

Driving Change

Foundations for Effective SARTs



West Virginia Foundation for
Rape Information and Services

“This work is not about being right.
It’s about building relationships,
meeting needs, and
transforming systems.”

Mariame Kaba & Kelly Hayes

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Purpose and Acknowledgements

Driving Change is designed to support Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) coordinators in facilitating and leading local teams. It provides a framework for understanding the purpose of a SART, its critical role, and offers guidance for building collaboration across disciplines. The goal of this resource is to equip coordinators with the knowledge and tools needed to foster effective meetings, strengthen partnerships, and guide their teams in making meaningful improvements to the community's response to sexual assault.

Driving Change was developed by WVFRIS and written by Kevin Kalany, with contributions from Kasey Forsell, Nikki Godfrey, and Marsha Kisner, and editing and formatting by Kristin Littel.

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1. A Systems Approach to Change

Need for SARTs

Sexual violence is a serious violent crime and a public health crisis. The impacts of sexual violence go far beyond the act of the crime itself. Victims of sexual assault face both physical and psychological trauma, including the risk of sexually transmitted diseases and physical injuries that can be life-threatening. The community's response or lack of response can deepen the trauma, causing victims to lose trust in social and criminal justice systems. These impacts can lead to withdrawal from work, school, community activities, and social connections. The human toll of this crisis alone is extraordinary, but the cost is also measurable in economic terms. According to a study using economic figures from 2014, the estimated lifetime cost of rape is \$122,461 per victim (Peterson et al., 2017).

In West Virginia, 1 in 3 women and nearly 1 in 6 men will experience some form of contact violence in their lifetime (Smith et al., 2017). We also know that different communities experience higher rates of sexual violence, and that many individuals across WV still face barriers to accessing the criminal justice system.

Sexual assault response teams (SARTs) are multidisciplinary teams designed to bring together diverse professionals—including, at a minimum, law enforcement, medical personnel, advocates, and prosecutors—to create **a coordinated, victim-centered response to sexual assault**. The need for SARTs is underscored by the complex nature of sexual assault cases and the burden of a public health crisis. The primary purpose of a SART is to improve outcomes for victims by enhancing communication, reducing system barriers, and strengthening the overall community response.

Systems Advocacy

Systems advocacy involves broad-scale efforts to improve institutional responses to sexual assault. The goal is to strengthen support and services for victims while ensuring that these systems are accountable and effective. Unlike individual advocacy, systems advocacy aims to transform practices, policies, and cultural norms within institutions to better support victims, hold offenders accountable, and reduce instances of sexual violence.

SARTs play a critical role in systems advocacy by identifying and addressing gaps in services, promoting policies that support victims' rights, and ensuring a collaborative response. Key SART strategies:

- **Identify Gaps in Services.** SARTs are uniquely positioned to identify where current systems fail to meet the needs of sexual assault victims. Through regular reviews and feedback from partners, SARTs can pinpoint deficiencies in the response process.
- **Promote Policy Changes.** Based on their observations and experiences, SARTs can advocate for changes in policies at the local, state, and even national levels. SARTs can raise awareness in their communities about the realities of sexual assault, educate professional colleagues, and be advocates for change in their workplace.

- **Enhance Collaboration.** SARTS can foster strong relationships among member agencies and organizations, enhancing communication and collaboration. This ensures that all entities involved in the response to sexual assault are working together effectively and efficiently, that victims aren't falling through the cracks in the system, and that the focus of criminal justice response is centered on suspects.
- **Assess and Evaluate:** SARTs can develop and implement evaluation tools to measure the effectiveness of their services as individual agencies and as a team. Members are encouraged to evaluate agreed-upon protocols and address barriers.
- **Educate and Train:** SARTs can address any weaknesses or gaps in services via education and training. This tool is to ensure that members have the necessary capacity to serve victims and effectively carry out their role-specific duties in these cases.

Core Values of SARTs

Victim-Centered and Offender-Focused

A victim-centered approach prioritizes victims' needs and well-being throughout the response process. This includes ensuring confidentiality, providing timely and compassionate support, and involving victims in decision-making.

Conversely, an offender-focused approach ensures that the investigation and prosecution efforts are directed at holding perpetrators accountable.

Responding to Victims from All Communities

Responding to victims from all communities means recognizing and respecting individuals' lived experiences, backgrounds, and unique needs. For victims of sexual assault, this approach is foundational to building trust and offering compassionate, effective support.

