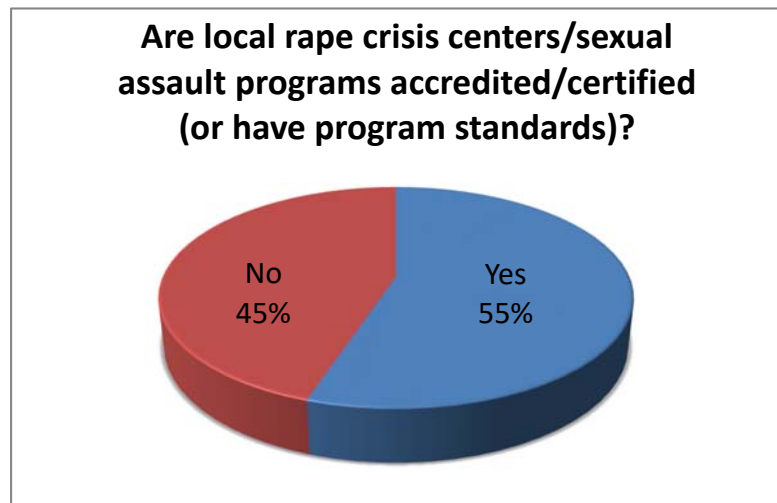




Program Accreditation/Certification

Forty-nine coalitions responded to an RSP survey regarding training and certification, conducted 2011-2014. Fifty-five percent of coalitions (27 of 49) had member programs that were certified or accredited; 45% did not (22 of 49). Typically, accreditation or program certification is formal recognition of completed requirements for programs (rather than individual advocates) set forth by the coalition or state/territorial entity, and is a method to ensure a minimum standard of service and define a vision for best practice for serving victims.

When asked who accredits/certifies member centers, 15 coalitions reported that the coalition manages accreditation and certification, 3 coalitions reported the State Attorney General’s Office as the managing entity, and 7 named other state agencies, such as the Health Department, or a state Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. One state has a sexual violence task force that certifies programs, and one reported that “our programs self-certify their compliance with program standards.” One noted that the state “Department of Community Health and Department of Human Services provided funding and programs must meet minimum standards to receive and maintain funding. This, however, is not considered certification.”



Member programs are certified and/or accredited in a variety of ways, involving program evaluations, site visits, and continual review of a program’s standards process. Peer evaluation and/or evaluation from an outside entity is a key component to help member programs gain and keep their certification/accreditation. In addition, the review process happens on a frequent revolving basis for many of the member programs to ensure consistency.

In the 2006 Organizational Survey, 66% of coalitions indicated there was an accreditation process or set of program standards for local sexual assault programs (31 of 47). 17 of 29 indicated that they established standards or an accreditation process for member sexual assault programs. Eight coalitions reported that standards/rules for programs come from the funders. Two coalitions were in the process of developing program standards.

This project is supported by Grant No. 2011-TA-AX-K054, awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.