

# **Collin County Sexual Assault Team (SART) Biennial Report December 2023**



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# Table of Contents

1	Executive Summary	3
1.1	Summary	
1.2	Objectives	
1.3	Main Activities	
2	SART Overview	5
2.1	History	
2.2	Team	
2.3	Meetings	
2.4	Confidentiality	
3	Activities and Trainings	6
3.1	Activities	
3.2	Trainings	
4	Data and Findings	7
4.1	Data Importance	
4.2	Services Breakdown (Collin County)	
4.3	Race/Ethnicity Breakdown (Collin County)	
4.4	Age Breakdown (Collin County)	
4.5	Hospital/Facility Location Breakdown (Collin County)	
4.6	Law Enforcement Agency Breakdown (Collin County)	
4.7	Collin County District Attorney Breakdown	
4.8	Collin County Crime by Jurisdiction	
5	SART Protocols of Collin County	11
5.1	Reporting, Investigating, and Prosecuting cases arising from a report of sexual assault	
5.2	Interagency information sharing, in accordance with state and federal law, to ensure the timely exchange of relevant information and enhance the response to survivors.	
5.3	Location and accessibility of sexual assault forensic examinations	
5.4	Information on the availability of and access to medical care when the care is clinically indicated	
5.5	Triage and Trauma Assessment	
5.6	Forensic Examinations	
5.7	After the Forensic Examination	
5.8	Requirements to ensure survivors are offered access to sexual assault program advocates	
5.9	Availability of and access to mental and behavioral health services	
5.10	Assessment of relevant community trends, including drug-facilitated sexual assault and sex trafficking.	
5.11	Case reviews and interagency protocol review process	
5.12	Training	
5.13	Conflict management and confidentiality or information shared among response team members	
5.14	Basic Reference Information	
6	Case Review	14
7	Conclusion	14
8	Appendix	16

# 1. Executive Summary

## 1.1. Summary

The Collin County Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) has been committed to the objectives of creating the most trauma informed response to sexual assault by stressing interprofessional collaboration, meeting regularly, and evaluating its response on an ongoing basis. The SART has met bi-monthly for the past two years. During these meetings, our multi-disciplinary team held training, reviewed best practices, developed new protocols and reviewed existing protocols, and committed to the mission of serving the sexual violence survivors in Collin County.

Over the past two years the SART has been able to develop and implement working response protocols in our community. Our team expanded its membership to include behavioral health and additional law enforcement agencies in 2023. One challenge that the team faced was the return to in-person meetings and the attempt to move the meetings around to accommodate the membership. After this was fully implemented, our attendance at the meetings has steadily increased and many of our members have expressed that they are happy with rotating the meeting locations. The team will continue to improve the meetings and the locations and seek feedback.

Another challenge that should be noted is the difficulty in developing a case review process that meets legislative requirements. Changes in SART membership, namely our District Attorney's Office, several key law enforcement departments, and SART leadership, has created challenges for the team in developing educational opportunities and completing a case review. Cases are; however, reviewed at every meeting to ensure adherence to county-wide response protocols and best-practices in trauma-informed care of survivors.

## 1.2. Objectives

The objectives for the Collin County SART aim to create a comprehensive, coordinated, and compassionate response to sexual assault, addressing the physical, emotional, and legal aspects of survivors' experiences and include:

- **Community Collaboration:** Collaborate with community organizations, agencies, and stakeholders to enhance the overall response to sexual assault.
- **Crisis Intervention:** Offer crisis intervention services, including counseling and mental health support.
- **Cultural Competency:** Recognize and address the unique needs of diverse populations, considering cultural, linguistic, and other factors that may impact survivors' experiences.
- **Data Collection and Analysis:** Collect and analyze data related to sexual assault cases to identify trends, improve response protocols, and advocate for policy changes.
- **Education and Prevention:** Provide prevention programs to reduce the incidence of sexual violence.
- **Law Enforcement Collaboration:** Foster collaboration between law enforcement agencies and the SART to ensure a coordinated and victim-centered response.
- **Legal Advocacy:** Provide information about the legal process to survivors.
- **Medical Assistance:** Ensure survivors have access to prompt and appropriate medical care.
- **Preventing Re-traumatization:** Implement trauma-informed practices to minimize re-traumatization during interactions with survivors. Ensure that all aspects of the response are survivor-centered and sensitive to their needs.
- **Support and Empowerment:** Provide immediate and ongoing support to survivors of sexual assault.
- **Training and Coordination:** Provide training for professionals involved in the response to sexual assault, including law enforcement, medical personnel, and advocates. Ensure coordination among various agencies and organizations to create a seamless support system.

### 1.3. Main Activities

The Collin County SART activities are multifaceted and involve collaboration among various professionals and organizations. To effectively contribute to a coordinated and victim-centered response to sexual assault cases our meetings are aimed to foster collaboration among professionals and agencies involved in the process. The group meets bi-monthly to share the following:

