

YWCA NORTHERN NEW JERSEY

healingSPACE

TITLE IX CONSIDERATIONS: BACK TO CAMPUS

Forensically Defensible Investigations in Title IX Violations

eliminating racism
empowering women

ywca

Northern New Jersey

Bergen • Essex • Hudson • Morris • Passaic



• Support • Prevention • Advocacy • Counseling • Empowerment

Bergen County's Sexual Violence Resource Center



WELCOME

TITLE IX CONSIDERATIONS: BACK TO CAMPUS HOUSEKEEPING

- Attendees will remain muted and without video.
- During the presentation, please enter your questions in the chat as there will be a 20-minute Q&A session at the end of the presentation where they will be answered.
- The survey will be added to the chat at the end of the presentation. Upon completion of the survey, the presentation material will be emailed to you.

TITLE IX CONSIDERATIONS: BACK TO CAMPUS

WELCOME/AGENDA FOR THE DAY

- Welcome/Introduction
 - Helen Archontou, MSW, LSW – CEO – YWCA Northern New Jersey
- Sexual Violence Resource Supports
 - Simaza Sadek, MSW, LSW – Director, YWCA Northern New Jersey healingSPACE
- Forensically Defensible Title IX Investigations: Collateral Witnesses
 - Joseph A. Del Russo, J.D.
 - Anthony D'Urso, Psy.D.
- Questions & Answers
- Closing remarks
 - Simaza Sadek, MSW, LSW – Director, YWCA Northern New Jersey healingSPACE

INTRODUCTION

TITLE IX CONSIDERATIONS: BACK TO CAMPUS

NJ BAR ASSOCIATION PROJECT OVERVIEW

This project is cosponsored by the New Jersey State Bar Foundation and made possible through funding from the IOLTA Fund of the Bar of New Jersey. For additional information about the Foundation's other law-related activities, please call 1-800-FREE-LAW or visit the Foundation on the Web at www.njsbf.org.

TITLE IX CONSIDERATIONS: BACK TO CAMPUS

NJ BAR ASSOCIATION PROJECT OVERVIEW

YWCA Northern New Jersey's healingSPACE was funded by the New Jersey State Bar Foundation for this project. The goal is to ensure that local Institutions of Higher Education are in compliance with all federal Title IX guidelines.

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YWCA MISSION

YWCA is the oldest and largest multicultural women's organization in the world. Across the globe, the YW has more than 25 million members in 122 countries, including 2.6 million members and participants in 200+ associations in the United States.

Our daily work at YWCA Northern New Jersey is focused on:

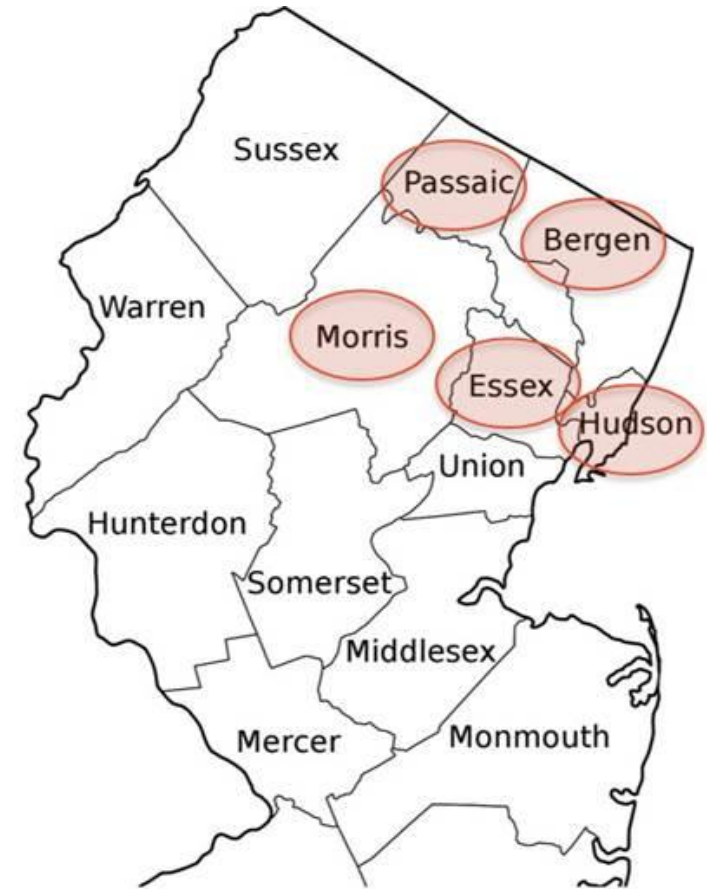
- Empowering women and girls with the tools they need to learn and grow along their paths to success.
- Advocating for the equality of all people regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, income level, sexual orientation, or disability.
- Supporting survivors and those impacted by sexual violence, and raising awareness about healingSPACE, Bergen County's only sexual violence resource center.
- Offering seniors wellness workshops and events to help keep them connected, healthy and fit.

