

Voluntary Services Webinar for OVC Human Trafficking Grantees

December 3, 2020
2:00–3:30 p.m. (eastern time)

Presenters:

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The material presented during today's webinar session will be available on the Human Trafficking Grantees Learning Community and the OVCTTAC Human Trafficking Webinars page.

The session will be recorded and will begin shortly.

As with all technology, we may experience a momentary lapse in the webinar session. In the event of a problem, please be patient and remain on the line. If the problem persists, please contact khough@ovcttac.org for technical assistance.



Today's Presenters

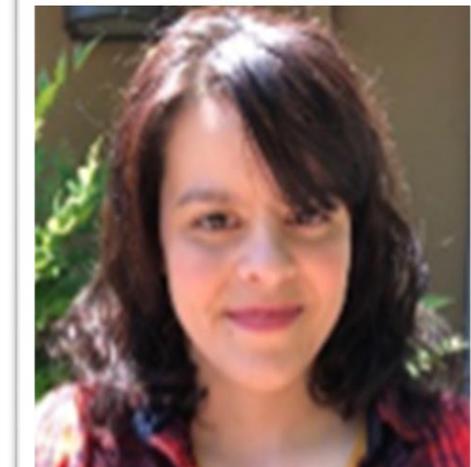
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Objectives



Today's webinar will:

- Outline the voluntary services model that is to be used within your OVC funded program.
- Highlight key differences between a rule-based model and voluntary services.
- Explore common misconceptions about the model and identify how the model empowers survivors and staff.
- Provide examples how anti-trafficking programs can do the work within this model.



Poll

How would you rate your knowledge of the voluntary service model?

- A. I'm very knowledgeable
- B. I'm familiar but could use a refresher
- C. I've heard of it before
- D. I've never heard of the voluntary services model



What do we mean by trauma-informed?

Trauma-Informed

Trauma-informed approaches are delivered with an understanding of the vulnerabilities and experiences of trauma survivors, including the **prevalence and physical, social, and emotional impact of trauma**. A trauma-informed approach recognizes **signs of trauma in staff, clients, and others**, and responds by integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, practices, and settings. Trauma-informed approaches place priority on **restoring the survivor's feelings of safety, choice, and control**.

For more guidance, definitions and resources, visit the [OVC Model Standards for Serving Victims and Survivors of Crime](#)



What do we mean by victim-centered?

Victim-Centered

Placing the **victim's priorities, needs, and interests** at the center of the work with the victim; providing **nonjudgmental assistance**, with an emphasis on client self-determination and assisting victims in making informed choices; ensuring that restoring victims' feelings of safety and security are a priority, and **safeguarding against policies and practices that may inadvertently re-traumatize victims**; and ensuring that **victims' rights, voices, and perspectives** are incorporated when developing and implementing system- and community-based efforts that impact victims.



National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV)

- NNEDV is a leading voice for domestic violence victims and their advocates.
- As a membership and advocacy organization, NNEDV works closely with its members to understand the ongoing and emerging needs of domestic violence victims and advocacy programs and makes sure those needs are heard and understood by policymakers at the national level.
- In partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women (OVW), NNEDV provides comprehensive, specialized TTA to state and territorial domestic violence coalitions, local domestic violence programs, other nonprofit organizations and local and state agencies.
- The Housing Project helps organizations create best practices in housing, transitional housing and related services for victims, and strengthens programs' response to victims with an emphasis on survivor-driven, empowerment-based services.



The Voluntary Services Model

- The Voluntary Services Model was created in direct response from survivors who stated that the rule-based model felt punitive
- This model is founded in rule-reduction or elimination to give survivors the autonomy to make decisions about their engagement in program services
- Based on the principle that the survivor knows the vision they have for their lives, and programs are there to help survivors achieve that vision
- It returns the position of empowerment back to the survivor, which helps to subvert the notions that survivors are unable to make decisions about their lives



The Basics: The Philosophy in Three Parts



Voluntary Services Approach

Choices

Variety of services that are accessible

Feedback

Encourage feedback on services to inform program changes

Building Strong Relationships (Rapport)

Creating safe spaces that are free of judgement



Philosophy to Practice: Putting the theory into action



How to make services voluntary

- Survivors can elect to participate in the services
 - In previous service models, participation was required, which meant that survivors would experience consequences such as homelessness, arrest, limited financial assistance, termination of services, etc. for not meeting with their case manager, participating in counseling services, or attending other program services
- Creating policies that promote survivor autonomy
 - Consider that program policies should give ample room for survivors to make choices about the direction of their life



Services

- Consider how to engage survivors without making participation in programming mandatory
- Place importance on building rapport over filling out forms
- Develop a wide-array services, blending conventional and unconventional
 - *Conventional example: Advocacy*
 - *Unconventional example: Art classes*
- Place high-value on survivor made choices



Program Shift

- Program shifts in practice – what does this look like?
- Reiterating the importance of choice, feedback, & rapport:
 - Ways to create more choices for clients
 - Ways to obtain feedback from clients
 - Ways to create safe spaces, judgment-free spaces



Changing the Lens

Rule-based service models often framed program policies as:

Survivor must do this to receive services

or

Survivor must do this to gain access to other services



Changing the Lens *(continued)*

The Voluntary Services model asks programs to frame their services as:

- What can we do to help a survivor achieve their vision?
- How can we improve services in order to meet survivor needs?
- Is this the only service that the survivor needs at this time?

