

# PEER SUPPORT PRESS

Disabled Persons Protection Commission

Sexual Assault Response Team

## WHAT IS PEER SUPPORT ?

The Peer Support Program provides peer to peer services led by individuals with disabilities who are survivors of sexual abuse.

The Peer Support Program also provides education and awareness in our communities to increase sexual assault responses and knowledge. Additionally, the Peer Support Program promotes the improvement of access to services for individuals with disabilities.



**Sexual Assault Response Team  
&  
Learning and Development**



**Peer Support Leaders  
Courtney, Leigh Ann, and Patty**



### Why is Peer Support Important ?

Peer to peer services creates a safe space for survivors to be supported by other individuals with shared experiences.

Peer led services also provides survivors with the tools to empower their healing journey.

# PATTY'S CORNER

## HEALTHY REALATIONSHIPS



A healthy relationship between partners and others should be one where everyone:

- Respects each other's boundaries
- Has good communication
- Trusts each other
- Helps each other
- Does activities together

It is important to respect one another and to respect that **No MEANS No!** Partners or even friends need your permission to be touched even if it is just to give a friendly hug.

### Signs of an unhealthy relationship

- The person doesn't respect you
- Your partner or friend keeps you away from people you love and care about
- The person controls everything you do and wear
- The person stops you from doing activities you like to do
- The person abuses or hurts you

## HOW TO BE SAFE IN RELATIONSHIPS

If you don't feel safe in a relationship you can:

- Tell someone you trust about the issues you are having
- Call 911 if you are in danger
- Call DPPC's hotline and report any kind of abuse
- Get someone you trust to help you report

### What is Consent?

- The word consent means permission or agreement
- To give consent means to give permission, to allow, to okay, and to agree

### What is Sexual Consent?

Sexual consent is the most personal type of permission you can give that involves touching or a sexual act.

It is important to know the consent is for one time only and you can always change your mind. If you don't want to continue being sexual with someone, you have the right to stop at any time. Being sexual can include touching, kissing or having intercourse.

If you don't say "no" with your voice, you can say "no" with your body language and your actions towards the other person to indicate consent hasn't been given. Consent also means you feel comfortable with what you are doing **ALL** times.

# PEER SUPPORT PRESS

Disabled Persons Protection Commission  
Sexual Assault Response Team

## Relaxation Room with Shamiya

*How to cope with trauma through meditation*

Coping with trauma is important because it helps you heal from your past traumatic experiences. It allows you to gain the skills to deal with future stressful situations. It also provides you the coping tools to manage your emotions and/or feelings when you become triggered.



Here are some meditation tips that can help you cope with trauma:

- Close eyes and count to 10, while taking deep breaths in and out of your mouth and nose
- Think of happy positive thoughts or a happy place you would like to be at
- Find a quiet place to self-reflect and write down your thoughts to express yourself in art form such as drawing or even painting

## Self-Care with Leigh Ann

Self-Care means taking care of yourself when you feel overwhelmed, not good, and not having a good day. It also means to take a walk or deep breath and talk to someone you trust. It's ok to ask for help when you need it.

### Why is self-care important?

Self-care is important because it helps you cope with trauma. It also helps you feel less overwhelmed with your emotions on your healing journey.

### Here are some ways you can take care of yourself

- Read a book
- Look at a magazine
- Listen to music
- Lay on the grass
- Take a walk
- Talk to someone you trust



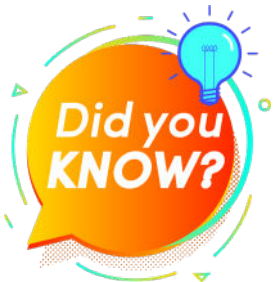
## Helpful Tips with Courtney

*What are visual aids? Why are visual aids important?*

Visual aids are things you can look at, such as a film, model, map, or slides, to help you understand something or to remember information.

Visual aids are important for individuals with developmental disabilities because it helps with communicating with someone who may need visual support. It also helps the person process the information that is being given to them and helps the individual remember the information.

Visual aids are also useful when supporting a sexual assault survivor with an intellectual disability. The visual aid provides the survivor the opportunity to use pictures to communicate their feelings and emotions when talking about their trauma. Additionally, it can help the individual process anxiety and stress on their healing journey.

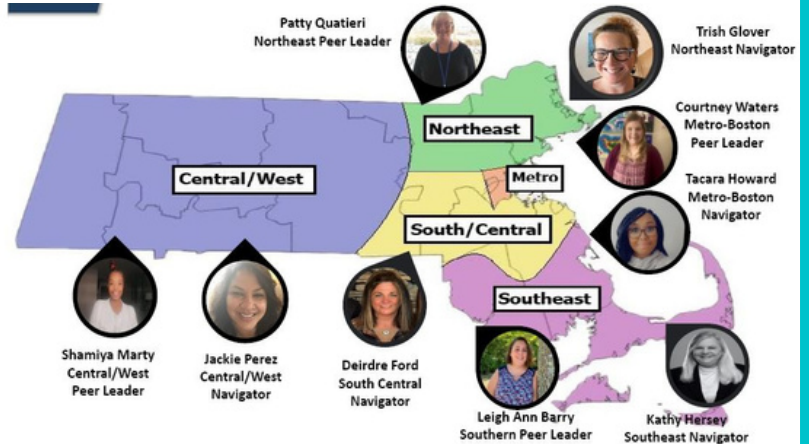


# PEER SUPPORT PRESS

Disabled Persons Protection Commission  
Sexual Assault Response Team

## SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE TEAM OVERVIEW

- The SAR Team has two support models that work together to support individuals in the community  
**(Peer Support and Navigation)**
- The SAR team's Peer Support provides outreach, peer to peer services, and resources
- The SAR team's navigators supports the survivors, family members, and assist in accessing services
- All services are free, confidential, and mobile



*DPPC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, or gender identify in the provision of services.*

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE DPPC'S 24 HOUR HOTLINE

The Disabled Persons Protection Commission (DPPC) operates a 24-hour Hotline to which citizens of the Commonwealth can report incidents of suspected abuse involving adults with disabilities by dialing 1-800-426-9009 or Deaf and Hard of Hearing Callers, use Video Relay Services (VRS) or MA Relay (711.)



**300 Granite Street, Suite 404  
Braintree, MA 02184  
Phone: (617) 727-6465  
[www.mass.gov/dppc](http://www.mass.gov/dppc)**



This newsletter was designed and created by the **Peer Support Leaders**  
**Editor: Patricia Quatieri**

This project was (partially) supported by the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance through a Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (VOCA) grant from the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice”