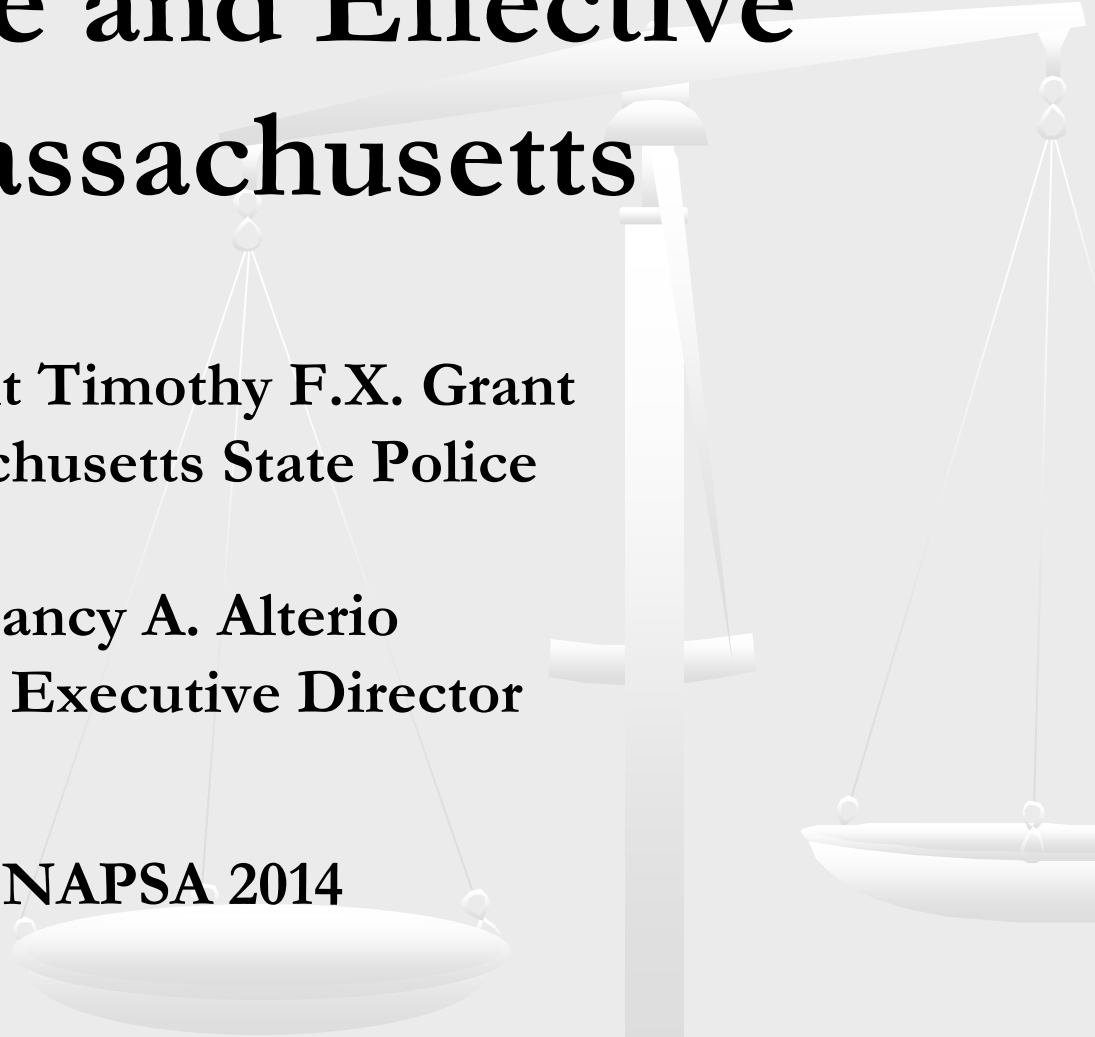


APS and Law Enforcement: Up Close and Effective in Massachusetts

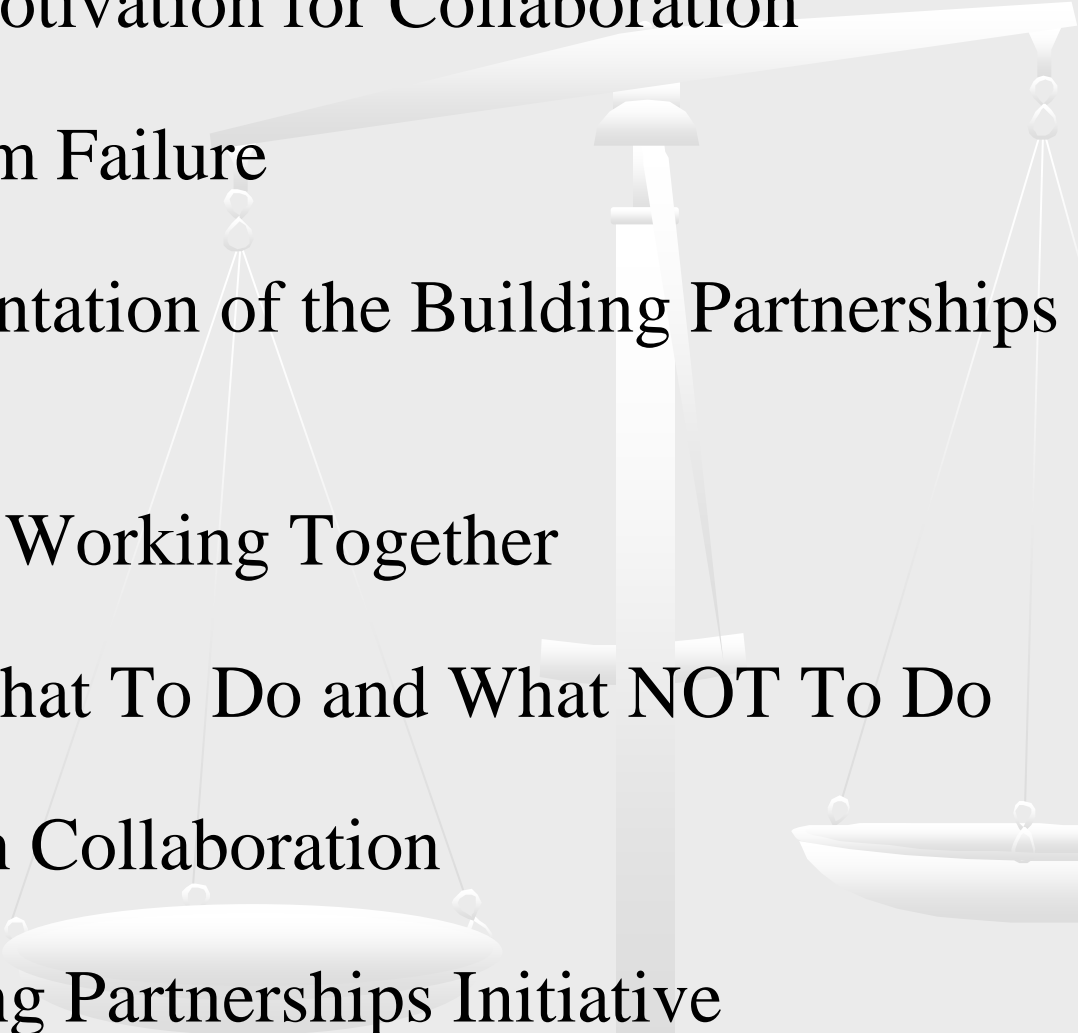


**Sergeant Timothy F.X. Grant
Massachusetts State Police**

**Nancy A. Alterio
DPPC Executive Director**

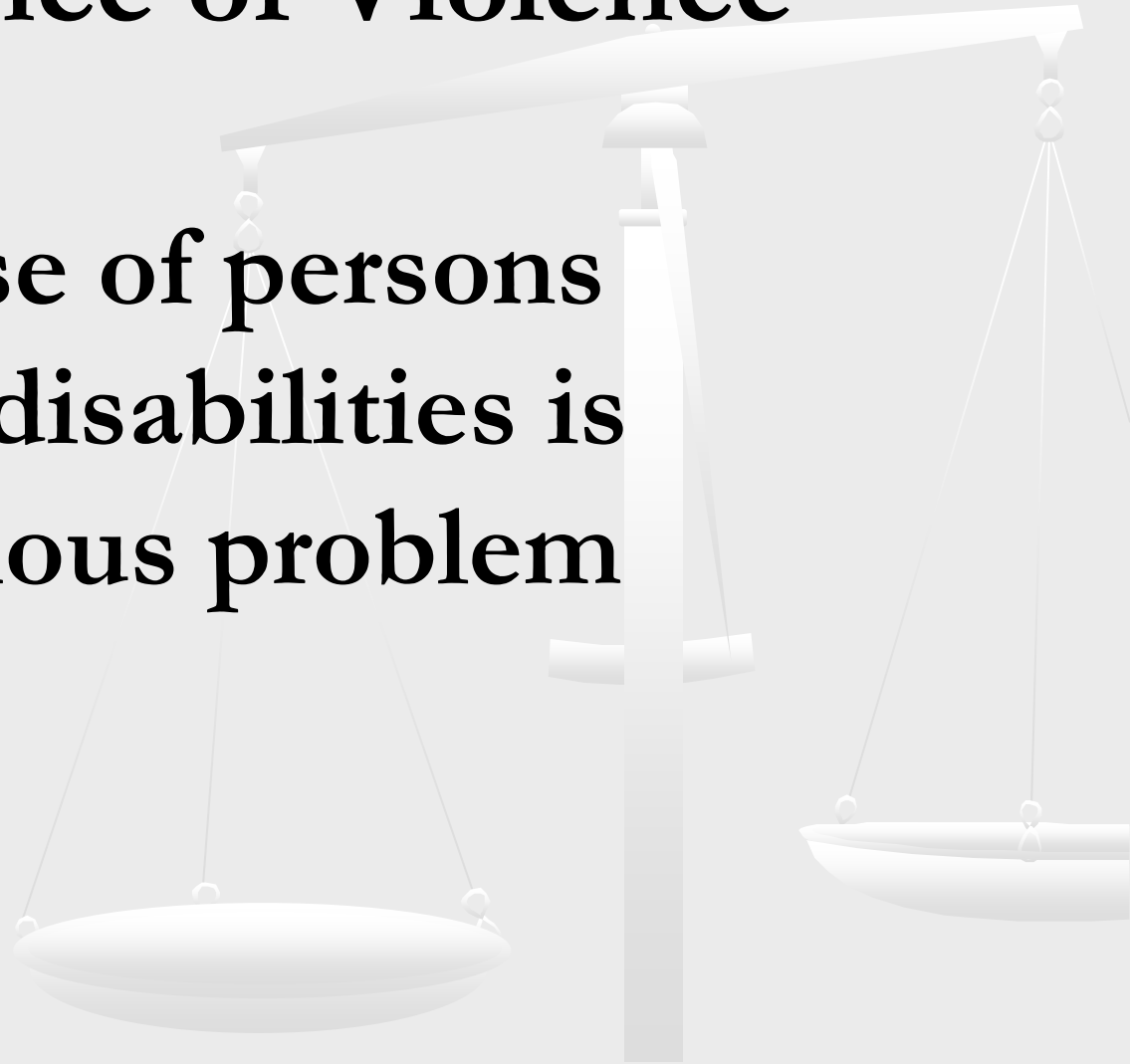
NAPSA 2014

AGENDA

- Prevalence of Abuse
 - *House of Horrors* – Motivation for Collaboration
 - Response to the System Failure
 - Creation and Implementation of the Building Partnerships Initiative
 - The Nuts and Bolts of Working Together
 - Case Examples and What To Do and What NOT To Do
 - Developing Your Own Collaboration
 - Benefits of the Building Partnerships Initiative
- 

Prevalence of Violence

**Abuse of persons
with disabilities is
a serious problem**



9 out of 10 people
with developmental
disabilities will be physically
or sexually abused



Valenti-Hein, D. & Schwartz, L. 1995. The Sexual Abuse Interview for Those with Developmental Disabilities. James Stanfield Company, Santa Barbara, California

Half of those people will be abused ten or more times



Valenti-Hein, D. & Schwartz, L. 1995. The Sexual Abuse Interview for Those with Developmental Disabilities. James Stanfield Company, Santa Barbara, California

Prevalence of Violence

- A study of psychiatric inpatients found that 81% had been physically or sexually assaulted (Jacobson & Richardson, American Journal of Psychiatry, 1987)
- 62% of women with physical disabilities reported experiencing emotional, physical or sexual abuse (Nosek & Howland, 1998)