SARTs must remain flexible and responsive, avoiding one-size-fits-all strategies in favor of approaches that empower victims. This may involve language access, awareness of trauma impact, and addressing other barriers that make it difficult for victims to seek help.

Facilitation and Leadership

SART Coordinators (i.e., team facilitators) are essential to the success and sustainability of a SART and ensure the team remains focused on shared goals. **Core responsibilities include:**

- **Coordinate and organize team activities:** Schedule meetings, set agendas, track progress, and follow up on action items.
- **Facilitate communication and collaboration:** Create a safe space for open dialogue, resolve conflicts, and promote mutual understanding among diverse disciplines.
- **Maintain a victim-centered focus:** Keep victims' needs and experiences central to discussions, decisions, and system improvements.
- **Guide strategic planning and goal setting:** Help the team define priorities, develop measurable objectives, and evaluate effectiveness.
- **Support accountability:** Encourage members to uphold agreed-upon protocols and address barriers constructively.

- **Foster continuous learning:** Coordinate training, share resources, and integrate new best practices into the team's work.
- **Serve as liaison and advocate:** Represent the team to community partners to strengthen local response capacity.

In many SARTs, the Coordinator also serves as the meeting facilitator and often assumes a leadership role. This does not mean directing or managing the team but rather setting the tone for conversation and providing guidance while staying grounded in the team's core values. Effective facilitators manage conflict and balance personalities to keep the team collaborating toward shared goals and the collective mission of the SART. Teams need to build consensus in their work to ensure sustained buy-in from all members.

Facilitation is a broad skill set, but SART Coordinators can stay grounded in two essential elements: Respect and curiosity.

- **Respect** – Facilitators model respect by actively listening, acknowledging contributions, and showing openness to others' expertise. Recognizing thoughtful input and good work helps team members feel valued and builds trust across disciplines.
- **Curiosity** – Curiosity keeps SART conversations light, genuine, and focused on learning rather than blame. A curious team asks thoughtful questions to understand what's really happening and why, seeking solutions instead of finding fault. Curiosity invites collaboration and keeps discussions grounded in shared problem-solving rather than defensiveness.

Meeting with Purpose

SART meetings can be a vehicle for change if properly utilized. Consider the following when planning your meetings:

- **Topics** – When selecting meeting topics, ensure they align with your team's current goals and objectives or build upon ongoing work. Each topic should have a clear purpose and connection to your SART's broader mission.
- **Agenda** – A well-structured agenda guides both planning and facilitation. Include the meeting's date, time, and location; list discussion topics in order of priority; and attach or reference any relevant materials. Emailing the agenda in advance, as well as printing out copies for the meeting, helps participants follow along, prepare their thoughts, and take notes.
- **Minutes** – Whenever possible, designate a team member to take minutes. Minutes should briefly summarize discussions, decisions, and action items. Share minutes after the meeting so members can review and identify action items.
- **Task assignment and follow-up** – Productive meetings lead to action, if team members have clearly defined next-steps. Consider implementing a buddy system for follow-up tasks or checking in with individuals between meetings.

2. Confidentiality

Need for Confidentiality

Confidentiality is crucial in the sexual assault response to protect the privacy, dignity, and safety of victims. It ensures that sensitive information about the victim and the details of the assault are only shared with those who need to know to provide appropriate support and services. This protection fosters a sense of safety, encouraging victims to come forward and seek help without fear of exposure or retaliation. When victims trust that their information will be kept confidential, they are more likely to engage with support systems, which is essential for their healing and for the effective prosecution of offenders.

Maintaining confidentiality also helps to create a supportive environment where victims feel secure in disclosing sensitive information. This environment is necessary to provide the comprehensive care and support that victims need. A breach of confidentiality can lead to further trauma for victims, reduce their trust in the system, and potentially compromise ongoing investigations.

A robust and understandable confidentiality policy should be one of the first documents that a SART develops. This document will keep discussions centered on system barriers and away from specific cases, in turn reducing conflict and maintaining victim privacy.

