

# UPROOT!

A Primary Prevention Newsletter from the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault

Preventioneer

*\pri-'ven(t)-shə-niə\*

n. One who, through innovative and pioneering means, seeks to create lasting social change with the intent of preventing sexual violence

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## WHAT NOW? STEPS TO TAKE AFTER THE NEEDS AND RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

Emiliano Diaz de Leon, Primary Prevention Specialist

With the start of a new year comes time to reflect on the previous year and to resolve to make changes in the present one. With your needs and resources assessment, you have been able to evaluate your community and determine areas in which your center can better work to prevent sexual violence. You also reflected on these needs and established goals for how best to address them. Now, it's time to resolve to meet this goal. Here are a few suggestions on how to do just that.

### **Resolve to Communicate**

Now is the time to check in with those who have contributed to your efforts thus far. It's critical to continue to nurture these relationships by providing frequent updates on the progress of your efforts. A personal visit where you take ample time to connect with others, share materials, answer questions and discuss possible opportunities for future involvement is ideal. However, because of time and distance, this is not always possible and other ways to keep people informed may need to be considered. Utilize

newsletters, email updates, a blog, informational meetings at various times and locations, or phone calls to provide both established partners and newcomers with a sense of investment and ongoing involvement. Regardless of the communication method you choose, use these opportunities to learn about other potential partners. Continue posing the question "who else needs to be involved?" to groups and people you meet with, thus building a stronger network of allies. Along the way, collect contact information for each person that you speak with, such as name, address, phone numbers, email address and, more importantly, skill sets and experience.

### **Resolve to Read, Review and Share**

Organize and establish book/article discussion groups with your co-workers, classmates, neighbors, family and friends. Encourage them to write and share reviews of books related to themes of social justice and violence prevention. Create your own lending library of books,

*(continued on page 2)*

## YOUTH PREVENTING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Tim Love, Primary Prevention Specialist

*The Students Taking Action for Respect (STAR) program, a project of TAASA, is a youth-led program whose goal is to end sexual violence in Texas. It is designed to provide youth tools to help them promote healthy relationships in their schools and communities. TAASA's annual STAR Conference provides training to over 250 students and sponsors across Texas. The 2009 STAR Conference, to be held June 12-14 at Texas Women's University in Denton, will provide primary prevention skills to its attendees. Tamara Williams, TAASA Youth Program Coordinator, and Ted Rutherford, TAASA Youth Outreach Specialist, answer questions about the STAR program and conference below.*

### **What primary prevention skills will attendees of the 2009 STAR Conference learn?**

Youth and sponsors will participate in "train-the-trainer" workshops that follow the STAR curriculum, as well as participate in exercises that give them the tools to understand the root causes of sexual violence and challenge the social



norms which support and maintain a culture where sexual violence happens too frequently. The conference is designed to provide youth with skills they can take back to their schools and communities to become leaders there in efforts to end sexual violence.

### **Why is it important to have youth taking leadership in the primary prevention of sexual violence, both in their schools and in their communities?**

Sexual violence is a product of conditions and social norms that are embedded in



Texas Association Against Sexual Assault

## TAASA Preventioners



**Morgan J Curtis, LMSW**  
Director of Prevention Programs  
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### About Morgan

*In 2009 Morgan hopes to engage in an in-depth study of all things ironic and embark on a journey to the center of sarcasm. She has recommitted to taking fewer trips to Waterloo Records, enjoying the music she already owns and mastering the business and management principles outlined in Scott Adams' The Dilbert Principle.*



**Emiliano Diaz de Leon**  
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### About Emiliano

*Emiliano's 2009 resolutions include, but are not limited to, going to yoga as often as his body will allow him to, serving on the board of directors of a local nonprofit organization and bowling a perfect 300 on Wii!*



**Tim Love**  
Primary Prevention Specialist  
tlove@taasa.org, x 16

### About Tim

*This year, Tim is dedicated to speaking his mind more and taking himself less seriously. He is going to finish cleaning out the garage that he's been working on for the last two to three years. He is also going to work on brevity – you know, getting right to the point, being judicious with his words, being clear and concise, not muddying up the water with extra words – well, you get the idea.*

articles, zines, films and magazines that is inclusive and accessible. This also presents a wonderful opportunity to organize, request or demand that these materials be available in your local public library, school library or bookstore. In addition, share online articles, blogs, websites, newsletters and videos through networking sites, such as Facebook, Twitter or MySpace. Add a primary prevention page to your website which includes updated information about your efforts and progress, along with links to various resources of interest. Create or join an online discussion group or listserv or participate in an online webinar or audio conference. Because times are tough for both families and agencies and both are tightening their budgets, organize, promote and offer your own trainings/workshops on a variety of topics facilitated by local community members for no cost or for a minimal fee. This is where the TAASA prevention team can help provide you, your staff, volunteers and community members with free training and technical assistance to support and enhance your primary prevention efforts.

