

**American Institutes for Research /
National Center on Family Homelessness**

Transitional Housing for Survivors of Domestic and Sexual Violence: A 2014-15 Snapshot

Overview Webinar #3 (Chapters 9-10)

Transitional Housing for Survivors of Domestic and Sexual Violence:

A 2014–15 Snapshot

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What's on the Project Webpage?

The project webpage is www.air.org/THforSurvivors. The webpage contains links to

- The 12 chapters of the **Report**, each with an executive summary and a reference list;
- The Methodology webinar and four **Overview webinars**;
- Four brief **podcast interviews** highlighting the approaches of some of the providers we interviewed; and
- **Broadsides** highlighting two of the many important topic areas this report addresses.

Chapters of the Report (Overview Webinar #1)

- #01 - *Definition of “Success” & Performance Measurement*
- #02 - *Survivor Access and Participant Selection*
- #03 - *Program Housing Models*
- #04 - *Taking a Survivor-Centered / Empowerment Approach: Rules Reduction, Voluntary Services, Participant Engagement*

Chapters of the Report (Overview Webinar #2)

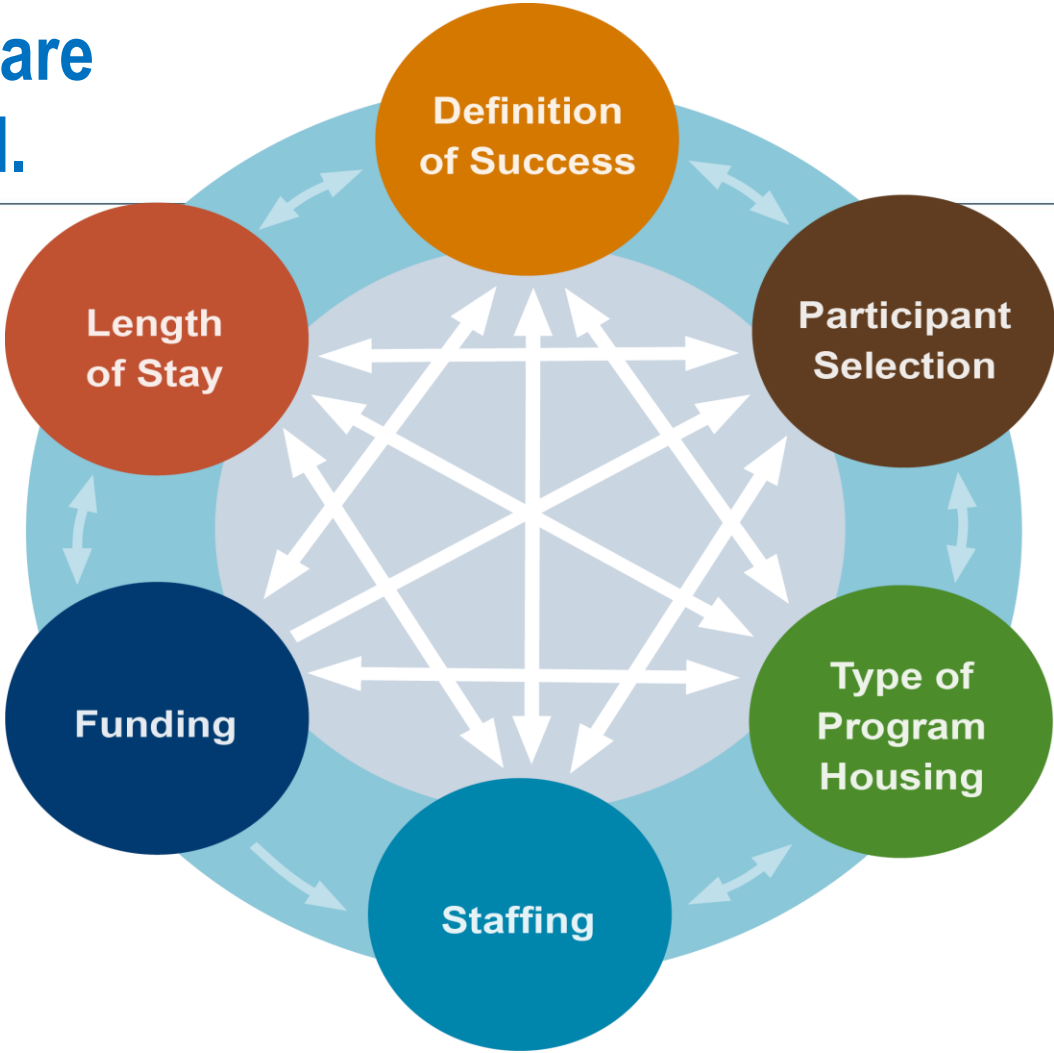
- #05 - *Program Staffing*
- #06 - *Length of Stay*
- #07 - *Subpopulations and Cultural / Linguistic Competence*
- #08 - *OVW Constituencies* (Domestic Violence - Dating Violence - Sexual Assault - Stalking +Trafficking)