YWCA ABOUT

YWCA Northern New Jersey (*formerly YWCA Bergen County*) has been serving the community for over 100 years since 1920.

In 2019:

- Moved our headquarters after 72 years from Ridgewood to Hackensack.
- Changed our name from YWCA Bergen County to YWCA Northern New Jersey to reflect our expansion into the following counties; Essex, Hudson, Morris, and Passaic, while deepening our mission in Bergen County where we will always be firmly rooted.



YWCA Northern New Jersey **Service Area**

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Northern New Jersey

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ORGANIZATIONAL PILLARS

Gender Equity & Empowerment

Providing tools and skill based learning for women & girls to inspire empowerment, self- advocacy, leadership development and personal authenticity.



GENDER EQUITY
& EMPOWERMENT

Racial Justice & Equality

Confronting hate and bridging divides by building awareness, education, and collaborative partnerships that elevate the voices of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.



RACIAL JUSTICE
& EQUALITY

Safety, Support & Wellness

Providing services for survivors and their loved ones impacted by sexual violence. Enhancing the well-being of families, especially children and seniors by fostering social connections, offering child care and summer camp experiences.



SAFETY, SUPPORT
& WELLNESS

SEXUAL VIOLENCE RESOURCE SUPPORTS

healingSPACE

healingSPACE WELCOMES ALL!



**BLACK
LIVES
MATTER**

YWCA Northern New Jersey healingSPACE

YWCA Northern New Jersey healingSPACE—is Bergen County’s only Sexual Violence Resource Center— it is a safe and welcoming place for survivors of sexual violence and their loved ones.

YWCA Northern New Jersey healingSPACE – Services

- 24/7 crisis intervention hotline (201-487-2227) staffed by Confidential Sexual Violence Advocates
- Prevention education programs and events
- Counseling (Group & Individual)

YWCA Northern New Jersey healingSPACE – Hotline Services

- 24/7 crisis intervention hotline (201-487-2227) staffed by Confidential Sexual Violence Advocates
- Accompaniments for survivors to medical, legal, and other proceedings associated with sexual violence by a Confidential Sexual Violence Advocate

YWCA Northern New Jersey healingSPACE – Prevention & Education

- Prevention and education programs for the community, schools, organizations, and businesses
- Specialized workshops and state-wide partnerships such as TITLE IX training for NJ institutions and higher education and Juvenile Detention training
- Advocacy on legislation and initiatives to support sexual violence survivors

YWCA Northern New Jersey healingSPACE – Counseling & Supportive Services

- Case Management
 - Creative art therapy programs like breathing and mindfulness, yoga, expressive dance, to help process trauma
 - Coffee House - gatherings for survivors to share artwork, music, poetry, writing and encourage creative expression
 - Job support and readiness workshops, including resume building, interview techniques and skill building, networking
 - Legal advice and services for issues related to sexual trauma
- Individual and group counseling, currently being offered remotely through a HIPAA compliant platform to support social distancing requirements

NJCASA

- 24-hour statewide hotline 800-601-7200
- <https://njcasa.org/find-help/>
- NJCASA's sexual violence programs are located in each of New Jersey's 21 counties and at the Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance at Rutgers University—New Brunswick.
- Each program supports survivors of sexual violence and their loved ones with services that include, but are not limited to:
 - Confidential, anonymous 24-hour crisis hotline
 - Short-term individual and group counseling and [support groups](#)
 - Referrals for long-term counseling
 - Accompaniment to forensic exams, police interviews, and court proceedings
 - Community education presentations
 - Access to language services

FORENSICALLY DEFENSIBLE TITLE IX INVESTIGATIONS

COLLATERAL WITNESSES

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BEFORE WE BEGIN...

- Where advice is contrary to practice
 - Follow your institutional guidance
 - But ask questions
- Area of law is dynamic, especially now
- This is a general overview
 - It does not cover everything
 - A detailed training is required
 - ATIXA

THE 2020 TITLE IX REVISIONS - REVISITED

- Pre-2018, Obama administration's guidance.
- In 2018, DOE issued a lengthy notice of proposed rulemaking under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA).
- APA very formal and procedurally rigorous.
- The department received over 124,000 comments on its proposal and held scores of meetings with interested parties. Its detailed explanation of the final rule ran to more than 2,000 pages.
- 3 years later in May 2020, new regs.