### Resolve to Take Risks

Try something new, forge unexpected relationships, step out of your comfort zone and resist the temptation to become complacent. This requires us to be open-minded, courageous and sometimes trust the leadership of others. Experiment with different strategies and activities that address the risk factors for sexual violence and meet the goals identified during your assessment process. Now is the time to build a foundation for the strategies you will implement from the state plan. You can con-

our culture – conditions and social norms that begin to influence the ways in which people think and act from a very early age. As youth learn the dynamics of relationships, they are forming opinions of what a healthy relationship looks like. They are deciding what will be acceptable for their own relationships. In addition, youth have a tremendous amount of influence over each other, their communities and their families, and are generally open to learning from one another. Having youth educating other youth, as well as the community as a whole, about sexual violence and having youth promoting healthy relationships will lay the

foundation for a society that is free of sexual violence. *Anything else about the STAR program?* STAR programs can be as big or as small as you want them to be. Each program is unique and it is up to the youth and their sponsor to determine what their program is capable of achieving. STAR teams are encouraged to challenge themselves to create change in their schools and communities and to use their creativity and energy to make it happen.

*For more information about the STAR program and conference, please contact Tamara*

## WHAT NOW? (CONT'D)

***Even though a needs and resources assessment has already been completed by your center, it is important to constantly reevaluate.***

### Resolve to Organize and Invite

and embrace the failures as an opportunity to try again. Even though a needs and resources assessment has already been completed by your center, it is important to constantly reevaluate. Get people together to continue talking about the issues and create opportunities to listen to various members of your community. These discussions can happen on the street, in living rooms, classrooms, community centers or anywhere where people gather. More importantly recruit and train community members to organize and facilitate these discussions. Document these conversations, collect the information, review and share it with key stakeholders in your community. This information will continue to inform your process and provide you insight into the needs and concerns of your neighbors. Use this as an opportunity to continue to conduct focus groups, especially with populations that you overlooked during your initial Needs and Resource Assessment, whether it is a group of immigrants or members of a particular faith community. It's critical to value and appreciate the experiences that each person shares with you and your team along the way.

## STAR (CONT'D)

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### Anything else about the STAR program?

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## Upcoming Events

## Resources

### ***Men Speak Out: Views on Gender, Sex, and Power***

Edited by Shira Tarrant

This collection of essays by and about pro-feminist men addresses various issues related to feminism, power and privilege. Contributors include Jackson Katz, Byron Hurt, Robert Jensen and Rob Okun.

### ***Engaging Bystanders in Sexual Violence Prevention***

by Joan Tabachnick

This resource, offered by the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC), explores issues related to engaging bystanders in sexual violence prevention and intervention. It includes activities and is available from the NSVRC website free of charge. For more information, visit [www.nsvrc.org](http://www.nsvrc.org).

### ***Yes Means Yes: Visions of Female Sexual Power and A World Without Rape***

Edited by Jaclyn Friedman and Jessica Valenti

This collection of essays flips the "no means no" mantra on its head and examines the notion that "yes means yes" as a way to acknowledge female sexual power. Contributors include Brad Perry from the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance and Christina Meztlí Tzintzún who works with the Workers Defense Project in Austin.

### ***TAASA and TCFV Joint Capitol Day***

Austin, TX, February 11, 2009

TAASA and the Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV) invite you to participate in our joint legislative action day. We ask that you attend Capitol Day with pre-prepared signs and letters that you have asked your clients, constituents and supporters to create. These will be delivered to legislators in the afternoon. We'll have a brief training and press conference before we march to the Capitol. Meetings with legislators will take place in the afternoon.

Capitol Day will begin at 10:00 am at the First United Methodist Church Education Center at 1300 Lavaca.

For more information: Torie Camp, [vcamp@taasa.org](mailto:vcamp@taasa.org).

### ***2009 TAASA Annual Conference:***

***Rooting Ourselves in Social Justice***

Austin, TX March 8-12

The 2009 TAASA Annual Conference will be held in Austin March 8-12 at the Airport Hilton. This year's theme, *Rooting Ourselves in Social Justice*, highlights the importance of making sure our work with victims and communities is grounded in a social justice analysis of sexual violence. Specialized study tracks include Social Justice, Diversity, SANE and Volunteer Management.

Social Justice will include the workshop "Pornography, Violence, and the Threat to Intimacy" with **Robert Jensen**, as well as workshops on homophobia, consumerism and engaging men and boys. Opening speaker Daisy Hernandez will address issues related to race, gender and sexuality. The conference is sure to be thought-provoking. Additionally, there will be yoga classes offered on two of the days, taught by TAASA Preventioneer Morgan J Curtis.

Registration and more information is available online at [www.taasa.org](http://www.taasa.org).

### ***Men and Women as Allies Conference***

Washington, D.C., April 14-15

TAASA is a co-sponsor of Men Can Stop Rape, Inc.'s "Men and Women as Allies," a national conference on primary prevention of violence against women. This event will take place April 14-15, 2009 at the deluxe Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC.

We are a sponsor because "Men and Women as Allies" promises to be a compelling and timely venue for discussing how men and women can work together to prevent sexual and domestic violence. Eve Ensler (founder of V-Day) will give the opening keynote, and Eve and Byron Hurt (*Hip Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes*) will engage in a "Men and Women as Allies" dialogue. Ben Atherton-Zeman (Voices of Men) will premiere a new performance of male celebrity voice impressions, specially commissioned for the conference.

You can learn more about the conference and registrar at: [mencan-stoprape.org/conference](http://mencan-stoprape.org/conference).



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