

**Moving Toward Best Practice:**

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

**for Agencies Serving Survivors of  
Human Trafficking**



# Hello!

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*We Are*



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# Overview

- History of the Guiding Principles
- Purpose of the guide
- Review of each principle
- Introduction to the self-assessment



# History of the Guiding Principles

## US Dept of Health & Human Services

ACF's Region 4 Human Trafficking Advisory Group developed the Guiding Principles.

## Guidance includes

input, standards, and guidelines from various regions.

## Identified need to develop

best practices framework to guide and evaluate agencies providing services to victims of human trafficking.

## The Guiding Principles were

peer reviewed by the OTIP, OVC, and by a survivor advocate and service provider through NHTTAC.



## Principle 1: Survivor-Centered Approach

### Principle Tenets

- Emphasis on self-determination
- Minimize re-traumatization
- Survivor actively engaged in the service process

### Practical Application

- Intake process
- Multidisciplinary referrals and meetings
- Client choice paramount in all service determinations and services steps



## Principle 2: Empowerment/Strengths- Based

### Principle Tenets

- Empowerment and strengths-based are not the same
- Empowerment promotes self-sufficiency, personal power, and choice
- Strengths-based service work focuses on skills, positive behaviors/traits, and self-awareness of program participants

### Practical Application

- Intake may include specific questions about what the program , their ideas about how to move forward, etc.
- Services provided may include activities like learning a new skill
- Encouraging and equipping program participants to be their own advocates



## Service Specific Questions to Ask Yourself and Program Participants

- Is this something the individual could do on their own, if I show them how to do it once?
- Does this individual have employment/educational skills that they can build upon with some support?
- What does this person want, and how can I provide support to help make that a reality?
- Am I providing this service because it is easier or because it is better for this individual?



## Principle 3: Trauma-Informed Approach

### Principle Tenets

- Consider the whole person
- Address past traumas
- Understand the impact of trauma
- Tailor services to be appropriate for trauma recovery
- Use basic environmental logistics and relational techniques to allow space for, and reduce, trauma response

### Practical Application

- Does your intake process address past traumas, health needs, and personal supports?
- Is the space where you are seeing clients trauma-informed? Consider all the senses in this assessment.
- Has your staff received training on simple grounding techniques?



## Principle 4: Screening

### Principle Tenets

- Screening should be done for all potential human trafficking
- Rapid screening first, then in-depth assessment
- Utilize validated screening and assessment tools
- Recommend including labor-specific questions in all screenings
- Staff should be trained on screening toll prior to use

### Practical Application

- Written policies and procedures that discuss screening-specific training assessment tools.
- Mindset of “screening in” as opposed to “screening out”
- Know that screening may require multiple conversations
- Process for next steps and referrals for multiple screening outcomes
- Screening for all typologies of trafficking



## Validated Screening & Assessment Tools



Tool Identifier	S	A	Demographic	Environment
Greenbaum Screening Tool	X		Ages 12-18; sex trafficking only	Health care setting
Human Trafficking Identification and Measurement (HTIAM-14)	X		Homeless Youth; sex trafficking and labor trafficking	Service Provider Setting
Vera Institute's Trafficking Victim Identification Tool (TVIT)	X	X	Ages 13+; sex trafficking and labor trafficking	Not specified
Quick Youth Indicators for Trafficking (QYIT)	X		Homeless Young Adults; sex trafficking and labor trafficking	Service Provider Setting
Human Trafficking Screening Tool (HTST)	X		Ages 18-24, sex trafficking only	Runaway-Homeless Youth System settings
Human Trafficking Screening Tool-Short Form (HTST-SF)	X		Ages 18-24, sex trafficking only	Runaway-Homeless Youth System settings
Commercial Sexual Exploitation-Identification Tool (CSE-IT)	X		Ages 10-24+, sex trafficking only	Multiple settings, including child welfare, juvenile justice, schools, homeless youth shelters, healthcare, and mental health.