WILL 2020 TITLE IX REVISIONS BE REVERSED?

- Congressional Review Act (CRA) applies to rules issued within the past 60 “legislative days”
- Congressional Legislation
- The Administrative Procedures Act

WILL 2020 TITLE IX REVISIONS BE REVERSED?

Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights Announces Virtual Public Hearing to Gather Information for the Purpose of Improving Enforcement of Title IX

MAY 17, 2021

Contact: Press Office, (202) 401-1576, press@ed.gov

The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) today announced a virtual public hearing to be held from June 7, 2021, to June 11, 2021, to gather information for improving enforcement of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. The notice for the public hearing is available [here](#), and the official hearing notice will be published in the Federal Register in the coming days.

The hearing is part of OCR's comprehensive review of the Department's existing regulations and other actions related to Title IX to implement President Biden's March 8 [Executive Order on Guaranteeing an Educational Environment Free from Discrimination on the Basis of Sex, Including Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity](#). The Executive Order stresses the Biden-Harris Administration's commitment that the nation's students should be guaranteed an educational environment free from discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment, which encompasses sexual violence, and including discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. The hearing is also a step toward fulfilling the directives of President Biden's [Executive Order on Preventing and Combating Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation](#).

DAY ONE TITLE IX INVESTIGATION STRATEGIES: INVESTIGATIVE PRACTICES

- Definitions
 - Forensic Interviewing v. Interrogation
 - Witness Interviewing
 - Tele-forensic Interviewing
- Types of Interviews
 - Complainant (Next Session)
 - Respondent
 - Witnesses or Corroborative Witnesses
- Developing a Rationale for the Investigative Approach
- Establishing a Team Approach

DAY ONE TITLE IX INVESTIGATION STRATEGIES: INVESTIGATIVE PRACTICES

- Interviewing Protocols & Strategies
 - Developing the Institutional Interview
 - Setting Expectations
 - Introduction & Ground Rules
 - Advanced Memory Strategies (thoroughly reviewed by AVD next session)
 - Basic Question Types (thoroughly reviewed by JDR next session)
 - Follow-up Questions (thoroughly reviewed by JDR next session)
 - Addressing Reluctance & Motivation

DAY ONE TITLE IX INVESTIGATION STRATEGIES: INVESTIGATIVE PRACTICES

- Controlling the Interview – Exuberant Reporters
- Offender Dynamics
- Bystander Behavior
- Setting the Stage for Corroboration
- Matching the Interview Structure for the Complainant, Respondent & Witness

INVESTIGATIVE PRACTICES: DEFINITIONS

- *Forensic Interviewing* v. Interrogation
 - Neutral fact-finding interview
 - Conducted by a specially trained interviewer
 - Securing important information that is the subject of the Complaint
 - Objective, neutral and sensitive to bias (substantiation or confirmatory close parentheses)
 - University as the client
 - Restricted confidentiality
 - Consent to obtain collateral information and disclose information
 - Accurate recollection of events
 - Recorded (recommended)

INVESTIGATIVE PRACTICES: DEFINITIONS

- Forensic Interviewing v. *Interrogation*
 - Focused fact-finding interview
 - Conducted by a specially trained interviewer
 - Securing important information that is the subject of the Complaint
 - Subjective, pointed biased (substantiated or confirmatory)
 - University as the client
 - Restricted confidentiality
 - Consent to obtain collateral information and disclose information
 - Recollection of events is controlled by the interviewer utilizing possible the distorted information for the purpose of an admission
 - Recorded (recommended)

INVESTIGATIVE PRACTICES: DEFINITIONS

- Clinical Interview
 - Assessment for diagnosis and treatment
 - Attribution, perception and reaction are assessed
 - Empathetic, supportive and factual as defined by the clients experience
 - Complaint and or respondent is the client
 - Confidentiality and privilege remain
 - Intake and interviewing strategies are defined by the therapeutic process

INVESTIGATIVE PRACTICES: DEFINITIONS

- Witness interviewing – First response, fresh complaint or corroborative interview
 - Sometimes called a minimal facts interview
 - Generally seeking corroborative detail
 - Confidentiality is pierced
 - Voluntary in nature
 - Following University guidelines

INVESTIGATIVE PRACTICES: DEFINITIONS

- Witness interviewing – First response, fresh complaint or corroborative interview
 - Complaint can be identified as the reason for the interview
 - Typically, adversarial as witnesses may be aligned with the complainant and respondent
 - Independent of confirmatory or substantiation bias
 - Documentation is essential as well as notification of reporting information
 - Requires multiple contacts, if necessary, for clarification

