



Providing Advocacy to Immigrant and Refugee Sexual Violence Survivors



ASIAN SERVICES IN ACTION

Presented by: Samantha Salamon and
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Introductions



- Samantha Salamon
 - Manager/ Supervising Attorney
- Monicah Yonghang
 - Bilingual Advocate



Asian Services In Action (ASIA) is the largest AAPI-focused health and social service 501(c)(3) agency in the State of Ohio.

Our mission statement:

At Asian Services In Action (ASIA), we strive to empower and advocate for Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders (AAPIs); and to provide AAPIs and other communities access to quality culturally, and linguistically appropriate information, health and social services.



- Uses a **“no wrong door”** approach to our service delivery
- Upholds culturally and linguistically specific care
- Uses a wrap-around service model



Departments:

Ahimsa Department (DV, SA & HT)

Aging and Adult (AA) Department

**Children, Youth & Family (CYF) Services
Department**

Interpreting & Translation Services (ITS)

Civic Engagement Department

Sustainability Services (SS) Department

**International Community Health Center
(ASIA-ICHC)**

Legal Services (LS)



Ahimsa provides quality culturally, and linguistically appropriate information, health, and social services to individuals who are victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, and human trafficking. Ahimsa's advocacy services are confidential and free.*



ADVOCACY

Legal Advocacy
Medical Advocacy
Safety Planning
Crisis Hotline
Case Management
Language Assistance
Benefit Assessment
Financial Planning
Emergency Shelter Referral
Housing Referral
Counseling and Support Services
Support Groups

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Representation of Victims in Criminal Court Under Marsy's Law
Obtaining Protection Orders
Immigration Assistance
Housing Assistance
Family Law (Divorce, Custody, Juvenile)

Objectives

In order to blossom we need to trim away the barriers that refugees and immigrants face to transform our agencies to be more inclusive to the linguistic and cultural needs of these survivors.



Objective 1: Understanding various Immigration terms and statuses and how they impact services

Objective 2: Barriers service agencies face when providing services to immigrant and refugee sexual violence survivors

- Case Study

Objective 3: How to create best practices when working with immigrant and refugee communities in your agencies.

Conclusion and Q&A



How Often do You Work with Immigrant and Refugees?

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or text amandasmith841 to
22333

Culture



Culture: An umbrella term that describe characteristics of a particular group which encompasses social norms, beliefs, language, arts, laws and habits of individuals within that group.

These plus
more...

Notes on Culture

- Culture is more than just ethnicity
- Power dynamics of the dominant culture
- All ethnic groups have unique cultural identities
- Acknowledgement of the latitude of oppression (horizontal vs. vertical)
- All cultures have gender norms
- Culture can provide resilience and pride as well as reinforce patriarchy and fear

Immigration Terms & Definitions



How do people come to America?

- Visitor/tourist visa
- Refugee
- Student visa
- Marriage / fiance visa
- Family
- Investors
- Employment (special talents visa)

Immigration Definitions

- Immigrant
- Alien
- Refugee
- Asylum/Asylee
- “Family-based immigration”
- Lawful Permanent Resident
- Green card
- Conditional Permanent Resident
- Visa
 - Work visa
 - Student visa
 - Fiance visa
- Immigrant vs. non-immigrant
- Sponsorship
- Diversity Visa (“lottery”)
- Overstay vs. undocumented

Immigration Statuses

- Refugee
- Green card holder / Lawful Permanent Resident
- Conditional Permanent Resident
- Asylee
- Visitor
- Undocumented
- International Student



Disclaimer: Many clients may be afraid to disclose their immigration status due to their fear of deportation or threats made by perpetrators

Best Practices and the Importance of knowing Immigration Status

- Almost always in need of immigration legal assistance
- Understand that deportation is **always** a concern; particularly as it relates to criminal legal advocacy
- Awareness that access to public benefits **may** impact immigration status
- Abusers of immigrant victims almost **always** use immigration status as form of **power and control**
- Protections **do exist** for victims under certain qualifiers (U-visa, VAWA, T-visa) but they are not guaranteed

Importance of Knowing Immigration Status Cont'd

- Awareness that some immigrants **may** be fearful of disclosing their status
 - Importance of having an expressed policy in regards to your agency's relationship with ICE
 - Importance of knowing implications for safety planning
- Provide appropriate and safe services
 - Knowing other places reporting policies and procedures

***Again if unsure always use an immigration attorney so your client can get legal advice or to assist in telling you what services they are able to use.**

Barriers Service Agency Face When Helping Sexual Assault Survivors

General Barriers

- Language Access
 - Interpreters available
- Immigration Status
 - What is agency policy
- Access to Transportation to Agency
 - Bus Lines
 - Funding available for bus, uber,lyft etc.
- Lack of education in regard to U.S system
 - What is a crime?
 - How does the criminal justice system work?
- Cultural differences
 - Cultural training provided to staff?
 - Cultural Humility
- Limited resources for immigrant and refugees
 - Translated materials, brochures, etc.

