Role of the Advocate

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Content

• Victim - centered advocacy

• Individual and system advocacy

• Building liaisons/community partnerships
Core Services

- 24 hour Crisis Line
- Crisis Response
- Ongoing Support & Information
- Emergency Shelter
- Legal Advocacy
- Medical Advocacy
- Transportation
- Education & Prevention
advisory

advocacy

advocate

advise; giving advice role.
of support (to a cause or work of an advocate) public in favour of a policy
What is victim defined or victim-centered advocacy?

The **victim’s experience** of the crime or impact of violence, the cultural influences in their life, and their specific life circumstances determine the direction and focus of advocacy, needs and/or and safety strategies.
Goals of Advocacy

- Safety
- Self Determination
- Restoration
- Justice
Core Values

- Empowerment
- Empathy
- Respect for self-determination
- Nonjudgmental responses
- Respect those we serve
- **Do no harm**
- The people we are serve our most important teachers
- Value diversity
- Professional boundaries
Advocacy with an Individual

- Understanding their unique situation
- Building a working relationship
- Comprehensive plan to assist them through the crime, situation, process
- Work with them to achieve THEIR goals
Empowerment Based Advocacy

What is Empowerment?
Disempowering Styles of Advocacy

- The Rescuer
- Aggressive Advocacy
- Passive Advocacy
- “Smile and Be Nice” Advocacy
- “Bleeding Heart” Advocacy
Empowerment "indicates the intent to, and the process of, assisting individuals, groups, families and communities to discover and expend the resources and tools within and around them."
Saleebey (2002:9)
Empowerment is thus a helping process to assist people to use their strengths to overcome their challenges.
Advocacy Wheel

Empowerment Based Advocacy

RESPECT CONFIDENTIALITY...
All discussions must occur in private, without family members present. This is essential to building trust and ensuring her safety.

BELIEVE AND VALIDATE HER EXPERIENCES...
Listen to her and believe her. Acknowledge her feelings and let her know she is not alone. Many women have similar experiences.

HELP HER PLAN FOR FUTURE SAFETY...
What has she tried in the past to keep herself safe? Is it working? Does she have a place to go if she needs to escape?

ACKNOWLEDGE INJUSTICE...
The violence perpetrated against her is not her fault. No one deserves to be abused.

RESPECT HER AUTONOMY...
Respect her right to make decisions in her own life, when she is ready. She is the expert in her life.

PROMOTE ACCESS TO COMMUNITY SERVICES...
Know the resources in your community. Is there a hotline and shelter for battered women?

From the National on Domestic and Sexual Violence - http://www.ncdsv.org/publications_wheel.html
Empowerment Based Advocacy

- Based on the belief that people are the experts in their lives and knows what is best
- Empower people so they can advocate for themselves, take back control of their life and make their and their families lives better
- We strive not to duplicate disempowering behaviors through the following:
  - Ultimatums or threats to change or deny services
  - Accusations and assumptions of dishonesty
  - Rules that must be obeyed to continue services
Prior to Advocating

• Have a completed release of information if necessary
  • confidentiality

• Discuss with the person what she/he is ultimately wanting through this advocacy
  • Know what they want & don’t want
The Basics...

- Building Rapport
- **Effective listening**
- Create a safe place
- Start with the survivor’s
  - Story
  - Concerns
  - Questions
  - Priorities

Image from: http://salesiology.com/rapport-sales-gbu/
Listening

We must listen to

- understand
- recognize the suffering
- be compassionate
- not be judgmental (don’t get caught in judgment of another, that’s not your job)
To Listen . . .
The Basics.....

• **Understanding a person’s perspective**
  • Open-ended questions
    • Sample Script
  • Validate
    • Sample Script
  • Be aware of their assessment of you
  • Understand that their Perspective will change
Tips for Starting the Conversation

• Sample scripts

• How can I help you today?
• Tell me about what’s going on for you.
• I’m here for you.
• What you tell me will be confidential. As a mandated reporter the things I have to report are – if you are a danger to yourself or others or, if you have knowledge of a child or vulnerable adult being abused.
The Basics.....

- **Share your knowledge of resources**

- **Discuss what options/choices are available**

- **Discuss the possible outcomes of those options, both positive and negative**
The Basics.....