\*("S" Indicates "Screening Tool", "A" indicates "Assessment Tool")



## Principle 5: Religious/Spiritual Self- Determination

### Principle Tenets

- Agencies receiving federal funding shall not discriminate on the basis of religion or require engagement in religious activities
- Transparency for faith-based organizations
- Faith-motivated vs faith-based
- Behaviors parallel with traffickers
- Approach religious/spiritual preference as other service-related needs

### Practical Application

- Policies and procedures do not require participation in order to access services.
- Include questions specific to religious/spiritual preferences
- For faith-based orgs – clearly explain any faith-based components of programming before potential client engages in services



## Problematic Practices

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### **Required participation in**

religious activities in order to receive services from program

### **Non-compliance with**

religious requirements result in exit from program

### **Not honoring various faith**

traditions or engaging in discriminatory practices

### **Sharing information**

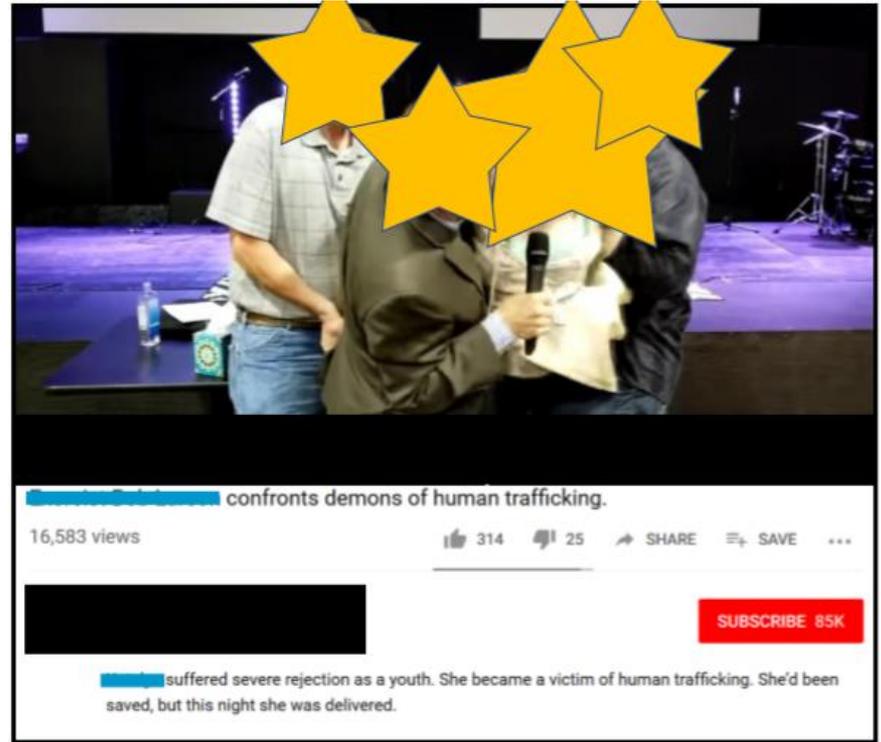
publicly with faith communities



## Real Life Example of a Problematic Practice

An exorcism was arranged by a faith-based human trafficking service provider:

- Required attendance of program participants
- In front of an audience of over 50 people
- Recorded and posted to YouTube using individual's name in the video





## Principle 6: Confidentiality

### Principle Tenets

- Informed consent and privacy
- Legal restrictions
- Program policies and procedures

### Practical Application

- Written policies and procedures specific to client privacy and confidentiality
- Talking with clients about informed consent
- Utilizing release of information forms with clients for referrals and collaboration with community partners
- Utilizing media release forms in advance of any public information



## Real Life Example of a Problematic Practice

I had the (extreme) honor of working with [REDACTED] conducting an undercover human trafficking detail on [REDACTED] in [REDACTED]. During that investigation, we located several women who were in need of assistance for many different reasons. Please read the request below.

One woman in particular has two kids, ages one and three. She works 40 hours a week at Arby's trying to ends meet at minimum wage. She had distanced herself from the children's father when she found out that he sells drugs, at this time he is incarcerated. This woman would not take any handouts, she even placed herself in danger trying to be the best mother she can be while supporting her two children.

We would try to help her with a hand up not a hand out. I am asking for anyone to chip in and help if its possible. Her one-year-old just had a birthday and she had to use some of her rent money to buy a cake and a present.