If yes, that is OK



Bridging to Trauma-Informed Care

- **Voluntary services is trauma-informed care**
- Acknowledges and addresses power and control dynamics
- Prioritizes the autonomy and self-determination of survivors
- Avoids actions that can be re-traumatizing for survivors



Voluntary Services for Minors

- Navigating mandated services (court or agency)
- Safety IS trauma-informed
- Program opportunities
- Importance of voice and choice



Voluntary Services for Minors

Program Design

Within a residential setting, part of the program is to have an art therapist come once a week to deliver a group activity to residents.

A youth does not want to participate, what do you do?



Voluntary Services for Minors

Court Mandates

One of your minor clients have been court-ordered to participate in therapy.

Where are there opportunities to provide choice and client agency?



Voluntary Services for Minors

Guardianship

A youth participating in your mentoring program has identified they would like to enter into a youth employment program this summer. Their guardian has said “no” and thinks this will only provide an opportunity to connect with “bad influences” and possibly runaway again.

How do you navigate a guardian and your client not in agreement on a goal?

Voluntary Services In Practice

Voluntary services are implemented at every step of service provision

- Screening - Who is screened as eligible and who has access to services
- Intake - What information is being asked and the purpose of that information
- Services - How are services offered or suggested
- Survivor Feedback - What spaces are available for survivors to offer feedback
- Referrals - Which referrals are made
- Exiting the program - How are exits conducted, especially involuntary exits



Disempowering Practices

Practices that go against a voluntary services model can include:

- Taking away cell phones
- Room searches or bag searches (scheduled or not)
- Drug screenings
- Requiring participation in counseling, therapy, substance treatment, etc.
- Strict curfews
- Zero tolerance policies on substance use
- Withholding or managing medications
- Required saving accounts
- Work or school requirements



Power and Control Dynamics

Anti-Trafficking Program

- Mandated services (detox, chores, therapy, or religious activities)
- Limiting communication (taking away cell phones)
- Curfews
- Chores
- Locked facilities

Trafficking Experience

- Forced labor
- Isolation (no cell phones or communication)
- Control of the survivor
 - Limiting the survivor's autonomy
- Utilizing threats



Housing First

Voluntary Services is rooted with Housing First, which means:

- Providing the survivor with housing first in order to address the homelessness first
- Higher-level needs cannot be addressed without first addressing a survivor's need for shelter
- Once housing is available, survivors can then begin to think about other needs such as:
 - Childcare, employment, education, etc.



Services and the Hierarchy of Needs



*Model created by Abraham Maslow, 1943, A Theory of Human Motivation



Thinking Deeper

Scenario: During the intake process, a client identifies safety as one of their top concerns. Because of this, you enforce daily check-ins and nightly curfews to ensure their safety.

- How does this response hurt client agency?
- How is this response continuing power/control dynamics?
- What would you adjust in this response?
- How can you best support a client concerned about safety?



Thinking Deeper (continued)

Scenario: During the intake process, a client identifies sobriety as one of their biggest goals they would like to work towards. What should be the next steps for the organization/agency in supporting this client?



Thinking Deeper (continued)

Scenario: Your organization is not a medical facility and client overdose is a very real fear for you and your staff. Would you have a policy around drug testing? **Y / N**

- How does this response hurt client agency?
- How is this response continuing power/control dynamics?
- What would you adjust in this response?
- How can you best support a client working on sobriety?



Thinking Deeper (continued)

Scenario: During a case management check-in, a client tells you they want to re-engage with a person connected to their trafficking experience. You don't think this is a healthy relationship for them. How do you support the client and this decision?



Change Can be Difficult

- Shifting our framework and how services have historically been provided can be difficult
- Staff may be anxious or push-back on the voluntary services model
- Program staff may feel like they don't have complete control
- **Voluntary services does not mean hands off services or no parameters**



Organization Readiness

- The lens of voluntary services should be implemented at every level of the organization
- Address disconnect between staff and the voluntary services model
 - What concerns exist?
 - What training is needed?
 - What support is needed?
 - How are staff supported?



Knowledge Check

- **True or False:**

The best way to build client engagement is to require or mandate that clients must participate in pre-determined services, groups, or program rules in order to receive services.



Knowledge Check (continued)

- **True or False:**

OVC TTA Providers like Freedom Network and OVC TTAC are available to review your policies and procedures and provide recommendations and TA support focused on the voluntary services model.



Questions?



Thank you!

Please take a moment to fill out an evaluation for this webinar.



Please scan the QR code with your phone to open the survey.