INVESTIGATIVE PRACTICES: PROTOCOL & TEAM APPROACH

- What constitutes best practice?
 - Define goals for all students
 - Meet regulations
 - Dedicate resources
 - Have a reason for everything we do
- Understand documentation
 - Reports
 - Transcription
 - Audio-visual recording
- Anticipate Difficulties

INVESTIGATIVE PRACTICES: PROTOCOL & TEAM APPROACH

- Arguments for videotaping interviews
- Arguments against videotaping interviews

INVESTIGATIVE PRACTICES: PROTOCOL & TEAM APPROACH

- Why teams?
 - Shared responsibility
 - Sources of Information
 - Multiple perspectives
 - Facilitated investigations
 - Decision-making

INVESTIGATIVE PRACTICES: PROTOCOL & TEAM APPROACH

- Establishing a team approach
 - Who and what internal resources are available
 - Who and what external resources are available
 - Developing a form to review complaints
 - Develop criteria for addressing case types, i.e. unwanted noncontact sexual behavior, contact sexual behavior
 - Cross jurisdictional conduct
 - Establishing safety procedures

INVESTIGATIVE PRACTICES: INTERVIEWING PROTOCOLS & STRATEGIES

- Determine investigative protocol
- Determine witness interviewing protocol
- Basic structures
 - Introduction
 - Rapport building
 - Memory and disclosure training
 - Open prompts
 - Question types
 - Questions for Follow-up

INVESTIGATIVE PRACTICES: INTERVIEWING PROTOCOLS & STRATEGIES

- Ground rules (examples)
 - Remembering can be hard
 - Let information flow
 - Pausing – do not wait for me to talk
- Raising the topic
- Witness centered interview
 - Complainant/witness has a unique set of needs
- Hypothesis testing
- Interviewing aids
- Questioning and clarification
- Closure

INVESTIGATIVE PRACTICES: INTERVIEWING PROTOCOLS & STRATEGIES

- Barriers to effective disclosure:
 - Setting expectations
 - Check victim assumptions
 - Build commonality
 - Allow for venting
 - Establish trust
 - Mirror and modeling
 - Promote safety
 - Identifying and addressing reluctance and motivation
 - Confirming that the complainant/witness has essential role in the interview
 - Confirming that complainant/witness must actively generate information

INVESTIGATIVE PRACTICES: INTERVIEWING PROTOCOLS & STRATEGIES

- Barriers to effective disclosure
 - Controlling the interview
 - Strategic use of question types, i.e. shifting the direction of the conversation, induce detailed descriptions, nonverbal behavior (pace, tone)
 - Setting the stage for corroboration
 - Understanding bystander behavior
 - Understanding complainant/respondent behavior

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

- Is there a policy and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) detailing how, why, when, and by whom the district attorney and/or police/public safety will be notified when criminal acts such as sexual assault, sexual abuse, and relationship violence are involved?
(ATIXA, Investigation in a Box, 2015)
- Clery Warnings Required?
 - Timely warnings are triggered when an institution determines that a crime for which it must report statistics – such as a homicide, sex offense or robbery – presents a serious or continuing threat to students and employees

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

- U.S. Department of Education recently updated guidance on January 19, 2021 to clarify that “any official...who has the authority to institute corrective measures” under the 2020 Title IX Rule “will” also be a Campus Security Authority (CSA) and thus required to report crimes under the Jeanne Clery Act at institutions of higher education for the purposes of gathering crime statistics and issuing timely warnings.

(Carter, Daniel S., *Title IX Officials Must Report Crimes, Clery Fines Increased, Title IX Rule Challenge Put On Hold*, SAFE Campuses, LLC, 02/04/21)

PREPARATION

- How to contact parties and witnesses and schedule interviews:
 - Who will conduct interviews
 - Remember: DOE regulations now require three separate officials to work through separate pieces of a single Title IX complaint process: a Title IX Coordinator, who receives reports of sexual misconduct; an Investigator, to gather facts and interview parties and witnesses; and a Decision Maker, to determine sanctions and remedies for parties. (2020 DOE Revisions)
 - Where interviews will be conducted
 - How information from interviews will be documented

(ATIXA, Investigation in a Box, 2015)

PREPARATION

- Review applicable policies and procedures that apply to the investigation
- Coordinate policies and procedures where more than one policy and procedure applies
- Establish a preliminary timeline for the investigation using reasonable time frames

(ATIXA, Investigation in a Box, 2015)

COLLATERAL WITNESSES

- Anyone Exclusive of Complainant / Reporter
 - Eyewitnesses
 - Fresh Complaint Witnesses
 - Access and Opportunity Witnesses
 - Corroborative Witnesses
 - Hearsay Witnesses
 - Affect and Demeanor Witnesses
 - Character Witnesses
 - Expert Witnesses

