

Fundamental Element #4

Hotline Staff & Volunteers Are Trained to Use Telecommunications Relay Service

The Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) is an important service for your agency to be able to communicate by phone with someone who has a hearing or speech disability. The TRS allows a person who is Deaf, Deaf Blind, Hard of Hearing or has a speech disability to call the Relay Service for assistance with telephone calls. A specially-trained operator relays messages between the relay caller using a TTY text telephone or an assistive device and a hearing person using a standard telephone. The Relay Service may be reached by dialing 7-1-1 almost anywhere in the United States.

You may receive a call from the Relay Operator from a person using a TTY text telephone or you may call someone who uses a TTY text telephone, thru the Relay Operator. It is critical for those working on your Crisis Hotline to understand this Service. The Relay Operator will give you instructions on how to use the Relay Service, if you need assistance.

The NC Division of Services for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing (DSDHH) can mail your agency a free 6-minute DVD, *Are You Listening?* that explains in detail how to use TRS. You can also request a FREE in person TRS training with the Division. DSDHH has seven regional resource centers throughout North Carolina.

For more information or to arrange a free training, contact:

DSDHH Telecommunications Access of North Carolina

(800) 999-5737

<http://dsdhh.dhhs.state.nc.us/division/tanc/tanc.html>

More information and resources regarding TRS can be found in the Guide to Achieving the Fundamental Elements of Accessibility. If you did not receive this guide, please contact Pam Dickens at the Access for All Project at 919-966-0871 (v) or 919-843-3811 (TTY) or dickens@mail.fpg.unc.edu. You can download the guide at www.fpg.unc.edu/~ncodh. Click FEA resources on the NCODH home page.

Let us know when you have implemented Fundamental Element #4.

Send us your stories, strategies, or pictures!

For more information or assistance, call

NC Coalition Against Domestic Violence: 1-888-232-9124 (toll free)

NC Coalition Against Sexual Assault: 1-888-737-2272 (toll free)

Access for All Project: 919-966-0871 or 919-843-3811 (TTY)

