

Promoting Connectedness

in Michigan's Disability Community to Prevent Sexual Violence

Did you know?



People with disabilities are

4 times

more likely to experience sexual violence, and, less likely to report it to police than people without disabilities.

SOURCE: BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS
2009-2019 REPORT



'Sexual violence' is any sexual activity that happens without consent, including sexual assault, harassment, abuse, and rape.

There is hope!



Communities can help prevent sexual violence by increasing

Protective Factors

which are strengths that make it less likely that someone will experience sexual violence or choose to commit sexual violence.

Connectedness

is an important protective factor for people with disabilities in Michigan.



What is Connectedness?

Connectedness is a sense of trust, support, unity, and safety between individuals and groups. It's found in many places such as schools, the workplace, neighborhoods, and between friends and family.

The Michigan Community Sexual Violence Prevention Assessment (CSVPA) heard from members of the Disabled community about how to increase connectedness. The following page shares needs and actions you can take to help prevent sexual violence in Michigan's Disability community.

What Can We Do to Increase Connectedness?

Create safe and accessible physical spaces for people with disabilities to build community without fear or discrimination.

Build acceptance and support for diverse identities and experiences, strengthen cooperation, and establish shared goals within the Disability community.

Recognize not all people with disabilities are the same. They may not want or need the same type of community opportunities.



“ Within the disability [community], people feel comfortable with things they know. You need to ensure not only that your child feels that they belong in the community, but that they have someone in a natural circle of support. **Once your child feels like they belong in a community, then they feel that they can go places for help.** ”

-CSVPA interview participant

Background: These are select findings from the Michigan Community Sexual Violence Prevention Assessment (CSVPA). The CSVPA consisted of interviews with individuals from Michigan’s Disabled communities, guidance from an Advisory Council of professionals working in the field of sexual violence prevention, and secondary data collection. To learn more about the CSVPA and sexual violence prevention work in Michigan, visit: www.mphi.org/svp

1. Harrell, E. (2021). Crime against persons with disabilities, 2009-2019, statistical tables. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/capd0919st.pdf>