

Hennepin SMARTeam – Five Core Principles

Service providers responding to sexual assault in Hennepin County adhere to five core principles that frame all interactions with the victim/survivor seeking support. Each principle serves as a tool in facilitating interactions with victims/survivors and other service agencies as well as frames the development and implementation of the protocol. Anyone connecting with service providers can reasonably expect the following principles to frame each interaction, regardless of entry point with each discipline:

1. **Compassion**: All interactions are grounded in respect and understanding, regardless of personal beliefs.
 - a. This includes using trauma informed approaches in interactions with victim/survivors.
2. **Collaboration**: Evidence and principles-based systems of support integrate practices, procedures, and services within and across agencies, systems, and policies. Service providers cooperatively work with the victim/survivor as well as other agencies and organizations.
3. **Communication**: Information regarding services, policies, processes, and decisions will be provided in a timely manner. Service providers have a responsibility to clearly inform others regarding their roles, limitations, and aspects of contact with their agency, to the greatest degree possible.
 - a. Service providers must educate and inform victims/survivors.
 - b. Service providers should share information with other agencies and organizations regarding service provision, when possible.
 - c. Service providers should educate the public and other organizations about their work.
4. **Choice**: Each service provider explains all options a victim/survivor has. In doing so, the service provider seeks to uphold and promote the wishes of the victim/survivor to the fullest possible extent.
5. **Cultural responsiveness**: Service providers will maintain a culturally responsive approach when working with victims/survivors of sexual assault. This includes seeking out culturally specific information or resources when beneficial and providing appropriate referrals to agencies if the victim/survivor wishes.
 - a. Service providers seek out education on working with culturally specific groups.