- Case Updates:
  - Review and discuss the progress of ongoing sexual assault cases.
  - Share any new information or developments related to investigations.
- Medical Response:
  - Discuss the medical care provided to survivors and any challenges or improvements identified in the process.
  - Address any issues related to forensic evidence collection and preservation.
- Victim Advocacy and Support:
  - Provide updates on the support services offered to survivors.
  - Discuss any specific needs or challenges faced by survivors and how they are being addressed.
- Law Enforcement Collaboration:
  - Review the collaboration with law enforcement agencies on sexual assault cases.
  - Address any issues related to communication, information sharing, or joint investigations.
- Legal Proceedings:
  - Discuss the progress of cases within the legal system.
  - Provide updates on court proceedings and any support needed for survivors in legal contexts.
- Crisis Intervention and Counseling:
  - Share information about counseling and mental health services provided to survivors.
  - Discuss strategies for addressing immediate crisis situations and long-term support.
- Training and Professional Development:
  - Plan and discuss ongoing training sessions for SART members.
  - Address any specific training needs identified during the response to recent cases.
- Community Education and Prevention:
  - Report on recent community outreach and education initiatives.
  - Plan and coordinate upcoming prevention programs and awareness campaigns.
- Data Collection and Analysis:
  - Review and analyze data related to sexual assault cases.
  - Identify trends, challenges, and opportunities for improving the overall response system.
- Policy and Protocol Review:
  - Discuss and update protocols and procedures for responding to sexual assault survivor cases.
  - Address any changes in local or state policies that may impact the response.
- Coordination with Other Agencies:
  - Coordinate with other agencies and organizations involved in the response to sexual assault.
  - Share information about collaborative efforts and address any challenges in inter-agency coordination.
- Feedback and Continuous Improvement:
  - Encourage feedback from team members about recent cases and overall response efforts.
  - Identify areas for improvement and discuss strategies for enhancing the effectiveness of the SART.
- Community Partnerships:
  - Discuss collaborations with community partners and organizations.
  - Explore opportunities for expanding and strengthening the network of support for

- survivors.
- Trauma-Informed Practices:
  - Discuss and reinforce the importance of trauma-informed approaches in all aspects of the response.
  - Share resources and information on best practices in trauma-informed care.

## 2. SART Overview

### 2.1. History

In 2021, the 87th Legislative Assembly passed SB 476, requiring every county in Texas to form an adult Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) to focus on adult survivors of sexual assault.

The Collin County SART covers all of Collin County has been existence long before SB 476 and brings together professionals from different disciplines to collaboratively respond to sexual assault cases. Our mission is to create best practices for sexual assault response, investigation, and prosecution that are survivor centered and work toward the best outcomes possible for those we serve.

- 2001 – Collin County SART was formed between community partners desiring to create a collaborative, survivor-centered, and trauma-informed response to victims of sexual assault and developed the first community response protocols.
- 2010 - The Turning Point took leadership of the SART.
- 2014 – The Turning Point received a VAWA grant for SART Coordination and Law Enforcement Training
- 2015 – Updated agency protocols.
- 2016 – Updated pediatric sexual assault exam guide, SART Protocols, Authorization of SANE exam, SANE response protocols, and the policy for Sexually Assaulted Patients
- 2017 – Created Guidelines for SART Case Review, dispatch protocol for children, and SART response for protocol for Methodist.
- 2019 – Created the Collin County Response protocols
- 2020 – Drafted Memorandum of Understanding between the Partner Agencies of the County Child Sex Trafficking Team
- 2021 – Updated Collin County Response and South Dallas Response protocols and created the LE Accompaniment flowchart
- 2022 – Created the SMU and LE Response protocol, updated the Collin County response protocols
- 2023 – Updated the Collin County Response protocols

### 2.2. Team

Our team is made up of:

- Professionals from local advocacy groups
- Law Enforcement
- Collin County Sheriff's Office
- Forensic Nurses
- Local Hospital Representatives
- District Attorney's Office
- Crime Lab
- Mental Health Providers
- Colleges and Universities

### 2.3. Meetings

The Collin County SART meets the 2nd Tuesday of odd months at 10:00AM CST. Meetings are in-person and rotate between partner and collaborative agency locations.

Members of the SART can propose a meeting location, speaker, or an agenda item for a monthly meeting by notifying the SART manager of their request.

## 2.4. Confidentiality

Sexual Assault Programs are subject to privilege on all written or oral communications with a victim. This is a Texas law that means they cannot share any information about a victim outside of the agency without specific written consent from that victim.

Additionally, any agency receiving funds from Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) or Family Violence Prevention & Services Act (FVPSA) will have confidentiality restrictions and be forbidden from the use of blanket consent forms.

Collin County SART members will maintain the confidentiality of information shared among response team members as required by law and will strive to ensure survivor information is treated with the utmost confidentiality to protect their privacy.

# 3. SART Activities and Trainings

## 3.1. Activities

The Collin County SART meetings are regularly attended by representatives from law enforcement, advocacy, victim services programs, the District Attorney's Office, forensic nurses, forensic laboratories, mental/behavioral health providers, legal advocacy, survivors, and independent participants.

The meeting begins with the reminder of confidentiality among members and the approval of the minutes from the previous month's meeting. Then, new members are introduced and welcomed.

At each meeting, representatives from each agency give data updates and agency updates. This allows the group to keep their pulse on trends or spikes in sexual assault cases, as well as new resources and initiatives that are available to victims and survivors.

Agencies represented include:

- Law Enforcement
  - Carrollton PD
  - Celina PD
  - Frisco PD
  - Lavon PD
  - Little Elm PD
  - Melissa PD
  - Plano PD
  - Collin County Sheriff's Office
- Advocacy Agencies
  - The Turning Point Rape Crisis Center
  - Texas Association Against Sexual Assault
  - Children's Advocacy Center of Collin County
  - Mosaic Family Services
  - Traffic 911
  - Aids Healthcare Foundation
  - The SANE Initiative
- Hospital Systems
  - Baylor Scott and White Healthcare
  - Children's Health First
  - Texas Health Resources
- Collin County District Attorney's Office
- Texas Department of Public Safety Crime Lab
- Universities
  - University of Texas at Dallas

### 3.2. Trainings

Throughout the year, the Collin County SART holds informational training at the meetings. These training courses are conducted by members to foster more interprofessional collaboration. Some of the topics covered are:

- Crime Lab Processes
- Trauma Informed Sexual Assault Response
- Report Writing and Case Preparation Tips
- Forensic Nursing Topics

In addition to the training during the meetings:

- Two large training was offered to the community of sexual violence professionals.
- In 2022, a training on trauma informed interviewing and developing a trauma informed culture within law enforcement was held.
- In 2023, a multi-disciplinary training was held for all the “First responders” of sexual assault. This included emergency nurses, law enforcement, EMS, and dispatchers.