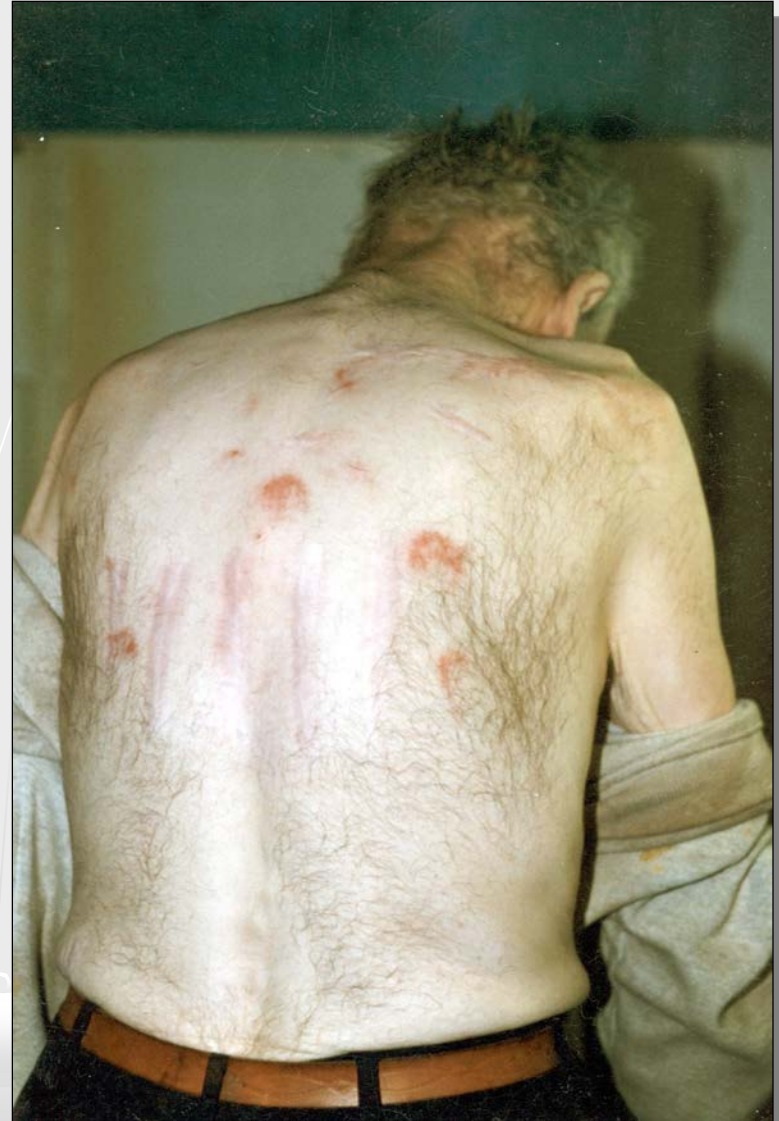
THE CRISIS

“House of Horrors”

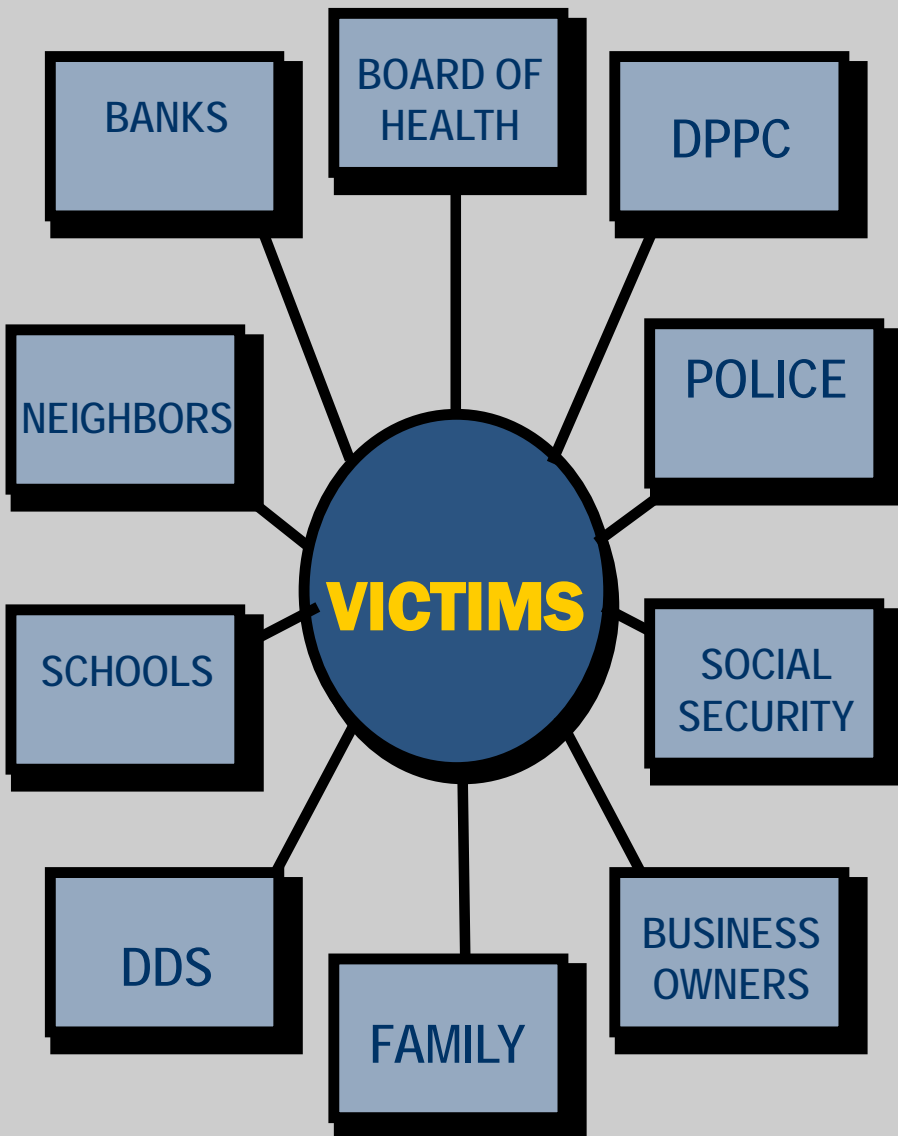
The Case that Changed
the System in Massachusetts

February 21, 1997
Raynham, Massachusetts

Pictures of the victim, Al with visible signs of physical abuse, such as burns, bruises, welts, scars and a broken nose.



What Went Wrong



A System Failure

What Went Wrong

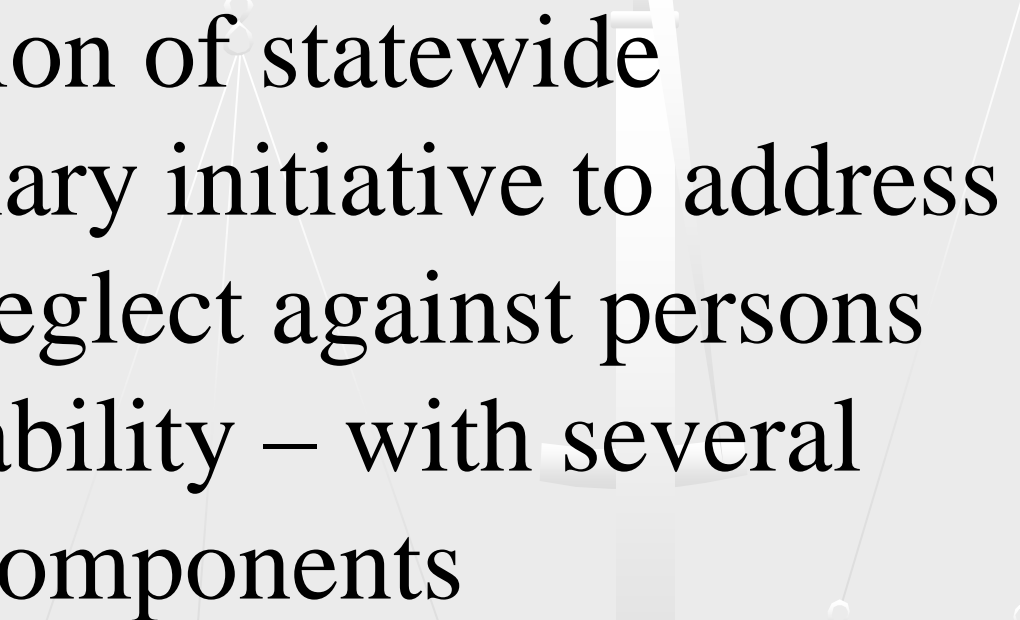
- Inaccurate and/or no information reported to APS
- Little to no response to complaints
- Lack of communication
- No coordination
- Delayed referral for criminal investigation
- Inadequate protections

Response to the System Failure

- Media scrutiny of *House of Horrors* and other cases
- Legislature-authorized investigation
- House Post Audit report
- DDS Investigations Advisory Panel (IAP) review and report
- EOHHS effort to unite APS and human service agencies
- Statewide conference to join law enforcement, APS and human service agencies to create MOU

Creation of Building Partnerships Initiative (BPI)

Creation of statewide multidisciplinary initiative to address abuse and neglect against persons with a disability – with several components





"Building Partnerships"
Working Together to Protect
Persons with Disabilities



BPI Steering Committee

- District Attorney (DA)
- MA District Attorneys Association (MDAA)
- Massachusetts State Police (MSP)
- Disabled Persons Protection Commission (DPPC)
- Department of Developmental Services (DDS)
- Department of Mental Health (DMH)
- Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC)



BPI Steering Committee

- Office of Attorney General (AGO)
- MA Office for Victim Assistance (MOVA)
- Provider Agency
- Massachusetts Advocates Standing Strong (MASS)
- Department of Public Health (DPH)
- Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE)
- Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA)

Implementation of the Building Partnerships Initiative

- Developed Memorandums of Understanding
- Created a Steering Committee to facilitate implementation of IAP's recommendations, including training needs
- Secured funding
- Developed Annual Plans and Annual Reports
- Drafted and secured passage of new legislation
- Developed training curricula and implemented training recommendations

