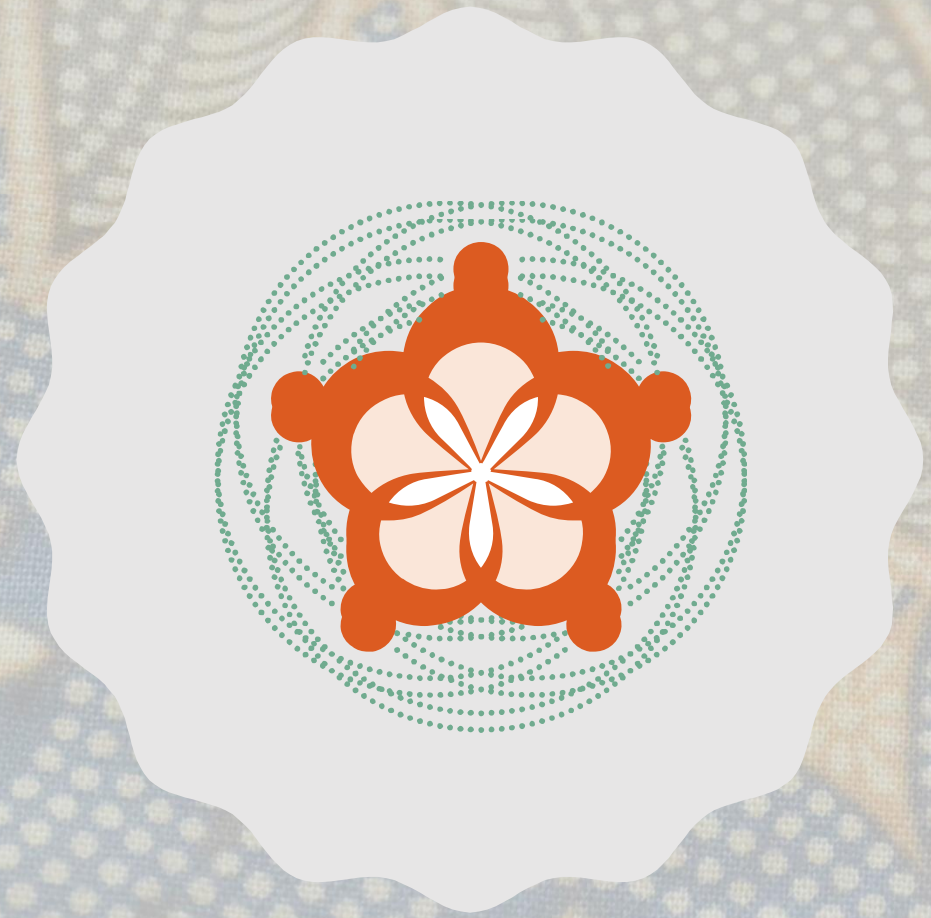

NAPIESV

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION
OF ASIANS & PACIFIC ISLANDERS
ENDING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

WHAT DOES ADVOCACY SERVICES LOOK LIKE FOR CULTURALLY-SPECIFIC PROGRAMS?

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF ASIANS & PACIFIC ISLANDERS ENDING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION

Culturally specific programs have been creating innovative programming in creating spaces for disclosures and for healing. But there is a tendency to disregard culturally specific practices due to issue that they are not evidence-based and the belief that "mainstream" practices as the "right way". This workshop will focus on sexual assault services to victims from culturally-specific communities.

GROUNDING

Grounding Exercise
Feet Seat and Back
(using focused attention on sensations)

INTRODUCTION

National Organization of API Ending Sexual Violence
www.napiesv.org

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NATIONAL ORG OF API ENDING SEXUAL VIOLENCE (NAPIESV)

- NAPIESV was established in 2010 to focus primarily on sexual violence because of growing concerns among advocates about the lack of specific services for API survivors of sexual assault.
- Awarded OVW TA grants FY 2011-2014, 2015 -2017, 2017 -2019
- Listening sessions report
- Curriculum: Sexual Violence, Child Sexual Abuse, Youth Sexual Exploitation, Militarism & VAW, Community Organizing, Transformative Justice, Healing
- http://www.napiesv.org/resources/

FIRST STEP:
NATIONAL COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

- API participants across five regions: the West, East, Midwest, South and Commonwealth of Northern Marianas Islands (CNMI).
- Total of 22 listening sessions/179 people with API advocates, women, men, elders, and youths and one strategic dialogue session.
- Individual discussions with numerous activists, advocates and service providers outside of the participants in the sessions.

