

**Collaborating for Equitable Language Access for Survivors of Sexual Assault: (2) A Healing-Centered Approach for Interpreter Services for Forensic Clients**



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF Forensic Nurses



api|gbv  
ASIAN PACIFIC INSTITUTE  
in GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

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- The International Association of Forensic Nurses is accredited as a provider of nursing continuing professional development by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.
- The planners, presenters and content reviewers of this presentation disclose no conflicts of interest.
- Upon attending the course in its entirety and completing the course evaluation, IAFN members will receive a certificate that documents 2 hours of nursing continuing education.

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**Collaborating for Equitable Language Access for Survivors of Sexual Assault Webinar**

The first webinar of this series discussed the importance of language access how it applies when working with survivors of personal violence. There was an overview provided of the role of the interpreter while interpreting in a forensic setting. An overview of the Ethical Guiding Principles for Interpreters Working Outside of the Courtroom was provided, and there was an introduction of the Guide for Interpreter Services, that was created collaboratively with IAFN and API-GBV specifically for this webinar series and provided as a handout.



<https://www.asfetsa.org/page/ArchivedWebinars-SAFEta>




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**Presenter**



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### LEARNING OUTCOME

Participants of this webinar will have an increased knowledge of ways to effectively collaborate with spoken language interpreters to provide trauma informed interpretation, identify challenges that may arise in doing so, and ways to effectively implement the use of a trauma informed approach with individuals that have experienced personal violence.



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### Trigger Warning

This training provides an open space for the critical and civil exchange of ideas through the use of case scenarios. Some scenarios contain graphic when describing the violence within the scenario. Some participants may find the language offensive and/or traumatizing.

We'll aim to forewarn about potentially disturbing content and we ask all participants to help to create an atmosphere of mutual respect and sensitivity



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### Key Terms

**Victim:** An individual who suffered harm as a result of a criminal conduct. Has legal implications within the criminal justice process. Victims have particular rights.

**Survivor:** Term used by many in the service field to recognize the strength it takes to continue on a journey toward healing in the aftermath of a traumatic experience

President's Interagency Task Force (2012, p.8)



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### Key Terms

**Patient:** This term refers to an individual that is receiving or whom is registered to receive medical care. It will be referenced anytime there is discussion regarding medical care and treatment of an individual.

**Client:** This term references an individual and possibly their family, that is receiving professional services from a victim service agency provider.



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### Key Terms

**Limited English Proficiency:** Individuals with LEP are those individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and have a limited ability to: read, write, speak or understand English.

**Deaf or Hard of Hearing:** Deaf (upper case 'D') refers to an identity with its own culture, language, and diverse communities



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The term "intimate partner violence" or IPV describes physical violence, sexual violence, stalking, or psychological harm by a current or former partner or spouse. This type of violence can occur among heterosexual or same-sex couples and does not require sexual intimacy.

\*Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

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## Domestic Violence

The term "Domestic Violence" or DV describes the use of physical violence, sexual violence, psychological harm, and other abuse behaviors against another that takes place within a household.



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## IPV/DV Dynamics

In both instances, there is an ongoing, debilitating pattern of abuse behavior used against another individual to maintain power and control over them.



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**Sexual violence** is defined as: any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work.

-World Health Organization

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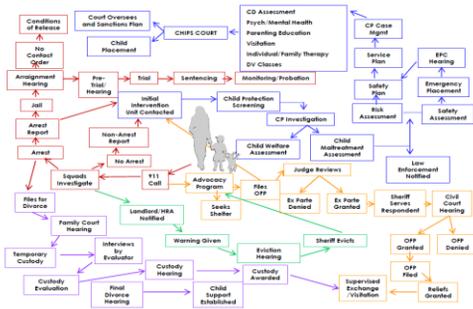
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Interpreting Settings

Forensic Interview	Medical Forensic Examination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child Advocacy Center</li> <li>Police Station</li> <li>Child Protection Office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hospital Setting</li> <li>Community Based Clinic Setting</li> <li>Child Advocacy Centers</li> </ul>

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### Introduction to Trauma Informed

What do we mean by **trauma**?




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### Individual trauma results from...

... a threat to one's physical or emotional well-being, and elicits intense feelings of helplessness, terror, and lack of control.