BPI Training Curricula

➤ Law Enforcement

- State and Municipal Police Recruits
- Veteran Officers

➤ Service Providers

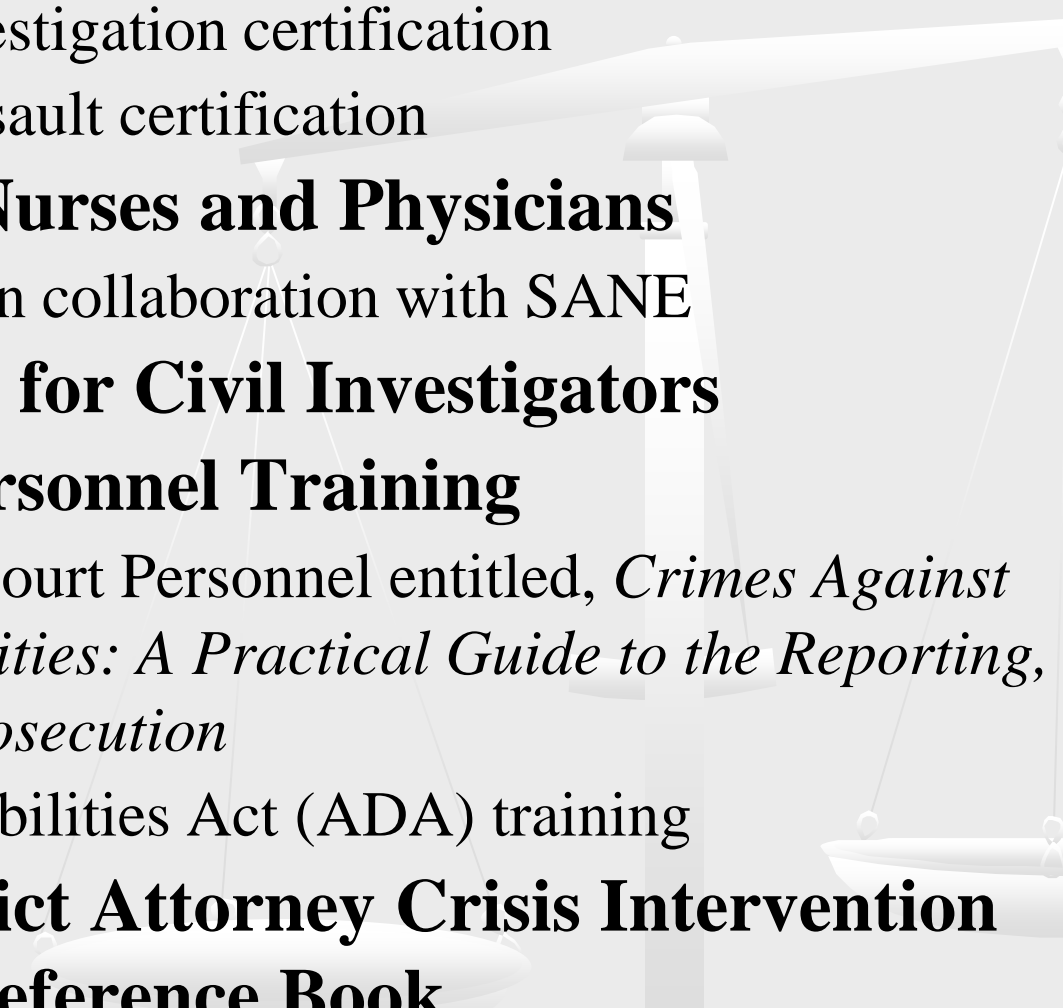
- Protect, Report, Preserve

➤ Persons with Disabilities

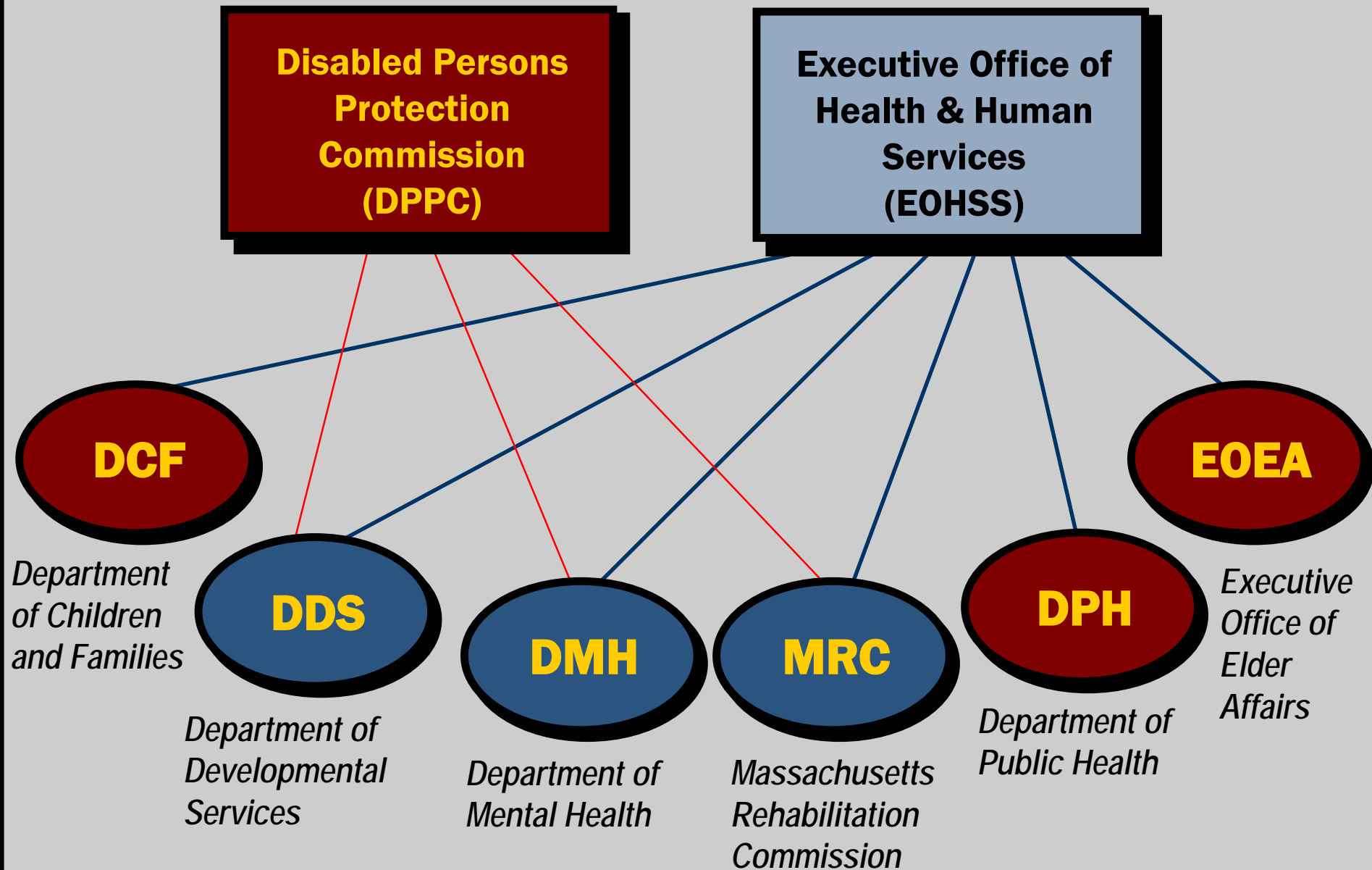
- Learning Tool
- Awareness & Action



Other Trainings / Materials

- 
- **Adult Protective Service (APS) Investigators**
 - Forty-hour basic investigation certification
 - Forty-hour sexual assault certification
 - **Emergency Room Nurses and Physicians**
 - Statewide Training, in collaboration with SANE
 - **In-Service Training for Civil Investigators**
 - **Judiciary/Court Personnel Training**
 - Practical Guide for Court Personnel entitled, *Crimes Against Persons with Disabilities: A Practical Guide to the Reporting, Investigation and Prosecution*
 - Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) training
 - **Northwestern District Attorney Crisis Intervention Program Officer Reference Book**

MA Government Structure & Oversight



DPPC Intake Unit

24 HOUR HOTLINE

- Operates a 24-hour Hotline:
 - 1-800-426-9009
 - 1-888-882-0350 TTY
- Receives reports of suspected **physical, verbal, sexual abuse, neglect and deaths** of adults with disabilities
- Evaluates reports to determine required response [emergency or non-emergency] and jurisdictional criteria
- Provides information and referrals to callers



CASE ASSIGNMENT

DPPC 19C APS Investigations

**Conducts abuse/neglect investigations,
assesses risk and recommends
protective service actions**

```
graph TD; A["DPPC 19C APS Investigations"] --> B["DPPC"]; A --> C["DDS"]; A --> D["DMH"]; A --> E["MRC"];
```

DPPC

DDS

DMH

MRC

DPPC/SPDU Criminal Screening and Case Assignment

- District Attorney's office notified
- Designated assistant district attorney assigns criminal investigations to:
 - Local Police
 - DA's SPDU
 - DPPC's SPDU
- APS Investigator (DPPC, DDS, DMH, MRC) notified and proceeds with protective services



Protective Service Examples

- 
- Access Warrants
 - Protective Orders
 - Respite Care
 - Emergency Shelter
 - Restraining Orders
 - Case Management
 - Family Planning
 - Housing Assistance
 - Adaptive Equipment
 - Transportation
 - Specialized Counseling
 - Guardianship/GAL
 - Counseling
 - Financial Management
 - Education/Training
 - Support Groups
 - Employment/Vocational Services
 - Legal Assistance
 - PCA's/Home Health
 - Clinical Evaluation
 - Medical Assistance

The Investigation





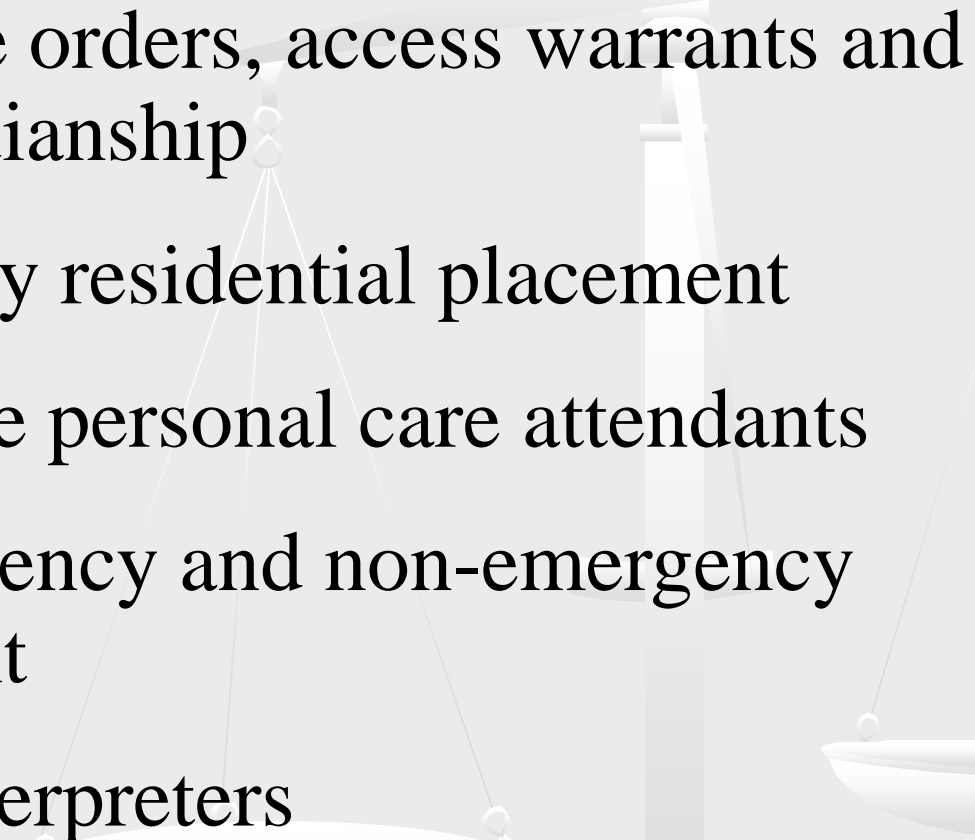
Multidisciplinary Team

(Participating Agencies)

- Adult Protective Services
 - Disabled Persons Protection Commission
 - DDS, DMH, MRC – Service Provider Agencies
- District Attorney's Office - Prosecutor, Forensic Interviewer, Victim/Witness Advocate
- Law Enforcement – State/Local Police
- Others

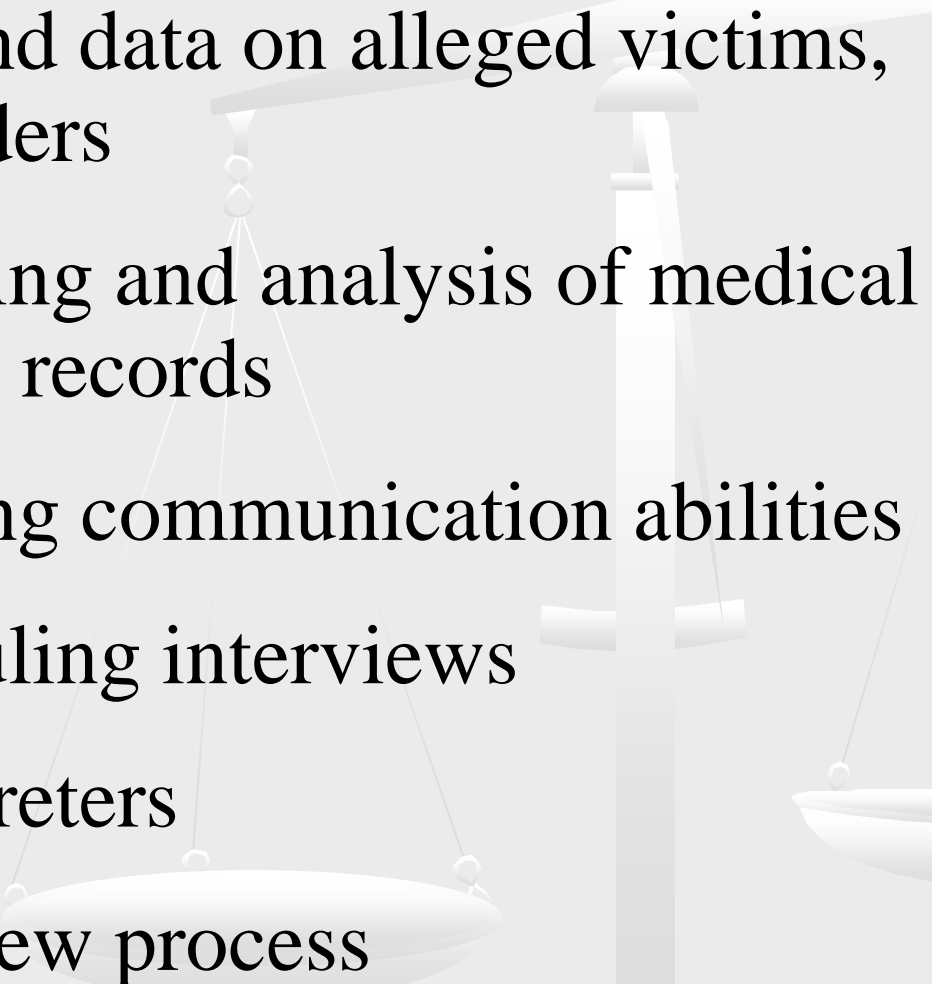
APS Assisting Law Enforcement

At the 'scene':

- Secure protective orders, access warrants and emergency guardianship
 - Obtain emergency residential placement
 - Obtain alternative personal care attendants
 - Accessing emergency and non-emergency medical treatment
 - Arranging for interpreters
- 

