

# Vera Institute of Justice

## Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

**<https://www.vera.org/publications/partnering-with-community-sexual-assault-response-teams-a-guide-for-local-community-confinement-and-juvenile-detention-facilities>**

## Policy Issue Resources

### Publication

Community-based sexual assault response teams, or SARTs, are considered a best practice for addressing the needs of victims and holding perpetrators accountable. The federal standards for implementing the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) require correctional facilities to develop a coordinated, victim-centered response to sexual assault so that victims in confinement settings including prisons, jails, lockups, and community confinement and juvenile facilities get the services and care they need. This guide, also available at [PREAguide.org](https://www.vera.org/publications/partnering-with-community-sexual-assault-response-teams-a-guide-for-local-community-confinement-and-juvenile-detention-facilities), is designed to assist administrators of local community confinement and juvenile detention facilities with the task of developing coordinated response procedures and partnering with community SARTs. It is based on the experiences and lessons learned from the Sexual Assault Response Teams in Corrections Project, a multi-year pilot program funded by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime, that Vera implemented in Johnson County, Kansas.

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) of 2013 sent a strong message that sexual assault should never be part of someone's penalty for committing a crime. Partnerships with SARTs can help facilities implement coordinated, victim-centered response policies and procedures that meet key requirements of the PREA standards.

Correctional facilities can benefit from partnerships with SARTs, which have expertise and practice with coordinating actions among first responders from different disciplines when sexual assault occurs in the community.

The guide discusses four phases of collaboration between SARTs and confinement facilities: gathering information and planning; working with the SART; incorporating a SART approach in facility policies; and training.

The guide offers a practical, streamlined plan for responding to sexual assault in a coordinated, victim-centered way that maintains facility safety and can be adapted to other confinement settings.

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