



ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2016

mecasa
MAINE COALITION AGAINST
SEXUAL ASSAULT

mecasa.org

MECASA Board

Tamar Mathieu, Board Chair
Rape Response Services

Donna Strickler, Treasurer
Sexual Assault Crisis & Support Center

Lydia Christie, Secretary
AMHC Sexual Assault Services

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Sexual Assault Support Services of Midcoast Maine

Fatuma Hussein
Immigrant Resource Center of Maine

Marty McIntyre
Sexual Assault Prevention & Response Services

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Sexual Assault Response Services of Southern Maine

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The Maine Coalition
Against Sexual
Assault is organized
to end sexual violence
and to support
high quality sexual
violence prevention
and response within
Maine communities.

Meeting the MECASA mission.

At MECASA, we value:

- Serving, connecting, and leading a broad community of providers, partners, and stakeholders;
- Both prevention and intervention as central to our work;
- Priority setting based on community-led assessments of strengths and needs;
- The expertise provided by national research and leaders, as well as local wisdom gained through experience and application;
- Victim-centered, evidence-informed, and trauma-sensitive solutions to issues of sexual violence and their underlying causes; and
- A guiding framework of social justice, anti-oppression, and intersectionality.

Over the last year, MECASA staff has been hard at work improving Maine's efforts to prevent and respond to sexual violence. We continue to be grateful for the partnerships of Maine's sexual assault service providers, our funders, donors, and statewide and national partners which make our work possible.

As always, it is difficult to distill a year's worth of work into a list of highlights, but key efforts last fiscal year included:

- Working closely with the Department of Health and Human Services to develop a policy and screening for youth in the state's care who are at risk for trafficking and exploitation and training every Child Protective Services worker on that policy as well as the issue more broadly.
- Reaching almost 800,000 people via our updated websites and social media networks.
- Supporting a significant expansion of the availability of Children's Advocacy Centers to victims of child sexual abuse and their non-offending caregivers.
- Creating a screening tool for LGBTQ+ identified survivors to use to find knowledgeable and affirming primary care.
- Establishing a statewide database, which allows for better collection and analysis of statewide client and education services.
- Supporting innovative approaches to community-based prevention programming through our mini-grant program.
- Creating a statewide training, *Human Trafficking in Maine: Identification and Response*, and training Maine's human trafficking multidisciplinary groups to deliver the curriculum.
- Partnering with Pine Tree Legal Assistance to dramatically expand the availability of civil legal services for victims of sexual violence.

Thank you for your partnership in and support of this work. We are honored to do this work and are proud to do it alongside such dedicated allies. Please contact us for more information about any of our programming.



Elizabeth Ward Saxl
Executive Director

Maine Network of Children's Advocacy Centers

Maine's Children's Advocacy Centers continue to grow and provide more support to sexually abused children and their families. As of the end of FY2016, the Network supported three operating CAC programs serving six Maine counties. In December 2016, coverage was expanded to four CACs serving eight counties. The Network also supported two multidisciplinary teams working toward becoming fully operating programs in 2017.

As we work toward supporting counties with existing and expanding CACs, we are also conducting needs assessments and feasibility studies in the remaining counties, which is one of the first steps in the development process.

Additionally, we created a statewide model policy to respond to commercial sexual exploitation of children cases which aligns with the Department of Health and Human Services' policy.

We began a quarterly Forensic Interviewer Peer Review program which is an opportunity for Forensic Interviewers to learn new techniques and keep up with the latest research and

*"The Network is essential to our individual ability and capacity to serve Maine. Their work allows us to grow, reflect on, and provide the best services for children and their families."
-CAC Provider*

trends. The program also helps Forensic Interviewers build their skillset for conducting legally sound, trauma informed, child focused interviews.

In addition to this support, we collaborated with our partners at the

Northeast Regional Children's Advocacy Center to bring several national trainings to Maine including a Victim Advocacy Training, a multidisciplinary team training, and a strategic planning session for programs across the state.

*Maine Children's Advocacy Centers' Service Delivery
--725 Forensic Interviews--
--1461 Direct Service Hours--*



MAINE NETWORK OF
**CHILDREN'S
ADVOCACY
CENTERS**

Prevention

In FY2016, MECASA’s prevention efforts focused on two key initiatives: the first was to expand our ability to ensure that programming is based in the best available evidence; the second was to expand the capacity of local providers to deliver innovative prevention programming with local partners.

After several years of planning and preparation, we launched statewide prevention outcome evaluation indicators and a statewide database, both of which allow for better collection and analysis of available primary prevention data. The outcome measures align with the Maine Department of Education Learning Results, which ensures that outcomes are based on a statewide understanding of age-appropriate concepts, and will allow us to better understand the impact of prevention efforts at the statewide and local level. The database provides a platform for collecting and analyzing outcomes data, as well as supporting a more informed understanding of prevention programming (such as sessions, audience, and time invested) in real time.