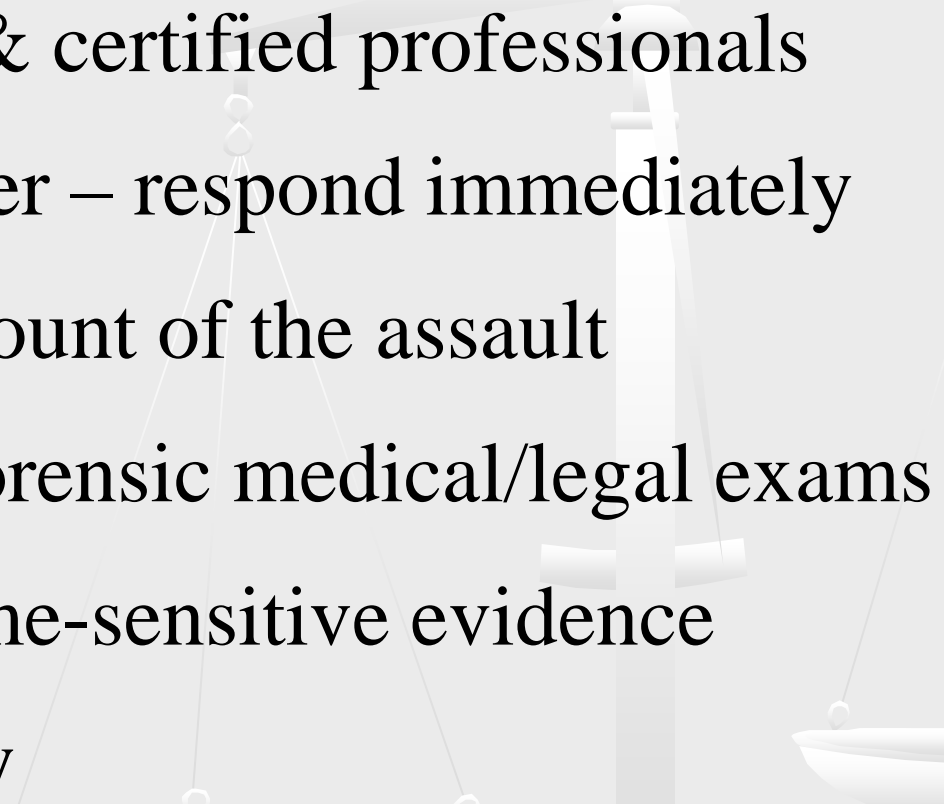
APS Assisting Law Enforcement

In preparation:

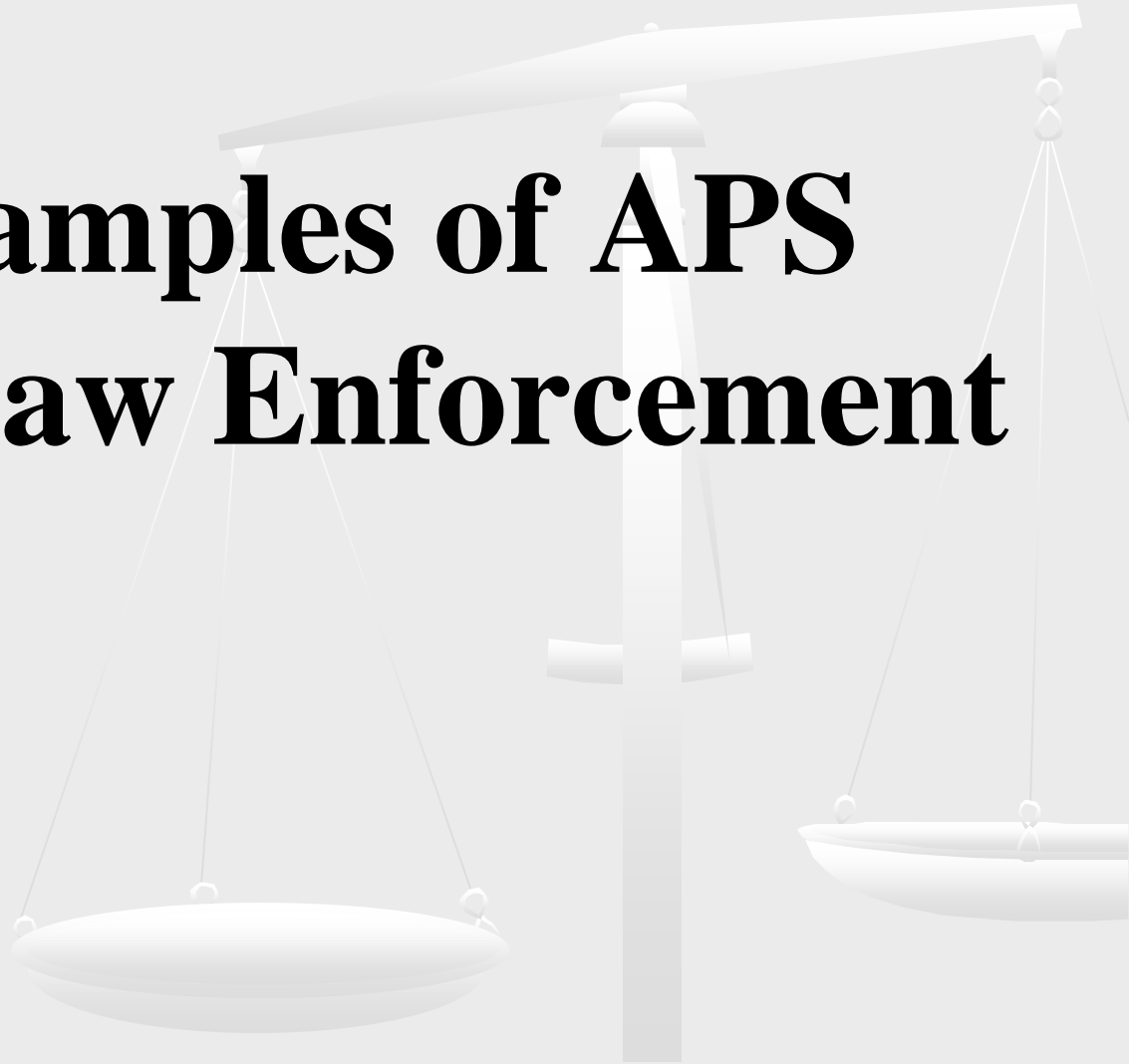
- Provide background data on alleged victims, abusers and providers
 - Assist with gathering and analysis of medical and administrative records
 - Assist in identifying communication abilities
 - Assist with scheduling interviews
 - Arrange for interpreters
 - Assist with interview process
- 

SANE Assisting Law Enforcement

Role of Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE):

- Specially trained & certified professionals
 - Available by beeper – respond immediately
 - Document the account of the assault
 - Conduct quality forensic medical/legal exams
 - Collect crucial, time-sensitive evidence
 - Available to testify
- 

Case Examples of APS Assisting Law Enforcement

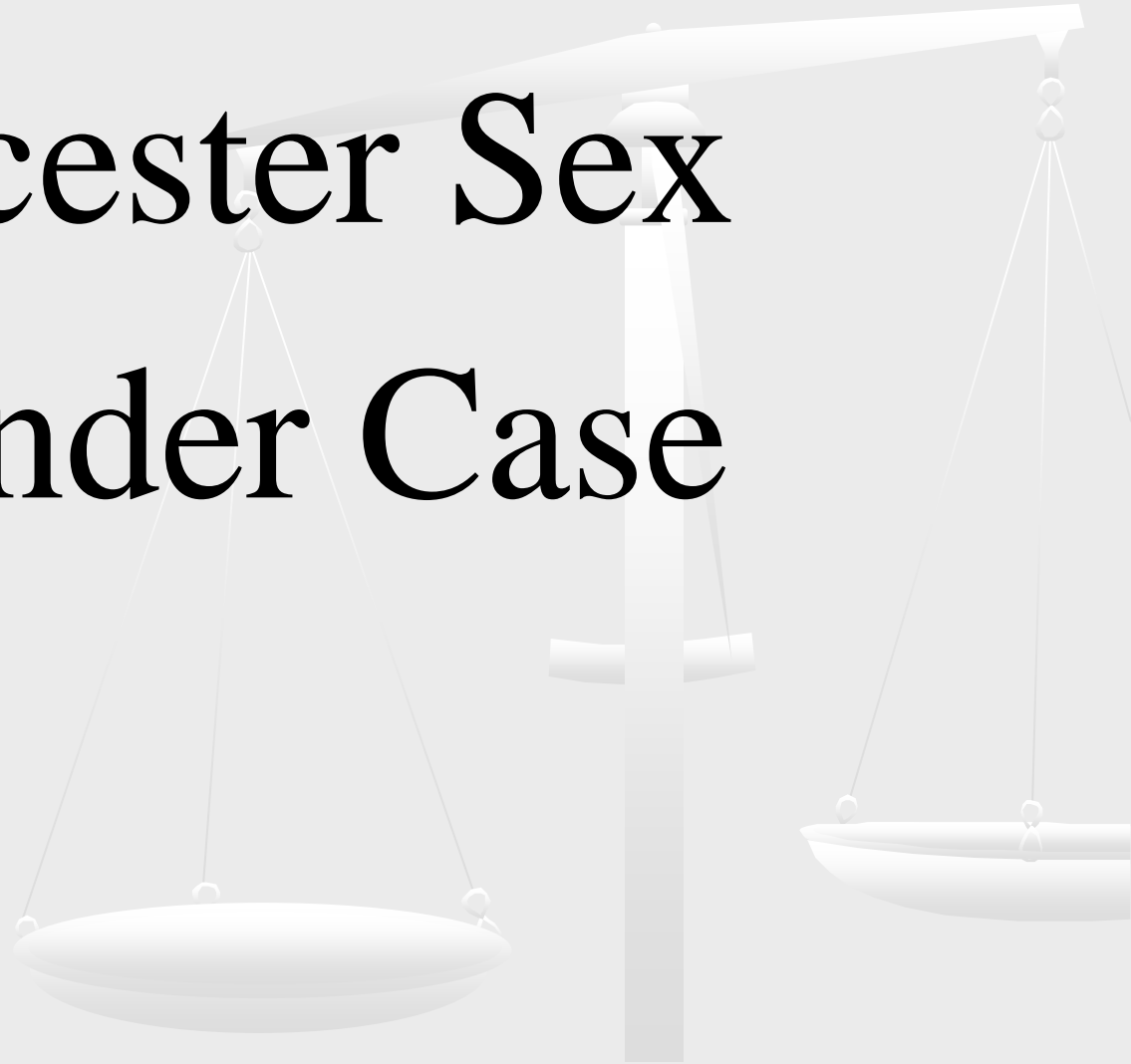


59lbs Case



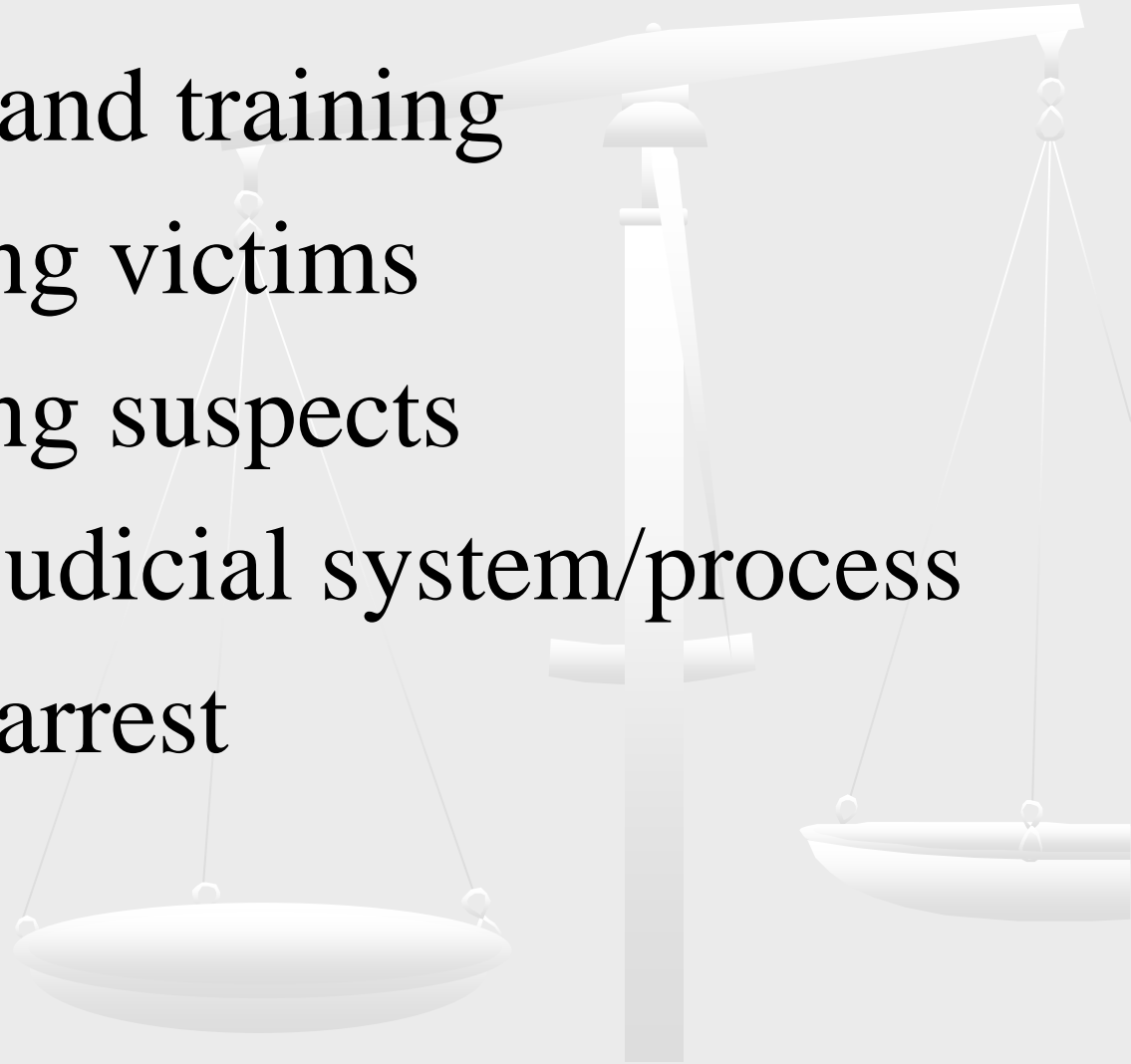


Worcester Sex Offender Case



How Law Enforcement Assists APS

- Education and training
- Interviewing victims
- Interviewing suspects
- Access to judicial system/process
- Powers of arrest