[REDACTED] or myself will collect anything that may help her. Her 1-year-old child wears size 4 diapers, she needs money for her insurance and tags which is about \$130 dollars. Her electric bill is \$80. You can give money, gift cards to Kroger or Walmart, diapers,

**HT Advocate**  
Yesterday at 1:10 PM · 🌐

**Community Member**  
Does she have boys or Girls?  
Yesterday at 10:50 PM · Like · Reply

**HT Advocate**  
[REDACTED] 11c shoe. ..6t clothes (children 6),  
[REDACTED] 5w shoes, 18-24 months  
Yesterday at 11:00 PM · Like · Reply

**Law Enforcement Officer**  
Boys. [REDACTED] 11c shoe. ..6t clothes (children 6), [REDACTED] 5w shoes, 18-24 months  
Yesterday at 11:00 PM · Like · Reply

**HT Advocate**  
Thanks  
Yesterday at 11:01 PM · Like · Reply

Write a reply...



## A Better Way to Share





## Considerations for publicly sharing information

- Do you need/have informed consent from client?
- Protect the identity of clients (photos, names, etc.)
- Protect information about locations
- Protect other identifiable information
- Use caution in discussing community partners
- Keep information about specific LE activities private
- Focus: services provided, service needs, etc.
- Is the content sensationalized?



## Principle 7: Safety

### Principle Tenets

- Safety planning with clients
- Safety considerations for service providers
- Let survivor have voice in defining safety

### Practical Application

- Training for staff on safety planning with clients
- Additional safety considers for foreign national clients
- Written policies and procedures that provide safety measures for service providers
- Survivors active participants in building safety plans



## Problematic Practices

- ⦿ Not recognizing the expertise each client has regarding their personal safety
- ⦿ Not providing sufficient safety measures for programmatic staff
- ⦿ Posting information about being involved in law enforcement actions or posting identifying information about clients (e.g. age, photos)



## Principle 8: Non-discrimination

### Principle Tenets

- Agency commitment to serve all (especially individuals from marginalized communities who are more likely to be trafficked)
- Evident in policy, signage, and culture of the agency
- Specific accommodations/access for individuals with limited English proficiency, with disabilities, and those identifying as LGBTQIA+

### Practical Application

- Agency includes intake forms that list primary language and preferred pronouns
- Agency has conducted a walk through of the program to ensure that those with limited English proficiency or disabilities can have equal access
- Agency consults with leaders from marginalized communities to develop responsive programming



## Principle 9: Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate

### Principle Tenets

- Agency recognizes that culture impacts experience of trafficking and how survivors may experience healing
- Agency conducts training of staff to work towards cultural humility
- Agency ensures that individuals from diverse communities and backgrounds receive services that are responsive to their cultural identity and experience

### Practical Application

- Shelter has a policy to allow for dress and dietary needs that may be culturally specific
- Signage reflects diverse communities and are in language that is responsive to the community
- Agency conducts a focus group with individuals from diverse communities to get feedback on services



## Principle 10: Collaboration

### Principle Tenets

- Agency recognizes that no one entity can do all things/ meet all need of victims
- Agency has working partnerships and MOUs with diverse agencies
- Agency develops protocols to clearly determine roles and responsibilities

### Practical Application

- Agency brainstorm community partners that need to be involved prior to a human trafficking emergency
- Example: Law enforcement develops a plan with a victims advocate and secures safe housing prior to an operation in which a trafficking victim is likely to be identified and offered services.



## Problematic Practices

- Competition that prevents agencies from collaborating
- Exceeding capacity and skills by offering to serve all victims without having adequate training/resources/expertise
- Not recognizing and respecting each organization's specific expertise and role



## Principle 11: Ethics & Professionalism

### Principle Tenets

- Knowing your role
- Respecting the roles of others
- Image usage
- Online presence and social media
- Language usage
- Statistics and sources of information
- Service description accuracy
- Communication with the media

### Practical Application

- Be clear of your role and the roles of others
- Be cognizant of others trying to put you in another role; set boundaries
- Not using chains, physical violence, abuse, or bar codes, etc. in graphics
- Special care to not sensationalize or reinforce false narratives
- Be mindful of terms such as victim, survivor, innocence, illegal immigrant, etc.