Survivors Reporting or Reaching Out for Help

- **Cultural Barriers**

- Reporting
 - Calling the Police
 - Knowing how/where to report
- Hospital for SAFE exam
 - Plan B
 - Medicine
- Aftercare/ Healing
 - Traditional views
 - Family Pressure
 - Counseling
 - Sexual Assault between Husband and Wife
 - S.A and D.V are taboo

- **Religious Barriers**

- Reporting
 - “Family Matter”
- Hospital for SAFE exam
 - Plan B
- Aftercare/ Healing
 - Divorce shame/ Women not allowed to Divorce

Note: It can be very hard to distinguish between what is a cultural barrier and religious barrier when you are not part of the culture or religion.

COVID-19/AAPI Racism

- **AAPI Racism**

- Shootings/ Attacks
 - Elderly and Women targeted the most
- Hate crimes
- Model Minority Group
 - Racial Wedge
- Intersectionality

- **COVID-19**

- AAPI members targeted
 - Fueled racism and xenophobia
 - Racial slurs
 - Fear/ Trauma
 - Work/ School
 - Everyday tasks

Survivors during COVID 19

- Afraid to reach out
- Resources could be closed or not as accessible
- Trauma on top of trauma
- Turmoil regarding immigration due to changes under executive branch
- Employment Issues
 - Discrimination in the work place
- General proximity to abusers
 - May not be able to be away from abuser

Overcoming Barriers

- Identify barriers at your agency
 - Work to resolve or find ways to overcome barriers
- Practice cultural humility
 - Attend trainings
 - Reach out to cultural specific agencies/individual to gain more knowledge
- Outreach to different communities to let survivors know services are available
- Gather specific information/ resources that the immigrant and refugees may need
 - I speak cards
 - Translated materials/ brochures
- Reach out to other agencies for ideas or technical assistance on how to be more inclusive
- Utilize agency platforms to promote anti-racism and anti- discrimination
 - Social Media
 - Agency Website



Case Study



Part 1

- Client A took part in a cultural ritual at a family member's house where client was supposed to be taught how to be a woman. Client A was sexually assaulted during this time and was told by the family member that it was part of the ritual. When her husband found out about this he was very angry and when she refused to have intercourse with him he accused her of being a lesbian. The government told her if they got one more report they would throw her in jail.

What issues do we see here?



Students, write your response!

Part 2

Client fled to the U.S. to get away from the perpetrator and has overstayed her visitor's visa. Client is currently staying at a shelter but the shelter can no longer provide her services.

**In your opinion,
what is the most
important issue to
handle first?**



Students choose an option

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Best Practices

Practice Cultural Humility!

What is cultural humility?

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What's the Difference?

Cultural Competency

- says, “I’m the expert”
- Implies mastery over another
- Outcomes focused (check mark)
- Objective set of best practices
 - Sees cultures as static
- Requires having “answers”

Cultural Humility

- says, “You’re the expert”
- Involves the process of self-reflection
- Process-focused (lifelong learning)
- Subjective set of best practices
 - Sees cultures as dynamic
 - Requires questioning

Note: No one can “know it all”; be open to alternative ways of thinking and behaving

Cultural Humility (HUMBLE) Model

H: Humble about the assumptions you make

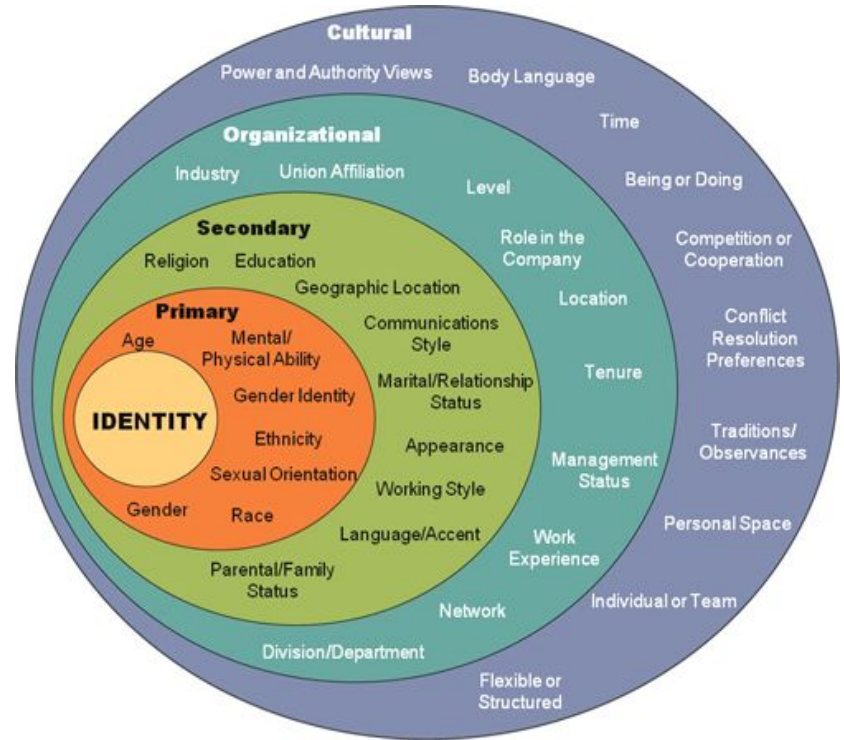
U: Understand your own background and culture