<b>2021</b>	
<b>Total Attendees</b>	<b>Topic</b>
117	Trauma Informed Sexual Assault Response
424	Turning Point/ Courtney's Safe Place Protocols
15	Court Structure and Law Enforcement principals
<b>2022</b>	
<b>Total Attendees</b>	<b>Topic</b>
394	Trauma Informed Sexual Assault Response
446	Sexual Assault Topics and Law Refresher
<b>2023</b>	
<b>Total Attendees</b>	<b>Topic</b>
137	Trauma Informed Sexual Assault Response
99	Sexual Assault Topics and Law
13	Neurobiology of Trauma - Law Enforcement Training

## 4. Data and Findings

### 4.1. Data Importance

Tracking data is important for several reasons and it plays a crucial role in improving the overall response to sexual assault cases. It is essential for continuous improvement, evidence-based decision-making, and enhancing the overall effectiveness of a Sexual Assault Response Team. It helps address the unique needs of survivors, informs preventive strategies, and contributes to a more informed and responsive community approach to sexual assault. All data below reflects within Collin County.

#### 4.2. The Turning Point Forensic Exam and Accompaniment Breakdown

	2021	2022	2023
# of Exam Requests	349	305	338
# of Forensic Exam and Accompaniments	324	284	300
# of Patients Who Declined Services	25	21	38
# of Patients Lost – No Nurse Available	0	0	0
# of Patients – No Advocates Available	0	0	0
Non-Report Totals	75	71	69
Human Trafficking Totals	6	2	6
Overall Forensic Nurse Response Time	55	59	56

#### 4.3 The Turning Point Forensic Exam and Accompaniment Race/Ethnicity Breakdown

Race/Ethnicity	2021	2022	2023
Asian	4	6	12
Black or African American	70	74	78
Hispanic	82	66	75
Multi-Racial	18	10	7
Native American or American Indian or Alaska Native	2	2	2
Native Hawaiian			1
Other Race	4	10	15
Pacific Islander	1	1	4
Race Unknown	13	4	7
White	155	132	137

#### 4.4. The Turning Point Forensic Exam and Accompaniment Age Breakdown

Age	2021	2022	2023
Adolescent	68	54	58
Adult	245	234	253
Pediatric	36	17	27

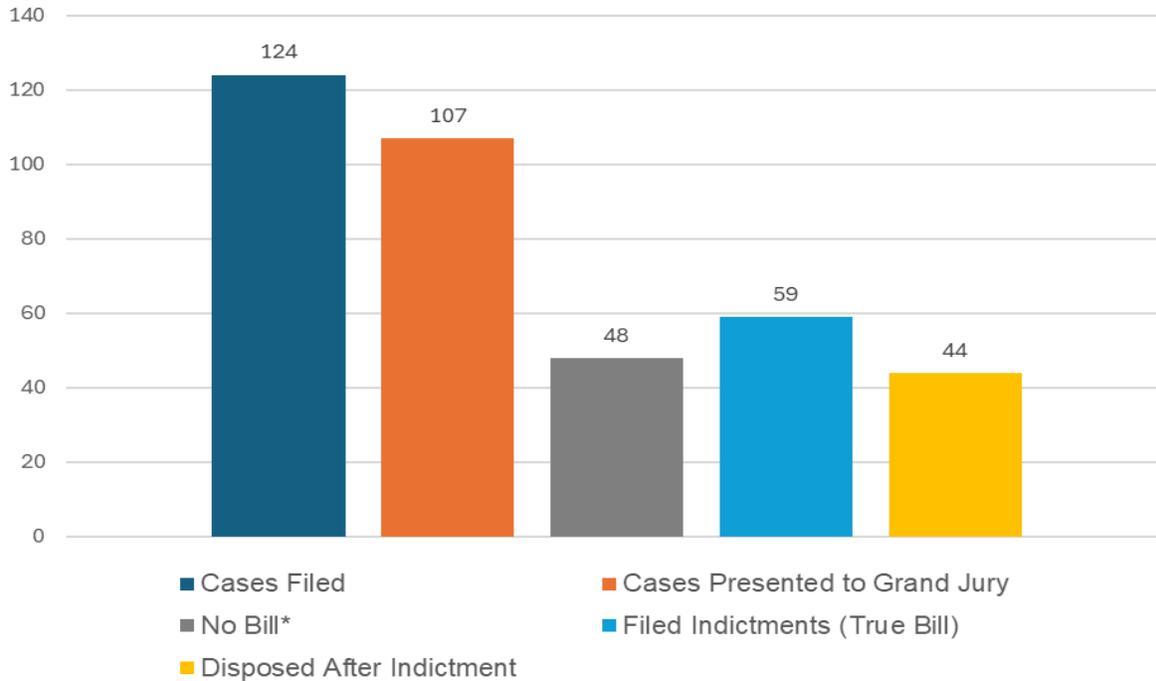
#### 4.5. The Turning Point Forensic Exam and Accompaniment Hospital/Facility Location Breakdown (Collin County)

Hospital/Facility	2021	2022	2023
Baylor Cent Frisco	2	2	4
Baylor Frisco	2	1	1
Baylor McKinney	13	15	18
Baylor Plano	5	5	12
Children's Plano	65	51	66
Courtney's SAFE Place	177	120	90
MC Frisco	6	8	6
MC McKinney	9	18	18
MC Plano	18	20	15
Methodist Richardson			2
Methodist Surgery			2
Other	1	3	4
THR Allen	5	7	8
THR Frisco	6	5	9
THR Plano	15	29	44
THR Prosper			1