OBJECTIVES OF WITNESS INTERVIEW

- Determine the witness' knowledge of the offense (must be relevant)
- Identify potential corroboration
 - See later: “fresh complaint / outcry”
- Anticipate explanations / defenses re: complainant
 - Family problems
 - Psychological / school problems / emotional problems
 - Any motive to lie

OBJECTIVES OF WITNESS INTERVIEWS

- Identify Bias, Motive and/or Interest
- Understand the social dynamics
 - Identify relationships between witnesses, witness loyalty, and any other potential credibility issues

AREAS OF INQUIRY

- The identities of and relationships between the parties
- The identities of and relationships between witnesses and the parties (and often, witnesses and other witnesses)
 - Try to learn whether the neutral witnesses? Loyalties? Bias?
- Details of the alleged misconduct, including date and time(line), place, circumstances, witnesses, and available corroboration

(ATIXA, Investigation in a Box, 2015)

AREAS OF INQUIRY

- Emails, text messages, photos, and conversations between parties themselves, between parties and witnesses, and between witnesses
- Social media
- Reconciling disparities between witness testimony or indications of evidence

(ATIXA, Investigation in a Box, 2015)

THE NUANCED INVESTIGATION

- *Areas of Inquiry* not the focus today
- Rather straightforward
- Focus today mostly on soft factors
 - The nuances of investigative inquiry
- These following will enhance your investigative practice
 - Facilitate forensic defensibility

WITNESS INTERVIEWS

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS & STRATEGIES

- Identifying Bias
 - Direct Bias
 - Member of the same fraternity
 - Member of the same football team
 - High school friends
 - Vocal support for the accused/negative statements about the complainant
 - Always ask, “what makes you say that”
 - As the witness to provide articulable basis for perceptions

WITNESS INTERVIEWS

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS & STRATEGIES

- Indirect bias
 - “He is just a touchy/feely kind of guy”
 - Look for subtle bias, subconscious to witness
 - Victim-blaming attitudes
 - Group defensiveness
 - Teams/frats
 - Witness fears getting in trouble
 - Off the record requests
 - “Is there a reason?”

WITNESS INTERVIEWS

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS & STRATEGIES

- Identifying Affect
 - Non-verbal communication
 - Affect – a facial, vocal, or gestural behavior that can communicate
 - Behavior, emotions, and speech patterns can convey meaning better than words/language
 - Must be vigilant documenting affect in reports
 - American culture values “directness” but people are often indirect for many reasons

WITNESS INTERVIEWS

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS & STRATEGIES

- **Body language and expressions**
 - This includes physical movements (arms crossed, nodding head, tics), facial expressions (yawning, frowning), and gestures
- **Use of eyes**
 - Including where a person is looking while speaking and the length of eye contact
 - But see Asian and other cultures (disrespectful)

WITNESS INTERVIEWS

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS & STRATEGIES

- Look for Incongruent Behaviors
 - “He’s a great teacher – he is always helping the students”; looks at ground, frowning
 - Avoidance – Question: “Has he ever treated you in a sexual way?” “He’s a great teacher.” or “Not really.”

WITNESS INTERVIEWS

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS & STRATEGIES

- REMEMBER: All nonverbal communication
 - Is imprecise
 - Can't explain complex ideas
 - Can be used to emphasize or contradict the spoken word
 - Is delivered through multiple channels
 - Often cannot transmit factual information
 - Is open to multiple interpretations

WITNESS INTERVIEWS PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS & STRATEGIES

- Look at signals as a group
 - In the aggregate
- Consider context
- Be aware that signals can be misread
 - Active listening

WITNESS INTERVIEWS PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS & STRATEGIES

- Cultural Issues
 - Look for clues of potential cultural issues
 - Identify the various racial, ethnic, and religious cultures in the community or your institution
 - Be sensitive to the diverse customs and beliefs

WITNESS INTERVIEWS PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS & STRATEGIES

- Identify how the culture arrived in the U.S.
- More particularly, identify how this witness came to arrive in your community
- During the interview, look for clues of potential problem areas
 - Cultural issues involving human sexuality

CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

- Interview each witness separately
- ***This is the cardinal rule of interviewing witnesses***
- If possible, interview witnesses in separate locations/rooms
- Base any impression of your own on articulable and observable information
- Avoid sharing information
 - Cross-contamination

CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

- Open-ended questions
- Minimize suggestions
- Invite witnesses or victims to talk in their own words – allow the witness to provide a narrative
- May act as memory prompts
- Get people talking – it can often be difficult just to get a person to talk at all

CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

- Encourage full answers
- Aid in getting accurate answers
 - Evidence that the interviewer did nothing to coerce the witness to answer in the fashion he or she did
- Active listening
 - Taking responsibility for what you hear; accepting, clarifying, and checking meaning, content, and intent of what the other person says
 - “so what you are saying is...”

CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

- Set forth facts in as much detail using as much of the witness' OWN words/wording/phrasing as possible
- Quotation marks around EXACT words
 - Still important, even when recorded
- Explore witnesses' statement of a conclusory remark. If the witness gives a conclusion or an assessment, always follow that up with **“what makes you say that?”**

CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

- Do not interject personal opinions into the interviews
- Face to face meetings. Why?

FRESH COMPLAINT

- Besides complainant, most important witness
- Every aspect of disclosure must be explored
- What were the circumstances/context of the disclosure?

FRESH COMPLAINT

- What prompted the disclosure?
- Who exactly was present?
- What were the complainant's exact words?
 - (use quotations)
- No exact words, ask witness to paraphrase.

FRESH COMPLAINT

- How the witness react to the disclosure?
- What did the witness say or do?
- All of these must be completely explored and document – may be hearsay exception.

ENDING THE INTERVIEW

- Instruct witnesses who may be in contact with the complainant/respondent not to discuss the matter
- Instruct witnesses not to discuss the investigation with any other witnesses
 - Cross-contamination
- Instruct witnesses to contact investigator immediately with other information that may remember or learn about

ENDING THE INTERVIEW

- Thank the witness for their time
- Leave witness with your contact information
 - **Business card, phone number, cell number, email address**
- Get EVERY witness's name, address, phone/cell numbers, email address, and date of birth – always and without exception

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TITLE IX CONSIDERATIONS: BACK TO CAMPUS

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES & CONTACT INFORMATION

TITLE IX CONSIDERATIONS: BACK TO CAMPUS

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

- Joseph A. Del Russo, Esq. is a graduate of Rutgers University Law School and a former Chief Assistant Prosecutor who supervised the investigation of child maltreatment, family violence, sexual violence and sex offender registration from 1992 to 2014. He has been among the faculty in Montclair State University's Department of Social Work and Child Advocacy since 2000. He has been the co-director of Child First/Finding Words New Jersey, a nationally recognized forensic interviewing training academy, since 2002. He is a practicing attorney with offices in Clifton, NJ where he provides institutional consultation, expert testimony, training and program support related to sexual violence in criminal, civil and Title IX cases. His full biography is available at jdelrusso.com.

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PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

- Dr. Anthony V. D'Urso, a licensed psychologist, who brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in forensic psychology and forensic interviewing. He is a tenured Associate Professor for the past 35 years who teaches graduate courses in psychology and advocacy. He teaches in the areas of child, adolescent and adult psychopathology, interpersonal and familial violence, forensic psychology, and clinical supervision. He has supervised clinical programs for the past thirty-six years in all three major hospital systems in New Jersey. He has co-directed Finding Words/Child First-NJ, a forensic interviewing academy since 2002, where over twenty-seven (2700) hundred forensic interviewers from law enforcement, child protective services, medicine and mental health. He has received gubernatorial appoints for fifteen years that resulted in initiatives that revamped sexual assault investigation practices and the review of child fatality. His full biography is available at psychinlawnj.com.

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YWCA NORTHERN NEW JERSEY BIOGRAPHIES

- Helen Archontou, MSW, LSW – As Chief Executive Officer since 2011, **Helen Archontou** is focused on guiding YWCA Northern New Jersey into its next century of living its mission to eliminate racism, empower women, and strengthen communities. Helen has overseen the development of a continuum of programs to support women and families in every stage of life as well as to raise awareness and take action to end racial and social injustice. In 2019, the organization expanded its service area to Essex, Hudson, Morris, and Passaic in addition to Bergen County and changed its name to YWCA Northern New Jersey.

Helen served as a state appointed member of the NJ State Task Force on Campus Sexual Assault and is a Co-Chairperson of the NJ Coalition Against Human Trafficking's Legislative Committee, and a member of the Non-profit Steering Committee of Commerce and Industry Association of NJ. In 2019, Helen received the Crime Victim's Rights Award from the NJ Office of the Attorney General and the Excellence Award of Victim's Justice. She was also named among The Powerful Women of NJ in Senator Loretta Weinberg's 2019 & 2020 Women Power List. In 2020 Helen received the Top 50 Women in Business from NJ Biz and the Top 25 Women in NJ Award from Leading Women Entrepreneurs. In 2021 Helen was recognized by Commerce & Industry Association of NJ (CIANJ) as a Women Leader on the Rise. Helen is an adjunct professor at Montclair State University since 2005 in the School of Social Work. Her love for her work in social justice is only topped by her love for her husband and eight-year old twins.

