

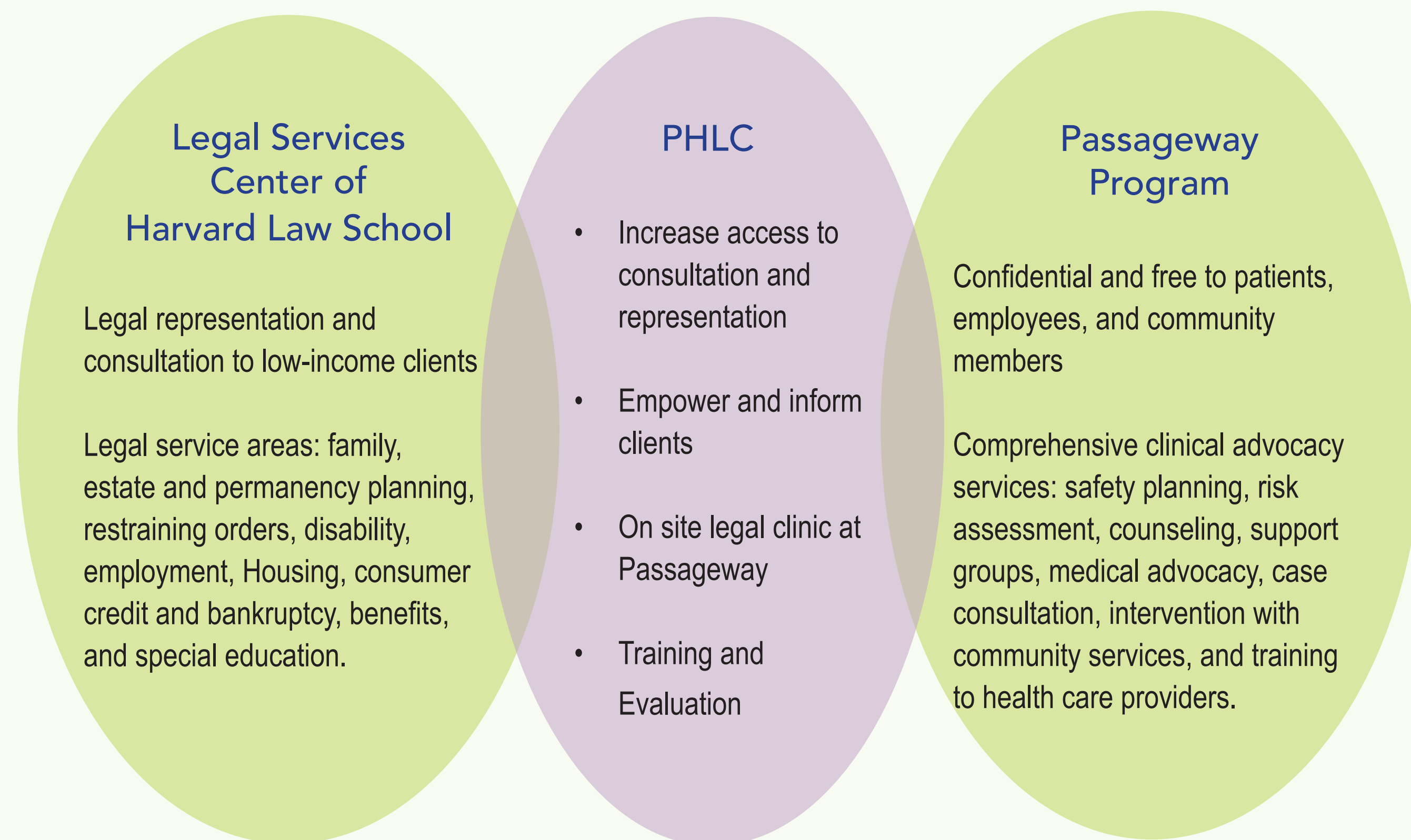
Health Law Collaborative Prevention Project

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Healthy Legal Choices for Women in Relationships: Dispelling Myths

Background of Passageway Health Law Collaborative (PHLC)

Started in 2004, the PHLC was created to address the lack of free, accessible, and trauma-informed legal services for domestic violence survivors in the Boston area.



Taking It to the Next Level: Prevention

Improve legal outcomes and thus, overall health of patients affected by domestic violence



Need identified for an effective domestic violence prevention strategy which links improved legal health outcomes to those of overall health