#### 4.6. The Turning Point Forensic Exam and Accompaniment Law Enforcement Agency Breakdown (Collin County)

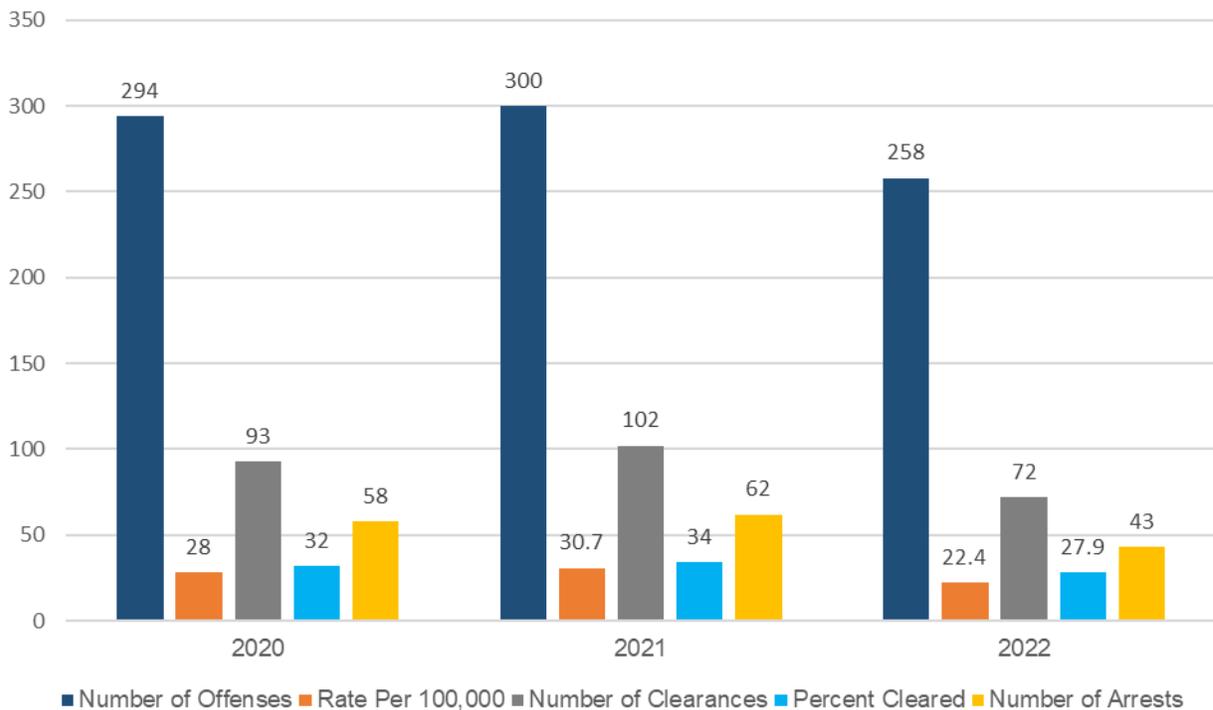
Law Enforcement Agency	2021	2022	2023	Law Enforcement Agency	2021	2022	2023
Addison PD	2	4	1	Lewisville PD			5
Allen PD	9	12	8	Little Elm PD	4	9	16
Anna PD		5	3	Logan County Sheriff			1
Arlington PD	1	1		Mansfield PD			1
Aubrey PD		2		McKinney PD	28	24	22
Austin PD	1			Melissa PD	2	1	1
Bedford PD			1	Mesquite PD	1		1
Carrollton PD	7	16	10	Oak Point PD	1		
Celina PD	2	1	5	Other	9	6	12
Cleburne County Sheriff			1	Parker PD	1		
Collin College PD		1		Plano PD	50	36	40
Collin County Sheriff	25	9	6	Princeton PD	2	3	4
Dallas PD	36	30	39	Prosper PD			1
Denison PD			1	Richardson PD	8	11	6
Denton County Sheriff			1	Rockwall County Sherrif			1
Denton PD	4	1		Rockwall PD			1
Duncanville PD		1		Rowlett PD		2	
Fairview PD	1		1	Royse City PD		1	1
Fannin County Sheriff		1		Sachse PD		1	1
Forney PD	1			Seagoville PD	1		
Fort Worth PD	2	1		Sherman PD	1	1	4
Frisco PD	31	25	19	Texarkana PD	1		
Garland PD	9	4	7	Texas DPS			1
Grand Prairie PD			1	The Colony PD	3	4	4
Grapevine PD			1	Trenton PD			1
Grayson County Sheriff			3	UTD PD	1		
Hill County Sheriff	1			Van Alstyne PD	1		
Hunt County Sheriff	1	1	2	Waxahachie PD		1	
Irving PD		1	2	Wylie PD	9	2	9
Kaufman County Sheriff			1	(blank)		3	1
Keller PD	1						

#### 4.7. District Attorney Breakdown – 9/1/21 to 12/31/23



- \* Included are 40 cases where no arrest warrant based on probable cause was issued prior to submission to the Grand Jury.
- The Collin County District Attorney's Office data is not linear. The data presented above are simply the number of cases received, indicted, and disposed during September 1, 2021 to December 31, 2023.

#### 4.8. Crime by Jurisdiction



\* FBI Crime data was missing Allen from 2021

## 5. The Turning Point Collin County Sexual Assault Protocol\*

The purpose of this response protocol is to ensure coordination between all agencies in Collin County, Texas involved in sexual assault cases to increase the efficacy of response and to minimize survivor traumatization.

### 5.1. Reporting, Investigating, and Prosecuting cases arising from a report of sexual assault.

- Reports of sexual assault will be taken in a timely manner and in accordance with the law enforcement agencies' policies.
- During the investigations, survivors shall be offered the ability to have an advocate present during the initial investigative interview.
- Victim's Liaison should review cases and ensure survivors are being offered resources to assist them through the reporting process.

### 5.2. Interagency information sharing, in accordance with state and federal law, to ensure the timely exchange of relevant information and enhance the response to survivors.

- Agencies will share as much information as possible to facilitate timely and successful outcomes.
- Information shared between agencies should always be considered confidential.