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### Understanding Trauma

- There is a biological response to trauma
- Variation in the response of survivors is normal
- No two people react the same
- Trauma impacts language and decision-making
- Judgement/expectation cannot be imposed
- Meet them where they are



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### Psychological Impacts of Trauma

- Fear
- Anxiety
- Self-blame
- Anger
- Shame
- Difficulty sleeping
- PTSD
- Trouble with intimacy
- Difficulty building close relationships



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### Promoting Autonomy In Interpreting

DO	DON'T
<b>Give voice</b>	Do not add, change or omit anything
<b>Preserve the message</b>	Don't explain it
<b>Respect your role boundaries</b>	Resist the temptation of helping
<b>You are trained as an interpreter</b>	You are not trained as an attorney



High Resolution photo. Licensed by Creative Commons

Source: Mappay A. Barcott, Katherine Allen, Carole E. Green, and Lisa M. Fawcett. *BREAKING SILENCE* Interpreting for Victim Services: A Training Manual. available at <https://open.sta.columbia.edu/handle/document/11220>




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### Adopting a trauma informed approach will help you :

- Prepare psychologically to hear about the impacts of violent crime
- Be more effective (by not taking trauma responses personally and understanding it's really about the survivor's experience)
- Place survivor's autonomy at the center
- Reduce possible vicarious trauma



Source: Adapted from Mappay A. Barcott, Katherine Allen, Carole E. Green, and Lisa M. Fawcett. *BREAKING SILENCE* Interpreting for Victim Services: A Training Manual. available at <https://open.sta.columbia.edu/handle/document/11220>

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### How can interpreters be trauma informed... and remain neutral?




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### Healing Centered Interpreting Goal 1:

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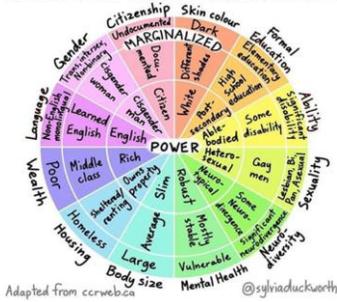


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### Understanding Power Dynamics



### WHEEL OF POWER/PRIVILEGE




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### Healing Centered Interpreting Goal 2:

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### Accuracy is Critical



### Case Scenario #1 with Chat Response

A forensic interview is being interpreted. The interpreter knows from reading the client's account that the case involves child sexual abuse. During the interview the client says her father touched her pussy. The interpreter doesn't know how to interpret *pussy*, but having worked with a Sexual Assault hotline in the past, they know that addressing the body part is most important, so they interpret "You know.. you know... down there". The interviewer continues with the interview presuming that her message has been conveyed.

How could word choice impact this client's case?



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### Word choice and understanding:

Are we saying what we think we are saying?

What do you hear?



What filtering takes place?



What do you interpret?



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### Self-reflection:

How would you interpret:

- SEXUAL PENETRATION
- SEXUAL INTRUSION
- RAPE
- SPOUSAL RAPE
- ANAL INTERCOURSE



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### Healing Centered Interpreting Goal 3:

Center the survivor's experience



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### Case Scenario with Poll Response

Interpreter Mr. E is interpreting an interview between a domestic violence advocate and a client. During the session, the client communicates to the advocate that she decided not to file a Restraining Order. During the session the client seemed shy and never made eye contact with the advocate.

After the session, and while walking to the parking lot, the interpreter approached the client and tells her: "In my experience interpreting for this organization, it's always best to file a restraining order. He will never stop, unless you do it now!"

Did the interpreter make a good decision?



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### Impartiality & Conflict of Interest

- "The interpreter shall be impartial & unbiased & shall refrain from conduct that may give an appearance of bias or conflict of interest...."
- "The interpreter shall disclose ... any real bias or interest in the parties or witnesses ..., or any situation or relationship that may be perceived ... as a bias or conflict of interest...."



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### Healing Centered Interpreting Goal 4:

#### Balance Compassion & Professionalism



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### Case Scenario 3 with Chat Responses

After interpreting for someone who was experiencing domestic violence with her partner, the interpreter, [with the best of intentions and from a place of empathy] gave the survivor her personal phone number.

**How could this action cause harm?  
What are other ways to show compassion within the role of an interpreter?**



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### Scope of Practice

- Interpreters are not licensed therapists, medical doctors, attorneys, or cultural anthropologists.
- Interpreters should NEVER offer legal advice or cultural advice.

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### Who should not interpret?

- Cultural Anthropologist
- Social Worker
- Advisor
- Counselor/Therapist/any Mental Health professional
- Lawyer or Paralegal
- Advocate or staff who knows ASL or the language of the individual with LEP




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### Acknowledging and Addressing Implicit Bias



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0veDFG6666s>

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### What is Implicit Bias?

