

# The Importance of the Trauma Consumer Community Driving Research



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# Outline

- The importance of researching male trauma survivors
- What is Community-Based Participatory Research?
- How to apply CBPR for male trauma survivors
- The ethics and challenges of conducting CBPR

# Why Study Men?

- At least 1 in 6 boys is sexually abused by their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday (ACES, 1997)
- At least 1 in 4 men will experience sexual abuse in their lifetime (NISS, 2014)
- Majority of research on sexual trauma focuses on girls and women
- There are gender differences in the experience, response, and impact of trauma

# Treatment-Related Issues for Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse: Psychological Outcomes

- Greater risk for:
  - Depression
  - PTSD
  - Substance abuse problems
  - Suicidal thoughts and behavior
  - (<https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/long-term-effects-child-sexual-abuse/gender-differences-long-term-impacts-child-sexual>)
- Lower quality of life and rated happiness for males

# Treatment-Related Issues for Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse: Gender-Role Socialization

- Gender role socialization teaches us that boys:
  - Are powerful
  - Are invulnerable
  - Should never cry/experience sadness
  - Should welcome sexual activity
- Less likely to identify experiences as abuse
- Myths about male sexual abuse:
  - Men cannot be raped
  - Men should feel “lucky” if the perpetrator was female
  - Survivors go on to become abusers

# Treatment-Related Issues for Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse: Gender-Targeted Treatment

- EBPs for PTSD indicate that women make more rapid gains (Galovski et al., 2013)
- Preference for gender-targeted information about sexual trauma (Turchik, Rafie, Rosen, & Kimerling, 2014)
- Participating in health care seems different and more limited as compared to female survivors
- Health care providers may perpetuate commonly misheld beliefs about male sexual trauma

# What is Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR)?

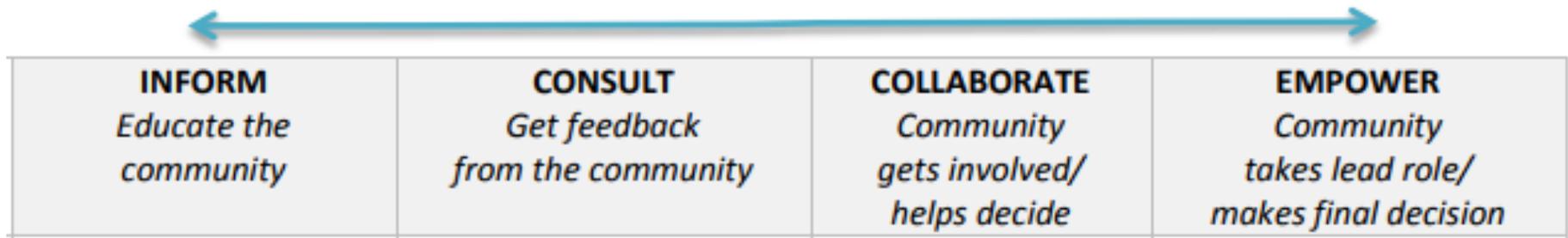
- Orientation
- Collaborative
- Equitable amongst all partners
- “Co-learning process” (McTaggart, 1997)
- Embodies cultural humility
- Aims to create social change
- Aims to reduce health disparities



# CBPR: Forming Equitable Partnerships

- Survivors/mental health users are full partners who contribute expertise
- And share in decision-making and ownership of research

*Spectrum for community engagement in research*



# CBPR vs. Traditional Orientations

## CBPR

- Co-researchers
- Processes
- Inductive

## Traditional

- Outside researchers
- Outcomes
- Deductive

# What Can CBPR Do?

- Improve cultural sensitivity
- Address community-level, not just individual-level, issues
- Facilitate true informed consent
- Support the development of questions that reflect community members' concerns
- Foster trust in the community thereby facilitating recruitment and retention
- Increase validity of interpretations

# Step 1: Identify the Community & Team

- Select your community
- Specify members of the team and their unique roles
- Allow topic to be loosely defined, as this will change with input from community members

# Step 2: Build Trust and Engagement

- Partners, not subjects or participants
- Joint ownership
- Attention to histories of discrimination and marginalization
- Transparent discussions of power
- Document community strengths and local knowledge
- Identify co-learning opportunities
- Build capacity, focus on systems development and sustainability

# Step 3: Topic & Question Development

- Topic and objectives should come from the community
  - Can be initiated by an outside researcher
- Expert vs. citizen knowledge
- Make it clear as to who helped to develop the topic and proposal, and how it was developed

# Step 4: Design & Conduct Study

- Use community feedback to determine best methods
- Methods:
  - Mixed methods
  - Surveys
  - Focus groups
  - In-depth Interviews
  - Workshops
  - Observations
  - Stakeholder dialogues
  - Community feedback
  - Ethnographic interviews
- Assessments and instruments
- Data collection

# Step 5: Disseminate

- Steps to not only conduct the research, but carry it forward in terms of action, policy, change and ways to benefit the community
- Ensuring equitable benefit
- Ways to benefit the community:
  - Document and/or sustain effective programs, services, and interventions
  - Extend interventions to real-world settings
  - Promote policy and advocate
  - Create products
  - Promote empowerment at micro and meso-levels

# Ethical Principles with CBPR

- Research should do no harm
- Relationships should be based on trust and mutual respect
- Community partners should have real influence
- Should benefit the community
- Respect for diversity

# Challenges in CBPR

- Scientific integrity/rigor
- Distrust of academia
- Insider-outside tensions
- Commitment issues
- IRB barriers

**Table 4**

Salient themes from the interpretation of scientific integrity.

Professional investigators	Community investigators
Conceptual flexibility	Trust
Logistical flexibility	Benefit to the community
Balancing scientific integrity with community needs	Accountability to the community
CBPR is traditional inquiry	

# Working with Male Survivor

- Step 1: Identify the community and team
- Step 2: Build trust and engagement
- Step 3: Topic & Question Development
- Step 4: Design Research Study
- Step 5: Disseminate

# Working with Male Survivor: Challenges & Lessons Learned

- Recruitment difficulties
- Scientific integrity challenges
- Attention to ethical issues and appropriate boundaries
- Address issues of safety and trust
- Minimize risk of harm when addressing trauma material
- Be mindful of own biases/assumptions
- Refer to Guidelines on Trauma Competencies for Education & Training for additional information:
  - <https://www.apa.org/ed/resources/trauma-competencies-training.pdf>

# Tips for Developing a CBPR Framework

- Establish significance and relevance beyond national data
- Describe needs *and* strengths
- Describe barriers to community members' participation
- Describe ways in which the community will be built upon
- Be clear about funding; do not leave majority of funding to be retained by the academic organization
- Leave room for flexibility, the cornerstone of a participatory framework

# References & Suggested Readings

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