

## **Exercise:** Three Shelter Rules (Revictimization)

### **Content Objectives:**

- Participants will be able to identify how some rules for survivors may feel overwhelming and add additional barriers.
- Participants will identify unnecessary rules set by themselves or their service programs for survivors.
- Participants will become more conscious of ways in which services may revictimize survivors

### **Process Objectives:**

- Participants will feel motivated to address their own revictimizing behavior when working with survivors.
- Participants will feel a desire to assist survivors who identify as being victimized by other service providers.

### **Time Required:**

- Instructions: 5 minutes
- Exercise: 15 minutes
- Process: 20 minutes

### **Materials Needed and Other Logistics**

- “What Rules Do We Need” handout
- Flip Chart
- Markers
- Easel

### **Instructions:**

- Determine if there are enough “program specific” participants to break them into groups (i.e., legal advocates, children’s programs, case managers, etc.). If not, break into groups of 3-4.
- Give them the “What Rules Do We Need” handout. Tell them they are allowed to decide three rules for their program/shelter and no more. They must then be able to articulate why they chose these three specific rules as the most important to their program and a survivor’s success using their program.
- At the end of the 20 minutes each group will report back to the larger audience. The trainer will write down the rules on a flip chart.
- After report backs the group will then discuss the benefits and barriers of the identified rules.

### **Process Questions:**

- Can you identify how some rules could feel judgmental to survivors (mandatory parenting or support groups)?
- Did this exercise help you identify how too many rules could drive a survivor away from using your services? How does this put us in the same position as the abuser?
- Do you have a better understanding about how yours as well as other service providers revictimize survivors?

### **Take Home Message:**

- We often make rules under the assumption that we know better than survivors what will benefit and protect them. After learning about Woman Defined Advocacy we begin to understand that the best way to help survivors is to be a partner in their process and individualize the assistance you offer.
- Less is always more.

# What Rules Do We Need?

One of the ways that domestic violence programs may revictimize battered women and their children is with the implementation of oppressive rules regarding conduct during their stay in the shelter. Of course, it is necessary to have rules related to shelter for everyone's health and safety, but often we develop lists that are overly controlling and punitive.

Challenge yourself: The shelter you work at has decided to have only three rules for residents to follow. What are the most important rules for your shelter to have?

Rule #1.

Rule #2.

Rule #3.