- The attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.
- Activated involuntarily, without awareness or intentional control. Can be either positive or negative. Everyone is susceptible.

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0veDFG6666s>




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## Impact of Implicit Bias

- Research shows that explicit sexism, racism, and other forms of explicit bias have become less prominent and public over the past century.
- Likely more pervasive now are questions surrounding implicit bias—attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, decision-making, and behavior, without our even realizing it.

Wolcott, P. (2014). *Implicit Bias in the Courtroom*. In *Implicit Bias in the Courtroom*. (Ed. J. P. 2011). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.




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## Case Scenario 4 with Chat Response



Interpreter Ms. M arrives to an interpreting assignment. When she checks in with the advocate, she realizes she has interpreted for the survivor two months ago. While in the session, she hears about the new episode of violence with her partner. She cannot help but think that the survivor is causing the violence to herself by not leaving the relationship.

**What impact does this belief have on the interpretation?**

**What are the ways this interpreter could be reinforcing power imbalance in their role?**




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## Our Facial Expressions and Body Language Reveal Us

- The interpreter might be thinking, “Why don’t they leave?” or, “But why did they dress like that and then drink so much?”
- The survivor sees the interpreter’s face and body, hears the tone.
- If they feel judged, they might not open up during the court proceeding.



Source: Photos from Nancy A. Smith, *Empowering Courtroom Interpreting for Translators*




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### Noticing Your Own Experiences and Vulnerabilities

Interpreting intimate partner/domestic/ sexual violence will bring up reactions that can include:

- Disassociation (or detachment)
- Traumatic flashbacks,
- Feeling fear of the alleged perpetrator/defendant, or
- Feeling triggered/repulsed by the details of the story.

You might want to ask yourself:

- Where are these range of feelings coming from?
- Does this resonate my own/ family history?




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### Tips for Overcoming Our Biases

Educate yourself.

Reflect on your own experiences.

Find support from a colleague or mentor




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### Cultural Humility




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### Risks Of Cultural Brokering

- Being wrong
- Side conversations/Disclosure
- Taking over
- Losing trust
- Survivor does not get services/ is harmed through services

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### Linguistic Intervention

- To address only the linguistic content of the message
- For role clarification
- To identify cultural misunderstandings
- Linguistic Interruption **does not**:
  - Include cultural explanations,
  - Provide direct client support




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### Vicarious Trauma

• **Vicarious trauma** is an occupational challenge for people working and volunteering in the fields of victim services, law enforcement, emergency medical services, fire services, and other allied professions, due to their continuous exposure to victims of **trauma** and violence.



Image credit: <https://www.health.org.uk/press-releases/2018/08/2018-08-20-what-is-vicarious-trauma>

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Source: OVC. What is Vicarious Trauma: <https://ovc.org/program/vt/what-is-vicarious-trauma>

### Vicarious Trauma Symptoms- Chat Activity

What may be the symptoms of vicarious trauma?



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### Strategies When Preparing to Interpret Traumatic Content

1. Learn about the case as much as possible beforehand.
2. Be ready to interpret intimate body parts, acts of violence/abuse
3. Practice interpreting coarse and obscene language in a mirror (to be sure you don't display discomfort).
4. Preserve the message: do not explain it, but instead make sure it is clearly understood.



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### Strategies When Preparing to Interpret Traumatic Content (contd.)

5. Avoid helping, comforting and above all TOUCHING the victim: resist that temptation!
6. Establish a "distress" signal with the service provider (who can call for a break).
7. Rehearse deep breathing
8. Plan for self-care



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### Strategies When Getting Triggered During Interpretation

- Body scan- feet on the ground
- Plan with colleagues to swap
- Reduce eye contact
- Positioning yourself to see the outside (green and trees)
- Being proactive and as for a break




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### Interpreter Self-Care

“As an interpreter, the greatest gift you can ever give to a survivor of violent crime is empowerment through the gift of voice. Use that gift wisely. Honor the voices of the survivor and the provider, and your [work] can become a gift for healing and justice.”

Source: Marissa G. Bennett, Kathleen Allen, Carole E. Green, and Lucille Thomas. (2019). *Working Safely: Interpreting for Justice Services & Training Manual*. Washington, DC: IAFN.