Responding to Suspected Abuse Against Persons with Disabilities

**What TO DO
What NOT TO DO**

Protect, Report, Preserve



Protect, Report, Preserve

REMEMBER

**Victims most often disclose to someone they trust
IF THIS IS YOU..... Contain your emotions:**

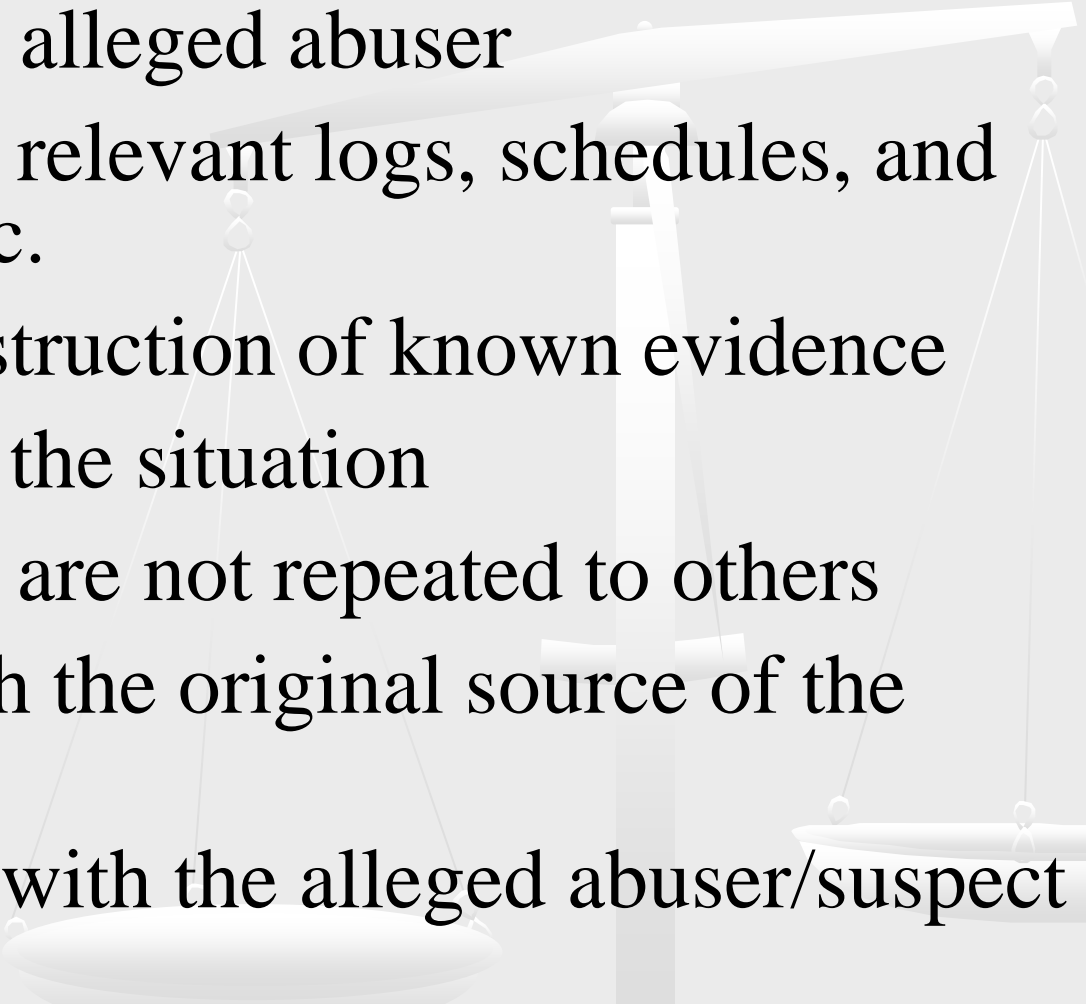
- Stay calm and remain non-judgmental
- Be supportive and ensure the individual's safety
- Explain the requirement to immediately report to DPPC or your local APS agency
- Listen closely if the victim wants to talk

Protect, Report, Preserve

Do gather essential information, by asking:

- **What happened?** - *Only enough to establish that abuse or a crime has occurred*
- **Where did it happen?** - *Important to know for notifying appropriate police department*
- **When did it happen?** - *If within 120 hours of sexual assault, go to an emergency room for a sexual assault exam*
- **Who is alleged abuser?** – *If appropriate, ask obvious questions of the alleged abuser about what happened*

Protect, Report, Preserve

- Gather and document basic information on the alleged victim and alleged abuser
 - If possible, collect relevant logs, schedules, and correspondence etc.
 - Prevent loss or destruction of known evidence
 - Contain & control the situation
 - Ensure allegations are not repeated to others
 - Speak directly with the original source of the report
 - Ensure all contact with the alleged abuser/suspect is by one person
- 

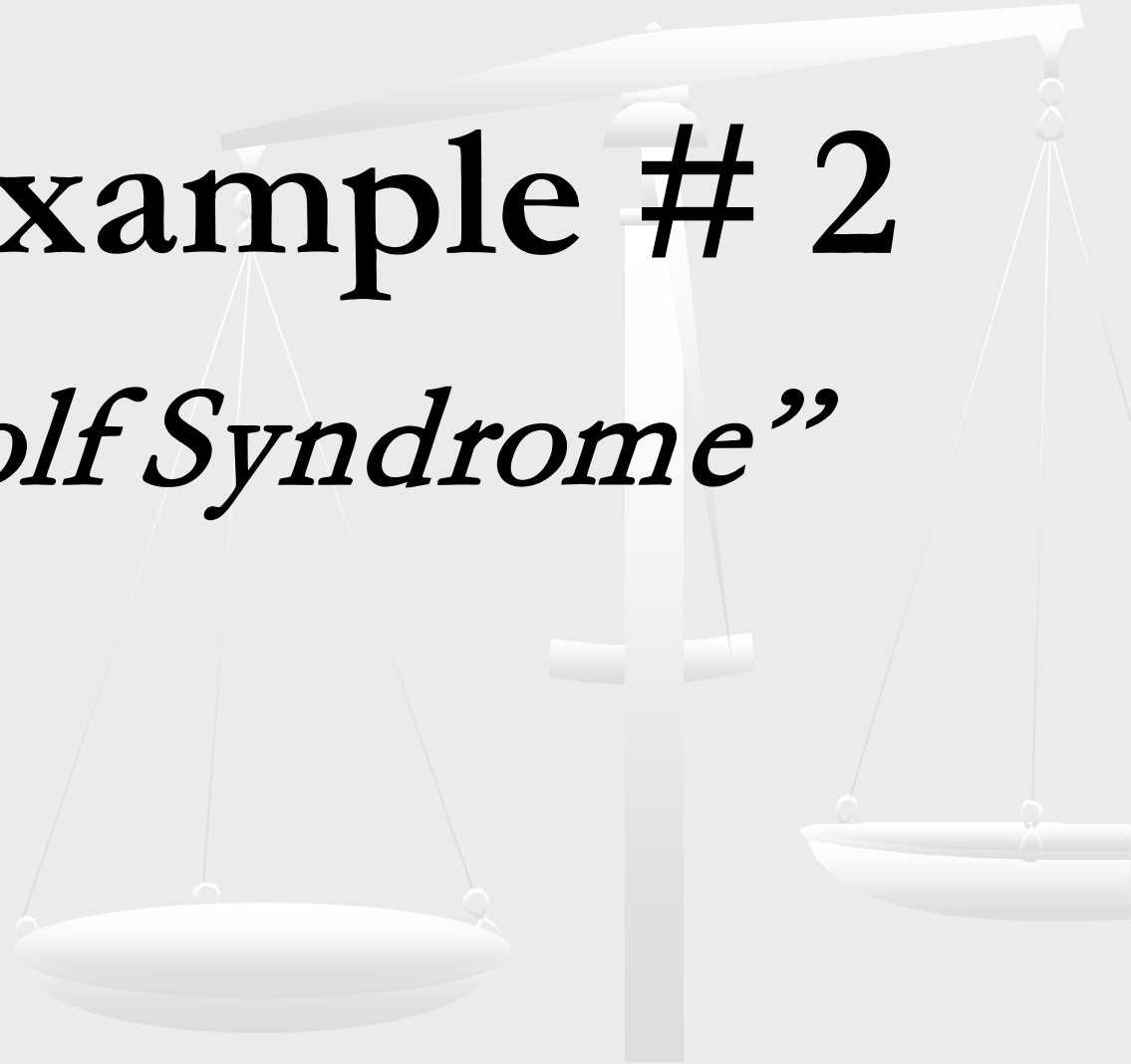
Case Example # 1

Waltham



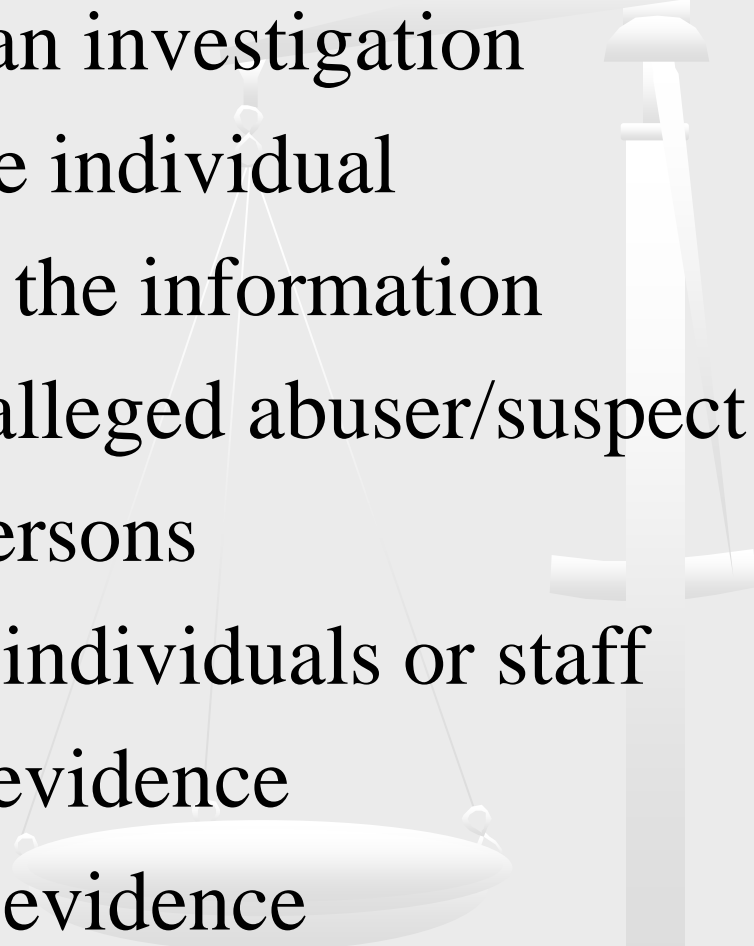
Case Example # 2

“Cry Wolf Syndrome”