### 5.3. Location and accessibility of sexual assault forensic examinations

- For survivors of sexual assault, forensic examinations can be provided at any SAFE Ready Facility in Collin County facility.
  - Courtney's SAFE Place – Survivors 17 and older (The Turning Point)
    - Are not currently under the influence of intoxicants.
    - Are not in need of emergency hospital services.
    - Are not in need of emergency psychiatric services.
    - Have a safe place to go after discharge.
  - Children's Medical Center - Plano (**Survivors 17 and under only and the preferred provider for pediatric forensic examinations**) (The Turning Point)
  - Baylor S&W – Centennial, Frisco, McKinney, Plano (The Turning Point)
  - Texas Health – Frisco, Plano, Allen (The Turning Point)
  - University of Texas – Dallas: Student Health Center (The Turning Point)
    - For students, staff, and guest of UTD only
  - Medical City – Frisco, McKinney, Plano (TXFNE) \*If the patient is at a Medical City Hospital you will need to call TXFNE for a forensic examination to be completed at these hospitals. \*
- If the pediatric survivor is not yet at a hospital, they will be directed to Children's Medical Center - Plano to avoid unnecessary transfers. Survivors 17 and older may be directed and seen at Courtney's SAFE Place if medically stable.

### 5.4. Information on the availability of and access to medical care when the care is clinically indicated.

- For all sexual assault survivors in need of a forensic examination, contact The Turning Point's 24-hour Hotline at 1-800-886-7273
- ALL FORENSIC NURSES WHO PERFORM FORENSIC EXAMINATIONS FOR SEXUAL ASSAULT PATIENTS MUST BE CERTIFIED BY THE TEXAS – OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OR THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FORENSIC NURSES
- If the survivor walked in without police accompaniment and they are 18 or older, ask if he or she would like to report the assault to the police.
  - If yes, contact the police department of the city in which the assault occurred and notify them you have a sexual assault survivor who would like to report.
- **If the survivor is reporting to the police:** Please have the police department contact

information, sexual assault case number, completed hand-off/communication form, survivor's name, age (date of birth), and clothing size available to give to The Turning Point's forensic nurse/advocate.

- **Non-reporting Forensic Examinations:** Adult survivors (18 and older) have a legal right to a forensic examination without reporting to the police. In this circumstance, no case number or police involvement is required for The Turning Point to dispatch a forensic nurse.
  - The Turning Point's forensic nurse or advocate is available to answer questions regarding reporting if the survivor is not sure.
- **Mandatory Reporting:** If a survivor is 17 or younger, has a disability, or is older than 65 years of age police must be notified.
- **All calls requesting forensic examinations will be connected to the forensic nurse on call.**

## 5.5. Triage and Trauma Assessment

- Once the survivor presents to the Emergency Department and discloses a sexual assault, immediately move them to triage for a primary assessment. Survivors are classified as ESI Level II.
- Do not ask the survivor to speak about the sexual assault. The focus should be on medical needs. DO ask when the assault took place. Acute forensic examinations can be done within 120 hours (5 days) of the assault.
- Make sure to wear gloves while providing trauma assessment. Assess for the following:
  - Strangulation (imaging is recommended)
  - Loss of consciousness
  - Pain or serious injury
  - Threats/safety concerns
  - Determine if the survivor can consent to the forensic examination (mental stability, awake, alert, and oriented to place, person, and time)
- If the survivor has experienced loss of consciousness, strangulation, or has other immediate medical needs, **the Physician needs to assess for life-threatening injuries prior to the forensic nurse arriving.** (CT Scan, other radiology, and/or lab tests).
- ***When possible do not give oral medication to the survivor before the forensic examination to prevent evidence from being lost.***
- ***If the survivor does not require further immediate medical attention, discuss the option of completing the forensic examination at Courtney's SAFE Place with them. If they would like to be discharged to CSP, contact The Turning Point rape crisis center immediately to make an appointment.***
- **The survivor should immediately be placed in a room or designated private area until the advocate and forensic nurse arrive. The survivor should be encouraged not to use the bathroom, change clothing, eat, or drink anything until the forensic examination has been completed.**
- The survivor must remain in the clothing they arrived in and have little contact with others to minimize the risk of evidence being lost or contaminated.
- If a survivor needs immediate medical attention, that takes priority over the forensic examination.

## 5.6. Forensic Examination

- Once the forensic examination has begun, no one should enter the exam room. This is important to the integrity of the evidence and the privacy of the survivor.
- Tip: Consider providing an "Exam in progress" sign for the door.
- **Prophylactic medication:** Once the forensic examination is complete, the following medications could be given.
  - Rocephin 500 mg IM
  - Zithromax 1g PO (if the survivor has compliance issues) or Doxycycline 100 mg BID/7 days PO
  - Zofran ODT 4mg PO
  - Flagyl 2mg PO

- Ella (within 120 hours) or Plan B (within 72 hours) (if pregnancy test negative)
- HIV prophylactic medications or prescription – Truvada 200mg/300mg PO Daily for 28 Days AND Tivicay 50mg PO Daily for 28 days. (if applicable and within 72 hours).
- The survivor is treated prophylactically for sexually transmitted infections per the CDC guidelines.