FINDINGS FROM THE COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSIONS

naming sexual violence as an issue within API communities is, in itself, work, as many in our communities deny its very existence and different communities have -different ways of identifying, defining and naming sexual violence, if at all

"I didn't know that 'it' was sexual violence until I came to this organization seeking services." (Survivor of CSA)

FINDINGS FROM THE COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSIONS

many times the stories we hear are not **representative of the diversity of the peoples nor hold the many complexities** of gender, race/ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, age, ability and cultural traditions.

"Sexual violence happens everywhere, in different communities, so we have to be more vigilant."
(from one of women's listening sessions)

FINDINGS FROM THE COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSIONS

need to specifically address the issue of sexual violence in our communities because of the **unique conditions and impact of sexual violence** and the epidemic rates at which it happens.

"My parents told me to concentrate on education and no conversation about sexuality."
(from one of the youth listening sessions)

FINDINGS FROM THE COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSIONS

conditions surrounding **immigration and immigration status** can also affect an API individual's experience of sexual violence and of seeking services and support, specifically as it relates to work, wages and whether one has a sponsored visa or is undocumented

"With people losing jobs and forced to share a house with other families, what we see is kids that are now around 16 years old [who] have been molested since they were 10 years old."
(from one of the advocate listening sessions)

FINDINGS FROM THE COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSIONS

Sexual violence has been used throughout our histories of (and current experiences with) **imperialism, colonialism, war, militarization, sex trafficking, refugee and internment camps, and immigration**

Long **legacies of sexual violence within and connected to patriarchal family structures** as well, and even within matriarchal family structures, where women were given some power, but men ultimately made the final decision

"No one talks about sexual assault; you don't talk about your sex life. Sex is a given when you are married."
(from one of the advocate listening sessions)

ASSESSING YOUR ORGANIZATION'S SA ADVOCACY

STRATEGIES IN WORKING WITH CULTURALLY SPECIFIC VICTIM/SURVIVORS

Learning about the dynamics of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking
Learning victim/ survivor histories, vulnerabilities and experience
Learning about the different communities of the victim

SAFE SPACES TO BREAK THE SILENCE

spaces to be able to tell our own stories and name our own truths - breaking the silence around our experiences of sexual violence and creating spaces where we can openly share our stories is vital to our work

"I never told anyone all these years." (Survivor)

"I didn't want to talk about it because of all of the emotions. You're supposed to be strong by yourself and keep your story to yourself." (Survivor from one of the elders' listening sessions)

Violence is systemic and requires that we organize for major systemic change at an institutional level as well as community and individual levels.
target the root caus of sexual violence – not only on the incidences themselves, but also on the conditions that allow for sexual violence to continue
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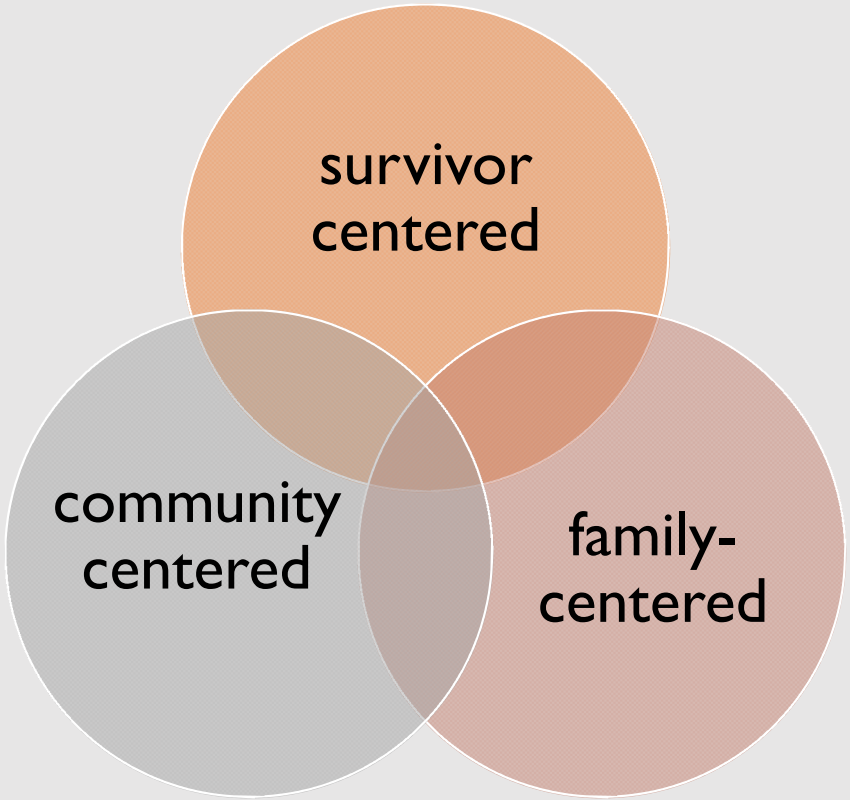
We cannot continue to individualize acts of violence without connecting them to the larger system in which we live.