Privacy, Confidentiality, and Privilege: What is the Difference? Adapted from the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MNCASA) and Wisconsin Office of Crime Victims Services			
	Privacy	Confidentiality	Privilege
What is it?	A right	Legal/ethical duty	Protected communication
Who does it apply to?	Public officials, employees, or agencies	Community-based victim advocates and SANEs	Doctors, counselors, and attorneys
How does it impact the victim?	"I decide who knows my information"	"You have a legal or ethical duty to protect my information."	"No one can make you share my information."
Guaranteed by?	Constitutional amendment	State laws, professional boards/standards and licensure, federal funding	State law

Crafting a Confidentiality Policy

Crafting a confidentiality policy involves outlining clear guidelines and procedures for handling victims' information. This policy needs to specify:

- **What constitutes case information.** Case information refers to any private or confidential information protected by law, funding requirements, or professional standards. This includes details about active investigations; identifying information about victims; privileged communications between victims and professionals; the identities of mandated reporters; medical or personal records; and any information shared with a professional by a victim with consent.
- **Conditions for sharing information.** A confidentiality policy needs to outline the specific circumstances under which information can be shared. This might include situations where a victim has given explicit consent, where there is a legal obligation to report (such as in cases of imminent harm), or where the information is necessary to provide critical services. Additionally, federal laws such as VAWA, VOCA, FVPSA, and HIPAA establish specific rules for protecting victim information. All sharing must follow informed, written, and time-limited consent.
- **Typical information sharing practices for SART members.** For example, law enforcement typically shares information internally and with the prosecuting attorney. Sexual assault victim advocates never share information about cases without consent and instruction from victims, except in very rare circumstances. Medical professionals share information they collect in a sexual assault evidence collection kit with law enforcement only if a victim reports and permits them to share it with law enforcement. They do not share victim medical records with other SART members without consent and instruction from victims, except in very rare circumstances.

Tool

A clear confidentiality policy helps ensure all team members understand and uphold shared expectations around confidentiality. Click on the resource below for a template that teams can use to formalize their confidentiality commitment. (Note that this resource is offered in this section as an electronic link and as an attachment in the Appendix.)

- [Sample Confidentiality Agreement](#)
- [Confidentiality SASTA Module](#)

3. Vision and Mission

Creating vision and mission statements is the next critical step for SARTs after developing a confidentiality policy, as they allow the team to develop a shared philosophy and purpose. This is especially important to gain consensus and buy-in from all members. Finding strong common ground is essential for the team to function.

The Vision Statement

A vision statement is a short, clear statement that describes the long-term goals and aspirations of the SART. It provides a clear picture of what the team hopes to achieve in the future, guiding its efforts and inspiring its members. Vision statements are broad and forward-looking, serving as the spirit of the team's mission.

Sample Vision Statements

“To build a community response to sexual assault that centers victims of all communities, ensures justice, and challenges systems that perpetuate harm.”

“A united team where victims' voices shape every response, every policy, and every step toward healing and justice.”

The Mission Statement

A mission statement defines the core purpose and function of the SART. It outlines the team's primary objectives and the methods it will use to achieve them. The mission statement serves as a foundation for the team's strategies and actions.

The SART needs to reference its mission statement regularly to ensure that the team's activities align with its stated purpose. It can also be used to communicate the team's goals and values to external partners and the community.

Sample Mission Statements

“Our SART ensures victim input in every aspect of our work, from protocol development to service delivery. We believe that systems shaped by victim experiences are more just, effective, and healing.”

“We provide a coordinated response to sexual assault that is consistent across jurisdictions and agencies. Through aligned protocols and joint training, we ensure that all victims receive seamless care that is informed by a correct understanding of the impact of trauma.”

Writing a Vision and Mission Statement

Crafting a vision and mission statement is an excellent activity to build consensus and focus the efforts of a SART. SARTs can use the tools below to help facilitate this activity.

Tools

Click on the resources below for help in writing mission and vision statements. (Note that these resources are offered in this section as electronic links and as attachments in the Appendix.)

- [Crafting a Vision Statement](#)
- [Setting a Mission Statement](#)
- [Mission and Vision Builder Sheet](#)
- [SART Foundations: Mission Statements, New or Revised](#)

4. Goals and Objectives

After a SART lays the groundwork with its confidentiality policy, vision, and mission statements, it can begin setting goals and objectives with tangible outcomes.

How Goal-Setting Drives SART Work

Setting goals and objectives provides essential direction and focus for a SART's efforts, ensuring that tasks are prioritized, resources are allocated efficiently, and progress is measurable.

By establishing specific, measurable goals, SARTs can create a strategic plan that outlines clear steps to meet targeted objectives. This roadmap helps identify critical tasks that need immediate attention, centering the SART's efforts on the most impactful activities.

Moreover, setting goals enhances team cohesion and motivation by uniting members with shared work. Achievable goals provide motivation, and celebrating milestones boosts morale, keeping the team motivated to continue their efforts. Regularly measuring progress ensures accountability and supports continuous improvement, helping the SART remain responsive and effective.