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YWCA NORTHERN NEW JERSEY BIOGRAPHIES

- Simaza Sadek, MSW, LSW – is a dedicated social justice advocate committed to gender and sexuality equity, diversity, racial justice, and violence prevention efforts. Prior to her role as Director of healingSPACE, Simaza served as Coordinator of The Women’s Center & LGBTQ+ Services at Ramapo College of New Jersey. As a licensed social worker, Simaza has devoted her career to addressing power-based personal violence by developing primary prevention educational programs, managing a Coordinated Community Response Team, and building partnerships to enhance services for survivors of sexual and domestic violence. Simaza also has clinical mental health experience in crisis intervention, counseling, and case management. Simaza earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Women’s & Gender Studies with a minor in Social Justice from William Paterson University and a Master of Social Work degree from Rutgers University.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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- Dr. Anthony V. Durso
(973) 277-0408 – adurso@psychinlawnj.com

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RESOURCES

TITLE IX CONSIDERATIONS: BACK TO CAMPUS RESOURCES

- YWCA Northern NJ links and contact information
 - 24 hour hotline (201) 487-2227
 - <https://www.ywcannj.org/ywca/index.php>
- NJ Coalition Against Sexual Assault
 - <https://njcasa.org/>
 - <https://njcasa.org/covid-19/>
- NJ COVID-19 Information Hub
 - <https://covid19.nj.gov/>
- NJ Coalition to End Domestic Violence
 - <https://njcedv.org/>

TITLE IX CONSIDERATIONS: BACK TO CAMPUS RESOURCES – healingSPACE

**24/7 Hotline: 201-487-2227**

Our free, confidential services support survivors of sexual violence and their loved ones as well as anyone who needs information about sexual violence. Whether a person experienced sexual violence today or many years ago, we are here to help.

CONFIDENTIAL SEXUAL VIOLENCE ADVOCATES ARE AVAILABLE 24/7 TO PROVIDE:

- **Short-term crisis intervention counseling.**
- **Medical and legal accompaniments** to emergency rooms, medical appointments, law enforcement agencies, and legal proceedings within Bergen County.
- **Information, referrals, and resources** about all medical, legal, financial, and support options for survivors, family, and friends as well as case management.

INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP COUNSELING SERVICES
Experienced trauma-trained clinicians provide free short- and long-term counseling to survivors and their loved ones regardless of gender identity. Clients under 16 need parental consent for ongoing counseling.

LEGAL ADVOCACY PROGRAM
Accompany survivors to all civil court dates and law enforcement interviews, refer clients to appropriate legal representation, and help complete Victims of Crime Compensation applications.

healingSPACE WELCOMES ALL



PREVENTION EDUCATION & TRAINING
Host events in the community and provide primary prevention education and training programs for schools, organizations, businesses, and diverse professionals.

Events include:

- Sexual Assault Awareness Month
- Denim Day
- Clothesline Project on the Green
- Week Without Violence
- Traveling Clothesline
- Art of Healing

Visit ywcannj.org to learn more or call **201-881-1750** to schedule a prevention event in your school, business, or community.

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

Volunteer advocates staff our 24/7 hotline, accompany survivors and loved ones to medical and legal proceedings, conduct community education and training, and support and staff our awareness events. Advocates undergo 40 hours of training, and participate in a statewide certification program.

Visit ywcannj.org or call **201-881-1750** to learn more about becoming a volunteer.

TITLE IX CONSIDERATIONS: BACK TO CAMPUS

APPENDIX

CURRENT PROGRAMS

GENDER EQUITY & EMPOWERMENT

- **WEN on the Go! - Networking groups committed to forming ways to network, exchange ideas, and get actionable advice on growing their business.**
- **Women's Leadership Conference - Join us throughout March for virtual conversations with inspiring female leaders to help you build courage, resiliency, and live an authentic life.**
- **Motherhood Uncensored - Designed for working/stay at home moms and their children, sharing advice and providing support on everyday issues.**
- **Circle of Care - 12 week group to support women in transition from the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women in reentry to the community. This is a partnership with the NJ Reentry Corporation.**
- **Your Story - journaling program *NEW***
- **Next Chapter - Offers women a space to connect with other like-minded professionals to network, exchange ideas and get actionable advice on their professional development, and feel part of a supportive community.**
- **TWIN (Tribute to Women of Influence)**
- **Ureeka - To support economic development and entrepreneurship for BIPOC women**