Chapters of the Report (Overview Webinars #3 & 4)

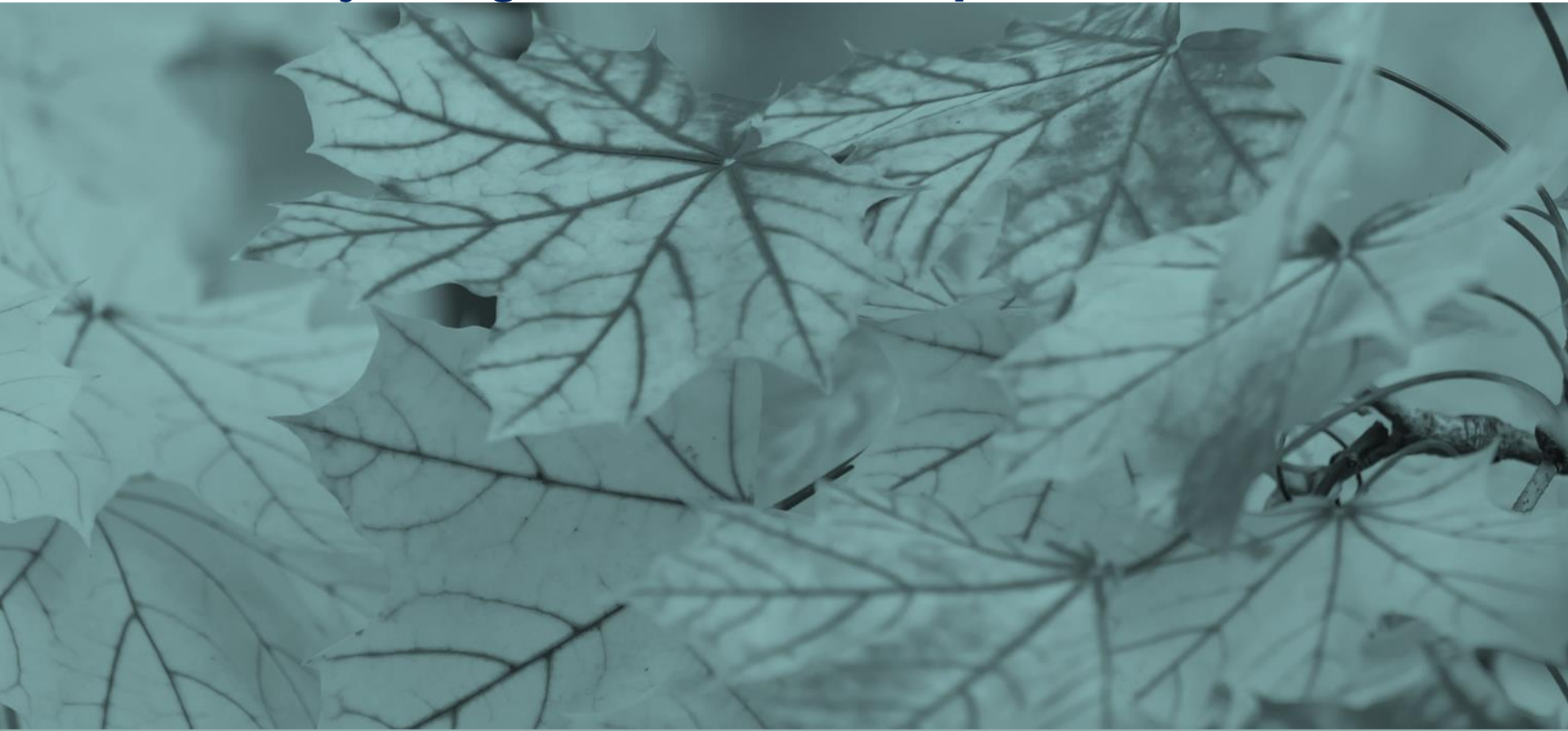
- #09 - *Approach to Services: Basic Support and Assistance*
- #10 - *Challenges and Approaches to Obtaining Housing and Financial Sustainability*
- #11 - *Trauma-Specific and Trauma-Informed Services for Survivors and Their Children*
- #12 - *Funding and Collaboration: Opportunities and Challenges*

