

# Investigation and Advocacy

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Sex Crime Unit  
Family Advocacy Center

Special thanks to Lupe Reyes  
City of Phoenix  
Caseworker 2

## Advocacy:

“the profession of an advocate; the act of arguing in favor of, or supporting something; the practice of supporting someone to make their voice heard.”

# City of Phoenix

- 1998: One advocate for DV and Sex Crimes
- 1998: DV murder
  - 20 yr stabbed to death by ex-boyfriend
  - Order of Protection in place
  - Victims services lack coordination
- 1999: Victim Service Unit (VSU) developed
  - City of Phoenix Family Advocacy Center
  - STOP grant positions
    - DV, Threats, Sex Crimes

# Family Advocacy Center

- 1999
- One Stop Shop
- Multiple services under one roof
  - EMPACT, NEW LEAF, JFCS, forensic exams, support groups, housing referrals
  - Emergency telephonic orders
- Funded: city budget, yearly fundraiser, STOP grant (grief counseling)

# FAC Advantages

- “One-Stop Shop”
- Seamless service
- Unifies limited advocacy resources
  - Reduce costs
- Off-site, “non-police” building
- Supports victim confidentiality
- “Victims” only
- Advocates and investigators together at last
- Standardized Advocate Protocol
- Services w/o PD involvement
- Connect with other centers/agencies
  - Human services, rent, utilities, food, shelter, employment



# FAC Disadvantages

- EVERYONE comes here
  - Family, friends, neighbors, etc...
  - 2,000+ in 2008
- Need to be adequately staffed
- Fear of PD at location
- No child care
- Clients recognize each other
- Case files may be subpoenaed
- Limited city budget (economy dependant)



# VSU

- Government Advocate
- Personnel
  - Director
  - VS Manager
  - Caseworker 3
  - Six Caseworkers
    - Specialty detail assignment
  - Management Assistant
  - College Interns
- Role: Empower the victim to participate in the CJ system, educate and assist

# Caseworkers

- Bachelor Degree – Social work
- Person Crimes
  - Homicide – Traffic Fatalities
  - Domestic Violence
  - Sex Crimes (adults and children)
  - Vulnerable Adults – Missing Persons
- City court advocate



# Homicide

- Partnership with fire department
  - Crisis teams staffed 24/7
- Referral from investigator or fire
- Role:
  - Referral – Grief counseling, victim comp, relocation, funeral homes, child therapist
- Educate: Victim rights, investigation process, court process
- Liaison between detective and family
- Parents of Murdered Children support group

# 2008 Governor's Taskforce

- Address cold cases in Arizona
- Committees: investigations, crime lab, prosecution, victims and family of victims'
- Compiled information from personal and professional experience
- Reviewed current literature
- Public comment

# Victim Impact Subcommittee

*(Public Comments from Victims Family)*

- Incompetence
- High turnover rate
- No accountability
- Evidence not processed
- Detective ignores calls
- “Shoe Leather”
- Need more advocacy
- Not Following up on all leads
- Not looking at all evidence
- Assuming too much
- Jurisdiction dispute
- No standardization of investigative protocol

# CC Recommendations

- Define cold case vs active case
  - Communicate this with family when it happens
- Develop communication/update policy
  - PPD experimenting with yearly letter
- Communicate information about the case
  - w/o compromising the investigation
- Develop policy ensuring transferring of cases
- Long term mental health
- Utilize non sworn case advocates to assist

# Domestic Violence

- Prioritize needs
  - Medical, safety, financial, housing, etc...
- Educate on DV cycle
- Safety planning
- Shelter placement
- Filing police report
- Court accompaniment
- Legal referrals
- U-Visa - VAWA





# Sexual Assault

- Crisis intervention
- Counseling referrals
- Risk assessment
- Long term therapy
- Investigative process
- Sexual assault exam
- Court process and procedures





# Case Study

- Adult female
- Severe mental disability
- Lives with mom and several “transients”
- Suspect found in room w/victim
- Att to get disclosure – exam completed
- SP denies sex
- Home visit
- APS placement out of house

