

'Simple Rules' for Victim-Centered Response

Please assess your team and responders in participating agencies with regard to their tendency to follow these simple rules when responding to survivors and handling cases.

There are three categories to use for assessment—minus (-), neutral (0), and plus (+). Think of applying them as follows:

0 = with only a few exceptions, people follow this rule

+ = everyone, every time follows this rule

_ = one has to work hard to get others to see and follow this rule

Assess for your team in the upper left corner of the box, assess for the overall group of responders represented in participating agencies in the lower right corner of the box (for example: +/-). Jot examples or questions down as you think of them.

		Team / Responders		
Simple Rule	Examples/Questions	-	0	+
Consider the victim first				
Listen generously				
Promote victim self-agency				
Coordinate and collaborate in the victim's interest				
Ensure victim safety				
Seek just solutions for all				
Hold self and others accountable				

'Simple Rules' for Victim-Centered Response

- **Consider the victim first.**

The victim/survivor and their unique needs and abilities should be considered first.

- **Listen generously.**

Listen with belief; acknowledge the violation. Listen with patience; walk with survivors as they determine their own path. Listen with compassion; give voice to the victim's experience. Listen with faith; believe in the victim/survivors' resilience. Listen generously to victim/survivors, colleagues, team members, community members to affect the change we seek. Create safe places for people to tell their stories.

- **Promote victim self-agency.**

An agent is "one that acts or has the power or authority to act." Promoting victim self-agency is about providing the supports and information that enable the victim/survivors to act in their own best interest relative to the unique circumstances of their lives. In this context, crisis intervention is about providing the supports necessary to re-engage or increase a victim/survivors' own coping abilities to the point decision-making is again possible. Informed decision-making means the victim/survivor knows what could be gained or lost in the options available to him or her. Assistance should be geared to providing information and support to help in decision-making relative to the victim/survivor's own goals of establishing *safety, healing, and seeking justice*.

- **Coordinate and collaborate in the victim's interest.**

Coordinating disparate and fractured elements of a response can improve a victim/survivors' experience and lead to better cases. Coordinating primarily in the system's own interests can re-victimize victim/survivors and jeopardize case outcomes.

- **Ensure victim-safety.**

Ensure victim/survivors have the information, resources, and supports to be or move toward safety. This can include access to confidential services, privacy protections, access to legal remedies for protection, notification of an offender's release, and consideration of the unintended consequences to victim/survivors of the policy and procedural decisions we make.

- **Seek just solutions for all.**

Be honorable, fair, lawful, suitable, and free from bias.

- **Hold self and others accountable.**

Be able to explain and answer for our own actions and decisions. Ask others to do the same.