Identifying Gaps and Barriers

Identifying gaps and barriers is a critical step in setting effective goals for a SART. This process involves assessing the current state of services and support for sexual assault victims, pinpointing areas that require improvement, and recognizing obstacles that may hinder progress.

Some ways to identify gaps and barriers in services and support for victims are to ask questions and thoroughly explore the answers as a team, such as:

- What services and support do we currently provide?
- What structural barriers exist? (e.g., limited resources, policy, or legal constraints)
- Who do we typically refer to on the team?
- Who do we tend not to refer to, and why?
- Are we reaching individuals who may face a greater risk of sexual assault or greater difficulty accessing services? How, or why not?
- What broader community factors, such as financial strain, lack of stable housing, or barriers to accessing public services, may affect our response?
- Are there areas in which we know our response could improve, or training programs we have found especially valuable that others might benefit from?

Setting Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound, and challenging (SMART-C). This framework ensures that the team sets realistic and actionable targets, facilitating better planning and evaluation.

Sample SMART Goal and Objectives

A SART writes a plan to improve the initial response to the hospital:

Objectives

- By January 2026, a secure room will be identified at [hospital] for medical forensic exams and equipment.
- By January 2026, [hospital] will update its protocol to move victims to a private waiting area upon arrival to the emergency room.
- By February 2026, [rape crisis center] will work with the hospital to provide an on-call protocol where advocates are called upon intake, arriving within 45 minutes of the call, and available in-person when the victim is offered advocacy by the medical provider.
- By April 2026, hospital intake staff will be trained on the new procedures, and the process will be added to onboarding.
- By April 2026, [team member] will contact the local news station, newspaper, and local journalist with a press release detailing the SART and [hospital's] partnership and a commitment to serving survivors of sexual assault.

A SART writes a plan to improve follow-up support for victims in the days and weeks after a forensic exam:

Objectives

- By January 2026, develop a standardized follow-up protocol that includes timelines, responsible agencies, and victim contact methods.
- At the April 2026 meeting, approve the protocol and ensure appropriate agencies will implement the plan.
- By July 2026, collect feedback from at least 8 victims (with consent and through existing follow-up calls) to assess whether they felt informed and supported after the exam.

Tools

For more on SMART Goals, see the resources below. (Note that these appendix resources are offered in this section and the Appendix as electronic links.)

- [How to Write SMART Goals](#)
- [Smart Goals Table](#)

5. Evaluation

Why Evaluate?

Evaluation is the process of asking, “Are we making a difference?” For SARTs, evaluation helps teams reflect on their practices to determine if responders are following protocols, understand what is working, and identify areas where systems can improve. Evaluation is not about assigning blame, but rather learning together to better serve victims and improve the coordinated community response to sexual violence.

Evaluation is also a tool for accountability. When done regularly, it ensures the team’s efforts remain aligned with its goals and mission, informs decisions, builds credibility with partners and the community, and helps create sustainability.

What Does Evaluation Look Like for a SART?

SART evaluation doesn’t require a formal background in research. At its core, **it involves identifying what your team wants to learn, gathering relevant information, and using that information to reflect and act.**

SART evaluations can focus on any of the following areas:

- Victim experience and satisfaction with services
- Interagency coordination and referrals
- Case outcomes and timelines
- Gaps in services or barriers to access
- The impact of team activities, such as training programs or protocol changes

The Evaluation Cycle

Effective evaluation follows a simple, repeatable cycle:

- **Plan.** Identify what you want to learn. Start with questions like: What does success look like? What do we hope changes?
- **Do.** Gather information using simple tools such as surveys, interviews, redacted case reviews, and observations.
- **Reflect.** Review results as a team. What do they tell us about our response? What patterns or gaps do we see?
- **Apply.** Use what you learn to make informed changes to your protocols, training, or outreach strategies.
- **Repeat.** Build evaluation into your team’s regular practice.

Process vs Outcome Evaluation

Process evaluation focuses on how the SART operates. It examines whether the team is implementing its agreed-upon practices consistently and whether the supporting infrastructure

– such as meeting structure, membership, communication, protocols, and collaboration – is functioning as intended. This can include comparing the emergency response with the SAFE county plan, tracking how agencies coordinate on individual cases, or assessing the quality of team communication. Process evaluation is often the most practical evaluation method for SARTs and provides critical insight into team dynamics, service delivery, and the practical barriers victims may experience within the response system.