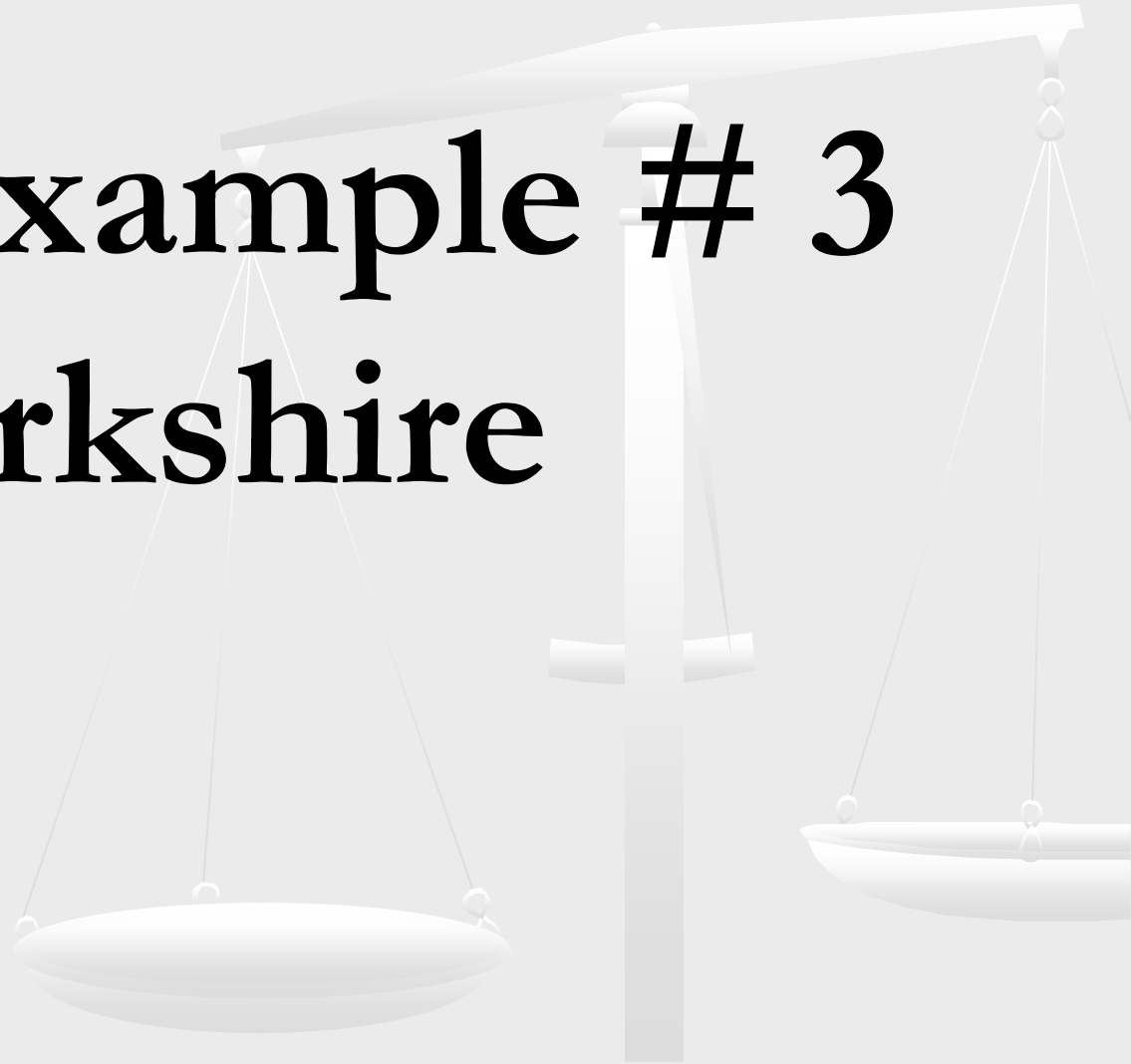
Protect, Report, Preserve

DO NOT:

- Try to conduct an investigation
 - Re-interview the individual
 - Interpret or edit the information
 - Interrogate the alleged abuser/suspect
 - Involve other persons
 - Interview other individuals or staff
 - Go looking for evidence
 - Touch physical evidence
- 

Case Example # 3

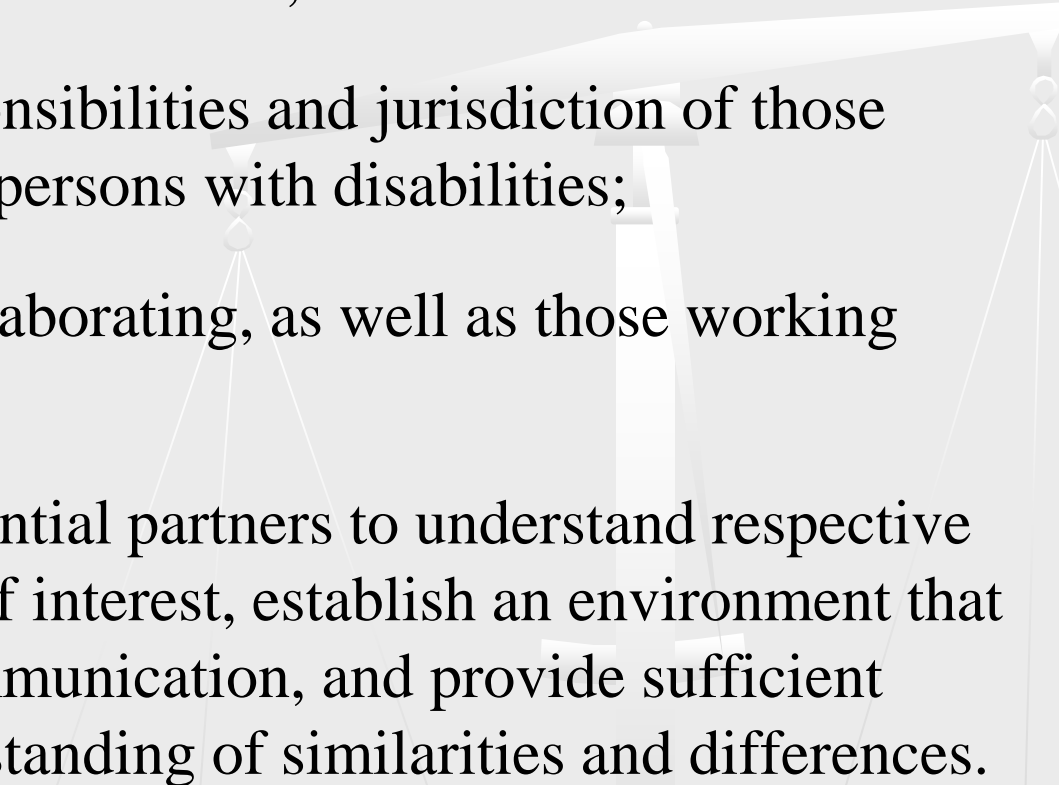
Berkshire



Developing Your Own Collaborations

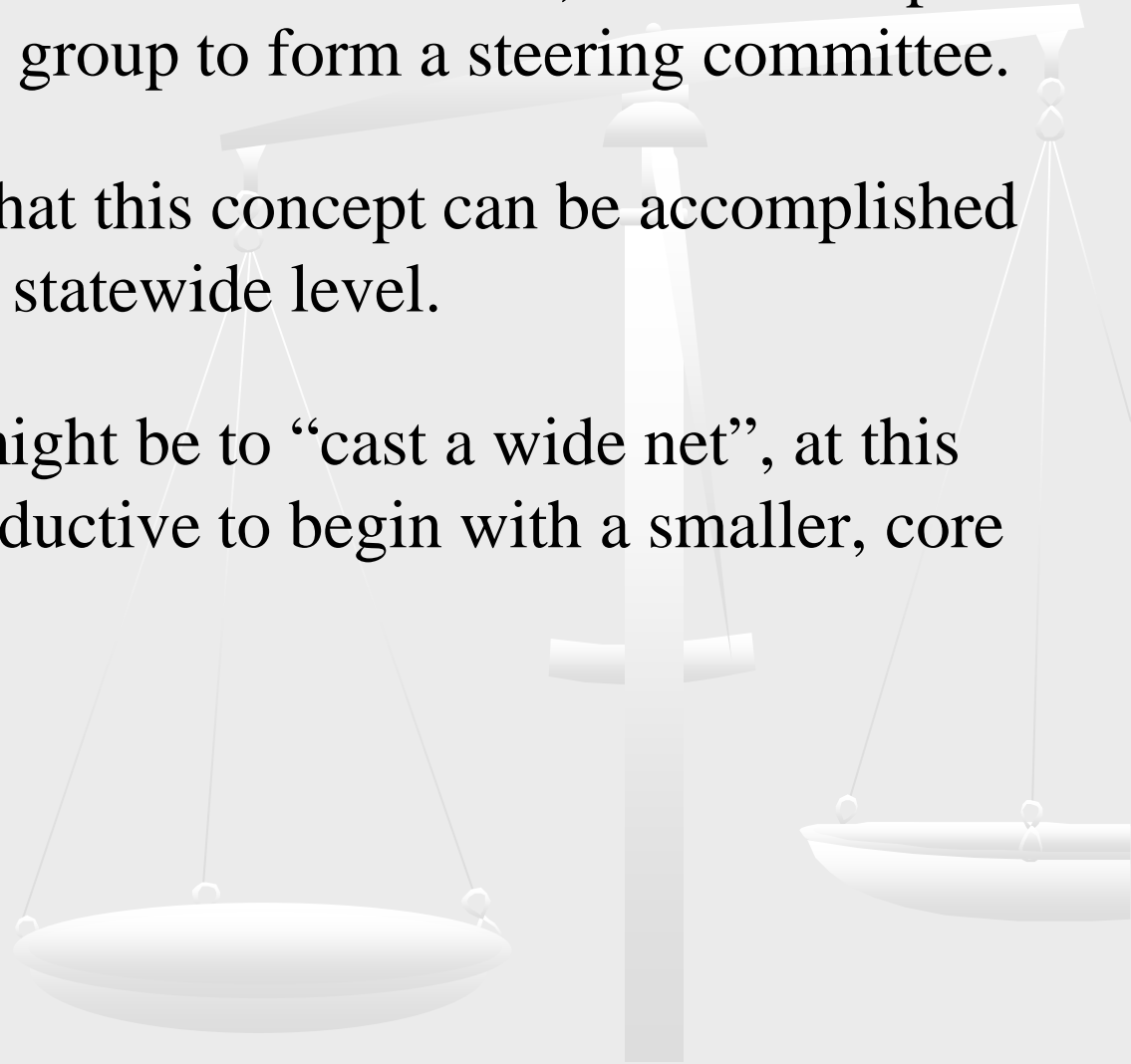


Developing a Multidisciplinary Collaboration

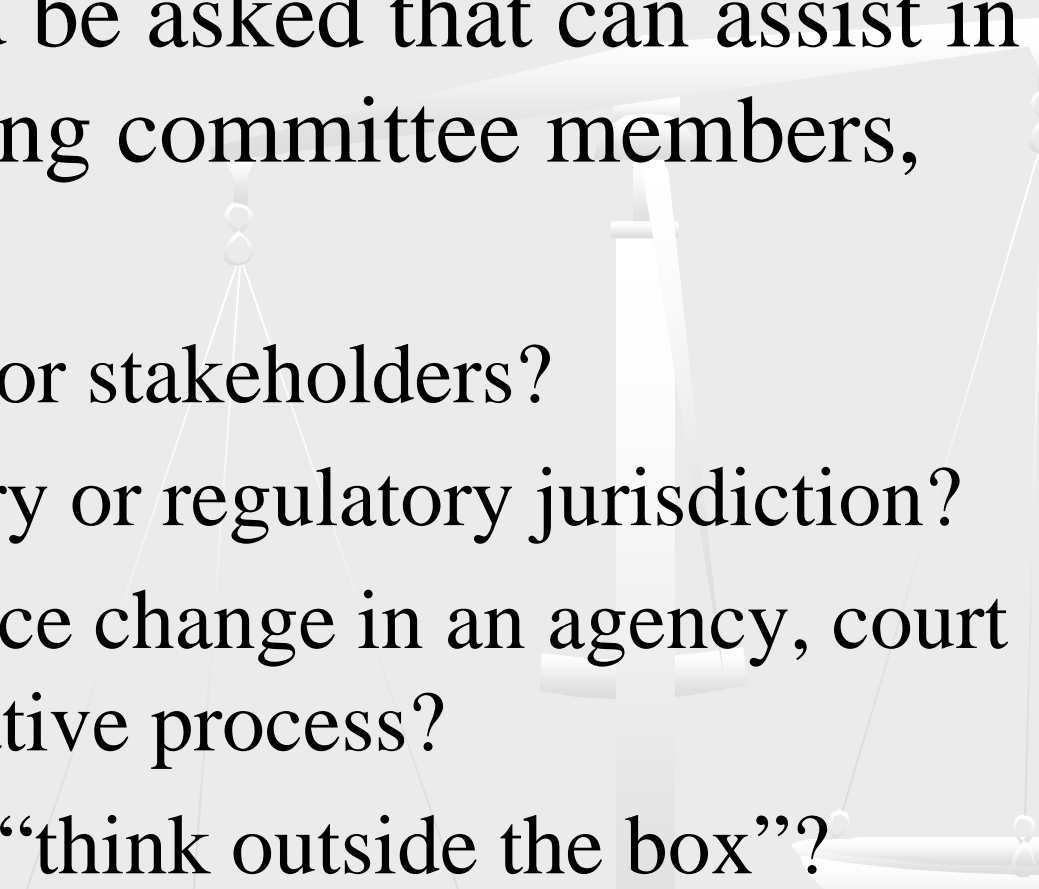
- Identify what individuals, organizations and agencies work with or interact with persons with disabilities;
 - Determine the roles, responsibilities and jurisdiction of those involved in working with persons with disabilities;
 - Identify those already collaborating, as well as those working independently; and
 - Target and meet with potential partners to understand respective efforts, determine levels of interest, establish an environment that fosters trust and open communication, and provide sufficient opportunity to gain understanding of similarities and differences.
- 

Developing a Multidisciplinary Collaboration

- Once a determination of interest is satisfied, the next step is to bring together a core group to form a steering committee.
- It is important to note that this concept can be accomplished at the local, regional or statewide level.
- While the inclination might be to “cast a wide net”, at this stage, it is far more productive to begin with a smaller, core committee.

