



Overview of Services



Our Mission

To respond, educate, and advocate to end sexual violence.



-- Preface-1971

City Swept by Delirium

Our estimate put the crowd at 28,000. Without question, it was the largest crowd to join the downtown since 1902 when the Pirates whipped the New York Yankees in the World Series.

Police said several rapes



Sections from a Pittsburgh Post-Gazette article from October 18th, 1971

October 18, 2021, by Richard Cook, Content Provided by The Odd, Mysterious & Fascinating History of Pittsburgh

The Need for Rape Crisis Prevention was recognized

In response to the rapes which occurred during the celebration of the Pittsburgh Pirates win over the Baltimore Orioles in the 1971 World Series, the National Organization for Women (NOW) created a task force on rape which would soon become PAAR.

1972 --



President Bittigh Discusses the early days of PAAR



The PAAR logo (long time 1972)

PAAR was Founded

PAAR was officially established as Pennsylvania's first rape crisis center and one of the earliest rape crisis centers in the country. During PAAR's first two years, the organization was membership and volunteer-driven providing only a 24-hour helpline and medical and legal advocacy.

-- 1974

Proposal for A Women's Rape Crisis Center

1980



Illustration found in the October 1980 issue of PAAR magazine.

PAAR & The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania

PAAR challenged the legal system and fought for the privacy rights of all rape victims. PAAR's Executive Director Ann Pride refused to turn over client records and was held in contempt of court. On appeal, the case made its way to the State Supreme Court, resulting in the Pennsylvania State Legislature passing the first law in the nation recognizing total confidentiality in communications between victims and rape crisis counselors, known as the Rape Shield Law.

1990



Picture of early residence of 81 S Nineteenth Street

New Home Project Created a Place for Survivors

Formerly an abandoned church, 81 South Nineteenth Street was purchased as PAAR's first permanent home. Drastic renovations took place throughout the year, and in 1991, PAAR Southside became open to the public.

2010

Early Intervention Services



Early Intervention Services are embedded in all we do –

- A core mission at PAAR is to support those who have been sexually assaulted and to help them reach a more stable and healed state of being:
 - By reducing the negative impacts of sexual assault, including PTSD; housing instability; and STIs, survivors are at lower risk for all negative health outcomes
 - Survivors of sexual trauma are a population at higher risk of contracting HIV and who greatly benefit from sexual health literacy .
 - Clients with HIV and a history of sexual assault have connected trauma and can deeply benefit from comprehensive, trauma-informed support



Quantifying sexual trauma and HIV



The early intervention services at PAAR specifically reach at-risk populations –

- 70% of individuals sexually assaulted or raped are **between the ages of 12 and 34**
 - Of the clients served by PAAR, nearly **50%** are between the ages of 12 and 35
 - **70%** of survivors in the First Steps Program are between age 14 and 35
 - This same age range (13 – 34) accounts for appx. **50%** of HIV diagnoses
- An individual is 3x more likely to be living with HIV **if they are incarcerated**
 - PAAR serves appx. **154** incarcerated survivors per year
 - The intersection of **age and incarceration**: the age group in the United States most likely to be arrested is 26 to 35
- 580,466 individuals were **unhoused** in the United States in 2020 – and 26% of those individuals were under the age of 24
 - **60%** of survivors in the First Steps Program are experiencing housing instability
 - When we meet many of these clients, they are engaged in or considering engaging in survival sex to have a place to stay.

Quantifying sexual trauma and HIV



- **Individuals with a disability** are twice as likely to experience sexual trauma
 - 28 of 83 survivors in the First Steps Program disclosed their disability status – of those, **68%** reported a disability
 - **Bidirectional impact** – individuals with a disability are more likely to be diagnosed with HIV .. and individuals living with HIV are more likely to have a disability
- **47%** of all transgender people have been sexually assaulted at some point in their lives – and these numbers are even higher for trans people of color, those who have engaged in sex work, been homeless, or have a disability
 - **appx. 2/3** of Black Transgender Women are living with HIV
- **22%** of Black women and **14.5%** of Hispanic women report experiencing rape in their lifetime
 - 69 of 83 survivors in the First Steps Program disclosed their race/ethnicity – of those, **44%** identified as a minority
 - **75%** of new HIV diagnoses are among racial and ethnic minorities

Impact of programming



- PTSD impacts appx. 4.3% of women and 1.7% of men in the United States – the estimated prevalence of PTSD among **people living with HIV** ranges from **35% to 65%**
- **Survivors of sexual trauma** with a PTSD diagnosis have **76x** the normal rate of HIV infection/transmission