- Help the person implement their choices
- Discuss the steps needed to reach their goals
- Identify useful, related & current referrals

Image from: http://www.eduberry.com/support-cell/implementation-steps/
The Basics.....

- Support and respect decisions made by the person
  - At times the person’s choices are different from what we “think” she/he should choose
- Our job is to support a person’s choices, regardless of our thoughts
- Healing/balance is a process.
  - Each time a person reaches out, she/he is more empowered and gains more strength and knowledge
The Washing Machine Story

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0obk_Y03APo
Boundaries & Advocacy

- Vital component of advocacy is having appropriate boundaries

- Boundaries are where one person ends and the other begins

Healthy  Enmeshed  Rigid
“Boundary Problems”

- Common areas of concern
  - Not addressing “isms”
  - Non-empowering styles of advocacy
  - Unhealthy boundaries with people served
- Difference between being friends and being friendly
- Consider dual relationships
- Consider care of self vs care of others
The Role of an Advocate in CRISIS intervention

CRISIS INTERVENTION – Definition

Focusing on a critical situation, with the aim of restoring the person to the level of functioning before the crisis

(wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn..)
Guiding Principles*

- Build Trust & Develop Rapport
- Listen Actively & Empathetically
- Promote Self - Determination
- Make Safety a Priority
- Balance your needs with those of the Person in Crisis

* From the National Domestic Violence Hotline (NDVH) training, 2012
Guiding Principles*

• Listen Actively & Empathetically
  • Be present
  • Put yourself in the person’s shoes
  • Make the interaction a conversation
  • Provide perspective

*NDVH, 2012
Guiding Principles*

- Promote Self Determination
  - Listen & reflect what the person is saying
  - Be non-judgmental as the person identifies needs & options
  - Support the person’s decisions
  - Help identify potential consequences (pros & cons)

*NDVH, 2011
Guiding Principles

• Make Safety a Priority
  • Give the person the time she/he needs
  • Assist the person as she/he develops a plan and safety plan when needed

• Help the person access local services in the community and advocate on her/his behalf when requested

*NDVH, 2011
Guiding Principles*

- Balance Your Needs with Those of the Person you are serving
- Take the time to process difficult interactions
  - Use your fellow advocates for support
  - Regularly assess your emotional state and problem solve with your supervisor
  - Take breaks regularly

*NDVH, 2011
“If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself.”
- Henry Ford

“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.”
- Henry Ford

**Systems Advocacy:**

How Do We Advocate With or Within Systems?
Collaboration & Systems Advocacy

• Systems coming together with a common understanding - to help people in need - can be of great benefit to the people we serve.

• Work to gain detailed understanding of other systems roles
Systems Advocacy

• Goal: policy & procedure change

• The “big picture”

• To improve a system’s response to persons whose lives have been impacted by crime and crisis
  • Housing
  • Law Enforcement policies
  • CPS Policies
  • Health Care
Individual Advocacy with Systems

Goal:

• to assist a person’s navigation of the different systems she or he is involved with as a result of the crime/crisis
Who Might We Work With?

- Faith Communities
- Batterer Intervention Programs
- Coordinating Councils
- Businesses
- Media
- Law Enforcement
- Prosecutors
- Criminal & Civil Courts
- Colleges/Universities

- CPS/HHS
- Housing Authority
- Medical Entities
- Counselors/Therapists
- Substance Abuse/Chemical Dependency Programs
- Child Care and Schools
Collaborative Systems Work

- CRT’s
  - Increase support and safety for victims
  - Increase offender accountability
- Have an understanding each agencies roles & limitations
- Respect each other’s roles
- Agree to disagree
- Have confidence in what you do
Same Goal, Different Paths...

• Each system wants to provide some level of assistance
• Each system typically has a different way of reaching that goal
In Conclusion -

Reminders and Take-Aways
Role of an Advocate

- Listen
- Offer guidance
- Do no harm
- Be compassionate, be kind
- Err on the side of generosity
- No expectations of gratitude

- Hospitable hosts, welcoming
- Knowledgeable
- Respectful
- “Do the right thing”
- Non-judgmental
- Offer resources and options
Questions? Comments?

I appreciate your involvement.