“The mini grants allowed us to provide incentives, like childcare, to attend programming in the community. These made it possible for people to participate who might not normally have the flexibility to do so.”
-Prevention Educator

Finally, we continue to work to expand the capacity of local programming. In FY2016, one of our most exciting prevention initiatives included our first effort at offering competitive “mini-grants” to local providers. These mini grants were offered with the intention of supporting the providers’ ability to engage in innovative programming, to expand partnerships with local schools and community organizations, and to reduce barriers to participation for identified audience members, such as transportation support for low-income parents to access multi-session child sexual abuse prevention and healthy sexuality promotion programming.



Projects included Super Hero Academy, which is a bystander intervention focused, full-school assembly presentation that uses an interactive presentation to “bring students on a heroic journey that tests their super powers and takes them beyond our world.”

Maine Sex Trafficking & Exploitation Network

Our program, the Maine Sex Trafficking and Exploitation Network (Maine STEN), engaged in significant statewide training and infrastructure development during FY2016. In the first half of the



year, we worked with the Maine Department of Health and Human Services to create a screening guide and response policy for children who experience commercial sexual exploitation and human trafficking, as a response to the federal Prevention Sex

Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act. Once completed, we worked with the Department to provide training on sex trafficking of minors to all child welfare case workers in Maine, as well as multidisciplinary teams, and to expand awareness of the new policy within Children's Advocacy Centers in Maine, who are a core part of Maine's response to child victims.

In the second half of the year, we partnered with colleagues from the Preble Street Anti-Trafficking Collaborative and the Maine STEN Provider Council to create Maine's first statewide human trafficking training program. "Human Trafficking in Maine: Identification and Response", is victim-centered and empowerment-based training, which includes interactive, skills-building sessions informed by Maine-based expertise and resources. MECASA developed the curriculum as well as

MECASA staff provided multiple day-long trainings to over 400 Child Protective Services staff members on commercial sexual exploitation of children awareness and response.

a range of associated resources, a trainer's toolkit, and a training of trainers – ensuring that all local anti-trafficking multi-disciplinary teams have the capacity to deliver local training which aligns with

nationally-recognized best practice. In the first year, approximately 200 direct service providers, law enforcement officers, health care providers, and more accessed this training at no cost. MECASA continues to administer the program, to enhance the content, and to measure the efforts for impact and outcomes.

In addition to training, we worked on several new resources for anti-trafficking providers in Maine, including a video series on human trafficking in Maine featuring local experts and survivors; offering training and certification for local providers to deliver the nationally-recognized "My Life My Choice" prevention curriculum for at-risk youth; and coordinated the state's first human trafficking Survivor Leadership Summit with our sister organization, Survivor Speak. The day-long training for survivors of sex trafficking and exploitation focused on current efforts in Maine and the crucial role of the survivor leader.

MECASA LBGTQ+ Advisory Board Efforts

MECASA staff coordinated the *Safe Space for Sexual Assault Support Centers* training for all of Maine's sexual assault support centers, provided by MECASA LBGTQ+ Advisory Board members.

The Advisory Board also worked on a Pride campaign that included stickers and social media shareable content with the messages #consentforME and #PrideforME. Sexual assault support centers engaged in outreach at every local Pride festival this year, and MECASA staff supported their efforts in a variety of ways.

The group finalized a screening for LBGTQ+ identified survivors of sexual violence to find a knowledgeable and affirming primary care provider.



MECASA Provider Support

This year we held our first annual statewide sexual violence conference. Over 80 providers and community partners were joined by guest speakers Laura van Dernoot Lipsky (Founder of The Trauma Stewardship Institute) and Shay Stewart-Bouley (Executive Director at Community Change, Inc. and Blogger of Black Girl in Maine). The conference included innovative presentations on vicarious trauma, sexual violence prevention, and the importance of intersectionality in the anti-violence movement. Participants noted: "It was a wonderful and enriching experience" and "This conference was a real gift to people who do very hard work every day." To the right is an image from the conference: a display of the Bristlecone Project, a portrait-based project featuring photos and biographies of male survivors.

We established a statewide database, which allows for better collection, analysis, and reporting of statewide client and education services. This included the launch of statewide prevention evaluation, and together with existing statewide intervention evaluation, informs funding and program planning.

To support providers in this transition, we provided significant onsite and remote technical assistance and developed an extensive database manual.



We launched a monthly webinar series for partners and providers. Topics were developed based on provider interest and feedback and included anti-racism in the anti-sexual violence movement, restorative justice, and prevention and intervention programming for individuals with disabilities.

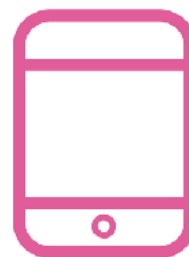
MECASA partnered with Pine Tree Legal Assistance to launch the expansion of civil legal services for victims of sexual violence. We are excited to further this initiative in the coming months.

MECASA was proud to be awarded a \$500,000 Office on Violence Against Women Rural Grant for FY2017, which will increase sexual assault support staffing in Maine's rural areas and provide those communities with significant local support regarding sexual violence response.

MECASA Communications

Throughout FY2016, MECASA staff continued to change the public perception of sexual violence through many platforms and audiences, including traditional media, social media, and supporting Maine's sexual assault service providers in their local public awareness efforts.