This is Overview Webinar #3.

The topics are interrelated.



Chapter 9: Approach to Services: Advocacy / Case Management, Safety Planning, Community Integration, Follow-Up



Approach to Services:

Overview of Advocacy / Case Management

- The case manager / advocate is the glue that holds a TH program together; primary source of support / advocacy
- Relationship between advocate and survivor is central
- Role varies, based on needs of survivor, housing configuration, staffing level, philosophy of program, operating environment
 - Exploring next-step options
 - Safety planning
 - Income - benefits - employment - housing – other needs
 - Addressing broad range of barriers to housing and employment
 - Supporting the survivor in restoring health and wellbeing

Approach to Services: Advocacy / Case Management: Empowerment Model

- **Survivor Empowerment** – making their own life choices (including the nature of program participation, type of assistance sought)
- Staff challenges:
 - Reconciling fundamental belief in a woman’s right to be free from violence vs. reality that survivor might decide, after weighing tradeoffs, that returning to an abusive relationship is her best (or least bad) alternative.
 - Desire to provide victim-centered services vs. concern that “successful transition” will take longer than “allowed” given survivor’s pace and broader focus vs. accountability for achieving HUD-defined “successes” within shorter timeframe.

Approach to Services: Advocacy / Case Management: Housing First Model

- “**Housing First**” – accessing permanent affordable housing as quickly as possible (vs. extended interim housing + services to build “readiness” to sustain mainstream housing), based on assumption that participant will be better able to address non-housing needs once stably housed.
- “Housing First” means different things to different programs
 - HUD program model: shelter (**ASAP**) → Rapid Rehousing (RRH) with “just enough assistance” (“typically six months or less”)
 - Victim services model: shelter (**safety/healing**) → transition-in-place in a scattered site apartment, with up to two years of assistance.
 - Huge variation in amount / duration of financial assistance, and in mix / intensity / duration of services. Increased program flexibility that comes with being able to access private resources.

Approach to Services: Advocacy / Case Management: Housing First: Limitations or Details of the Approach?

- **“Housing First”** challenges for Transition-in-Place / RRH Programs:
 - What if a survivor isn’t “ready” or cannot get a lease in her name?
 - What if a survivor is not committed to independent housing?
 - What if a survivor seeks more support than she can access from a scattered site location, or the safety/support of a staffed program?
 - What if a survivor has poor prognosis for sustainable income?
 - As “traditional” TH models are replaced with transition-in-place models, what low threshold options are available to survivors with greater needs for support and more significant barriers to housing / income / employment / independence?

Approach to Services: Advocacy / Case Management: Sanctuary Model – Full Frame / Network-Oriented Approach

- Importance of understanding and being guided by the unique motivations and priorities of each survivor.
- Holistic, trauma-informed, ***network-oriented approach***: participants are defined by more than their status as “survivors.” They are part of communities in which they have meaningful roles and relationships.
- ***Full Frame*** emphasis on “***tradeoffs***” in choosing between “safety” and leaving the relationship / community vs. sustaining the roles and relationships that enrich and add meaning to a person’s life. (Davies’ “Advocacy Beyond Leaving” ~ “harm reduction”)
- Importance of operating the program and delivering services in a way that is inclusive / empowering for both participants and staff.

