

Considerations for Victim-Centered Presentations

This document provides guidance and tips on how to develop victim-centered, trauma- and survivor-informed human trafficking presentations for multidisciplinary audiences. This includes intentional and respectful use of language that reflects respect for human trafficking survivors and models important themes for participants to use in their work with victims or with others who work directly with victims.

Use of victim images and representation of human trafficking in presentations

- **Are pictures of victims essential to the presentation or are they inserted there to elicit shock?**
 - Avoid using pictures of victims. If such images are essential to the presentation, do not use exploitative pictures taken by the trafficker (e.g., advertisements from backpage or Redbook).
 - Warn the audience of the graphic nature of some of the images.
 - If using a real image of a victim, or their likeness, blur out their features and other identifiable marks and ensure permission is obtained from the victim to use the image.
- **Does the image represent a narrow interpretation of trafficking?** Unless you are conducting a presentation on a specific type of trafficking, make every effort to use images that convey that there are multiple forms of trafficking and that trafficking victims are diverse.
 - For example, victims from different socioeconomic backgrounds, races and ethnicities, countries of origin, ages and genders. Showing this broader reality of victimization can better inform the audience on victim identification and understanding the full scope of human trafficking.
- **Do images sensationalize the issue of human trafficking?**
 - Be mindful of the intent of these images and how the images may influence audience members.
 - Images used, even in the context of showing them as harmful, can still be triggering and disrespectful to victims and survivors.
 - These images often misrepresent the reality of trafficking, continue to sensationalize the issue, and can mislead people who potentially identify victims.

Language

Per the OVC Model Standards, avoid language that communicates victim blaming, suspicion regarding a survivor's account of a crime, condemnation for past behavior, or other judgmental statements¹.

¹ OVC Competency Standard 3.1 The victim assistance provider develops rapport and communicates effectively with victims/survivors.

- Avoid using language like “prostitute,” “hooker,” “illegals,” or other stigmatizing terms.
- Promote self-determination by using language that acknowledges the victim’s right to choose what is best for them. For example, victims may have a diverse set of needs when it comes to what makes them feel safe or what services they need for themselves and their families.
- Additionally, use language and visuals that engage the audience to move toward next steps in awareness, identification, services, or collaborative response. For example, provide hotline numbers or contact information for local or national organizations where audience members could gain further education or resources.

Audience

Keep in mind that there may be people in the audience who may not disclose their victimization or have not identified their experiences as trafficking, and your presentation may provide them with this new realization. If you are doing a standalone presentation, ensure that the National Human Trafficking Hotline or your state trafficking hotline is provided as an additional resource.

Additional Resources:

[OVC Model Standards](#)

[Human Trafficking Task Force e-Guide: Using a Trauma-Informed Approach](#)

[Victim Assistance Training Online: Trauma-Informed Care](#)

[Trauma-Informed Case Management Webinar Series: Trauma-Informed Care](#)