Engaging in services with PAAR –

1 helps survivors know their status

2 reduces the risk of a survivor contracting HIV

and

3 reduces the prevalence of PTSD among people living with HIV



Sexual Health is an umbrella that includes –

- Emotional wellbeing
- Mental wellbeing
- Social wellbeing
- Education
- Access to resources and health care



*the ability to choose
safe sex*





Overview of PAAR Teams and Services



Victim Response Team



The Helpline

PAAR's Helpline is **available 24/7** by calling 1-866-363-7273 / sending a text message / or joining an online chat at www.paar.net

Services

- Confidential information and support / space to debrief and process
- Developing self-care practices, coping skills, and grounding techniques
- Crisis intervention, safety planning, and emergency case management
- Designated lines – *incarcerated survivors; human trafficking; hospital / police; Spanish-speaking callers*
- Complete initial intake and referral to PAAR programs/services





Crisis and Options Counseling in response to a recent victimization, triggering event, or a crisis related to the victimization

- crisis management and stabilization
- coping skills and grounding techniques
- safety planning
- emergency case management
- “options counseling” and victim’s rights information
- information and referral

Medical Advocacy

- Accompaniment in the hospital setting
- Address basic needs – clothing, transportation, shelter, safety planning
- Provide information about survivor rights and options, including anonymous reporting, the Forensic Medical Exam, and evidence collection
- Coordinate response with medical personnel and police



Advocacy and Accompaniment



Advocacy and Accompaniment in various settings

- Navigating medical care, including hospital and clinic-based settings, follow-up testing services, and access to medication
- Making an **initial report to police** and navigating an investigation
- **Accompaniment in civil, criminal, and juvenile court proceedings**
- Assistance with safety planning and protection orders/PFAs/SVPOs
- Advocacy in the university misconduct or Title IX process, including accompaniment to meetings, hearings, and proceedings
- Support for survivors at Allegheny County Jail/PREA line
- “Procedural services” – Victim’s Compensation Program, offender status notification, victim impact statement assistance, address confidentiality program, coordination with the Office of the Victim Advocate

Community based work



PAAR provides community-based “Office Hours” for immediate access to options counseling, crisis counseling, and advocacy –

Community locations –

- **Homewood** @ the Community Engagement Center
- **Mon Valley Region** @ the Human Services Center

College/University locations –

- Point Park University
- University of Pittsburgh, available to Oakland area universities

PAAR in the Mon Valley

human services center mon valley

2nd Floor • 519 Penn Ave
Turtle Creek, PA 15145

Schedule:
Monday: 9:00am - 1:00pm
Tuesday: 9:00am - 4:00pm
Thursday: 9:00am - 1:00pm

PAAR services are available in the community! You can meet with PAAR in the Human Services Center, no appointment required.

Services Include:

- ✓ Immediate, in-person support for those impacted by sexual-based trauma
- ✓ Information about your rights and options, including the reporting process
- ✓ Connection to advocacy, counseling services, and support groups
- ✓ Information about how to support a survivor in your life
- ✓ Information about other resources and referrals

PAAR services are confidential and available at no cost to you

HELPLINE | Chat Online at paar.net
Call/Text: 1-866-365-7273

PAAR
PITTSBURGH ACTION AGAINST RAPE

Serving every student, on every campus - right here in Oakland

PAAR Office Hours Oakland Neighborhood

Stop in during Office Hours to access:

- Immediate, in-person support for those impacted by sexual-based violence
- Information about your options and rights, including the reporting process and “anonymous reporting”
- Connection to advocacy, counseling services, and support groups
- How to support a survivor in your life
- Information about other resources and referrals

LOCATION
Floor 31 at the Cathedral of Learning
Every Wednesday • 10:00am - 4:30pm
ANY University/College student can drop-in

SCHEDULE
Every Wednesday • 10:00am - 4:30pm
ANY University/College student can drop-in

CONTACT
Office Hours are “drop-in” - no appointment required
For more information, call/text PAAR’s confidential Helpline at 1-866-365-7273

College Student’s Virtual Support Group

This is a closed processing group for current undergraduate college students who have experienced sexual trauma.

Scan QR code for group details and registration information.
Email Katie at katie@paar.net for questions and details.

HELPLINE | Chat online at paar.net | Call/Text: 1-866-365-7273



First Steps Program

Client Navigation Department: intake



1ST CONTACT

Client calls PAAR asking for counseling services.



