

**Voices of Maryland Women Listening Tour**  
**Anne Arundel County**

Anne Arundel County Community College – Arnold, Maryland  
June 8, 2017, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Hosted by the Anne Arundel County Commission for Women, the Voices of Maryland Women Listening Tour traveled to the Anne Arundel County Community College where a crowd of over 50 people gathered to talk to the Maryland Commission for Women about the concerns of women and girls in their community.

The evening began with welcoming remarks by Susannah Kipke, Chair of the Anne Arundel County Commission for Women, followed by an open forum on the challenges facing women in this central Maryland region.

The attendees at the forum included individuals and representatives of women's and community advocacy organizations. They identified a wide range of issues and challenges for the women of Anne Arundel County, selected those they thought were most important, and discussed possible remedies.

The attendees listed a total of 26 challenges facing the women of Anne Arundel County. Each participant was given five "votes" to place beside the issues they thought were most important. Three issues tied for fifth place so the group voted again on just those three issues to decide which one to include in its "top five." The participants then discussed actions that could be taken to address those five issues:

**1. The "opioid epidemic"**

- a. Develop more services aimed at prevention
- b. Address substance abuse early on when young people are seen in juvenile court for small offenses such as underage drinking or possession of minor amounts of marijuana
- c. Provide a comprehensive continuum of care/treatment including transitional housing and services for women addicts with children
- d. Expand the "Not My Child" program and make it available state-wide
- e. Encourage more training in the use of Narcan<sup>®</sup> (Naloxone HCl)
- f. Establish networks connecting existing services
- g. Increase requirements for accountability among doctors and pharmacists
- h. Counsel patients at the point of care across the health care spectrum

**2. Lack of Mental Health Services**

- a. Deliver trauma-informed services with multi-lingual, culturally competent providers
- b. Increase funding
- c. Expand health insurance coverage
- d. Incentivize training for culturally and linguistically diverse students
- e. Establish mental health services in schools
- f. Include mental health services in health care reform

### **3. Under-Reporting of Sexual Assault**

- a. Provide training for law enforcement in trauma-informed response
- b. Establish a sexual assault response team at every hospital and every police station
- c. Investigate and prosecute cases more aggressively and thoroughly
- d. Take steps to eliminate the backlog of untested rape-kits
- e. Conduct a public information campaign aimed at creating an environment in which immigrant women feel safe reporting assault

### **4. Too Few Women in Elected Office**

- a. Encourage more women to run for office
- b. Establish programs in public schools to encourage girls' leadership
- c. Provide more public funding for election campaigns
- d. Develop more training for women regarding running for office
- e. Encourage women to engage in other women's campaigns

### **5. Need for Leadership Training and Development for Girls**

- a. Offer leadership experience starting at a young age
- b. Establish programs such as "Girls On the Run" in every elementary school
- c. Establish mentorship programs including with women in business
- d. Provide training in public speaking
- e. Build more community centers
- f. Create more student positions on official boards, committees and commissions

The chart on the next page lists all the issues that were identified during the course of this public forum and shows the number of votes each one received from those in attendance as they considered the priority level of each issue in comparison to the others.

<b>Number of Votes</b>	<b>Issue</b>
19	The “opioid epidemic”
17	Lack of mental health services
14	Under-reporting of sexual assault
13	Too few women in elected office
12	Need for leadership training and development for girls
12	Access to affordable, quality child care
12	Affordable housing for working people
11	Lack of After-School Programs for Youth
11	Human trafficking
9	Lack of public transportation including for persons with disabilities
9	Financial literacy – need for education in schools
8	Education inequities, including dress codes, access to feminine hygiene products, sexual harassment, lack of comprehensive sex education
8	Lack of paid parental leave
5	Too few hospitals conduct evidence-gathering examinations for sexual assault
5	Lack of women’s empowerment and self-esteem creates vulnerabilities
4	Too little information about access to existing resources
3	Need for job training for young women
3	Gender and age discrimination for “middle aged” women in the workplace
2	Too few women in law enforcement
2	Teen suicide
2	Lack of information, education and support regarding the aftermath of hysterectomy and ovary removal surgery
2	Homelessness, especially for women with children
1	Unequal family responsibilities, women carrying a larger share of the homemaking and dependent care duties, absent and/or uninvolved men
0	Need more groups advocating the empowerment of women
0	“Caregiver discrimination” in the workplace (reluctance to hire women who have care-giving responsibilities)
0	Re-entry women – often perceived as lacking current work-place skills
184	26 Issues

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# Anne Arundel County: Voices of Maryland Women

## Photo Album

