M: Motivate yourself to learn more about the other person's background

B: Begin to incorporate this knowledge into your work

L: Lifelong learning

E: Emphasize respect and negotiate service plans



Working with Survivors

- **How and Why** you ask is more important than **what** you ask
 - Empathy and a willingness to learn
 - Inform what you need/use the information for
- **Awareness** is always helpful, but assumptions can be harmful
 - Don't assume ethnicity or language based on country of origin (South America, Spanish; Burma, Burmese) Ask!
 - Use of Language Identification Booklets/Cards (Ohio Dept. of Safety)
- Don't expect individuals to speak for their **identity group**
 - "Are all _____ like that?"
- Meet client where they are at
 - Be aware of the *unique barriers* that special populations face, and find ways to adapt to their needs rather than expecting them to immediately assimilate to your agency's way of doing things

- Acknowledgement of each individual as *unique in their own right*.
- Acknowledge the **barrier of oppression** (by majorities, by abusers, by systems)
- Acknowledgement of the **privilege of birthright citizenship** (for providers, for abusers, for children of the survivor)
- Acknowledge the value culture holds in its ability to nourish pride, resilience, belonging, identities, and connection.
- Acknowledge how culture can also justify violence, inequality, stigmatization
 - conversation domestically; how it may differ or draw similarities from other cultural groups
- Acknowledgement that culture is not stagnant, but a dynamic experience that can be shaped and reshaped by commonalities of experience

Empowering Survivors

- Take extra time with consent forms and confidentiality disclaimers.
 - Check for understanding frequently.
 - Inform the survivor your agency's policy on mandatory reporting
 - Note that there are laws revolving around that - go through that with your own organization
- Don't make false assurances (i.e. "everything will be fine," "no, no one will be deported")
 - Be direct about what you know and don't know, **never give immigration advice**, and inform the risks while providing options
- Prepare survivors when they may need to interface with authority (uniform, law enforcement, court)
 - Allow extra time whenever possible
 - Explain roles, expectations
 - If necessary, make sure language access is available to your client
- Think of your interactions with immigrant survivors as a *way to reciprocate knowledge and education*:
 - The potential to gain knowledge and educate one another about culture and how things work
 - The potential to impact expectations based on the experiences they have
 - "Planting the seed"
- Respect, rather than problematize, immigrant patient's cultural and family obligations

Limited English Speaking Clients and Working with Interpreters

Working with Limited English Speaking Clients

- **Language Preference**
 - Home language vs. majority language
 - Dialectical differences
 - Don't default based on assumption
 - Keep "I Speak" cards at your desk
- **Find a "good fit" interpreter whenever possible**
 - Check with survivor on comfort level, ability to understand
 - Gender, location, ethnicity, training
 - Speak up if an interpreter is "not working"
- **When going to court, allow extra time if possible to make sure client and interpreter have a chance to meet**
 - Make sure there are 2 interpreters, one for survivor and one for perpetrator

Working with Limited English Speaking Clients

- **NEVER use family members, children, abusers to interpret.**
 - **If a police report was made with any of these acting as interpreters; go with the client to make another one**
 - **Can cause more trauma**
- **Encourage clients to carry “I speak” cards with them and use them when interfacing with law enforcement or other public services**
- **Don’t expect bilingual advocates to be “on-call” interpreters, or to interpret in settings where a certification may be required (court, hospitals)**

Interpreters

- Title VI requirements
 - Language advocacy is often needed
- Interpretation ≠ Translation
- Roles (Bilingual advocate, interpreter)
- Bilingual ≠ Qualified Interpreter
 - Inaccuracy
 - Confidentiality
 - Act as a biased party or advocate
 - Unfamiliarity with legal terms
- In-person interpreters > telephonic interpretation
- Who can interpret in a court or medical setting?
 - **court-qualified** or **court certified**
 - Ask for credentials
 - Role of **bilingual advocate**
- Unbiased interpreting
 - Family members, children
 - Connection to community