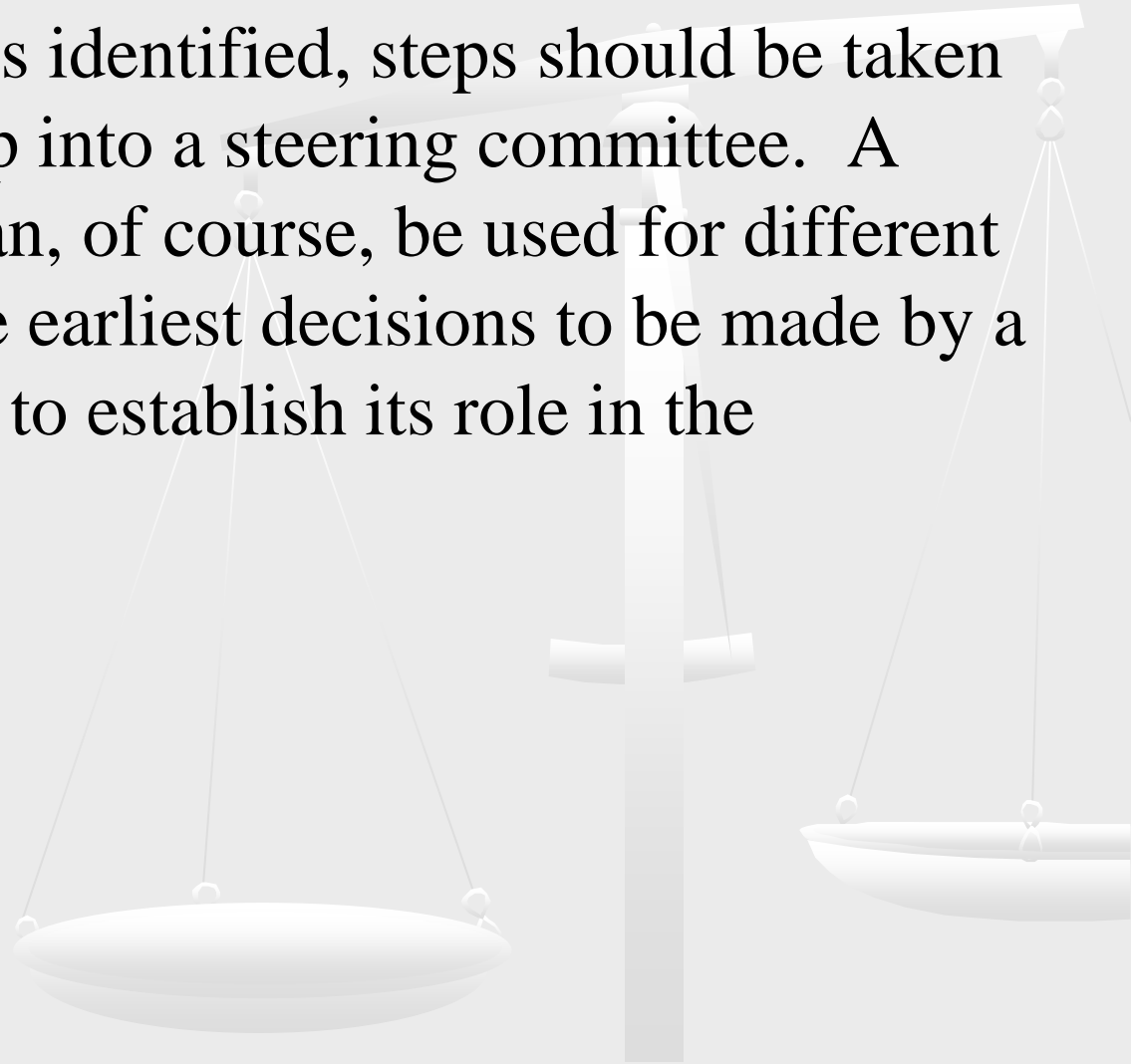


Developing a Multidisciplinary Collaboration

- 
- Questions should be asked that can assist in identifying steering committee members, such as:
 - Who are the major stakeholders?
 - Who has statutory or regulatory jurisdiction?
 - Who can influence change in an agency, court system or legislative process?
 - Who is likely to “think outside the box”?

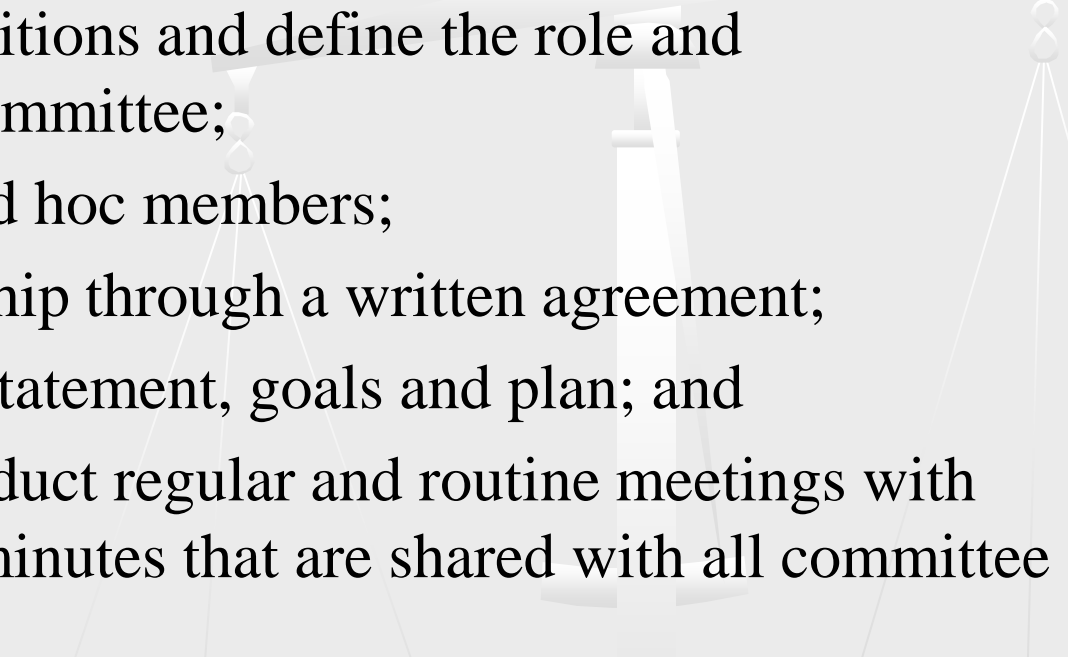
Developing a Multidisciplinary Collaboration

- Once the core group is identified, steps should be taken to formalize the group into a steering committee. A steering committee can, of course, be used for different purposes. Among the earliest decisions to be made by a steering committee is to establish its role in the collaboration.

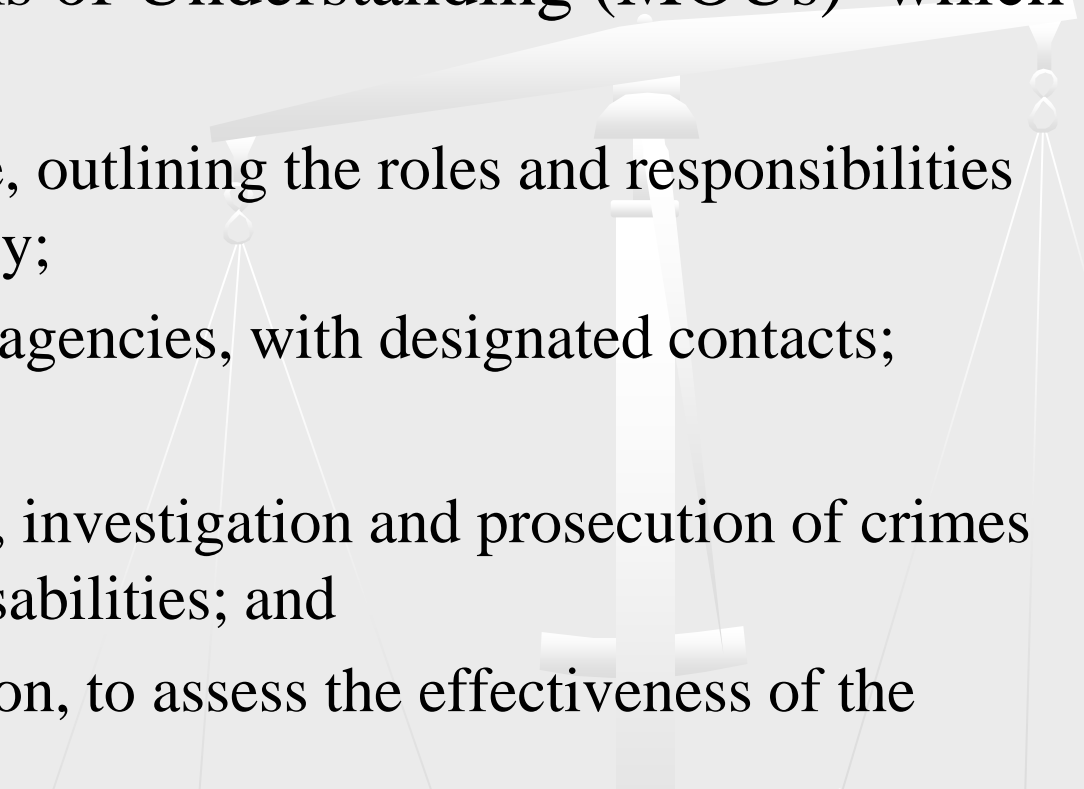


Developing a Multidisciplinary Collaboration

➤ Steering Committee members should:

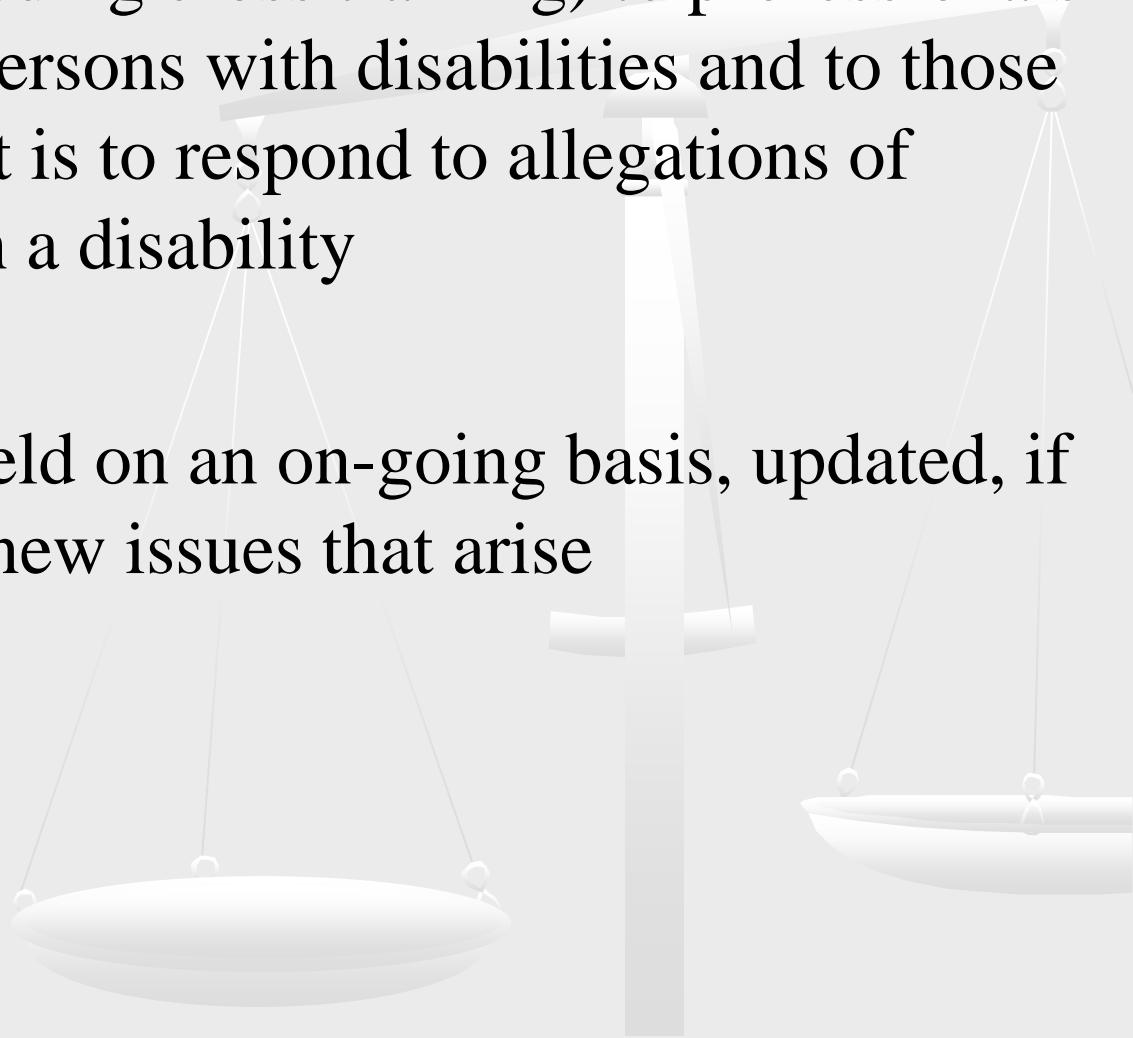
- Identify leadership positions and define the role and responsibility of the committee;
 - Distinguish core and ad hoc members;
 - Formalize the partnership through a written agreement;
 - Establish the mission statement, goals and plan; and
 - Set a calendar and conduct regular and routine meetings with agendas and meeting minutes that are shared with all committee members.
- 