ETO PROFILE

ETO Profile is created, Initial Intake is complete, CIA Availability is obtained. Childline as needed.



CLIENT INTAKE ASSESSMENT

CIA is scheduled & complete during a virtual call to determine PAAR as appropriate level of care. Referrals sent.



WAITLIST

If appropriate, client is placed on waitlist depending on availability.



SCHEDULING

Clients are scheduled as appointments open based on availability.



Referrals - Immediate Support:

- Advocacy
- Case Management
- Walk-in Wednesday
- Community-based resources

First Steps Program



“The fundamental states of recovery are:

- Establishing safety
- Reconstructing the trauma story
- Restoring the connection between survivors and their community.”



- Judith Lewis Herman in *Trauma and Recovery*

The First Steps Program is designed to help clients in active crisis reach the step of **establishing safety** and **finding a sense of stability** so that they can move forward in their healing process.

The First Steps Program also aims to help triage clients who call PAAR for counseling but are in a state of more intense crisis by serving them as quickly as possible.

First Steps Program



The **Client Intake Assessment** will determine if a client is in active crisis, or if they have a more immediate need for stabilization – this prompts a referral to the First Steps Program, which consists of two services: **case management** and **counseling**

Case Management – appx 3 – 6 months

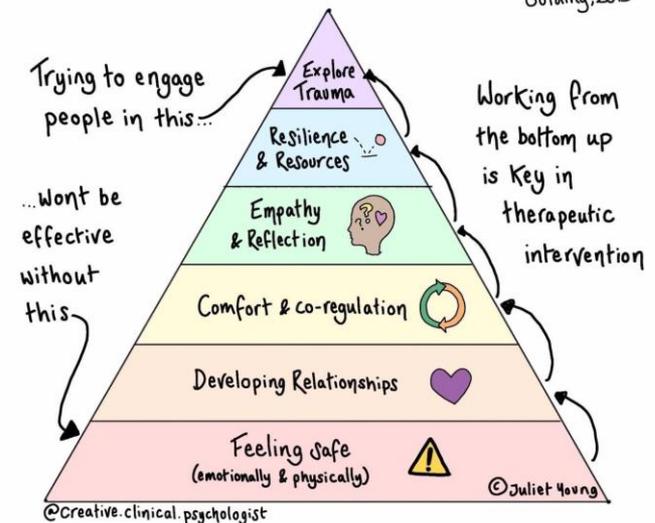
- To identify goals that may be inhibiting the client's ability to focus on healing (housing; food insecurity; transportation; unemployment)

Counseling – 12 sessions

- Focused on developing grounding skills and establishing safety
- Unlike trauma processing therapy, there is less focus on the details of the traumatic event and more focus on the here and now
- Clients may continue into trauma processing therapy with PAAR

Therapeutic Needs Hierarchy

Golding, 2015



First Steps Program: Walk-in Wednesday



On Wednesdays, staff are available for the community to access PAAR without an appointment. Walk-in services include -

- information about PAAR services
- emergency needs including food, hygiene items, and clothing
- crisis and supportive counseling
- short-term case management goals
- connection to community resources and providers



Allies for Health + Wellbeing -

- On Wednesdays, PAAR is a testing location for Allies
- Clients and community members can receive free, rapid screening for HIV, HepC, Syphilis, Chlamydia, and Gonorrhea



Clinical Services

short-term and intensive trauma therapy, utilizing evidence-based treatment models

The Clinical Team



- Therapists (LSW, LCSW, LPC); the Interim Director of Clinical Services; and the Supervisor of Clinical Services, with a maximum caseload of 24 clients per week
- PAAR uses time-limited, trauma-focused treatment models over a period of appx. 6 to 9 months, extending up to 1 year or more if needed

Treatment Models and Services –

- Adult Counseling: CPT and EMDR
- Child and Family Counseling: TF-CBT, EMDR, and SMART
- Support Groups:
 - Coping Strategies for Trauma Group
 - Men’s Support Group
 - Trauma-informed Yoga Class



Trauma Processing Therapy



Clients referred to Trauma Processing Therapy at PAAR must meet the following criteria –

- Client has presented concerns related to sexual trauma
- Client has adequate support and resourcing skills to engage in trauma processing
- Client has identified strengths and self-care practices to help them engage in trauma processing therapy
- Client may have completed the First Steps Program and meets the above criteria
- Client may have been assessed at the initial CIA to meet the above criteria and is directly referred to trauma processing therapy

Most clients on the “waiting list” are waiting for specialized services. There is **no waiting list to receive services at PAAR including support groups, walk-in services, crisis counseling, advocacy, and the Helpline.