## Problematic Practices

- ⦿ Working outside of your role:
  - Outside of expertise
  - With other populations
- ⦿ Statistics and sources
  - Not citing *original* sources for data
  - Using data from questionable sources
  - Continuing to use data that isn't accurate or using old data
  - Not discussing data in the accurate context
- ⦿ Language
  - Conflating issues in language use
  - Word usage that doesn't reflect intent/meaning

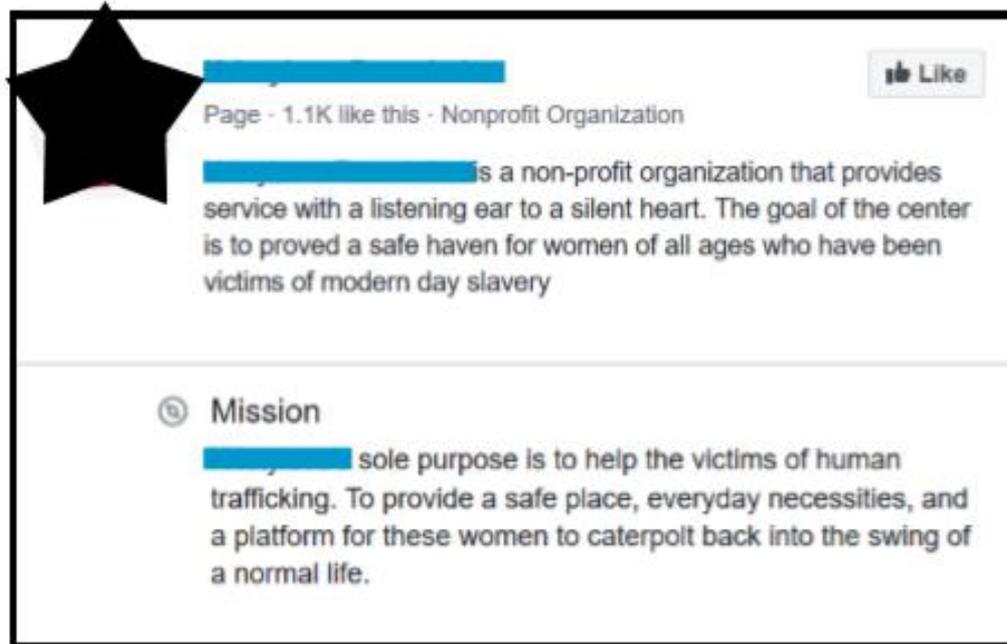


## Real Life Example of a Problematic Practice





## Real Life Example of Problematic Practice



Page - 1.1K like this · Nonprofit Organization

Like

is a non-profit organization that provides service with a listening ear to a silent heart. The goal of the center is to provide a safe haven for women of all ages who have been victims of modern day slavery

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 Mission

sole purpose is to help the victims of human trafficking. To provide a safe place, everyday necessities, and a platform for these women to caterpolt back into the swing of a normal life.



## Principle 12: Survivor-Informed

### Principle Tenets

- Services should be survivor-informed
- Variety of activities and roles for survivor engagement
- Survivors should be employed as staff/contractors
- Survivor engagement should be meaningful and non-exploitive

### Practical Application

- Survivors should be a part of every program, beyond the space of being a program participant
- Engagement with survivors at all levels in the agency (consultants, staff, leadership, boards, etc.)
- Utilize resources created by survivors and support the work