Outcome evaluation assesses the difference the SART's work makes for victims, partner agencies, and the broader community. It measures changes that result from coordinated efforts, such as improved access to advocacy and forensic care, reduced barriers for underserved populations, increased consistency in victim-centered practice, or enhanced interagency collaboration. Outcome evaluation may also examine system-level shifts, like strengthened policies, more reliable referrals, or improved follow-through on investigations. While outcomes often take time to emerge, they provide essential information about whether the SART's efforts are producing meaningful, measurable change—and where further improvements are needed. See [section 4.2 of the SART Toolkit](#) for more on the evaluation process.

Starting Small

Introduce evaluation to your team by identifying one question and choosing a practical method for exploring it. For example:

- Survey responders after a training to see if they apply new skills
- Track the number of cases that receive prompt advocacy referrals
- Review case timelines for delays or bottlenecks

Evaluation needs to be meaningful and manageable. Many teams create a standing evaluation workgroup or rotate the role of gathering and sharing data.

Preserving Confidentiality and Privacy

Respect, transparency, and informed consent are critical when gathering feedback from victims.

Be clear about how information will be used and who will have access to it. Ensure participants understand they can decline to participate without consequences.

SAFE Plans and Evaluation of Services

In West Virginia, every county is required to develop a Sexual Assault Forensic Exam (SAFE) Plan outlining how first response services are provided for adult and adolescent victims of sexual assault. These plans are often coordinated through local SARTs and serve as the foundation for each county's multidisciplinary response.

A great way to begin evaluation is by comparing the county SAFE plan to actual SART practice. Ask partner organizations that implement the protocol whether it is being activated

with each report of sexual assault. Is the victim advocate always being called? Are adult victims with decision-making capacity consistently offered the option of a non-report forensic examination? Is the designated hospital able to provide a trained medical provider (e.g., SANE) in a timely manner? These are just a few possible questions that can form the basis of a SAFE plan evaluation.

Tools

To help your team begin or enhance its evaluation efforts, see the resources below. (Note that these resources are offered in this section as electronic links and as attachments in the Appendix.)

- [Community Toolbox Objectives](#)
- [Victim Survey Template](#)
- [Facilitating Data Review](#)
- [Think Aloud Session](#)

The Work Ahead

Sexual assault response teams are uniquely positioned to improve outcomes for victims and strengthen the systems that serve them. Building and sustaining an effective SART needs more than regular meetings. It requires intention, reflection, and shared commitment.

By grounding your work in shared values, centering victims' needs, and setting clear goals, a SART can become a powerful force for change in your community. Strong teams are built through connection, accountability, and continuous improvement.

Use this document, *Driving Change: Foundation for Effective SARTs*, as a tool to spark conversations, shape your team's direction, and support your ongoing efforts.

The impact of your work may not always be visible, but **it is real, it is needed, and it matters.**

Appendices

Printable, customizable versions of some appendix items are available in the [WVFRIS Welcome to the Movement Google Drive under the SARTs section](#).

Appendix A

Sample Confidentiality Agreement

Resource adapted from: Mason County SART Confidentiality Agreement

During my time as a member of the [County] SART Team, I may learn or have access to confidential and possibly identifying information regarding victims of sexual violence, stalking, and human trafficking.

Due to varying confidentiality requirements among agencies, SART meetings are not the appropriate format for discussing active cases, and I will refrain from discussing ongoing cases in any way that may identify the victim. Should information about an active case be shared by mistake, I agree not to share this information with anyone outside of the SART meeting. I recognize that sharing case information outside my agency without permission can harm victims and damage trust in the SART.

As part of an investigation, some agencies share case information as needed and in accordance with their role. Under no other circumstances will information be shared among SART members without a signed informed consent from the victim, detailing what information will be shared and with whom, and a timeframe of when information can be shared (e.g., 10 days).

I agree to uphold this confidentiality agreement beyond my membership with the [County] SART.

If I violate this agreement, I will be asked not to return to [County] SART meetings.

Confidentiality is void if the victim is at a high risk to harm themselves or others, or if the victim is a minor who reports abuse. Under these circumstances, a mandatory report will be made to the appropriate persons and authorities.

