



Alianza Latina en contra la Agresión Sexual
(Latina alliance against sexual violence)

Established in 2004, by Arte Sana - the Alianza Latina en contra la Agresión Sexual (ALAS) is the first national Latina-led membership network of victim advocates working to address and prevent sexual violence. Through collaborative efforts and cyber activism, ALAS promotes the leadership of Latina victim advocates and develops models, resources and policies to empower communities and eliminate access barriers for survivors. ALAS honors the diversity of the Latin@ culture by respecting the similarities and differences of our languages and histories.

Since 2004, ALAS members have strived to inform victim advocates of the unmet needs and particular issues facing our growing communities. The following is a summary of position statement recommendations on various issues that affect Latin@ outreach and advocacy. The complete original documents are also available on this page along with a link to learn more about ALAS.

"Eliminating Barriers to Services for Latina/o Survivors of Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence" (2004)

Eight recommendations from the original ALAS position statement:

1. Work to assure that staffing patterns adequately reflect the demographics of the population being served.
2. Agencies should include a specific description of the bilingual services offered in the organization's brochures and/or website.
3. Establish criteria for measuring an agency's level of bilingual services.
4. Promote multicultural inclusion within an agency's board of directors.
5. Respect diversity within diversity and dialect variance issues within the Latino/a community by incorporating language accessibility and cultural competency into all mandated staff and volunteer training.
6. Earmark certain funds for second-language materials, bilingual staff, interpreters, etc.
7. All program staff, substitutes, and volunteers (*not just Spanish-speaking staff and volunteers*) should receive training in victim's language rights and in how to advocate for those rights.
8. All program staff, substitutes, and volunteers should be trained in how to work with an interpreter.

An URGENT CALL to address the National Shortage of Latina Victim Advocates

2007 ALAS Position Statement

In order to deconstruct the systemic exclusion of Latino communities in anti-sexual violence efforts, there must be a consolidated national effort to support the retention of Latina victim advocates and the development of culturally competent and linguistically appropriate programs and materials.

Victim advocates, coalition staff and policy makers need to recognize that Latinas and Latinos are not a new segment of the U.S. population, for we are the offspring of both the original residents and colonizers of this continent. We have contributed to the development of this nation, are here to stay, and as a growing segment of underserved survivors of sexual and intimate partner violence, we deserve victim services in whatever language we choose or need to speak.

We need more than just good intentions for the Latino/a Community. The health and human rights of millions are at stake. As Latina victim advocates and allies we urge the following immediate actions to help address the shortage of culturally competent Latina/o victim advocates:

1. Include bilingual/bicultural staff, programs and materials as permanent budget areas in your grant applications.
2. Honor translation and interpreter services accordingly, rather than just adding them as specialized skills onto jobs descriptions.
3. Work to also engage diverse Latina/o communities in our work rather than just assist them as victims.
4. Take proactive steps to eliminate tokenism of all advocates of color in victim services.