End Violence Against Women International
(EVAWI)

# How to Provide Expert Training for Law Enforcement in Sexual Assault Response and Investigation

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# Electronic Access

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# Authors

**Sgt. Joanne Archambault** (Retired, San Diego Police Department) is the Chief Executive Officer for EVAWI. In 2003 prior to founding EVAWI, Sgt. Archambault worked for the San Diego Police Department for almost 23 years, in a wide variety of assignments. During the last 10 years of her service, she supervised the Sex Crimes Unit, which had 13 detectives and was responsible for investigating approximately 1,000 felony sexual assaults each year. Sgt. Archambault has provided training for tens of thousands of practitioners, policymakers and others – both across the country and around the world. She has been instrumental in creating system–level change through individual contacts, as well as policy initiatives and recommendations for best practice.

**Dr. Kimberly A. Lonsway** has served as the Director of Research for EVAWI since 2004. Her research focuses on sexual violence and the criminal justice and community response system, and she has written over 60 published articles, book chapters, technical reports, government reports, and commissioned documents – in addition to numerous training modules, bulletins, and other resources. Over her career, she has trained thousands of professionals across the country and around the world, in a diverse array of disciplines and settings, and volunteered for over 15 years as a victim advocate; in 2012, she was awarded the first-ever Volunteer of the Decade Award from the Sexual Assault Recovery and Prevention (SARP) Center in San Luis Obispo, California. She earned her PhD in the Department of Psychology at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

Nearly every week, EVAWI receives a request for help identifying expert speakers to present at a local, regional, or statewide training event for law enforcement. Often, we are asked if EVAWI can provide this type of training, or we are asked to provide recommendations for experts in the field. Unfortunately, EVAWI is unable to provide this type of in–person training on a local level. However, in this training bulletin, we will provide you with the resources you need to host a successful training event, including suggestions on how to find experts in the field to enhance your training.

## Identifying Experts in the Field

When you are looking for someone to offer training on law enforcement investigations, a good place to start is reviewing agendas from our prior conferences. With over 100 speakers covering a wide range of topics each year, our agendas can help spark ideas and identify specific names of individuals who might be able to conduct the training.

We are also happy to brainstorm ideas with you for topics and speakers. Please go to our Contact Us page and click on Subject Matter Expertise for assistance.

## EVAWI Training Resources: Webinars

Alternatively, you can take advantage of training resources that EVAWI offers, including webinars, training bulletins, or training modules from the Online Training Institute (OLTI). For example, we offer numerous webinars in our archive. Because they are posted online, you can listen to them anytime or you can incorporate them into a training event. We know that playing a webinar is not the same thing as having a live trainer, but you can supplement the experience by bringing in speakers or facilitating discussion to promote interaction and learning. This is one way to take advantage of the national-level expertise reflected in EVAWI's webinars while also interacting with colleagues and local experts to create a valuable training experience.

Here are a few examples of webinars that may be of interest to you:

- *Neurobiology of Sexual Assault (2 part series):* Part 1, Part 2
- *Effective Report Writing: Using the Language of Non–Consensual Sex*
- *Effective Victim Interviewing: Helping Victims Retrieve and Disclose Memories -* Part 1
- *Effective Victim Interviewing: Helping Victims Retrieve and Disclose Memories.* Part 2
- *Uncovering Sexual Assault in Domestic Violence Calls: An Improved Law Enforcement Response to Assess for Sexual Violence, Build an Evidence Based Case and Reduce Gender Bias*

- *Digital Evidence: Successfully Identifying and Acquiring Electronic Evidence to Combat the CSI Effect*

- Suspect Forensic Examinations and Evidence Collection Webinar *(2 part series): Part 1, Part 2*

This video gives a sense of the high quality, and engaging training content provided by leading national experts in EVAWI's webinars.

## Online Training Institute (OLTI)

Our Online Training Institute offers one of the best ways to bring advanced training to professionals in your community with 19 comprehensive modules, totaling 213 hours of free training, all focused on criminal justice and community responses to sexual assault – with particular emphasis on law enforcement investigations.

Courses include interactive elements like review exercises, practical applications, case studies, and end-of-course test questions. Anyone who passes the end-of-course test receives a personalized certificate of completion, which can be used to demonstrate professional advancement and possibly used to earn continuing education units, depending on the person's professional discipline and jurisdiction.

You can encourage colleagues within your agency and community to take advantage of the OLTI to advance their knowledge of sexual assault response and investigation. If you are a supervisor or manager, you can even require subordinates to complete a certain number of modules. The modules and numbers required could vary based on their professional role. For example, whether they are a patrol officer versus an investigator in law enforcement, a health care provider, or an advocate. Subordinates could either be assigned certain modules to complete or given choices in the courses that interest them most.

If modules are not a requirement, but you want to encourage OLTI participation in your community, you could institute a reward program or host a competition to see who can complete the most modules. There are a variety of ways to promote participation in the OLTI and move your agency and community forward in this area.

Here are a few examples of OLTI modules that may be of interest to you:

- *Effective Report Writing: Using the Language of Non-Consensual Sex*

- *False Reports: Moving Beyond the Issue to Successfully Investigate Sexual Assault*

*Effective Victim Interviewing: Helping Victims Retrieve and Disclose Memories of Sexual Assault*

- *Forensic Examinations of Sexual Assault Victims and Suspect: Role of the Examination in Sex Crimes Investigations*
- *Laboratory Analysis of Biological Evidence and the Role of DNA in Sexual Assault Investigations*
- *Sexual Assault Response and Resource Teams (SARRT): A Guide for Rural and Remote Communities*
- *Successfully Investigating Sexual Assault Against Victims with Disabilities*

## Specialized Training Requests

Another request we frequently receive is to offer recommendations for subject matter experts on how to respond to a specific type of sexual assault – such as campus sexual assault, sexual assault within the military, or sexual assault within a specific culture or setting (sexual assault on Tribal lands, in correctional settings, etc.).

When we respond to these requests, we encourage people to take advantage of the more general training resources that already exist, because they can often learn as much, if not more, from training that does not have a specific focus on their culture or setting. While specialized settings certainly have unique characteristics and dynamics, the foundation for every sexual assault investigation is the same. This is because the dynamics of sexual violence are fundamentally the same across settings – as are aspects of our responses to victims, suspects, and the investigation of reports. In fact, one problem in our field is the tendency to work in silos, so we tend to talk primarily with professionals working in the same context or setting, which can prevent us from drawing from the knowledge and experience gained from practitioners in other contexts.
To address specific populations, our recommendation is therefore to draw from general training materials and then *team up with other presenters* to address complex subject matter areas, for example an expert in sexual assault investigations could partner with an investigator from the Department of Corrections or university investigators.

## Resources to Tailor Your Training

EVAWI also offers a wide range of resources online, which professionals can use to create their own training and tailor it for the unique needs of their audience. In particular, we encourage people to check out the Best Practices section of the EVAWI website, as well as the FAQ section.

In addition, you may find the Training Bulletin Archive helpful as you search resources on a particular topic for your training. The Resource Library also provides excellent resources on a wide variety of topics, and the Glossary of Terms may help you identify common terms and their definitions.

As you can see, there are numerous resources available to help you plan and host a successful event for law enforcement in your community. If you would like to continue your learning on this topic, consider viewing our webinar: *How to Plan a Successful Training for Law Enforcement*, with EVAWI's CEO and Founder, Sgt. Joanne Archambault (Ret.) and Research Director Dr. Kim Lonsway. This webinar offers guidance on how to plan an event with collaboration across disciplines, as well as event basics like how to create a timeline, how to market the event, and how to design the training for adult learners.