

Violence Against Women Act 2005: Rape Prevention and Education Grant Program

What is the Rape Prevention and Education Grant Program?

The Rape Prevention and Education (RPE) grant program, created through the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, represents a strategic step toward strengthening national, state and local sexual violence prevention efforts and the operation of rape crisis hotlines. RPE funding provides formula grants to States and Territories to support rape prevention and education programs conducted by rape crisis centers, state sexual assault coalitions, and other public and private non-profit entities. Many promising programs working with youth, young adults and communities have been supported with RPE funds over the past ten years, demonstrating the effectiveness and need for rape prevention programming. These programs and initiatives support the value of funding appropriations at the authorization level; thus confirming the impact of this valuable program in the prevention of sexual violence.

Rape Prevention and Education grants provide crucial funding for rape crisis centers and campus sexual assault programs that are generating a positive response from schools, communities and the public-at-large.

The Importance of Rape Prevention and Education Outreach

Rape Prevention and Education funds assist rural, suburban and urban areas with programming designed to support community advocates' work in ending sexual violence in their communities. These outreach activities are crucial not only in changing public attitudes and behaviors, but also in reaching sexual assault victims who have not previously sought help. Similarly, training for allied professionals on issues related to sexual violence enables those persons to better understand victims and make appropriate referrals. A Kaiser Family Foundation study found that parents and students alike want school-based primary prevention programs to learn to avoid sexually violent behavior and information on what to do if a friend is sexually assaulted.

While an obvious need for rape prevention education exists, community-based sexual assault programs are increasingly reporting that it is more and more difficult to meet the demand for these critical public awareness activities.

Rape Prevention and Education funding also supports the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC), founded by the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape. The NSVRC provides up-to-date information, materials, research data and resources regarding sexual violence to policy-makers, Federal and State agencies, college campuses, sexual assault and domestic violence coalitions, the media and the general public.

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