# Cop vs Advocate



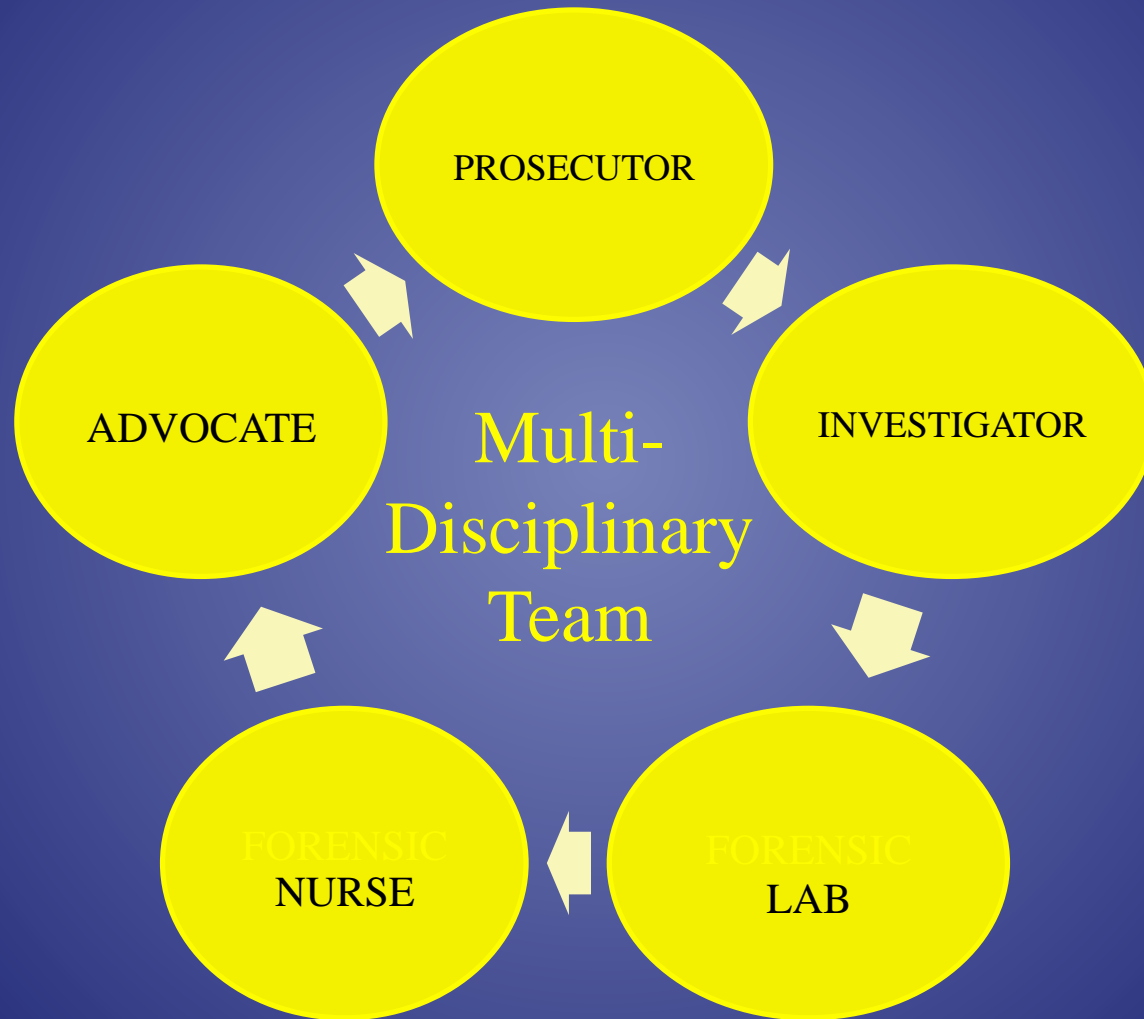
- Cop says:
  - You can't save the world
    - You can't always believe the victim!
  - Real world vs the advocate world
    - We are not CSI – be real
  - Don't tell me how to investigate
  - Don't give bad investigative information
    - Understand what and why I do things
  - Our advocacy is putting bad guy in jail



# Cop vs Advocate

- Advocate says:
  - You aren't sensitive and caring
    - You don't understand you've never been a victim
  - Why don't you believe the victim
  - Stop judging
  - You don't tell me anything
  - Why don't you just arrest them
  - Cop mentality
    - Stop joking

# One Solution



# Multi-Disciplinary Team

## ➤ **Investigative team**

- L.E., CPS/APS, prosecutor, lab

## ➤ **Non-investigative team**

- FNE, advocate, social agencies, other healthcare
- Formal or informal team
- May have different goals – same focus
- Strength in numbers
- Judged by when things go wrong
- Advocacy Center
- Communication is the key



# MDT



- In service training
  - Understand and defines roles
  - Understand limitations
  - Understand requirements
  - Opens communication
- Goals and objectives that work together
- Resource sharing
- Victim sees coordination and cooperation
- Must have effective and supportive leadership
- You can defeat a soldier, but not an army





“TO SERVE OTHERS IS TRULY A  
GREAT AND REWARDING LIFE, IT IS  
AN ACT OF SERVICE THAT BENEFITS  
THE GREATER NEEDS OF MANKIND”

PEGGY PUYPE, 2000

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