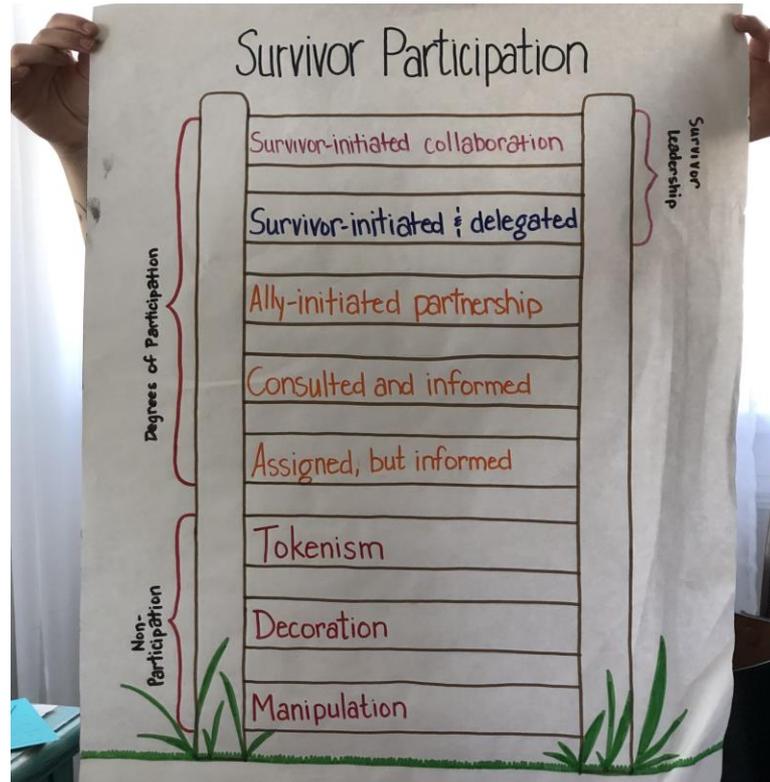


## Problematic Practices

- ⦿ “Survivor-led” is not the same as “survivor-informed”
- ⦿ Exploitative survivor engagement is common
- ⦿ “Survivor-led” as the only legitimate service organization is a false narrative
- ⦿ Tokenism
- ⦿ Lack of balance between regard for emotional labor and appropriate pay for experience and education in compensation for survivors



# The Survivor Ladder of Participation





## Principle 13: Evidence-Based Interventions

### Principle Tenets

- Utilize evidence-based (validated) screening tools, prevention education curriculums, and other evidence-based practices
- Engage in evaluation of your own program with a focus on outcomes

### Practical Application

- Have program participants complete an evaluation or feedback from regarding services received
- Engage former clients in formal program evaluation
- Use a validated screening tool
- Utilize evidence-based prevention education curriculums



## Principle 14: Staff Support and Self Care

### Principle Tenets

- Establishing boundaries with clients and the community
- Providing training to staff on self-awareness
- Including self-care as written policies and procedures
- Prioritizing self-care in practice

### Practical Application

- Encouraging staff to flex out their time and take days off
- Exploring with agency leadership, finance, and human resources ways that the agency can provide extra support to direct service staff
- Provide workspaces that promote self-care, mindfulness, etc.



## Principle 15: Training for Service Providers

### Principle Tenets

- Hiring staff who have the appropriate background (education and experience)
- Policies and procedures outlining requirements of staff (at hire and on-going)
- List of necessary components for staff training and how those will be provided
- Process for regularly reviewing staff training needs

### Practical Application

- Job descriptions that clearly explain educational and experience-specific requirements for staff
- Hire staff only who fit the job description
- Consider “outside of the box” methods for hiring staff
- Have training requirements include experiential components such as going on police ride alongs



## **Guiding Principles Self-Assessment Tool**

This assessment is intended to provide a clear visual of you/your agency's implementation of the 15 Guiding Principles.



# Self-Assessment Example

## Self-Assessment | Guiding Principle 1: **VICTIM-CENTERED APPROACH**

Instructions: Answer these questions based on <i>actual, current</i> practices (as opposed to theoretical practice standards) within your agency.	1 Never	2 Rarely	3 Sometimes	4 Often	5 Always
1. Agency staff are trained in a victim-centered response to clients.					
2. Does your agency prioritize client needs, adjusting policies and procedures as needed to adequately address client needs?					
3. Does your agency have a client's rights and responsibilities form that outlines client restrictions, limitations, or activity-specific requirements before they agree to engage in services?					
4. Does your agency encourage participants to choose their own goals?					
5. Are clients regularly involved in or aware of all work done on their behalf to achieve their goals?					
6. Does your agency continue to support client goals even when they do not align with recommendations from agency staff?					
7. Do case meetings or multidisciplinary team meetings include the client as a participant?					

Total Score:

Assess below how your agency applies written policies/procedures and actual practice specific to this guiding principle:

<u>Written policies/procedures:</u>	<u>Needs Substantial Improvement</u>	<u>Effectively Implementing:</u>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Practice/implementation:</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments:

What do you identify as needing the most improvement in your agency in regards to this guiding principle?

What next step(s) will you take to improve your agency's approach to this guiding principle?

# Thank you!

## Contact



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