Approach to Services: Advocacy / Case Management: Motivational Interviewing: A Useful Tool

- **Motivational Interviewing**

- not a case management approach; MI is a style of counseling that advocates can use to help participants navigate difficult decisions in which there is either ambivalence or tradeoffs to consider.
- [Edmund & Bland \(2011\)](#) – MI is a counseling approach that helps people "explor[e] and resolv[e] the ambivalence most people feel when they seek to make major changes in their lives. Emphasis is on respecting individuals' right to make their own decisions as they are ready to do so, which [is] compatible with the empowerment approach favored by victims' advocates."

- **Provider comments** on their approach to advocacy/case management

Approach to Services: Safety Planning

- Safety Planning (Domestic Violence)
 - Batterer-generated risks: violence, psychological abuse, financial abuse, sabotage, endangerment of children
 - Life-generated risks: poverty, loss of work, loss of health coverage, inability to sustain child custody
 - Maximizing safety / minimizing risks attendant to:
 - ✓ unplanned encounters with abusive (ex-)partner;
 - ✓ remaining in contact with abusive (ex-)partner (e.g., in shared custody or visitation arrangements); or
 - ✓ remaining in connection with extended family and/or community that includes abusive (ex-)partner.

Approach to Services: Safety Planning: Restraining Orders/Orders of Protection

- Potentially beneficial / potentially inflammatory
- Only effective if abusive (ex-)partner / assailant is deterred by the threat of punishment for violating court order
- May be seen by “authorities” (public assistance offices, judges ruling on custody, police) as a “litmus test” of the survivor’s “commitment” to extricating herself (and her children) from a dangerous situation
- ➔ ***The survivor is best judge of whether to seek such an order.***
- See WomensLaw.org webpage on restraining orders for general background information and state-specific laws governing such orders.
- VAWA Full Faith and Credit (FFC) provision requires that orders issued in any jurisdiction be recognized and enforced in all other jurisdictions.

Approach to Services: Safety Planning Danger Assessment / Lethality Assessment

- An accurate measure of survivor's future risks?
-- or --
- An appropriate tool for triaging survivors participating in a “coordinated entry” system?
-- or --
- A vehicle for helping survivor systematically inventory their experience of abuse and risks for future violence
-- or --
- A vehicle for supporting closer cooperation between law enforcement, health provides, and victim services providers in addressing risks posed by domestic violence

Approach to Services: Safety Planning & Technology

- Safe Use of Technology
 - NNEDV Safety Net project:
 - ✓ training and resources for providers on program use of technology, assistive technology for Deaf survivors and survivors with disabilities, data collection/storage, etc.
 - ✓ resources for survivors on safe use of phones, tablets, internet browsers, etc.
 - Counseling survivors who will be referred into mainstream homeless services system about their right to withhold permission to share personally identifying information.
- **Provider comments** on participant safety / safety planning

