



Advocating for Our Relatives Experiencing Domestic and Sexual Violence

Responses for Urban Native Programs

*Remember that you are all people
and that all people are you.
Remember that you are this
universe and that this universe is
you. Remember that all is in
motion, is growing, is you.
Remember that language comes
from this. Remember the dance
that language is, that life is.*

Remember, by Joy Harjo



Our advocacy work must reclaim our traditional values of respect and cooperation and we must work to restore balance and harmony to our tribal communities. We do this in the way we conduct our work.

Working with survivors/victims of domestic and sexual violence, we must have an ability to recognize how what we are doing will have an impact on their lives. We listen, and listen more about what the survivors are telling us. They know their own experiences and are the best guide in what they need. Our job is to offer options and to engage with a survivor to support them in finding their own solutions. We assist a victim/survivor with exploring their options while balancing their survival skills. We bring our knowledge and expertise to help survivors and victims make informed decisions about their lives.

Our responsibility is to offer a supportive, compassionate and patient process.

Biased Supporter

Advocates are biased supporters. This means our work is with and on behalf of the survivor. We work with them to have their voices be heard, options presented to them, their needs met, and their decisions supported. To advocate is do more than provide services to survivors. We work holistically for them.

Safety

Survivor safety is critically important. They will be the best judge of what they need. We can help them identify options but it is not our decision to make.

Survivors have physical, emotional and mental safety needs.

Confidential

Survivors have a basic right to expect information shared with the advocate will not be shared with others inappropriately or without survivors' knowledge or consent. However, confidentiality is not absolute, and it is essential that survivors be made aware of the exceptions such as mandatory reporting.

Trauma Centered

Survivors experience trauma from the recent violence. They also experience may have prior traumas they experienced as well as historical and multi-generational trauma. We work in ways to provide a time for healing from the trauma. Importantly we must be in-tune with the survivor to not create more trauma.

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