SMART

Sensory Motor Arousal Regulation Treatment



SMART Modality



SMART – Sensory Motor Arousal Regulation Treatment

- An evidence-based practice for treating children and adolescents who have experienced trauma
- SMART goals:
 - Strengthen emotional regulation in the body
 - Allow for embodied processing of traumatic experiences
 - Facilitate attachment building between youth and caregivers
- Achieved using multi-sensory equipment:
 - Vestibular
 - Proprioceptive
 - Tactile





PAAR's Project RISE addresses the unique and practical needs of those who experience commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking with trauma-informed services to meet them where they are on their road to growth and healing through our **Drop-In Center Services** and **Community Outreach**.



Prevention & Education Department

In the Beginning...



Education Programs were:

- Risk Reduction focused on “victim” behavior
- Scare Tactics
- Good Touch / Bad Touch

Pros:

- Basic knowledge
- Basic Safety Tips

Cons:

- Victim Blaming
- Did not look at preventing perpetration
- Made children responsible for preventing behaviors
- Excluded the community (peers) from responsibility for prevention

The Public Health Approach to Sexual Violence

Primary



Before an act of sexual violence occurs to prevent violent behaviors; includes interventions that change rape culture

Secondary



Identify those at increased risk of victimization and perpetration and immediately after sexual assault to prevent short-term, negative effects

Tertiary



After sexual assault with perpetrators to prevent recidivism

OR

After sexual assault with survivors to reduce long-term, negative effects

Educational Programs



Prevention and Education programs include –

- K-12 programming
- College programming
- Coaching Boys into Men
- Project Last Call
- Parents in the Know
- Men in the Know
- Programming covers various topics including:
 - Healthy Relationships
 - Boundaries
 - Bystander intervention
 - Consent

**all programs are age-appropriate, incorporate skill-based activities, and occur in multiple sessions over a period of time*



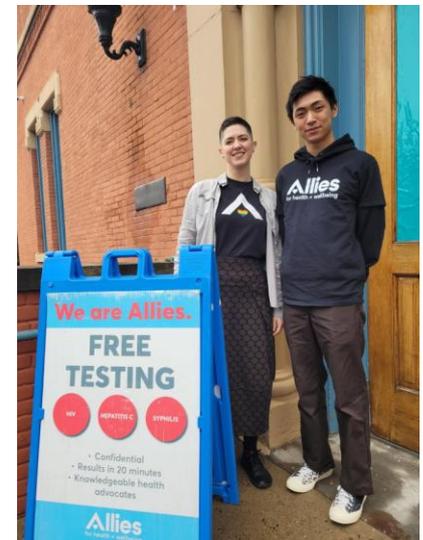


Early Intervention Services: a year in review

Program Data



- **Walk-in Wednesday** **242 individuals**
- **On-site Testing with Allies** **77 individuals**
21 were current PAAR clients
- **Clinical Intake Assessment Appointments** **176 individuals**
Received sexual health literacy
- **Accompaniment in the hospital setting** **267 individuals**



Community Outreach and Engagement Highlights



- Tabling at **OUTrageous Bingo** – January, June, and December
- Presentation on Trauma and Sexual Violence, Shepard Wellness
- Tabling at Pittsburgh Pride; OUTfest; the Child Maltreatment Conference, and Proud Haven events
- Discussion series on consent and safe sex, CAPA High School
- Education on how to respond to disclosures, area colleges/universities
- Site Visits at Macedonia FACE, WPIC, MAAETC, Bethlehem Haven, and the 412 Youth Zone



PAAR Group Services



- LGBTQ+ Support Group
- Pride at Positive Pathways
- Allegheny County Jail: Women's Pod
- Allegheny County Jail: The Diversionary Housing Unit
- Men's Support Group
- Coping Strategies for Trauma Group
- Trauma Processing 50+ Group
- Men's Hiking Group
- Sojourner House Moms Group
- Holy Family Group
- Garden Home Ministries
- Community Correction Center
- Passages to Recovery
- Trauma-informed Yoga