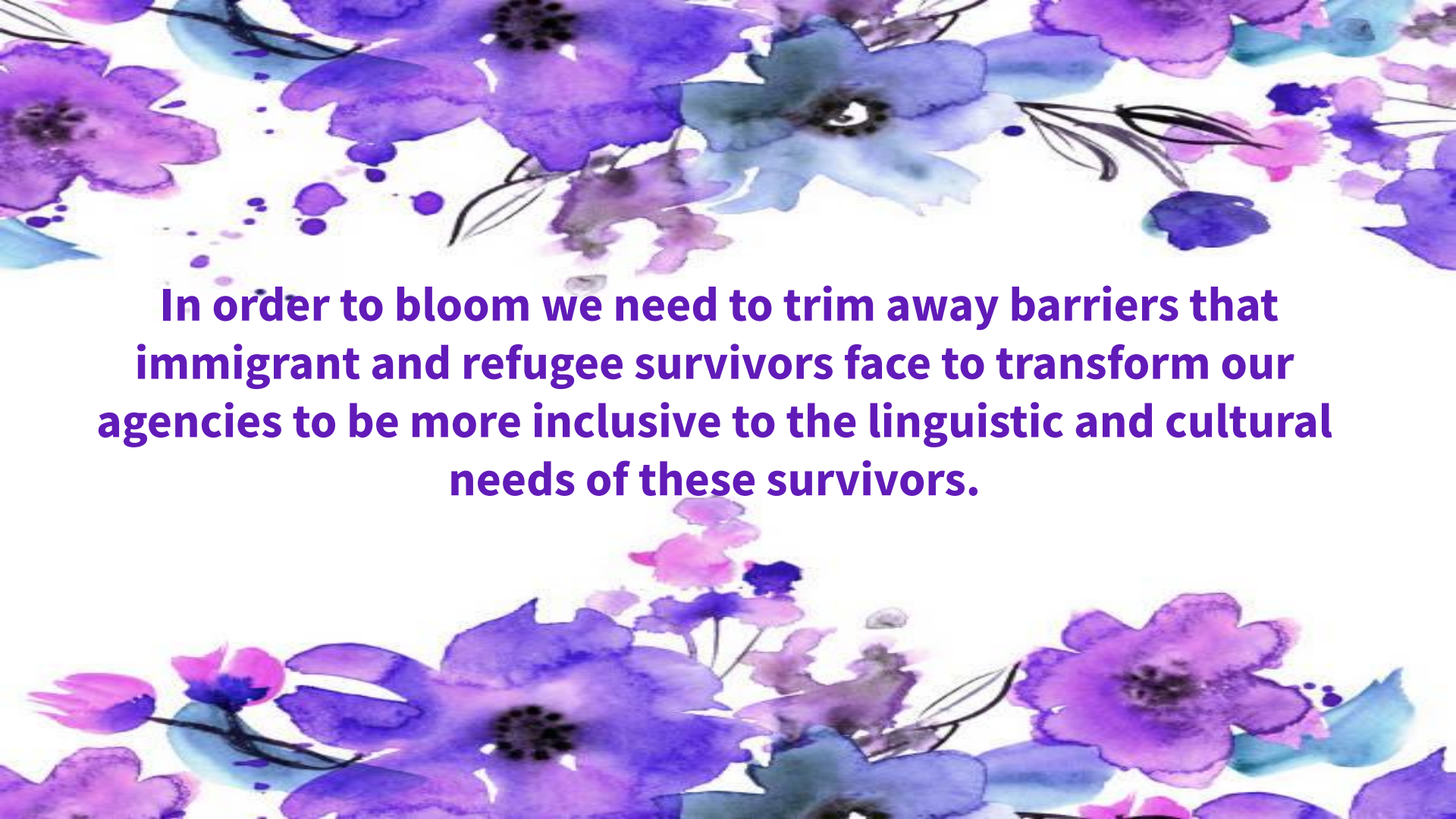
Working With Interpreters

- ALWAYS refer to the client/survivor directly using “I” language and address your body language towards him/her
- When using an interpreter keep speaking directly to the client, do not use language like “Tell Client this, etc.”
- Talk and face the client not interpreter
- Keep language slow and concise and avoid slang that may not translate into their native language
- Sometimes interpreters can simultaneously interpret while you talk but some languages do not allow that, so get a basic understanding of the language before meeting with the client.

Evaluating Your Agency/Self

Tool to help you:

- See where you are practicing cultural humility
- Areas that may need improved
- Areas you are succeeding in

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In order to bloom we need to trim away barriers that immigrant and refugee survivors face to transform our agencies to be more inclusive to the linguistic and cultural needs of these survivors.



Q & A



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Thank You!

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