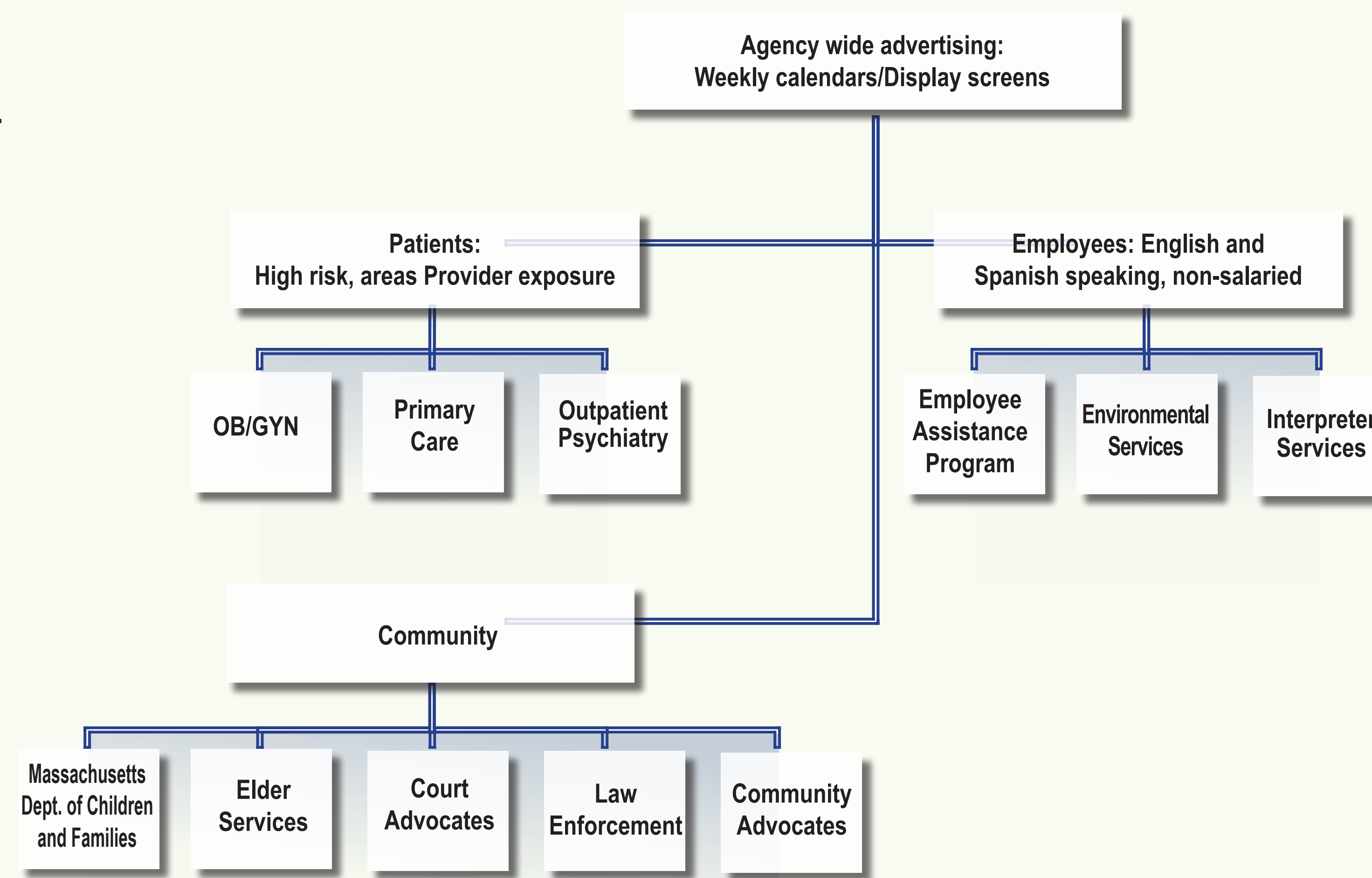
Workshops developed to provide preemptive legal information and social support



Objectives:

- Educate women about how state and federal law can be used to ameliorate power and control tactics used by abusers
- Maximize women's access to such information prior to reaching a crisis requiring legal intervention
- Minimize negative health outcomes
- Create points of entry for individuals just starting to identify the legal issues in their lives
- Serve as opportunities for hospital staff to learn more about legal issues that impact the lives and health of their patients

Marketing and Recruitment



Content: Dispelling Myths

It is a myth that...

- ...Domestic violence is a personal problem
- ...If domestic violence is a legal issue, then it is not a health issue
- ...No one will believe me if I report the abuse
- ...I need physical proof of injuries to get a restraining order
- ...A restraining is just a piece of paper
- ...I will loose my health insurance if I leave
- ...If I get child support, then my partner will have the right to see the kids
- ...Because I am undocumented, the police and courts won't help me



"So much legal stuff I didn't know and I feel that every woman I know should know all their rights! This information is so important, it should be in sent home in every child's backpack!"

"it gave me a better understanding of the victim's mental health... her fears, the myths and how the Law answers with the truth to help her." "lunch time..., very convenient to attend."

"The presenter was so approachable and made the law seem very understandable and clear (most lawyers make things seem more confusing). Sarah really broke it down into laymen's terms"

Key Components to Success

- Intake and RSVP process
- Challenge legal myths
- Provide preemptive legal information
- Familiar setting
- Avoid disclosure of survivor status
- Demystify legal systems and processes
- Increase credibility, i.e. presented by attorney
- Room size, limited number of attendees, and ratio of known staff conducive to fostering intimacy and social support
- Culturally competent
- Lunch/Parking

Evaluation

- Process evaluation conducted
- Forms in both English and Spanish
- Likert-style (scaled 1-5) and open ended questions
- Questions about knowledge, presenter, access

Results:

- All attendees "Strongly agreed" that the workshop increased their understanding of the intersection of the legal system and myths used to maintain power and control
- Most attendees were able identify legal rights and options for next steps in the legal process

Lessons Learned From Evaluation:

- Opportunity for questions for the attorney spread throughout the presentation
- More information on immigration law



Future Directions

- Expanding workshop to partnering sites
- Translating concept into other topics
- Formal evaluation