Developing a Multidisciplinary Collaboration

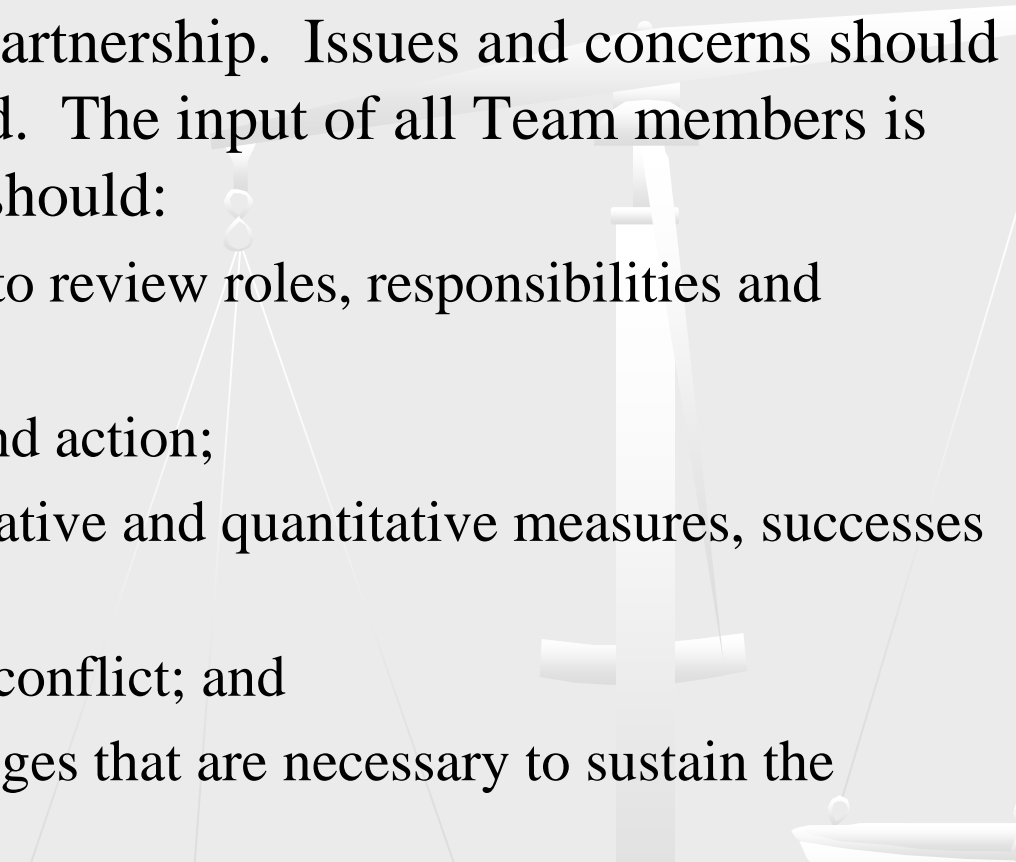
- 
- Develop Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) which include:
 - A Statement of Purpose, outlining the roles and responsibilities of each signatory agency;
 - Names of participating agencies, with designated contacts;
 - Goals of the MOU;
 - Protocols for the report, investigation and prosecution of crimes against persons with disabilities; and
 - A Review and Evaluation, to assess the effectiveness of the MOU.

Developing a Multidisciplinary Collaboration

- Provide training (including cross training) to professionals who work to protect persons with disabilities and to those whose responsibility it is to respond to allegations of abuse of a person with a disability
- Trainings should be held on an on-going basis, updated, if necessary, to address new issues that arise



Developing a Multidisciplinary Collaboration

- 
- Finally, a major component to a successful partnership is an on-going evaluation of that partnership. Issues and concerns should be addressed and resolved. The input of all Team members is critical. Team members should:
 - Meet on a regular basis to review roles, responsibilities and protocols;
 - Be flexible in thought and action;
 - Evaluate, through qualitative and quantitative measures, successes and non-successes;
 - Address and resolve all conflict; and
 - Be willing to make changes that are necessary to sustain the partnership.

Roma's Story

A Multidisciplinary Team Approach



A green-tinted image of a globe, possibly representing Earth, with the text "Roma's Story" overlaid in white. The globe shows some cloud patterns and is set against a dark background.

Roma's Story

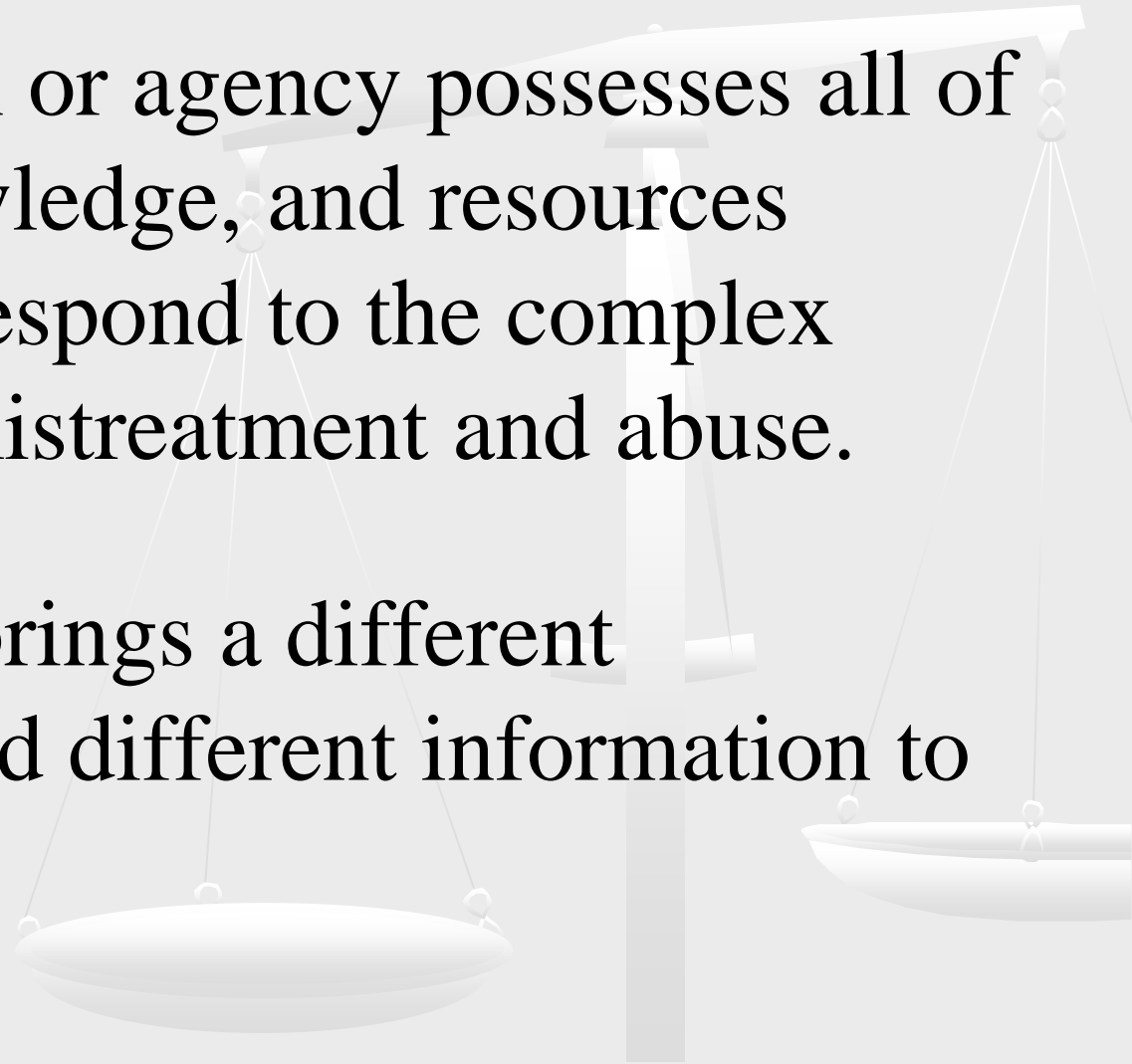


Benefits of the Building Partnerships Collaboration



Multidisciplinary Agency Approach Joint Investigations

- No one person or agency possesses all of the skill, knowledge, and resources necessary to respond to the complex problems of mistreatment and abuse.
- Each agency brings a different perspective and different information to the table



Measures of Success

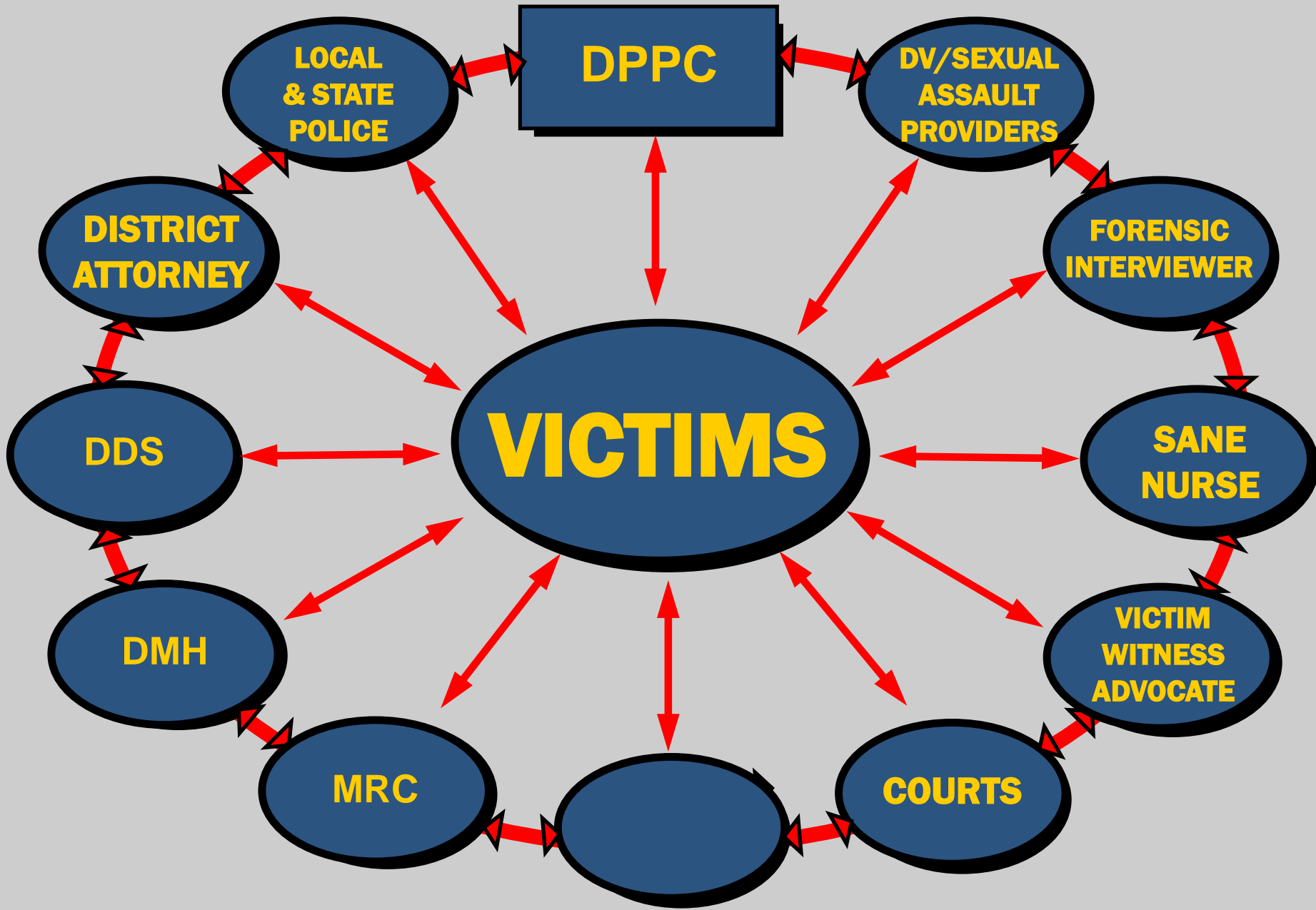
- Staff are trained and respond effectively
- Mandated report to DPPC is timely made
- APS is notified to optimize victim's safety
- DA is notified for case review
- DA coordinates with BPI partners to conduct criminal/civil investigation
- Collection of forensic evidence is optimized with timely SANE and other forensic examinations
- Prosecution of offender can be maintained

Benefits to Building Partnerships

- Improved communication and coordination
- Less trauma for victims and families
- Improved civil and criminal investigations
- Increased reporting, criminal investigations and prosecutions
- Enhanced access to the criminal justice system for victims with disabilities
- Institutionalized systemic improvements
- Improved data collection and documentation
- Common goal:

➤ **Increased protection for victims with disabilities**

The Partners In Protection



Building Partnerships...

- the concept is simple;
- the work is difficult; but
- the benefits are worth it!

