

Module 2: Values and Responses to Victims

Purpose

This module helps participants become aware of their own attitudes, biases, and beliefs, and how these affect their responses to victims of crime.

Lessons

1. Exploring Values
2. Self-Awareness Inventory
3. Values and Roles
4. Multicultural Competency and Ethics

Learning Objectives

By the end of the module, you will be able to:

- State your own values, morals, and ethics.
- State how these attitudes and beliefs influence your responses to victims of crime.

Ethical Decisions

Knowing oneself ethically requires self-awareness. Victim service providers must understand their own definition of a morally good person, how their personal values may influence their responses to challenging situations, how their religious beliefs may influence their judgments, and how their attitudes toward the rights of individuals may come into conflict with the broader principles of justice.

As important as it is to understand their moral orientation, victim service providers must also understand how willing they are to act on their values and uphold their personal ethics if they are challenged. Being aware of the need for action, determining the right course of action, and having the emotional and intellectual commitment to follow through are all important factors when assessing personal values.

Professional values grow from the same basic desire as personal values (to do no harm, help others, and make the world a better place), but they are different in focus and content. Any conflict between a victim service provider's personal and professional values could affect the ethical decisionmaking process and compromise the capacity to provide services effectively in a particular circumstance. Therefore, personal values must be recognized and dealt with appropriately. A provider's character and commitment, motivation, and personal viewpoint are all authentic components of the ethical decisionmaking process. Searching for ethical self-knowledge is necessary if victim service providers are to understand their innate reactions when value conflicts occur.

Worksheet 2.1

Assault Victim Vignette

Scenario

Julia Sullivan is a law enforcement victim advocate. Julia has taken Charlotte Thompson to the emergency room for treatment of injuries resulting from an assault.

Julia knows Charlotte Thompson because of Charlotte's prior history of physical and sexual assaults. In the last year, Charlotte had recanted her story of one violent assault as the case moved through the legal system.

Julia is trying to complete a compensation form to help Charlotte with her medical expenses.

Questions

- What are your reactions to the vignette?

- Do you have any concerns or hesitations about working with this client?

- What values cause you to feel this way?

- How might your feelings affect your professional relationship with Charlotte Thompson?

- What can you do to put Charlotte's interest first?

For your consideration:

What other challenging victims have you dealt with and how did you handle the situation?

Worksheet 2.2

Self-Awareness Inventory*

The following five questions will help you evaluate your own values, attitudes, and beliefs. For each question, circle 1 if you strongly disagree, 5 if you strongly agree, or 2, 3, or 4 for points along the continuum.

Keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers. This is an inventory designed to get you thinking about your values, attitudes, and beliefs so that you may better serve your clients.

1. Members of a helping profession such as victim assistance should refrain from getting personally involved with victims they work with.

Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

2. A higher spiritual power should guide our behavior and thinking.

Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

3. Women are rarely violent.

Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

4. The needs of victims must sometimes override a supervisor's directive.

Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

5. Culture and race are not factors in a professional helping relationship. As human beings, we are more similar than different.

Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

* This inventory was adapted from the inventory in *Victim Assistance Online (VAT Online)* at <https://www.ovcttac.gov/vatonline>.

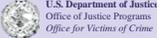
Worksheet 2.3

Domestic Violence Scenario

Patrice is the 24-year-old mother of three children, ages 4, 2, and 4 months. She is married to Zeke, the father of her baby and the 2-year-old. Zeke drinks heavily and has been abusing Patrice for at least a year. During this time, law enforcement has been to the home repeatedly for domestic violence incidents, but Zeke has been arrested only a couple of times. Three weeks ago, law enforcement arrested Zeke and alerted the local human services agency with concerns about the children. Zeke was able to post bail and was out of jail 2 days later. He is currently staying with his brother and his brother's wife, who live about 4 miles down the road. A caseworker from child protective services is in the process of assessing the risks of harm and safety factors for the children. Patrice has been talking with a victim assistance provider with the local domestic violence program.

Last evening Zeke nearly strangled Patrice and threatened to kill her and the children if she told anyone. This morning Patrice called the victim assistance provider with the domestic violence program to tell her about Zeke's threats. Patrice is planning to leave with the children as soon as she can make all the arrangements. She knows she must wait for the right opportunity to leave. She also tells the victim assistance provider that she does not want all this to go to court. It will only make the situation worse.

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Learning Objectives

- ❖ State your own values, morals, and ethics.
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2-2

Delivering Services

- ❖ Begins with personality, moral orientation, and beliefs of provider
- ❖ Involves relationships between providers and victims
- ❖ Requires awareness that personal values and ethical codes of provider influence interactions

2-3

Exploring Values

2-4

Exploring Values

- ❖ Distinction between personal and professional values
- ❖ Importance of self-awareness
- ❖ Keeping personal attitudes from interfering with professional services

2-5

Activity

What Are Values, Morals, and Ethics?

2-6

Definition of Terms

- ❖ *VALUES* are the ideals or beliefs to which an individual or group aspires.
- ❖ *MORALS* relate to making decisions between right and wrong.
- ❖ *ETHICS* is the articulation of standards of behavior that reflect those values or morals.

2-7

Behind Ethical Decisions Are . . .

- ❖ Your character
- ❖ Your commitment
- ❖ Your personal viewpoint

2-8

Activity

Assault Victim Vignette

Worksheet 2.1

2-9

Discussion Questions

- ❖ Any hesitations about working with this client?
- ❖ What values may cause you to feel this way?
- ❖ How might your feelings affect your professional relationship with the victim?

2-10

Discussion Questions

- ❖ What can you do to put the client's interest first?
- ❖ Consider: what other challenging victims have you dealt with, and how did you handle the situation?

2-11

Self-Awareness Inventory

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Activity

Self-Awareness Inventory

Worksheet 2.2

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Values and Roles

2-14

Activity

Domestic Violence Scenario

Worksheet 2.3

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Scenario Roles

- ❖ Group 1: Law enforcement victim assistance provider
- ❖ Group 2: Child protective services caseworker
- ❖ Group 3: Domestic violence program victim assistance provider
- ❖ Group 4: Prosecutor's office victim assistance provider

2-16

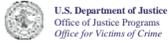
Discussion Questions

- ❖ How does assuming the perspective of another role affect your response to the victim?
- ❖ Would you have responded differently if you had been in your role as victim assistance provider?

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Review of Module Learning Objectives

- ❖ State your own values, morals, and ethics.
- ❖ State how your attitudes and beliefs influence your responses to victims of crime.




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