

Module 1: Introduction

Purpose

This module will offer an overview of OVC TTAC, introduce the purpose and ground rules for training, and allow participants to become acquainted with one another.

Lessons

1. Getting Acquainted
2. The Prevalence of Disability
3. Purpose of the Training
4. Training Materials
5. Terminology
6. Training Overview

Participant Worksheet

- Worksheet 1.1, Getting Acquainted

OVC TTAC focuses on strengthening the capacity of crime victim assistance organizations across the country by providing developmental support, mentoring, and facilitation in such areas as program design and implementation, strategic planning, program management, evaluation, quality improvement, collaboration, and community coordination. The organization draws on the expertise of a network of consultants and seasoned crime victim service professionals with first-hand experience to design and deliver training.

1. Getting Acquainted

Most of us are far more comfortable sharing information with people we know. As we get to know one another, we tend to share more and more information. While we won't be able to become *really* well acquainted within these 3 days of training, we can begin by using an activity to get to know one person and introducing that person to the other participants.

In order to maintain our own well-being, we need to set a safe emotional distance – although not an *empathic* distance – from the context and stories that may be shared. How do we do that? How do we make our environment safe to share our experiences? And how do we make it safe for *others* to share as well? Think about how you create that environment in your work.

2. The Prevalence of Disability

Based on data from the American Community Survey (ACS), in 2010, there were 304,287,836 individuals living in the U.S., of which 36,354,712 were individuals with disabilities. This is a prevalence rate of 11.9 percent.

The state with the largest number of individuals with disabilities was California, with 3,640,092 individuals with disabilities, while the state with the smallest number of individuals with disabilities was Wyoming, with 65,570 individuals with disabilities. West Virginia had the highest prevalence rate, 18.9 percent, while Utah had the lowest prevalence rate, 8.5 percent (American Community Survey, 2010).

According to March 2012 U.S. Department of Labor statistics, people without disabilities have an almost 70 percent employment rate. People with disabilities have an employment rate of about 20 percent.

Even when individuals with disabilities are employed full time, their earnings are less than workers who do not have disabilities.

In 2009, the median annual income of full-time workers *without* a disability was approximately \$41,000. In contrast, the median annual income of full-time workers *with* a disability was approximately \$35,000 (American Community Survey, 2010).

Obviously, there is still bias and discrimination against people with disabilities. Why? After all, having a disability is perfectly normal because *all* people are different in some way – the color of our skin, our height, or our ethnic background. A disability is just one of the many differences that makes each of us unique.

3. Purpose of the Training

The purpose of this training is two-fold.

- To optimize individual, agency, and system capacity to serve people with disabilities who are victims of crime.
- To foster cross-sector collaboration among organizations, agencies and systems that serve people with disabilities who are victims of crime by:
 - ~ Developing reciprocal understanding of disabilities and crime victimization.
 - ~ Increasing knowledge of disabilities and crime victimization.
 - ~ Building skills for supporting crime victims who have disabilities.

4. Training Materials

The instructor will offer a brief orientation to the training, the agenda, the Participant Manual, and training guidelines.

5. Terminology

Appendix A in the Participant Manual – Disabilities Glossary includes many terms that will be used throughout training.

We will be using People First Language in this training. See Appendix B in the Participant Manual – Examples of People First Language.

People with disabilities are like people *without* disabilities – individuals who have distinct abilities, interests, and needs. For the most part, they are ordinary people who want to live ordinary lives.

Recognizing the disability as secondary acknowledges the disability as a significant characteristic of one's life, but not the genuine identity of a person. The concept also favors the use of "having" rather than "being."

People First Language evolved from a self-advocacy movement. The movement began in Sweden in 1968 when a Swedish parents' organization for children with developmental disabilities held a meeting. The organization had the motto, "We speak for them," meaning parents speaking for their children. The children at the meeting decided they wanted to speak for themselves and made a list of changes they wanted made to their services.

The People First movement came to the U.S. in 1974, with the purpose of organizing a convention where people with developmental disabilities could speak for themselves and share ideas, friendship, and information. Those planning the convention were trying to decide on a name when someone said, "I'm tired of being called retarded – we are people first."

Since the late 1980s, People First Language has been used by the majority of people with disabilities as well as professionals working with them.

However, some people with disabilities reject People First Language. The Deaf and autistic communities and the National Federation of the Blind, for example, reject People First terminology. That's because these groups generally see their condition as an important part of their identity, and so prefer to be described as "deaf people" and "blind people" and "autistic" or "autistic people" rather than "people with deafness" and "people with blindness" and "people with autism". They see People First Language as devaluing a significant part of their identity.

However, many people with disabilities do prefer People First Language, and we will be using it in this training. Using People First Language could make all the difference in the initial interactions between victim service providers and crime victims with disabilities.

6. Training Overview

This curriculum has 9 modules, including **Module 1**, in which we're getting acquainted and learning about the training.

In **Module 2, Crime and Victims of Crime**, we will look at the prevalence of crime in the U.S., identify two major resources that are used as indicators of crime, and discuss some of the more important issues impacting victims of crime and victims of crime with disabilities.

Module 3, Applicable Laws and Concepts, covers the laws that apply to victims of crime and laws that apply to people with disabilities. We will discuss the purpose of Titles II and III of the Americans With Disabilities Act, and the concepts of universal design and universal access.

Module 4, Identifying Common Ground, describes the disciplines and allied professions that work with victims of crime and people with disabilities. We'll also look at the principles and values shared by crime victim service providers and advocates for people with disabilities, and identify other organizations that work with crime victim service providers and disability service providers and advocates.

Module 5, Overcoming Situational Challenges, explains the importance of creating an accessible and supportive space for victims of crime and the related challenges that an agency might face.

In **Module 6, Overcoming Personal Challenges**, we discuss how unearned privilege and individual value systems affect attitudes toward people with disabilities, and explain the importance of self-reflection, especially as it applies to supporting crime victims with disabilities.

Module 7, Overcoming Communication Challenges, covers guidelines for communicating with crime victims and crime victims with disabilities, including those with complex communication needs. We will also address interaction with service animals.

Module 8, Reporting Requirements and Confidentiality Issues, discusses state Adult Protective Services laws, reporting requirements, and confidentiality issues.

Module 9, Collaborating for Maximum Impact and Wrap-Up, explores the benefits and challenges of collaboration, and the purpose of a multidisciplinary team. Using a case study, you will map out where you would intervene and how you would collaborate.

