

Fundamental Element #3

Staff and Volunteers Provide Accessible Communication

Can You Hear Me?

It is important for you to be able to communicate with survivors of violence who may have hearing loss. If people with disabilities cannot understand information, they may not seek out your services. You will have clients with all levels of hearing loss, from a mild hearing loss to profound deafness. Hearing loss may be the result of a congenital disorder, illness, injury, or aging. A hearing disability is often unnoticeable; you can't necessarily tell by looking whether a person is hard of hearing. For this reason, it is a good idea to ask people which communication strategies work best for them.

Methods of communication differ greatly among people with hearing disabilities

For example, people who are Deaf may use:

- a sign language interpreter
- a TTY telephone
- pen and paper

While people with hearing loss may use:

- assistive listening equipment
- volume control phones
- pen and paper

Some Resources at Your Finger Tips

- The NC Coalition Against Domestic Violence has a hearing loss kit with adaptive equipment available for loan to DV agencies / shelters.
- The NC Coalition Against Sexual Assault has assistive listening technology that rape crisis centers can check out for use in counseling sessions, or support groups, or volunteer trainings.
- The NC Division of Services for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing has TTY machines and assistive listening equipment for loan and offers **free** training on TTY machines and using Relay NC.

Please review your notebook, *A Guide to Achieving the Fundamental Elements of Accessibility*, to gather more information and resources on how to implement Fundamental Element #3.

If you did not receive this guide, please contact Pam Dickens at the Access for All Project at 919-966-0871 or 919-843-3811 (TTY) or dickens@mail.fpg.unc.edu.

Let us know when you have implemented Fundamental Element #3.

Send us your stories, strategies, or pictures!

For more information or assistance, call

NC Coalition Against Domestic Violence: 1-888-232-9124 (toll free)

NC Coalition Against Sexual Assault: 1-888-737-2272 (toll free)

Access for All Project: 919-966-0871 or 919-843-3811 (TTY)

