

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.vera.org/blog/pledging-to-end-violence-against-people-with-disabilities>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

Bridging the Gapthe [Center on Victimization and Safety](#)'s second national conference on sexual and domestic violence against people with disabilities was a resounding success. Close to 300 people from diverse backgrounds from around the country attended the gathering in Louisville Kentucky on October 31 November 1. Advocates, first responders, policymakers, and others came together to learn, exchange ideas, and, most important, collaborate in their efforts to end violence against people with disabilities.

At the conference, there was a palpable sense of momentum toward reaching this goal. In addition to the wealth of energy and the deep commitment expressed by attendees, we heard countless stories of positive change and steps big and small toward a world where people with disabilities live free from violence.

This effort is where it is today thanks to the tremendous dedication of those who have come before us. Its future is guided by those who are tirelessly working today to continue these past efforts and to chart a way forward. And, based on what we experienced at Bridging the Gap, we have every reason to be hopeful. We witnessed an unprecedented number of self-advocates people with disabilities speaking up for themselves leading the charge to end sexual and domestic violence against people with disabilities.

Together, these advocates and their allies participated in the [Clothesline Project](#). This effort bears witness to the experiences of survivors of sexual and domestic violence through T-shirts created by survivors. As far as we know, this is the first time the project focused on people with disabilities who are survivors. The shirts form a powerful visual reminder of the violence people with disabilities experience. This display is an important tool for making the often invisible yet devastating acts of violence against people with disabilities visible, a necessary step to sparking collective action. We thank the contributors and look forward to growing this exhibit and displaying it across the country.

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