The first step would be education to reveal the connections between sexual, intimate, communal and state violence to reveal how violence is encouraged and supported through laws, policies, culture and collective practices.

INCLUSION OF FAMILY MEMBERS IN SERVICES AND SOMETIMES THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE



COLLABORATIONS: CO-ADVOCACY

between mainstream service providers and culturally specific programs

between non-traditional SV service providers / social justice organization / ethnic-based organizations & mainstream service providers & culturally specific service providers

working to end conflict / peaceful resolutions

HIRING INDIVIDUALS FROM THE COMMUNITY

- community insiders
- trusted by the community
- training for the staff
- "healing and restoration" for the staff
- but, if you cannot hire someone from the community, hire someone who is connected/neighboring community

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

innovative, can include person to person, building relationship

providing services that might not be "victim" services but specific to the community needs

SERVICES

trauma informed - understanding the history of not only the survivor and their family but also their community

supportive groups e.g. weaving, sewing, cooking together, carving, canoeing

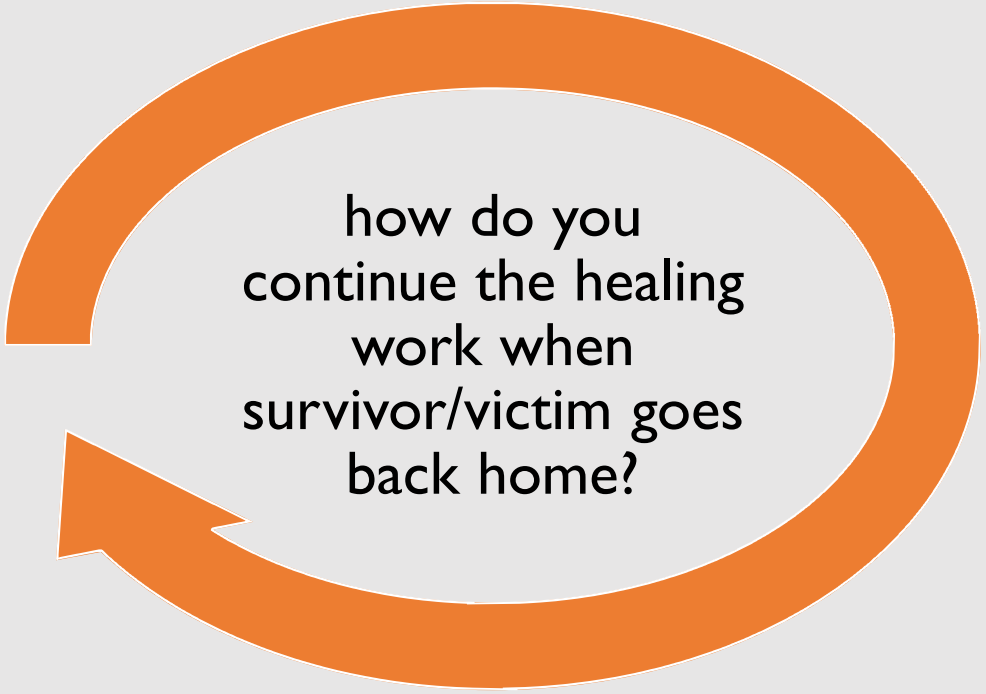
individual assistance that begins with maybe, what they need first just to survive

individual counseling, support (not therapy)

COMMUNITY BUILDING / COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS = ALLYSHIP

Creating a program specifically for the Culturally Specific communities

CONNECTING THE LOCAL WORK TO GLOBAL WORK



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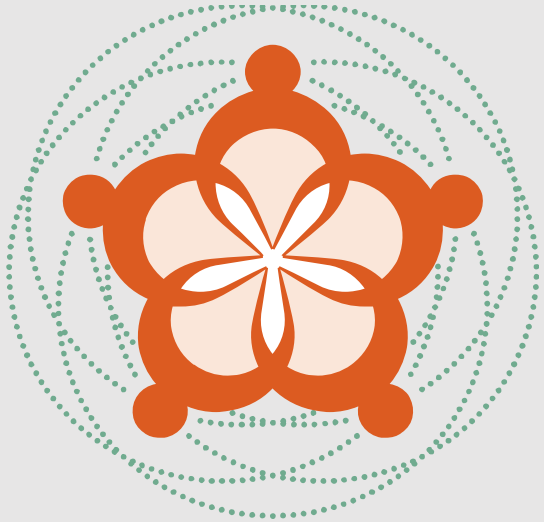
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