#### 5.7. After the Forensic Examination:

- Once the forensic examination is completed, the survivor should be moved back to a different room so that the forensic nurse may finish documenting and packing up the kit if possible.
- **It is important that the forensic nurse has privacy away from the survivor to do so to prevent errors.**
- **Final Medical Screening:** If the forensic examination takes place at the hospital, a Physician must complete the final medical screening before the survivor leaves the hospital. This should be focused on medical and not asking the survivor to describe the assault. If there are medical needs other than the forensic examination, the Physician should see the survivor prior to the forensic nurse being called.
- The forensic nurse must be in the same room as the sexual assault kit at all times until the kit has been sealed and transferred to the appropriate police department or evidence locker.
- Evidence Storage: Sexual assault kits and evidence collected for all completed cases by a Turning Point forensic nurse will be stored in the secured evidence locker located at Courtney's SAFE Place within The Turning Point offices: 3325 Silverstone Drive, Plano, Texas, 75093, except for cases completed at Children's Medical Center - Plano and Dallas. The appropriate law enforcement agency will be notified via Track-Kit and by phone within 1-2 days of storage by CSP staff for pick-up. Proper chain of custody protocols will be followed by all personnel releasing evidence. All evidence collected at locations other than Courtney's SAFE Place will be sealed with evidence tape prior to transportation.
- Discharge instructions for the survivor should include The Turning Point's Contact Information: Business Line 972-985-0951 and 24HR Crisis Line 800-886-7273 as well as instructions for follow-up testing and STI screening.
- Every effort should be made to ensure the survivor has a safe place to go after the exam. This includes transportation. This should be a collaborative effort among all personnel to ensure the safety and well-being of the survivor.

#### 5.8. Requirements to ensure survivors are offered access to sexual assault program advocates, as defined by Section 420.003, Government Code

- **An advocate should be present before the forensic examination begins unless the survivor states otherwise to the advocate.**
- The survivor has a legal right to an advocate, and they must bring a resource packet and clothing to the survivor at the hospital.
- **The presence of an Advocate should be offered to the survivor for the initial investigative interview unless the survivor states otherwise to the advocate.**
  - The survivor has the legal right to an advocate during the initial interview.
  - Every effort should be made to accommodate the request for an advocate and agencies should follow policy related to this which has been set out by HB 1172.

#### 5.9. Availability of and access to mental and behavioral health services

- All survivors should be offered access to mental health services.
- Resources will be discussed during the time of discharge in the forensic examination

#### 5.10. Assessment of relevant community trends, including drug-facilitated sexual assault and sex trafficking.

- Annual reports will be compiled to identify SART progress and areas for improvement.
- An ongoing assessment of current community trends will be conducted.

- 5.11. **Case reviews and interagency protocol review process**
- Case reviews will be conducted at SART meetings to include all relevant information necessary to discuss the facts while still maintaining confidentiality.
  - Case reviews will cover general facts and circumstances so that the SART can review the response and continue to develop best practices.
  - If a case review contains any identifying information of the survivor, the survivor will be contacted and permission for a release of this information within the SART will be obtained. The survivor's information will only be used when it is necessary and will not be shared outside of the SART case review process.
- 5.12. **Training**
- Inter-agency training will occur during the SART meetings between members.
  - Training will be focused on the needs of the SART members.
- 5.13. **Conflict management and confidentiality of information shared among response team members.**
- Confidentiality agreements will be read and acknowledged before every SART meeting.
  - All information that identifies a specific survivor will not be discussed unless permission has been obtained from the survivor.
  - When conflicts among members arise, members will remain professional and work toward a resolution.
- 5.14. **Basic Reference Information**
- For any questions, concerns, or assistance in obtaining supplies please feel free to contact The Turning Point's Forensic Nursing Program Manager.
  - Acute forensic examinations WITH evidence collection are within 120 hours of the assault.
  - Non-Acute forensic examinations are over 120 hours.
    - Adult Patients (18 and up) – Should be scheduled with The Turning Point at Courtney's SAFE Place.
    - Adolescent/Pediatric Patients (17 and under) – Must be scheduled with the Reach Clinic at Children's Medical Center Plano.

## 6. Case Review

Sexual assault cases are presented at every meeting to ensure compliance with county-wide response protocols. All agencies are encouraged to bring non-victim identifying cases for review and members discuss generalities of each case and whether or not trauma-informed responses and investigations were demonstrated.

No formal case reviews were conducted this time period as membership were educated on the requirements for proper case reviews.

## 7. Conclusion

The Collin County SART continues to strive toward addressing the issues facing adult survivors of sexual assault. Through strong interprofessional collaboration, the team has been able to create best practices using a trauma informed and survivor-centered approach. The SART cannot succeed without great partners, and we are very fortunate in Collin County to have professionals from many disciplines coming together toward such a worthwhile purpose. The commitment to survivors is to be commended.

As we conclude this year's biennial report, we reflect on the collective achievements and challenges faced by our dedicated Sexual Assault Response Team (SART). Over the past year, our commitment to supporting survivors, enhancing our response protocols, and fostering community resilience has remained unwavering.

We take pride in the progress made and we recognize that our work is ongoing, and challenges persist. The evolving landscape of sexual violence demands our continued vigilance, adaptability, and a commitment to refining our practices. As we face these challenges, we remain resolute in our dedication to continuous improvement, guided by the principles of empathy, trauma-informed care, and survivor-centered approaches.

Looking ahead, for the next phase of our SART development, a case review process that aligns with the legislative requirements will be implemented. This has proven to be a significant challenge and will be one that needs to be addressed in the next evaluation period. We renew our commitment to advocating for policy changes, fostering community education, and working collaboratively to prevent sexual violence. Together, we strive to create a community where survivors are supported, empowered, and heard.

As a united SART, we stand firm in our belief that, through continued collaboration, education, and advocacy, we can contribute to building a safer and stronger community for all.