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### Practicing Self-Care

Grounding techniques while interpreting




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### Creating A Self-Care Plan

- Be creative
- Be reasonable
- Be realistic

100+ Ways to Cope with Stress, Relaxation.com




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### Questions.....




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### Resources

- Model Guides for Policy and Practice in the State Court: [https://www.ncsc.org/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0017/19700/court-interpretation-consortium-model-guides-for-policy-and-practice-in-the-state-courts.pdf](https://www.ncsc.org/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/19700/court-interpretation-consortium-model-guides-for-policy-and-practice-in-the-state-courts.pdf)
- NCIHC National Code of Ethics for Interpreters in Health Care: <https://www.ncihc.org/assets/documents/publications/NCIHC%20National%20Code%20of%20Ethics.pdf>
- Guiding Principles for Interpreters in cases involving Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Sexual Abuse and Human Trafficking: <https://apinstitute.box.com/s/ogflrvly6v6lz5f9fh2z7plx31ngzh>

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### Implicit Bias Resources

- Kirwan Institute, *State of the Science: Implicit Bias Review 2015*, available at <http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/2015-kirwan-implicit-bias.pdf>
- Saleem Reshamwala, NY Times, *Check out Bias to Wreck our Bias*, available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/video/us/10000004818668/check-our-bias-to-wreck-our-bias.html>
- Project Implicit, available at: <https://www.projectimplicit.net/index.html>

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### Resources: Trauma Informed and Interpreting

- ATA, *Breaking Silence: What Interpreters Need to Know About Victim LEP Services Interpreting*, The ATA Chronicle, available at: <http://www.atanet.org/chronicle-online/cover-feature/breaking-silence-what-interpreters-need-to-know-about-victim%E2%80%A8services-interpreting/#sthash.xRzyUXpB.dpbs>
- Marjory A. Bancroft, Katharine Allen, Carola E. Green, and Lois M. Feuerle, *Breaking Silence, Interpreting for Victim Services A Training Manual*, available at: <https://ayuda.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Breaking-Silence-Training-Manual-1.pdf>
- Marjory A. Bancroft, Katharine Allen, Carola E. Green, and Lois M. Feuerle, *Breaking Silence, Interpreting for Victim Services A Glossary of Victim Services Terminology*, available at: <http://www.cultureandlanguage.net/s/Breaking-Silence-Glossary.pdf>

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### Self-assessment Resources

- Professional Quality of Life (ProQoL) Self-Test (Available in 17 languages) [http://www.proqol.org/ProQoL\\_Test.html](http://www.proqol.org/ProQoL_Test.html)
- Compassion Fatigue Self-Test: An Assessment <http://www.compassionfatigue.org/pages/cfassessment.html>
- Life Stress Test <http://www.compassionfatigue.org/pages/lifestress.html>

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## Interpretation Technical Assistance & Resource Center (ITARC) Resources



- Interpreter Skills Building Training for Bilingual Individuals
- Language Access Planning and Compliance
- Interpreting for DV/SA Victims
- Interpreting for LGBTQ Victims and Survivors
- Cultural Responsiveness
- Technical Assistance on
  - Systems Advocacy
  - Language Access Planning and Protocols
  - Identifying qualified and certified interpreters

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## Additional API-GBV Resources



- Resource Guide For Advocates & Attorneys On Interpretation Services For Domestic Violence Victims, 2016: <https://www.api-gbv.org/resources/interpretation-resource-guide/>
- Survivors With Limited English Proficiency: Barriers To Access: <https://www.api-gbv.org/resources/survivors-with-limited-english-proficiency/>
- Serving Individuals Who Are Deaf, Hard Of Hearing Or Deaf-blind And Do Not Use American Sign Language, 2015: <https://www.api-gbv.org/resources/deaf-blind-hard-of-hearing/>

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### Future Webinars In This Series

- Collaborating for Equitable Language Access for Survivors of Sexual Violence: (3) Interpreter Services During the Forensic Interview  
**August 12, 2021 3-5pm EST**
- Collaborating for Equitable Language Access for Survivors of Sexual Violence: (4) Interpreter Services During the Medical Forensic Exam  
**August 31, 2021 3-5pm EST**




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### www.SAFeta.org Resources

Access to telephone or personalized e-mail technical assistance from the International Association of Forensic Nurses.

Email: [contact@safeta.org](mailto:contact@safeta.org)  
Professional Resource Line: 1-877-819-7278




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Research. Educate. Lead.



Thank you for joining us today!!

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