GENDER EQUITY
& EMPOWERMENT

CURRENT PROGRAMS

GENDER EQUITY & EMPOWERMENT

GIRLS PROGRAMING

- **Girls's Ambassador Program** - Encourages young girls to utilize their voices and passions to navigate a socially unjust world. We provide tools and mentors to illustrate activism work.
- **Empower U(niversity)** - 10 month girls personal, professional, and empowerment program.
- **Gen on the GO!** - Quarterly networking opportunity for tweens and their caregivers to help them connect, make new friends, and learn about topics that are relevant to their lives.
- **SAS - Serious About STEM.** A new learning opportunity for girls 9-14 to explore STEM based careers and reinforce our commitment to helping girls develop the skills they need to thrive and grow



GENDER EQUITY
& EMPOWERMENT

CURRENT PROGRAMS

RACIAL JUSTICE & EQUALITY

SEA: Self Exploration, Education and Action - Opportunities for individuals and groups to work toward systemic change through personal journey based and evidence-based curriculum.

Current initiatives include:

- **Undoing Racism** - A training focused on creating an understanding of where racism comes from, how it functions, why it persists, and how it can be undone.
- **Raising Race Conscious Children** - Teachers and parents are trained on how to explicitly address race, privilege, and power with children to dismantle inequitable practices.
- **21-Day Racial Equity and Social Justice Challenge** – an opportunity to create dedicated time and space to build more effective social justice habits, particularly those dealing with issues of race, power, privilege, and leadership.



RACIAL JUSTICE
& EQUALITY

CURRENT PROGRAMS

RACIAL JUSTICE & EQUALITY

- **Share the Mic Now** - A weekly program offered through our YWTV Facebook Live platform focused on amplifying the voices of black women in our community. They're invited to publicly share their experiences, struggles, and successes and how have been impacted by race.
- **Racial Justice Awards** - Recognize individuals, organizations, and businesses that demonstrate leadership by working to eliminate racism and promote peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all.
- **Bergen County Racial Justice Task Force** - Comprised of over 160+ community leaders, who meet regularly to discuss racial climates, develop programming to address racism, and support each other's work, including collaboration with County Offices.
- **YW Townhall**- An open forum offered 2x a year gathering community leaders to engage in an in-depth discussion around systemic institutions ingrained with racism.
- **Stand Against Racism** - Designed to build community among those who work for racial justice and to raise awareness about the negative impact of institutional and structural racism in our communities.
- **Voices** - Students are invited to submit poetry, short prose, photography, and artwork that reflects their commitment to building a just world. Entries are selected and showcased in our youth literary journal.
- **Solidarity Circle through Art** - Students and civic leaders share poetry, photography, short prose and artwork around understanding the struggles many people face daily
- **Courageous Conversations** - A discussion series focused on educating our community on racial disparities and injustices.
- **Bergen County Black Business Network (BCBBN)** – Program under our umbrella that supports the economic growth and development of black businesses in Bergen County to create positive impact in the community.



RACIAL JUSTICE
& EQUALITY

CORPORATE/NONPROFIT TRAINING

RACIAL JUSTICE & EQUALITY

EQUITY INSTITUTE

- **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ) Equity Institute-** helps businesses and nonprofits restructure their organization and processes to help end systemic racism and denounce intolerance and exclusion in our community. Our racial justice experts and employment attorneys provide:
 - **Workshops**
 - **Assessments**
 - **Plan Development**
 - **Implementation Assistance**



CURRENT PROGRAMS

SAFETY, SUPPORT & WELLNESS

- **healingSPACE** - Provides support, 24/7 crisis intervention hotline (201 487-2222), online chat staffed by Confidential Sexual Violence Advocates, counseling services to sexual violence survivors and their loved ones, and free assistance. Training and Educational programming for schools, organizations and businesses are available along with sponsored events throughout the year to raise community awareness about sexual violence prevention.
- **Virtual Senior Fitness Classes** - That include Chair Yoga, Zumba and Fit and Fabulous. Morning class times vary and you can register online by visiting our website.
- **Friendship Fridays** - FREE monthly Senior Health & Wellness programs returned with free, fun, informative virtual presentations that support your health and wellbeing.
- **Healthy Mind, Healthy Life** - FREE tele-therapy support group for seniors

YOUTH SERVICES

- **Before and After Care** - Offers a safe child care experience that facilitates a child's cognitive, social, physical and emotional growth AND meet the needs of the entire family.



SAFETY, SUPPORT
& WELLNESS

**eliminating racism
empowering women**

ywca

Northern New Jersey

Bergen • Essex • Hudson • Morris • Passaic