Signature:

Date:

Appendix B

SART Foundations: Mission Statements, New or Revised

Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault, posted on July 24, 2019

Through doing work with SARTs, one of the key ways to help orient the group and keep the work grounded is a mission statement. Sounds cheesy? You betcha. Is it effective? You betcha! Mission statements or clear guiding principles/goals help any group with the work they do, the decisions they need to make, or the outcomes they want to see. Recently, our organization went through the process of updating and revising our mission statement, and the process helped us grow tremendously and gave us a better sense of direction.

Mission statements or goals should be relatively short and clear. The mission statement tells you all the most essential information that an outside party needs to understand what you do and why. Your statement will contain the following information: (1) Who are you? (2) What do you do? (3) Who benefits? Let's walk through what those mean, even if they seem pretty simple.

1. **Who are you?** This is the easiest part of the mission statement. It is the name of your group or agency. If you don't have a name, now is a fine time to unite under one banner. It should probably describe your service area and include the team type. Let's just pretend that my SART is named after my cat, CleoCatra. So, the question is answered by the following: **The CleoCatra County SART**
2. **What do you do?** This might be a little trickier to be able to say concisely, because the truth is that SARTs do a lot of work for their areas. You meet regularly. You build relationships. You challenge your agencies to improve their work. You write and implement the protocol. You collect input from service providers and victims. There are so many things to choose from that it can feel overwhelming. Focus on the big picture view of your work. Ask yourselves about the end goal you and your team are trying to achieve. Using my example, I might say this: **Increases access to and improves the sexual assault response**
3. **Who Benefits?** This question is asking who you are doing the work for. A mission statement will tell people what you are seeking to do and who will be better because of your existence. This helps to justify and clarify the work you do when people go off track. Knowing the people you aim to serve will help keep your team centered. You will have the power to ask, "For whom do we do this work?" which will help steer people back on course. Keep this part focused on your main population, because many people will probably benefit from your work. So, my example might look like: **Sexual assault victims in our county**

When we put my example all together, it would read like this: **The CleoCatra County SART increases access to and improves the sexual assault response for sexual assault victims in our county.**

Even that has some repeated phrasing. We could shorten it to look like this: The CleoCatra County SART increases access to and improves the sexual assault response for victims.

This mission statement tells people who we are, what we do, and who benefits as a result. It provides a clear roadmap for our work and will serve as our touch point moving forward.

Appendix C

Crafting a Vision Statement

Resource adapted from: <https://www.cascade.app/blog/write-good-vision-statement>

Define the Outcome-Focused Vision

Start by clearly articulating what your SART aims to achieve for victims. This might be something like, “Ensuring timely, compassionate, and effective response to sexual assault victims.”

Identify What Makes Your SART Unique and Valuable

Consider what unique services or approaches your SART provides that individual members cannot do on their own. This could include multidisciplinary cooperation, specific community outreach initiatives, or interagency agreements that empower victims as they move through the criminal justice system.

Envision the Long-Term Impact

Think about the long-term changes the SART would like to address. Think big: reducing the incidence of sexual assault, holding more offenders accountable, improving community awareness and prevention, or setting new standards in victim support.

Craft a Vision Statement

Using the insights from the previous steps, members can individually or in small groups propose and workshop drafts of vision statements. Several facilitation techniques can be used: choose the one that works best for your SART.

Refine and Finalize

Get buy-in from the entire team. If possible, you may include victims in the process. The statement may be reviewed and updated regularly as the team grows and evolves.

Facilitated Example

The facilitator begins by explaining the purpose and value of a vision statement. They then ask the team to brainstorm some words that come to mind when they think of their SART. Spend a few minutes listing these on a whiteboard or large poster board.

Afterwards, write the following on another board for the team to see for reference:

1. What impact does our SART have on victims?
2. What do we do as a team that others can't?
3. What is the long-term impact on our community?

Depending on the size of your team, break into small groups and instruct a notetaker to write the groups' responses to these three questions. Ask groups to share and write the responses for all to see. You may ask the group if they see any themes emerging. Afterwards, begin taking suggestions for short vision statements that incorporate answers to these questions.

Appendix D

Setting a Mission Statement

Resource adapted from: <https://www.cascade.app/blog/write-good-vision-statement>

Define the Core Purpose of Your SART

Begin by identifying the specific role your SART plays in your community. What do you do together that improves outcomes for victims and enhances systems?

Highlight What You Deliver

What services, coordination, or actions do you provide that individual agencies can't do alone?

Clarify the Approach You Take

Make sure your values are reflected in the language. Is your SART focused on reducing harm, supporting recovery, or fostering accountability?