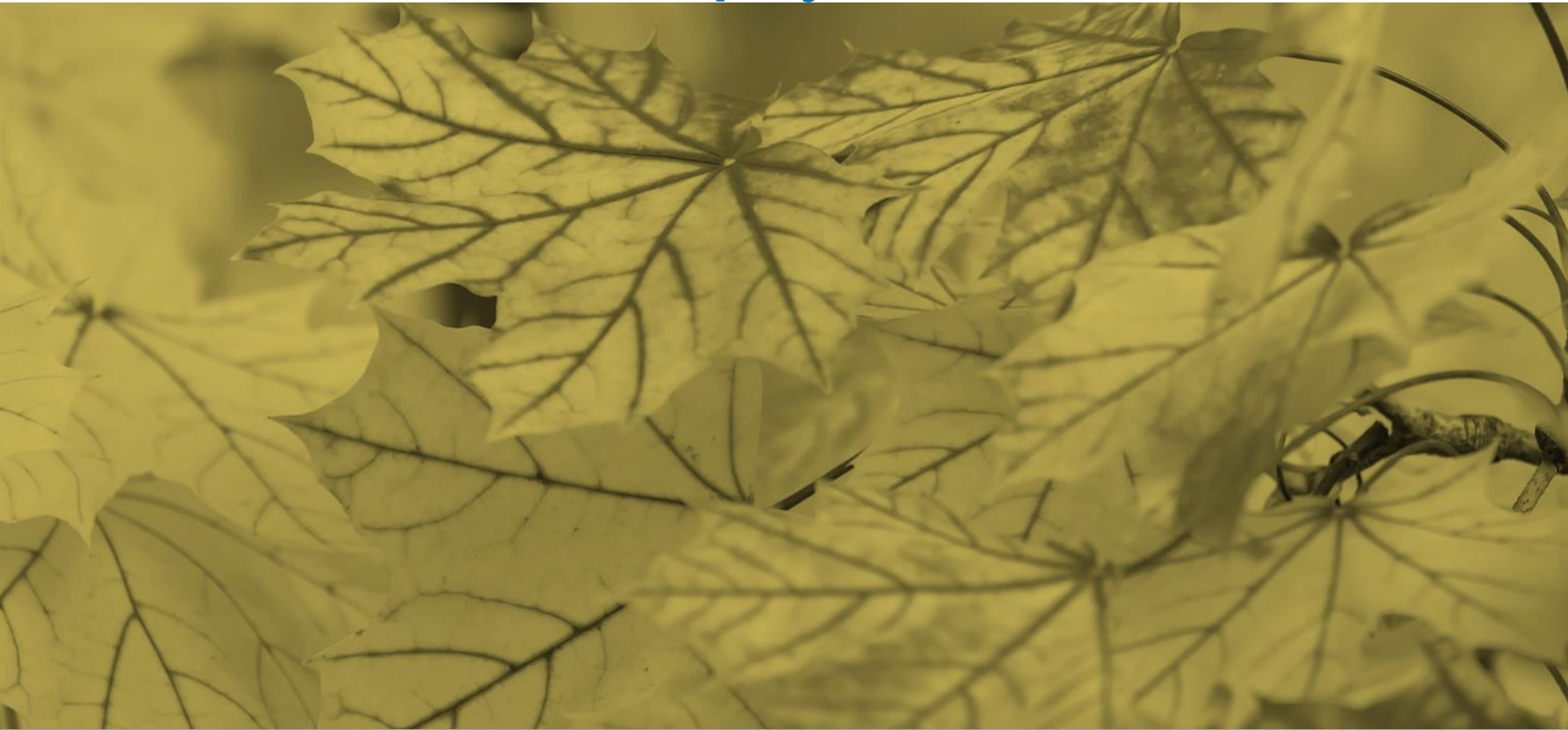
Approach to Services: Community Integration

- **Critical importance of well functioning social networks:** (a) increase survivor wellbeing; (b) increase access to resources; counter abuser's efforts to isolate her; (c) reduce severity of PTSD and post-trauma distress
- What if survivor's community **condones or ignores** her partner's violence and abuse, and exerts unwanted pressure to remain in or return to situation?
- **Tradeoffs** of being in a residential TH program away from abusive partner: (a) respite from the violence; (b) isolates survivor from informal network, and from roles and relationships central to her identity and self-worth; (c) formal supports (e.g., therapists) offer more limited, less enduring support, often dependent on payment or insurance coverage that survivor doesn't have.
- **Making a life in a new community** takes an investment of energy. Process may be liberating and therapeutic, or draining and anxiety-provoking.
- **Provider comments** on how programs support survivor integration

Approach to Services: Follow-Up

- Regulatory framework (OVW, HUD) for follow-up services
- **Provider comments** describing substantial variation in program approaches / experience with follow-up services, based on
 - Nature of relationship between staff and survivor and survivor's experience while in the program
 - Geography / transportation logistics of staying connected
 - Nature of survivors' living situations; needs (e.g., tangible support, friendly ear, counseling, referrals, etc.); and access to alternate / safe sources of support.
 - Provider's approach / perceived ability to safely reach out to "alumni"
- **Provider comments** on challenges serving rural communities.