Submitted February 26, 2024

## 8. Appendix

### Community Cooperative Working Agreement Document

#### Collin County Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) Community Cooperative Working Agreement

*This working agreement is recognized as a cooperative and collaborative commitment between each agency listed, below and is proof of commitment as acknowledged by the signature of each agency's representative.*

**All parties enter into this collaborative working agreement voluntarily in an attempt to better serve the needs of sexual assault survivors in Collin County and the surrounding communities. The Agreement is not legally binding and may be amended at any time in writing with the mutual consent of all the parties. Cancellation of any clause within the Agreement does not result in cancellation of any other clause in the Agreement. Any party may withdraw from the Agreement with thirty (30) days written notice; however, the withdrawal of any party will not result in the nullification of the Agreement nor of any part of the Agreement.**

#### **I. The Turning Point agrees to:**

- A. Provide administrative oversight of the Collin County SART with designated representation at all SART meetings.
- B. Designate a Coordinator to serve as facilitator for the SART.
- C. Maintain a record of all SART meetings and documents.
- D. Support and provide trained Advocates.
- E. Provide forensic medical care by a Forensic Nurse certified by the Texas-OAG and/or the IAFN within Courtney's SAFE Place and all contracted SAFE Ready Facilities when appropriate for the survivor's care.
- F. Demonstrate a forty-five (45) minute to one-hour response time, from the time the call is received to the time the advocate & the Forensic Nurse arrive at the designated healthcare facility.
- G. Instruct the Advocate & the Forensic Nurse to check-in upon arrival/departure.
- H. Provide hotline sexual assault survivors with appropriate healthcare facility choices for a medical assessment and a forensic examination, when requested.
- I. Provide information, emotional support, and crisis intervention for sexual assault survivors and their family members and/or friends at the hospital.
- J. Provide appropriate referrals and follow-up care, consulting with the Social Worker on any areas of concern.
- K. Provide ongoing data to the SART for evaluation.
- L. Coordinate and participate in SART training activities, as determined and supported by the SART.

- M. Provide follow-up intervention, counseling, and advocacy services for the survivors and family members as requested.
- N. Collaborate with law enforcement and the district attorney to meet the survivor's needs regarding crime victims' rights, compensation, and advocacy throughout the investigation and prosecution.
- O. Provide ongoing process improvement information to the coordinator and/or SART.
- P. Provide a process for the survivor and/or family to receive information regarding crime victims' rights, compensation, and the right to advocacy.
- Q. Cooperate with local Law Enforcement to provide the appropriate care to survivors.
- R. Provide a process for notification of law enforcement when a sexual assault survivor presents to the facility.
- S. Provide the survivor with the opportunity to be supported by a trained advocate during their medical/forensic experience and their investigative interview with law enforcement (HB1172).
- T. Maintain confidentiality of any, and all, references to case-specific information.

**II. Collin County Hospitals agree agrees to:**

- A. Provide intervention for the survivor.
- B. Determine if Law Enforcement has been notified and notify when appropriate.
- C. Initiate the call to the county dispatch, The Turning Point, when a sexual assault survivor has arrived and request an Advocate and Forensic Nurse.
- D. Provide the needed space to conduct Forensic Examinations within the Emergency Department.
- E. Provide the necessary triage of the sexual assault survivor by medical personnel.
- F. Work with The Turning Point's Forensic Nurse to determine if care at Courtney's SAFE Place (CSP) is appropriate and provide the necessary information and opportunity for the patient to receive forensic care at CSP.
- G. Provide ongoing feedback, as needed, to the area SART partners.
- H. Develop a strong working relationship with area resources to strengthen the follow-up potential for survivors referred.
- I. Provide appropriate and healing Community resources.
- J. Provide ongoing process improvement information to the Forensic Nursing Program Manager and/or SART.
- K. Appoint a representative for each SART meeting.
- L. Maintain confidentiality of any, and all, references to case-specific information.
- M. Call the appropriate Human Trafficking Agency when there is contact with a survivor of Human Trafficking if Law Enforcement has not already done so.

### **III. University of Texas – Dallas – Student Health Center agrees to:**

- A. Designate a liaison for SART.
- B. Prohibits acts of sexual or gender-based violence and other forms of Prohibited Conduct as defined by University Policy.
- C. Determine which law enforcement agency has jurisdiction over an assault and ensure the agency(ies) have been notified when appropriate.
- D. Initiate the call to the county dispatch, The Turning Point, when a sexual assault survivor has arrived and request an Advocate and Forensic Nurse.
- E. Provide the needed space to conduct Forensic Examinations within the Student Health Center.
- F. Provide the necessary triage of the sexual assault survivor by medical personnel.
- G. Work with The Turning Point's Forensic Nurse to determine if care at Courtney's SAFE Place (CSP) is appropriate and provide the necessary information and opportunity for the patient to receive forensic care at CSP.
- H. Provide ongoing feedback, as needed, to the area SART partners.
- I. Develop a strong working relationship with area resources to strengthen the follow-up potential for survivors referred.
- J. Provide appropriate and healing Community resources.
- K. Provide ongoing process improvement information to the Forensic Nursing Program Manager and/or SART.
- L. Appoint a representative for each SART meeting.
- M. Maintain confidentiality of any, and all, references to case-specific information.
- N. Call the appropriate Human Trafficking Agency when there is contact with a survivor of Human Trafficking if Law Enforcement has not already done so.

### **IV. The Collin County District Attorney's Office agrees to:**

- A. Designate a liaison to serve as a resource person for the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART).
- B. Provide ongoing data for cases that have gone to prosecution.
- C. Use Forensic Nurses as witnesses during sexual assault trials, as needed.
- D. Provide reasonable notification of upcoming trials to the Forensic Nurse who will testify.
- E. Meet with Forensic Nurse prior to judicial proceedings to review the case.
- F. Maintain communication and contact with the SART and establish a method for follow-up on the disposition of cases.
- G. Participate in SART training activities, including law enforcement officials, other attorneys, and Forensic Nursing candidates.
- H. Participate in training that will increase the Forensic Nurse's ability to provide clear and

defined testimony as an expert witness.

- I. Provide ongoing process improvement information to the Forensic Nursing Program Manager and/or SART.
- J. Maintain confidentiality of any, and all, references to case-specific information.

