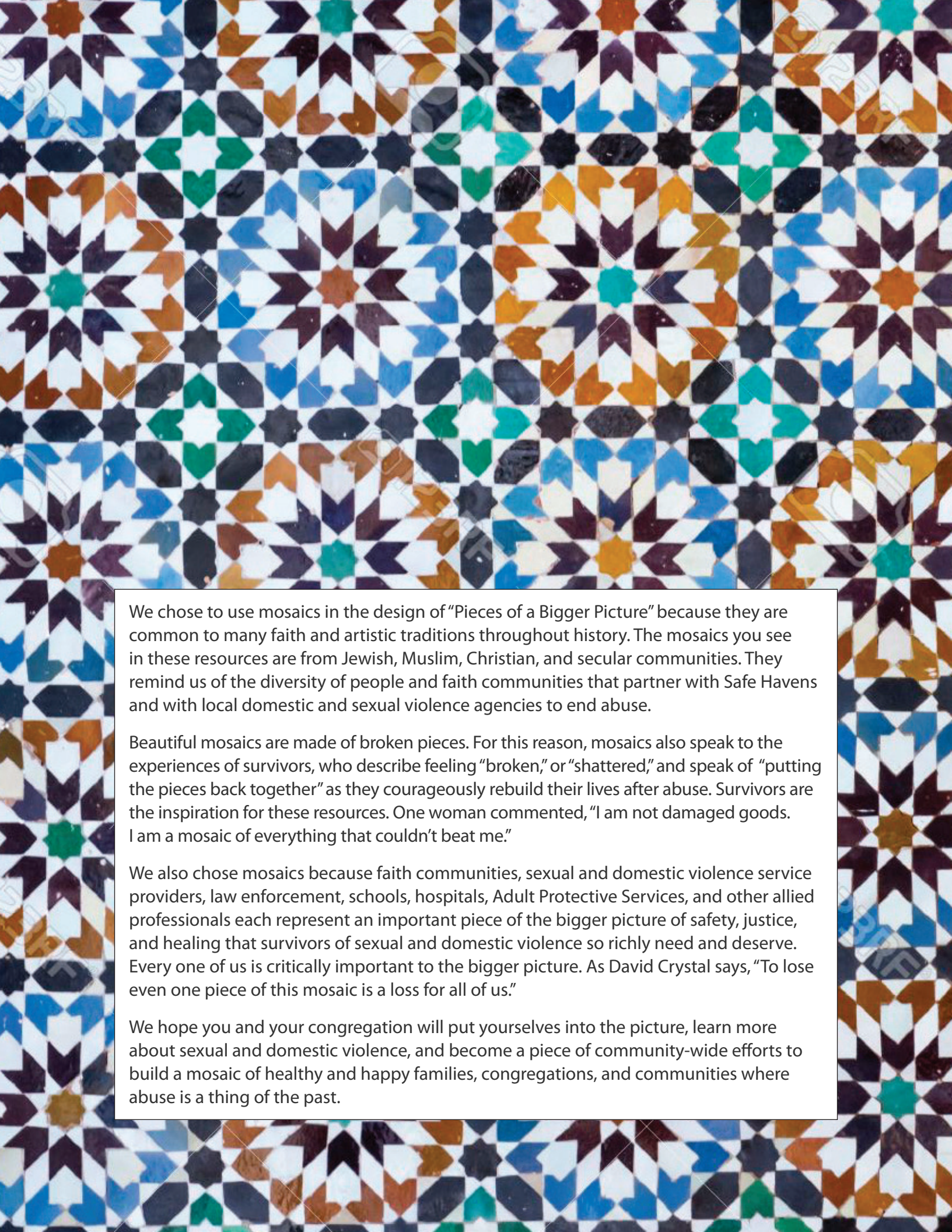
⁵ Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network, www.rainn.org/statistics, "Who are the Victims?" 2010.

⁶ It may be useful to inform faith leaders that 73% of sexual assaults are perpetrated by a non-stranger (38% of rapists are a friend or acquaintance, 28% are or were an intimate partner or spouse, 7% are a relative). See RAINN, Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network, www.rainn.org/statistics, 2015.

Our heartfelt thanks to the service providers, clergy, and coalition staff members across the U.S. who shared their time, experiences, and wisdom so generously with us. We have learned so much from you all, and we are deeply grateful. It is an honor to share this journey with you. We are also grateful to the Office on Violence Against Women of the U.S. Department of Justice for their guidance and support.

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We chose to use mosaics in the design of "Pieces of a Bigger Picture" because they are common to many faith and artistic traditions throughout history. The mosaics you see in these resources are from Jewish, Muslim, Christian, and secular communities. They remind us of the diversity of people and faith communities that partner with Safe Havens and with local domestic and sexual violence agencies to end abuse.

Beautiful mosaics are made of broken pieces. For this reason, mosaics also speak to the experiences of survivors, who describe feeling "broken," or "shattered," and speak of "putting the pieces back together" as they courageously rebuild their lives after abuse. Survivors are the inspiration for these resources. One woman commented, "I am not damaged goods. I am a mosaic of everything that couldn't beat me."

We also chose mosaics because faith communities, sexual and domestic violence service providers, law enforcement, schools, hospitals, Adult Protective Services, and other allied professionals each represent an important piece of the bigger picture of safety, justice, and healing that survivors of sexual and domestic violence so richly need and deserve. Every one of us is critically important to the bigger picture. As David Crystal says, "To lose even one piece of this mosaic is a loss for all of us."

We hope you and your congregation will put yourselves into the picture, learn more about sexual and domestic violence, and become a piece of community-wide efforts to build a mosaic of healthy and happy families, congregations, and communities where abuse is a thing of the past.