Chapter 10: Approach to Services: Obtaining Housing, Income / Education / Employment, Self-Determination



Approach to Services: Obtaining Housing: Different Models / Implications

- Traditional TH vs. OVW Transition-in-Place vs. HUD RRH
 - ***Different threshold for participating in program:*** based on who is named on lease, duration of lease, survivor's "credentials" / income
 - ***Different timing on addressing the housing barriers:*** by when do participants have to find housing and get a lease in their name?
 - ***Different timing on the housing search:*** do survivors need to lease housing to participate in the program – or – do survivors participate in the program to enhance their ability to find housing?
 - ***Different program focus:*** are housing and income the primary focus, or does program take a holistic, survivor-centered approach?
 - ***Different meaning and timeframe for “completing” the program***

Approach to Services: Obtaining Housing: The Housing Search Environment

- Survivors simultaneously dealing with trauma, safety, health, children's needs, housing, income, legal, and all other priorities.
- Rental housing markets more expensive, more competitive (especially for decent, affordable units in safe locations); credentials matter.
- Increasing disparity between entry level wages and cost of housing.
- Shift in program model to participant-leased transition-in-place means a higher threshold for entry; receipt of HUD funds makes housing compliance more complex, shrinks the timeframe for addressing the barriers that stand in the way of “success” and “sustainability.”
- VAWA housing protections (e.g., lease bifurcation) help survivors already in public/subsidized housing, but new access to public or subsidized housing is increasingly tight. Rising to the top of a waitlist for public or subsidized housing could take years.

Approach to Services: Obtaining Housing: Housing Search Challenges / Approaches / Strategies

- Review of the challenges survivors face
- Approaches and strategies, including landlord outreach, credit/debt repair, job search, visa applications, housing budgets to inform search process, interviewing skills, training on tenancy rights and responsibilities, tenant advocacy, funding minor repairs, landlord protection fund guaranteeing coverage of damages, etc.
- Annotated list of resources addressing diverse aspects of the housing search process
- Extensive **provider comments** about the challenges faced by survivors seeking housing and the approaches taken to help address those challenges.

Approach to Services:

Income / Education / Employment: Importance

- Poverty perpetuates violence, violence perpetuates poverty
- Goodman et al. (2005) – access to resources is a source of power in a relationship
- Davies (2009) – “To be safe, victims need to be free from the violence and control of their partners, but they must also be able to meet their basic human needs.”
- Beeble, Bybie, & Sullivan (2010) – “Women survivors' psychological well-being is closely tied to their material well-being by way of resources.”
- Given the research linking poverty and violence, one might conclude that a ***program that places survivors in housing they are unlikely to be able to financially sustain, leaves them vulnerable to further victimization by the people they may turn to for financial support.***

Approach to Services:

Income / Education / Employment: Challenges & Approaches

- Barriers to Education / Training / Employment
- General information and online resource listings
 - education and training programs and scholarships.
 - career planning, job search
 - workplace safety: (resources for employers and advocates to address risks of sabotage or harassment by the (ex-)partner)
 - addressing workplace discrimination against survivors
 - employment help for survivors with criminal history records
- Extensive **provider comments** on survivors' challenges and approaches taken to support efforts to obtain education, employment, childcare, transportation assistance.

Approach to Services:

Self-Determination: Financial Abuse

- Examples of Financial Abuse: barring victim from discretionary access to assets, depleting/destroying victim's assets, prohibiting victim from working or seizing her income, ruining victim's credit/reputation, etc.
- Plunkett and Sussman's ***Consumer Rights Screening Tool for Domestic Violence Advocates and Lawyers***
- ***WomensLaw.org Financial Abuse webpage*** - options for covering abuse-related medical/court/other costs, addressing identity theft
- ***Center for Survivor Agency and Justice*** online trainings on the role and importance of tax advocacy.

Approach to Services: Self-Determination: Mainstream Benefits

Information and Online Resources:

- Income, nutrition, health coverage
- Veterans income and disability-related benefits, health coverage, Military Sexual Trauma
- Parents and children's services (parenting, child development, childcare, Early Intervention, Head Start, etc.)
- Immigration status: special visas, public charge issues
- Financial assistance for survivors to help with the costs of fleeing and rebuilding their lives

Approach to Services:

Self-Determination: Financial Literacy

Financial Literacy / Empowerment: Information and Resources

- Allstate/NNEDV Moving Ahead through Financial Management curriculum, plus additional resources addressing:
 - Budgeting and money management
 - Credit, debt, and bankruptcy
 - Loans
 - Dealing with utility companies
- IDAs (Individual Development Accounts) / Micro-lending
- Other life skills

Provider comments - mainstream benefits / financial empowerment

Thank You!

For more information visit: www.air.org/THforSurvivors

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