Craft a Mission Statement

Use the above elements to write a short, clear sentence or two that describes what your SART does, who it serves, and how you do it. Mission statements should be practical and action-oriented—something your team can return to often to assess alignment.

Refine and Finalize

As with the vision statement, get input from all team members and, if appropriate, from community partners or victims. Revisit and update the mission statement as your team evolves.

Facilitated Example

Start by writing these prompts on a board or large paper:

1. What does our SART do, and why do we do it?
2. Who benefits from our work?
3. What do we do that no single agency could do alone?

Break into small groups and have each team write a draft mission statement using responses to these questions. Regroup and look for themes or phrases that capture the team's shared identity and purpose. Aim for one to three clear, action-oriented sentences.

Appendix E

Mission and Vision Builder Sheet

From the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault, Sexual Violence Justice Institute

SART Companion Sheets for Use for Multidisciplinary Teams

Mission Builder

Who are you?

What do you do?

Who benefits?

Put it all together in a single, revised statement:

Vision and Scope of Work Planning

What will be the end result of the team's work in 2-5 years? How will the response be different or what will all victims be able to say as a result of our work?

What do I (and my agency) currently know about the sexual violence response (e.g., strengths and needed improvements)? What do we need to learn?

What do I (and my agency) see as the top priorities, issues, and/or needs that the team must address to improve outcomes for victims?

How will we measure the results of our goals and priorities?

How does this scope of work and vision relate back to the team's mission and areas of impact?

In order to enhance the experience of victims and create better outcomes...

	What can I do to impact...?	What can my agency do to impact ...?	What can the team do to impact...?
Individual Practices			
Agency Policies			
Systems Procedures			
Interagency Relationships			

Team Planning Tool for Next Steps on Vision Building

BIG, BOLD GOAL (what, who, when, why)		RESOURCES NEEDED (people, supplies, etc.)	EXPECTED TIME TO COMPLETE
Sub-goals	Steps to Accomplish	Team Coordinator Tasks	Team Member Tasks

Appendix F

How to Write SMART Goals

SMART Goals: A How-to Guide from the University of California – A comprehensive resource that provides a detailed breakdown of SMART Goals, a template for writing them, and sample SMART Goals.



<http://bit.ly/46LrhW>

Smart Goal Guidelines

Sample from NC Council for Women & Youth Involvement Southern Piedmont Region Office (Updated March 2017) – A concise table containing sample SMART Goals pertaining to sexual assault response.



<https://bit.ly/3lvR1G3>

Appendix G

Victim Survey Template

From SARTs: Assessing Systems Change (Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault, Sexual Violence Justice Institute)

Survey to Collect Feedback from Victims following Initial Contact

Thank you for taking the time to share some feedback about your experience with us today. The questions below relate directly to the service that you received here today. What you share will be used to help us improve our services. Your identity will remain anonymous and will not be directly associated with these responses.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. My needs were taken seriously during this visit/service.				
2. I was able to get my questions answered.				
3. The information I received was clear and easy to understand.				
4. I felt listened to.				
5. I experienced care and compassion during this visit/service.				
6. I was talked to in a place that felt safe.				
7. It was conveyed to me that the assault was not my fault.				
8. I would recommend this service to a friend.				

What was most helpful?

What, if anything, did you need during this visit that was not provided?

Many people find it helpful to speak with an advocate. May an advocate make a follow-up contact within the next two weeks to address any questions or concerns? ☐ Yes ☐ No, thank you.

If yes, please provide your contact information below:

Name: _____

Best way to reach you: ☐ Phone ☐ Email

Phone number(s): _____

Email address: _____

Can be included on the back of this survey and completed before handing to the survey responder. This is a way to track this record in a confidential manner:

Case Code _____

Type of visit: ☐ Medical/Forensic ☐ Advocacy/In Office

Appendix H

Facilitating Data Review

From SARTs: Assessing Systems Change (Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault, Sexual Violence Justice Institute)

Tips and Sample Questions for Facilitating a Review of Team Data

It can be challenging to facilitate a discussion about the data collected. Participants need direction and assistance in organizing the information. Facilitators may find the following outline and questions useful in guiding team conversations.

