



Foundations in Advocacy

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Learning Objectives

- ▶ I can explain the role of a sexual assault advocate
- ▶ I understand the importance of survivor defined services
- ▶ I understand the foundations in providing sexual assault advocacy

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Reflection

What does **advocacy** mean to you?



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Foundations: Core Sexual Assault Services



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WCASA Core Services

- ▶ 24-hour Crisis Response
- ▶ Personal Advocacy
- ▶ Systems Advocacy
- ▶ Information & Referral
- ▶ Support Groups
- ▶ Accessible Services
- ▶ Community Outreach & Prevention

<https://www.wcasa.org/get-involved/sasp-membership>



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Resource Sharing Project

- ▶ Crisis Intervention
- ▶ Support Group
- ▶ Advocacy
- ▶ Counseling & Therapy
- ▶ Institutional (System) Advocacy
- ▶ Prevention & Awareness
- ▶ Information & Referral



Core Services &
Characteristics of
Rape Crisis Centers:
A Review of State Service Standards
Second Edition

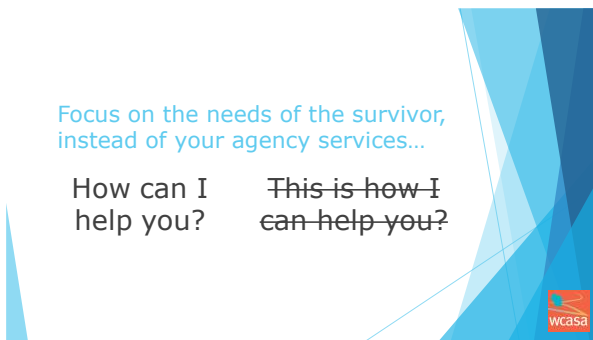
<http://resourcesharingproject.org/core-services-and-characteristics-rape-crisis-centers>



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- ▶ Believe
- ▶ Tell the victim they are not to blame
- ▶ Say you are sorry for what happened
- ▶ Explore all their options
- ▶ Normalize & validate their feelings
- ▶ Ask how you can help



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- ▶ What are some other DOs?



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- ▶ Touch or hug the victim without consent
- ▶ Promise them 'everything will be okay'
- ▶ Press the victim for details of the incident
- ▶ Make judgements or assumptions
- ▶ Tell them what to do
- ▶ Respond in shock or disbelief



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► What are some other DON'Ts?

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Foundations: Empowerment

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Decision-Making

- Is a process
- Individualized
- Takes times



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Empowerment vs. Rescuing

Empowerment

- ▶ Offering options & waiting for the victim to make decisions
- ▶ Believing that victims know what is best
- ▶ They have the answers
- ▶ Survivors are the experts

Rescuing

- ▶ Persuading the victim to do what you think they should
- ▶ Assuming you know best for victims
- ▶ You have the answers
- ▶ You are the expert



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Potential Influence



Self-Reflection:
If you wanted to, could you influence the decisions survivors make?



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Foundations: Individual Skills for Success



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Trust Survivors

- ▶ Survivors are not broken
- ▶ Healing looks different for everyone
- ▶ Justice means something different to everyone



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Be Grounded In Your Role

- ▶ Clear & confident in your role
- ▶ Serve survivors – not systems
- ▶ Deep understanding of SA



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Understand What Is NOT Your Role

- ▶ It is not your role to investigate what happened
- ▶ It is not your role to do other people's jobs
- ▶ It is not your role to make decisions on behalf of survivors



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What about #MeToo

In many circumstances, it is not helpful to share your survivor experience while providing services

- ▶ Keep focus on survivor
- ▶ All experiences are unique
- ▶ Can be triggering for advocate



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Maintain Healthy Boundaries

- ▶ Emotional boundaries
- ▶ Professional boundaries
- ▶ Don't use boundaries as an excuse not to provide services



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Keep Your Values To Yourself

- ▶ Self-reflect on what you value & if that is impacting your advocacy
- ▶ While values are core to who we are, they can lead to judgment & mistreatment



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Commitment to Inclusivity

- ▶ Lifelong learning
- ▶ Understanding of equity – not equality
 - “I treat everyone the same”
- ▶ Active allyship



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Be Willing To Speak Up

- ▶ Challenge systems of oppression
- ▶ Work within systems, while not losing focus on survivors
- ▶ Not always a popular role



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Practice Strong Listening Skills

- ▶ Active listening skills
- ▶ Comfortable with silence
- ▶ Allow survivor to set pace



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Respect Confidentiality

- ▶ Confidentiality is key to building trust
- ▶ Be upfront about any limits to confidentiality
- ▶ Understand complications in small or rural communities



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You Are Not A Superhero

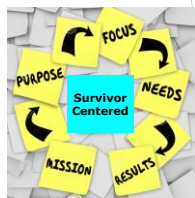
- ▶ *WITH SURVIVORS...* It is not your job to rescue or save anyone
- ▶ *FOR YOURSELF...* You don't have to do this alone & you can ask for help



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Center The Survivor

- ▶ You are the only person involved with the sole purpose of supporting the survivor



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Avoid "White Savior Complex"

- ▶ Do this work *WITH* – not *FOR* – survivors
- ▶ POC (and all survivors) know what they need better than you
- ▶ Reflect on why you do this work & how that could impact your work



<https://everydayfeminism.com/2016/06/white-savior-problem/>



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Questions



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Evaluation Questions

- ▶ Please use your clickers to rate the following statements on a scale of 1 (disagree) to 5 (agree)



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