We launched a statewide awareness campaign that was truly a community effort. Through interviews with providers across the state, we documented quotes about advocacy and their work in Maine and coupled them with Maine-based images we received from people who support our work. The results were a social media campaign (which included images branded for each of Maine's sexual assault support centers) and two PSAs which showcased the work, faces, and words of Maine's sexual assault service providers to help survivors learn about resources available to them.



**We engaged over
800,000 people
through our
websites and social
media platforms.**

The role of an advocate is like a seeing eye dog. It's not our job to determine where the survivor is going or where the survivor wants to go. It's our job to help them know if there are obstacles in the way that we can work around to help them get there safely, and we do that at their direction.

We also fully updated MECASA's branding and online presence, including our website, logo, and print and digital materials. The website update included new content for survivors about services, and made many of MECASA's publications available to the general public.

Public Policy

At MECASA, we are passionate about our public policy work. During FY2016 we were proud to advocate for the interests of victims/survivors, their families and communities, as well as for Maine's sexual assault service providers both on the state and national level.

Our positions are informed by the experience and expertise of Maine's sexual assault service providers and the communities they serve, the best available evidence, and our many trusted statewide partners. We are a strong voice at a wide range of public policy tables, at the State House, and with our congressional delegation, for victim-centered, evidence-based sexual violence policy.

"Thank you. It's a huge comfort to know that you are part of the public policy process."

-Sexual Assault Support Center Executive Director

As part of our mission, we seek to expand, improve, and protect public policy which:

- Meaningfully contributes to the prevention of sexual violence;
- Ensures high quality response to victims across systems;
- Promotes victims' rights, protections, and victims' access to justice;
- Increases community safety; and,
- Is responsive to the needs of marginalized and vulnerable populations.

"Protection orders are powerful tools that can specifically support trafficking victims. Extending this statute is one important way that we can apply our existing resources in a way that enhances safety for some of Maine's most vulnerable populations."

-MECASA Testimony

Some of the work we engaged in at statewide public policy tables included:

- Seeking a balance among victim confidentiality, the administration of justice, and the media's interest in using video of court cases at the Judicial Branch Committee on Media and the Courts.
- Improving policy and practice related to mandated reporting of elder abuse at the Maine Council for Elder Abuse Prevention.
- Working with the Maine Department of Education to develop a statewide model policy on prevention and response to child sexual abuse for all Maine elementary schools.

MECASA worked on a range of bills during the last legislative session, many of which we supported and which are now law, including:

- **Public Law 407** requires all child abuse mandated reporters to complete mandated reporting training at least once every four years. (Sponsor: Senator Bill Diamond)
- **Public Law 394** updates sections of Maine's Criminal Code to distinguish between consensual sexting between teens close in age and the creation, possession or dissemination of child pornography. It also allows individuals under 18 to access protections under the "revenge porn" law. (Sponsor: Senator Bill Diamond)
- **Public Law 427** reduces the burden of proof required to terminate the parental rights of a person who committed a sexual assault which resulted in the birth of a child. (Senator Bill Diamond)
- **Public Law 410** allows access to protection from harassment and protection from abuse orders for victims of "revenge porn." (Sponsor: Representative Lori Fowle)
- **Public Law 443** allows any individuals who are victims of sex trafficking, aggravated sex trafficking, and some forms of immigration document tampering to access Protection Orders. Additionally, it enables probation to become part of the sentence for individuals convicted of sex trafficking and aggravated sex trafficking. (Sponsor: Senator Amy Volk)
- **Public Law 509** acknowledges that the same power differential exists between

school officials and high school students who are 18 and older as with those who are under 18 years of age. (Sponsor: Senator Scott Cyrway)

We are grateful to the sponsors of these bills and to our statewide partners for their work to help pass them. In particular, we want to thank: the Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence, the Department of Public Safety, Pine Tree Legal Assistance and the Maine Women's Lobby for their work on some of last session's more complex bills.

For more information on these and other bills please see our annual Legislative Session in Review, which can be found on the Public Policy page of our website.

FY2016 Financial Overview

REVENUES & OTHER SUPPORT	9/30/2016 (Audited)	9/30/2015 (Audited)
Dues/Donations	30,902	44,803
Foundations	15,000	62,052
State and Federal Grants	1,953,564	1,159,555
Sub-Contracts	3,506	21,883
Interest and Dividend	1,369	2,953
Unrealized Gain/Loss	5,489	(4,007)
TOTAL REVENUE & OTHER SUPPORT	2,009,830	1,287,169
EXPENSES		
Prevention & Victims Services	526,317	406,017
Technical Assistance & Coalition Building	111,856	126,219
Pass-Through to Service Providers	1,281,704	599,284
Other Sub-Contracted Programs	46,784	121,269
Management & General	22,595	27,497
TOTAL REVENUE & OTHER SUPPORT	1,989,256	1,280,286
Change in Net Assets	20,574	6,883
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	113,116	112,529
Net Assets at End of Year	139,986	119,412

FY2016 Expenses