Client case study



- **Brea called PAAR requesting counseling to address her past sexual assault by a family member –**
 - Following the Clinical Intake and Assessment, Brea was placed in the First Steps Program due to severe PTSD-related symptoms and concerns for unsafe sexual behaviors
 - Prior to beginning services, Brea was engaging in unprotected sex with 7 sexual partners as a way to cope with her PTSD symptoms
 - While in counseling, Brea worked on impulse control, coping skills, and received sexual health education – she graduated from the First Steps Program and began Trauma Processing Therapy
 - Brea now has only 2 sexual partners, uses protection and other safe sex practices, and is regularly receiving STI and HIV testing

Client case study



- **Maria was connected with PAAR in an area emergency room, where she completed the forensic medical exam –**
 - Maria was escaping a trafficking situation and was unfamiliar with the Pittsburgh area
 - Maria is deaf, in a wheelchair, and has a service animal
 - From the hospital, Maria came to PAAR's office and worked with staff on finding accessible shelter and planning her relocation to stay with a family member out of state

- **Lee was referred by the Allegheny County Jail after testing positive for HIV while incarcerated –**
 - Lee is navigating the criminal justice system with the help of an advocate from PAAR, after deciding to prosecute the former partner who sexually assaulted her
 - Following her release from jail, Lee sought treatment in a rehabilitation center, and is now in and out of incarceration throughout Pennsylvania
 - Lee regularly lapses in care related to her HIV diagnosis, but maintains connection to PAAR. We continually work with her to stay engaged in HIV care.

Sexual Trauma + Preventative Care



Emergency Rooms provide critical preventative care including STI prophylaxis, PEP, and emergency contraception – and address barriers in access

- Historically, hospitals provided 1x dose of STI prophylaxis + 28-day course of PEP **in the ER** to address barriers in access, adherence, and confidentiality
- Revised recommendations – *CDC STI Treatment Guidelines (2021)* - required hospitals to adjust procedure
- in Allegheny County, this impacted how providers in the ER and outpatient pharmacies can **meet the needs of survivors:**
 - Removed 1x dose and “to go packs” of medication
 - Requires access to a pharmacy, often within 24 hours of discharge
 - Accessing prescription medications is cost prohibitive; individual may be uninsured or unable to use insurance due to safety / privacy
 - A survivor’s ability to navigate barriers and adhere to the timeline is impacted by trauma, disrupted functioning, and lack of sleep



Sexual Trauma and Preventative Care

Health implications



Survivors are more likely to lapse in their treatment – and less likely to access follow-up testing services

- Reduced access to preventative care increases the importance of follow-up testing and care, despite knowledge that survivors engage at a very low rate:
 - Lapse in treatment leaves survivors unprotected from potential STI / HIV exposure during the assault
 - Without testing, survivors are unaware of their status
 - Rates of STI and HIV diagnosis in Pennsylvania have consistently increased, 2020 – 2023
 - Additional health issues could develop that remain undetected

| <u>indicator</u> | <u>Year</u> | <u>Cases</u> | <u>Change</u> |
|--------------------------------|-------------|--------------|---|
| Chlamydia | 2023 | 54,547 |  *compared to 2020 |
| Gonorrhea | 2023 | 18,732 |  |
| Primary and Secondary Syphilis | 2023 | 1,178 |  |
| HIV diagnosis | 2023 | 921 |  |

CDC – Pennsylvania (2020 – 2023) [AtlasPlus - Charts](#)

Katzman and Neu (2025) – *Updates on Testing, Treatment, and Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections in the United States*

Health literacy by SANE's



Wellness kits -

- Developed in collaboration with local SANE's - provided to survivors at the time of discharge in the emergency department

planning follow-up care

| | Timeframe | Timeframe | Timeframe | Timeframe |
|----------------------------------|---|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| STTI testing without prophylaxis | 2 - 4 weeks | 3 months | 6 months | |
| STI testing with prophylaxis | | | | |
| HIV testing with PEP | Receive remaining medication within 7 days | 6 weeks | 3 months | 6 months |
| HIV testing without PEP | 1 - 2 weeks | 3 months | 6 months | |
| Resources | UPMC Outpatient Clinic ----- Child and adolescent medicine, Oakland** (412) 692-6677 | Allies for Health and Wellbeing* ** (412) 345-7456 <u>and</u> walk-in available at PAAR every Wednesday | Center for Inclusion Health at AHN* (412) 359-4649 | Central Outreach* (412) 515-0000 |
| | *gender affirming | **adolescent care | | |

PAAR Helpline (24/7): 1-866-363-7273



Follow-up care and testing -

- Recommended timeline for HIV and STI care, resources to access medication, and information about follow-up testing services

Questions?