**V. Law Enforcement Agency Agrees to:**

- A. Designate a liaison for the SART.
- B. Refer appropriate sexual assault survivors to Courtney's SAFE Place or other participating Collin County healthcare facilities for medical/forensic treatment.
- C. Provide on-location help to survivors, giving them the options for treatment.
- D. Provide a case number or incident report, as needed, for a forensic examination.
- E. Provide follow-up information and education to the Forensic Nurse for any cases that are not approved for a forensic examination and bring summary discussion to SART.
- F. Receive forensic evidence that has been collected from the survivor and/or suspect for approved forensic examinations.
- G. Report back to the Forensic Nursing Program Manager any suggestions from the Crime Lab concerning evidence collection, documentation, or packaging or sealing of the evidence, and bring summary discussion to SART.
- H. Follow law enforcement's established protocol regarding evidence transmission and storage for approved forensic examinations.
- I. Maintain communication and contact with the SART.
- J. Participate in SART training activities that will enhance the knowledge of the community at large, Law Enforcement, the District Attorney's staff, Forensic Nurses, or Forensic Nurse candidates.
- K. Provide data concerning sexual assaults to the SART.
- L. Provide ongoing process improvement information to the Forensic Nursing Program Manager and/or SART.
- M. Offer the survivor the opportunity to be supported by a trained advocate during their investigative interview with law enforcement (HB1172).
- N. Coordinate with the local advocacy program to arrange for an advocate to be present at all investigative interviews should the survivor request such presence.
- O. Maintain confidentiality of any, and all, references to case-specific information.
- P. Call the appropriate Human Trafficking Agency when there is contact with a survivor of Human Trafficking.

**VI. DPS Crime Lab agrees to:**

- A. Designate a liaison for the SART.
- B. Ensure the proper handling, proper custody, and proper control of all collected evidence,

with particular attention paid to collecting evidence regarding drug-facilitated assaults.

- C. Assist SART Coordinator in trainings and presentations related to evidence collection.
- D. Provide SART members with timely updates and best practices in the collection, handling, and proper custody, and proper controls of all evidence collected.
- E. Provide ongoing process improvement information to the Forensic Nursing Program Manager and/or SART.
- F. Provide data concerning sexual assaults to the SART.
- G. Maintain confidentiality of any, and all, references to case-specific information.

**VII. The Forensic Nurses agree to:**

- A. Gain initial CA-SANE and CP-SANE Certification through an OAG-approved program within the time allotted by the OAG and/or SANE-A and SANE-P Certification through the International Association of Forensic Nurses.
- B. Maintain CA-SANE AND CP-SANE AND/OR SANE-A and SANE-P Certification without lapse in certification.
- C. Attend current topics for Forensics, specific to Adult and Pediatric Sexual Assault Forensic Examinations.
- D. Demonstrate a one (1) hour response, from the time of the call is received to the time the Forensic Nurse arrives to the designated healthcare facility.
- E. Provide consistency in the forensic examination of survivors.
- F. Follow established guidelines for maintaining chain of custody for evidence collected.
- G. Properly prepare for upcoming judicial proceedings.
- H. Meet with the District Attorney to review the cases prior to judicial proceedings.
- I. Maintain contact with the District Attorney's Office when a case is pending or in process.
- J. Notify the District Attorney's Office of address and/or telephone number changes.
- K. Maintain contact with the law enforcement agency and the Turning Point for case review.
- L. Agree to meet regularly as a Forensic Team to discuss quality of care, peer and procedural review, and updates.
- M. Participate in SART meetings and SART-sponsored training activities.
- N. Help with interpretation of data and improvement process.
- O. Maintain confidentiality of any, and all, references to case-specific information.
- P. Call the appropriate Human Trafficking Agency when there is contact with a survivor of Human Trafficking if Law Enforcement and the hospital have not already done so.

**VIII. LifePath Systems agrees to:**

- A. Designate a liaison for the SART.
- B. Work collaboratively with other SART partners in determining the proper response to

survivors of sexual assault.

- C. Provide appropriate mental and behavioral health resources or sexual assault survivors.
- D. Participate in SART meetings and SART-sponsored training activities.
- E. Provide training and best practices for working with child survivors of sexual assault to SART.
- F. Maintain confidentiality of any, and all, references to case-specific information.

**IX. Children's Advocacy Center of Collin County agrees to:**

- A. Designate a liaison for the SART.
- B. Work collaboratively with other SART partners in determining the proper response to child survivors of sexual assault.
- C. Provide appropriate collaborative partners with a 24/7 on-call schedule designating the appropriate after-hours staff for forensic interviews and law enforcement response.
- D. Provide proper referrals and follow-up to child sexual assault survivors.
- E. Participate in SART meetings and SART-sponsored training activities.
- F. Provide training and best practices for working with child survivors of sexual assault to SART.
- G. Maintain confidentiality of any, and all, references to case-specific information.

**X. Mosaic agrees to:**

- A. Designate a liaison for the SART.
- B. Work collaboratively with other SART partners in determining the proper response to Human Trafficking Survivors 18 years of age and older.
- C. Provide proper resources, referrals, and follow-up for Human Trafficking Survivors 18 years of age and older.
- D. Participate in SART meetings and SART-sponsored training activities.
- E. Provide training and best practices for working with Human Trafficking Survivors 18 years of age and older to SART.
- F. Maintain confidentiality of any, and all, references to case-specific information.

**XI. Traffick 911 agrees to:**

- A. Designate a liaison for the SART.
- B. Work collaboratively with other SART members in determining the proper response to Human Trafficking Survivors 17 years of age and younger.
- C. Provide appropriate collaborative partners with a 24/7 on-call schedule designating the appropriate staff for hospital response, when needed.
- D. Provide proper resources, referrals, and follow-up for Human Trafficking Survivors 17 years of age and younger.
- E. Participate in SART meetings and SART-sponsored training activities.

- F. Provide training and best practices for working with Human Trafficking Survivors 17 years of age and younger to SART.
- G. Maintain confidentiality of any, and all, references to case-specific information.