

At a Glance: Sexual Violence Prevention in Virginia

August 31, 2026

Overview

The five-year **Rape Prevention and Education (RPE)** grant was awarded to the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) from 2024 to 2029 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The goals of the RPE award are to prevent sexual violence (SV) and promote optimal health for all. This is done through:

- addressing social factors.
- helping state and territorial health departments work together, and
- building lasting systems and support.

The RPE grant also helps state and territorial health departments prevent SV through programs, practices, and policies.

VDH supports eight partner organizations in Virginia. Each partner has unique initiatives to prevent SV through three focus areas:

- strengthening economic supports,
- creating protective environments, and
- promoting social norms that protect against violence.

Partner organizations are focused on **reducing SV risk and perpetration before it starts.**



Focus Areas and Partner Organizations

Focus Area 1: Strengthening Economic Supports

- **The Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance** works to improve economic support through addressing policy strategies. Action Alliance also provides training to help people understand harm. These trainings teach people how to take accountability if they do harm.

Focus Area 2: Creating Protective Environments

Greater Richmond SCAN helps organizations that care for people who have had traumatic experiences in their lives. SCAN provides consultation, resources, and training.

- **The Haven Shelter and Services** works to increase food access in the Northern Neck region. The Haven has several community gardens and learning opportunities. They also distribute locally grown fruits and vegetables to families in need.
- **The Sexual Assault Resource Agency (SARA)** leads a restaurant coalition. The coalition teaches restaurant staff how to recognize and prevent workplace harassment.

Focus Area 3: Promoting Social Norms that Protect Against Violence

- **The Alexandria Center for Sexual Assault** holds a support group for parents and caregivers with children and youth at higher risk for SV.
- **Blue Octopus Consulting** teaches SV prevention in adaptive programs. These programs are for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Blue Octopus also leads a project on prevention of stalking in the floral industry.
- **Families Forward** leads and trains facilitators for the Circle of Parents program in correctional facilities. This program functions as peer support groups for incarcerated individuals.
- **REAL LIFE** works to prevent violence perpetration through teaching about emotional regulation. REAL LIFE teaches correctional settings, local jails, and community classes.

Program Highlights

Focus Area 1: Strengthening Economic Supports

- Held **3** regional listening sessions with **51 participants** to identify policy issues
- Identified a policy issue of focus: **expanding access to childcare**
- Developed [family-friendly policy guide website](#) and brochure

Focus Area 2: Creating Protective Environments

- Developed and maintained **3** community gardens in the Northern Neck area
- Distributed **1,968** pounds of food to **480** households in need
- Taught **756** people how to grow their own food
- Maintained resource hub for **24** Virginia organizations and trained **4,408** professionals and **7,254** community members on providing care to people with past traumatic experiences
- Held **3** community events, including Resilience Week and Prevent-A-Thon
- Held **9** listening sessions with organizations around restaurant and workplace harassment prevention practices

Focus Area 3: Promoting Social Norms that Protect Against Violence

- Held **87** support group meetings for parents
- **9** participants graduated from the FitAbility Club pilot program with the Autism Society of Central Virginia
- Developed **1** prevention curriculum for youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Formed **7** new Circle of Parents groups
- Held **7** trainings and trained **114** Circle parent leader facilitators
- **827** people graduated from the REAL TALK program class curriculum, with **8** participating facilities
- Screened **947** individuals for violence perpetration and experiencing violence



Learn More About VDH and Partner Organizations

State and National Resources

- For more information on sexual violence prevention initiatives in Virginia, visit: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/injury-and-violence-prevention/sexual-violence-prevention-2/>
- For more information on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s Rape Prevention and Education grant, visit: https://www.cdc.gov/sexual-violence/programs/?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/sexualviolence/rpe/index.html

Partner Organizations

The Alexandria Center for Sexual Assault

- <https://www.alexandriava.gov/SexualViolence>

Blue Octopus Consulting

- <https://blueoctopus.consulting/>
- <https://blueoctopus.consulting/statewide-initiative-aims-to-prevent-abuse-of-virginia-youth-with-disabilities/>

Families Forward

- <https://www.familiesforwardva.org/>

Greater Richmond SCAN

- <https://grscan.com/>

The Haven Shelter and Services

- <https://www.havenshelter.org/>

The Sexual Assault Resource Agency (SARA)

- <https://www.saracville.org/>

The Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance

- <https://vsdvalliance.org/>
- <https://www.familiesthriveva.org/>