



# SEEK THEN SPEAK

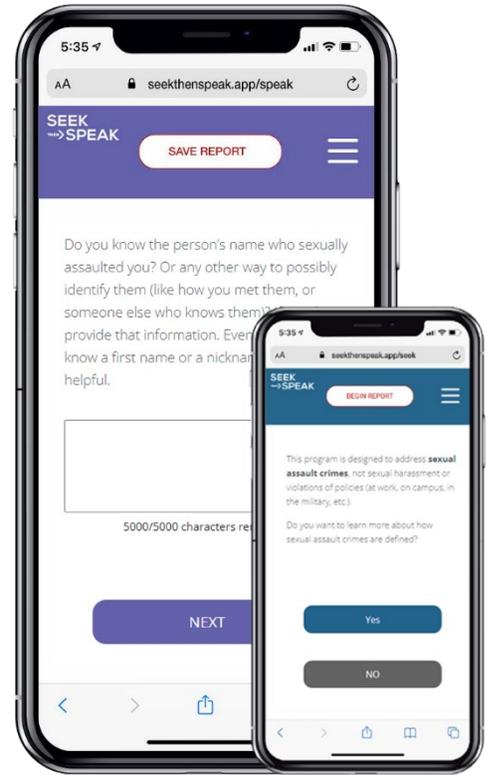
## Pilot Sites

EVAWI is delighted to offer **SEEK THEN SPEAK** as a new pathway to justice for sexual assault survivors. As a first step, pilot agencies gave feedback to ensure the information provided in **SEEK** and the self-guided interview and report generated in **SPEAK** meet the police agencies' investigative needs, as well as the needs of sexual assault survivors.<sup>1</sup>

The next step is for police agencies and advocacy organizations to add a link to the program on their website.

## Law Enforcement Practices

Yet before law enforcement agencies link to the program from their website, they must carefully consider how the tool will be used in practice, when survivors submit their reports, and evaluate what adaptations might be needed to law enforcement policies and procedures to respond. This includes addressing the specific roles of communications personnel (911 and non-emergency call takers/dispatchers), patrol officers, follow-up investigators, supervisors, and command staff. How will these personnel respond to reports created by survivors using this tool?



EVAWI will provide technical assistance and support to pilot agencies during this process.

## Collaboration with Advocacy

Advocacy agencies can also link to the program from their website, and educate sexual assault survivors about this option for reporting their sexual assault to police. In addition to encouraging survivors and support people to gather information and explore options using **SEEK**, advocates can offer support for survivors while completing a report in **SPEAK**.

With consent, advocates can continue supporting survivors while they contact law enforcement to provide their report, or submit the report to law enforcement on the survivor's behalf. Protocols will need to outline the appropriate procedures for advocates and law enforcement in these scenarios, as well as situations where law enforcement receives a report from a survivor who has not yet received advocacy services. These reports should trigger advocacy notification, just as when a survivor presents to the hospital or reports using other means.

<sup>1</sup> **SEEK THEN SPEAK** is designed to meet all federal data privacy requirements for HIPAA, VAWA, FVPSA, and VOCA.



## Need for Training

After drafting a protocol for handling survivor reports, preliminary training will be needed for key personnel in the pilot agencies before adding the link on any website. This is to prevent a scenario where a report is completed using this tool, but agency personnel have no idea what to do with it when the survivor calls or emails the agency to submit their report. Again, EVAWI can provide technical assistance and support during this preliminary training phase.

## Public Notification

Linking to this new program is only part of the solution to non-reporting. Another part is ensuring sexual assault survivors and support people are aware of this tool to increase access. EVAWI will help with this task by creating marketing materials (fliers, brochures, pocket cards) for agencies to promote the use of **SEEK THEN SPEAK** in their communities. Information can also be disseminated electronically via social media, and press releases can be issued for traditional media outlets to publicize the availability of this valuable new tool.



## Survivor Feedback

The self-guided interview in **SPEAK** includes several brief questions for survivors to evaluate their experience using the program. That feedback will be used to support improvements to the program, both in the pilot sites and after the tool is released nationally.

## Evaluating Practice

Agencies that link to the program from their website will have the ability to track the number of individuals who access the tool from their site. This can be tracked along with characteristics of the reports they receive. Over time, agencies can assess whether the number of sexual assault reports increase as a result of offering this new tool, and whether there are increases in the number of medical forensic examinations conducted, advocacy services requested, etc.

Within a few months, pilot agencies may receive enough reports to begin evaluating the effectiveness of this new pathway. How is the program working? What are survivors' experiences with it? What is the law enforcement agency hearing, not only from victims, but also from their own personnel (in communications, patrol, investigations, records, and management) about how the program is functioning? Specifically, what works in terms of policies, procedures, and training – and what doesn't? Most important, what can be done to improve the tool for everyone involved? Lessons learned from the pilot sites will be invaluable for enhancing the content and function of the program, before releasing it nationally.