- Many thanks to your team leadership (and others) involved in reviewing and compiling this sexual assault case data. Thanks, too, for establishing a way to compile this data annually for the team's periodic review!
- Before we leave here, it's important that the team comes to some agreement about how we intend to use this particular document. What you have before you is marked "Do not distribute." The information was initially compiled as a way for the team to monitor and assess different parts of the team's practices and outcomes. Let's talk more about this once we've had a chance to review it.
- The intention in sharing this information is not to point any fingers or lay blame for less-than-favorable outcomes of cases. It is intended to be a learning tool for the team about where to look further in order to deepen our understanding and secure better outcomes for those who approach the system for help.
- Having access to this data and using it as intended is an awesome responsibility. Fortunately, we've been successful at creating a trusting environment with our team.

What we're going to do now is engage in a "data analysis process." All that means is that you, as the experts in these cases, are going to:

- Look over the data
- Share your thoughts and insights
- Ask questions
- Consider what's most useful for the team to know
- Determine, as a team, what we have to learn from this data and what we want to know more about

Take 10 minutes or so to look over these pages and jot down notes about questions you have, things that stand out for you, and things that concern you. Once everyone's had a chance to do this, we'll have a conversation.

- Thinking about the data overall, what most got your attention?
- What surprises you?
- What concerns you?
- What appear to be key issues or problem areas?
- What are the numbers that you want to know more about? What, specifically, do you want to know?
- What would you like to see here that is missing?
- How, specifically, is this information helpful to our team?
- What implications does it have for our work, our protocols, our practices?
- What might be the next steps?

Before we go, let's talk about how we want to use this data and how we don't want it to be used. (Get commitments from team members about not sharing it inappropriately.)

Tip: Ensure that everyone gets the chance to make a comment or share their thoughts. Use flip charts or note paper, but be sure that detailed notes are taken for follow-up purposes.

Appendix I

Think Aloud Session

From SARTs: Assessing Systems Change (Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault, Sexual Violence Justice Institute)

Orientation to a Think Aloud Observation Session

A “Think Aloud” process is often used to get quick and immediate feedback from someone about a tool or instrument, such as a survey. The process described in this document is for the purpose of gathering information about the protocol, process, and set of procedures used during a sexual assault case by various responders. Some of the potential benefits of using this method during shadowing or observation with a SART colleague:

- It can provide feedback regarding sexual assault protocols or other steps or guidelines developed by the SART.
- It provides an opportunity for a SART team member to hear directly from a colleague in a different role on how they think about sexual assault cases while in the process of responding.
- It will likely take the observer deeper into the details of the response process than a structured interview might.
- It is a highly flexible process that allows the observer to take the conversation in different useful directions, though the observer should be cautious not to shift the conversation away from the task at hand.
- It provides the chance for meaningful dialogue and exchange related to the SART protocols and work between colleagues that can lead to valuable insights.

Tips for making the process useful

- It’s important that the observer clarify that they are trying to learn about the process, what it looks like, and how to improve the system response. The colleague’s handling of a sexual assault case is not under scrutiny.
- The colleague being shadowed should be encouraged at all times to comment on their actions, intentions, and thoughts.
- It’s important that the colleague is relaxed, at ease, and not feeling judged or tested.
- The observer should be jotting quick notes about things s/he wants to remember or come back to.

Question prompts

- Can you tell me what you are thinking now?
- What led you to do that?
- What is that used for?
- How do you decide what to include in the report?
- What goes into the decision about what format to use?
- What tells you what is the most important next step?

Adapted by S. Haas from “Think-Aloud Protocol Guidelines for Use Evaluations of Surveys” developed by Roberta Gibbons, Metropolitan State University, and “Methods for successful ‘Thinking-Out-Loud’ procedures” developed by Judy Ramey, University of Washington.

Questions for Debriefing a Ride-Along or Think Aloud Session

Ideally, you will have some notes from your session that capture answers to the questions below. Whether you do or not, make sure to take some time within 24 hours of the Ride Along or Think Aloud Session to answer these questions specifically before some of the information is lost to time.

1. What do you remember particularly about the exchange? Think of specifics.

2. What words or exchanges are still resonating with you?

3. What information was new to you or surprised you in some way?

4. What key insights related to the protocols or system response to sexual assault did you have during the exchange?

5. What other more general key insights emerged from the conversation?

6. What specific follow-up steps need to happen as a result of this exchange?

References

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Smith, N. & Harrell, S. (2013). *Sexual abuse of children with disabilities: A national snapshot*. New York, NY: Vera Institute of Justice, Center on Victimization and Safety.



WV Foundation for Rape Information and Services (WVFRIS)

www.fris.org

For more training, visit <https://sasta.fris.org>.

For the most updated version of this document, visit www.fris.org.