

Just Rural! Conference

National Sexual Violence Resource Center
December 10-12, 2013

Working with Individuals with Disabilities

This isn't your
grandmother's workshop
on disabilities and victims
of sexual/domestic
violence!

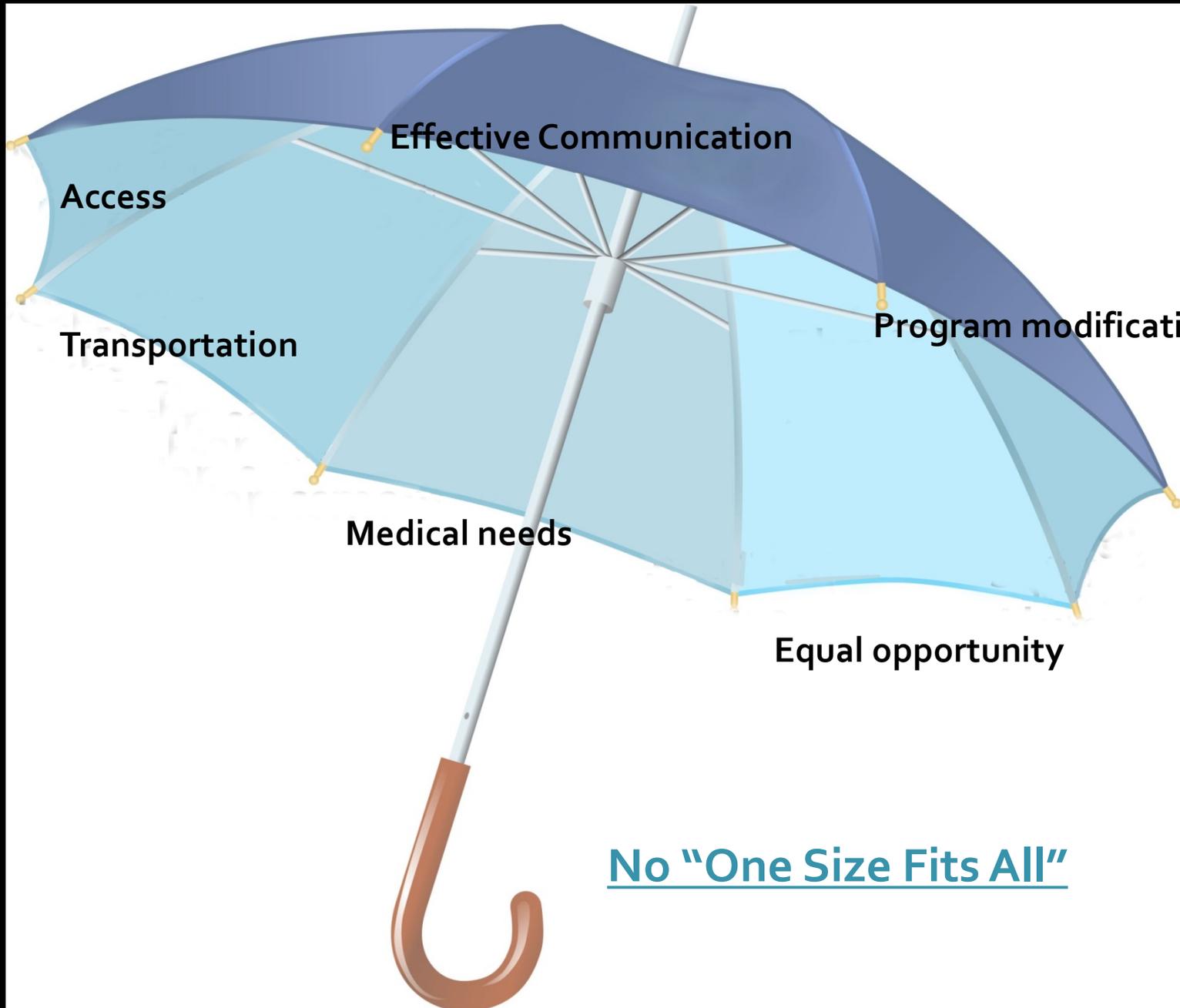


It's About Us...

- Our attitudes
- Our biases
- Our experiences
- Our education
- Our skill level and
- Our willingness to provide timely and appropriate supports and services to survivors with disabilities.

Today, we're going to discuss

- Access and functional needs, **not** labels
- Communication
 - Hotline
 - Counseling
 - Education
 - Court Accompaniment
- External and internal environments
 - Personal appearance
- Personal safety education and safety plans



Effective Communication

Access

Transportation

Medical needs

Program modification

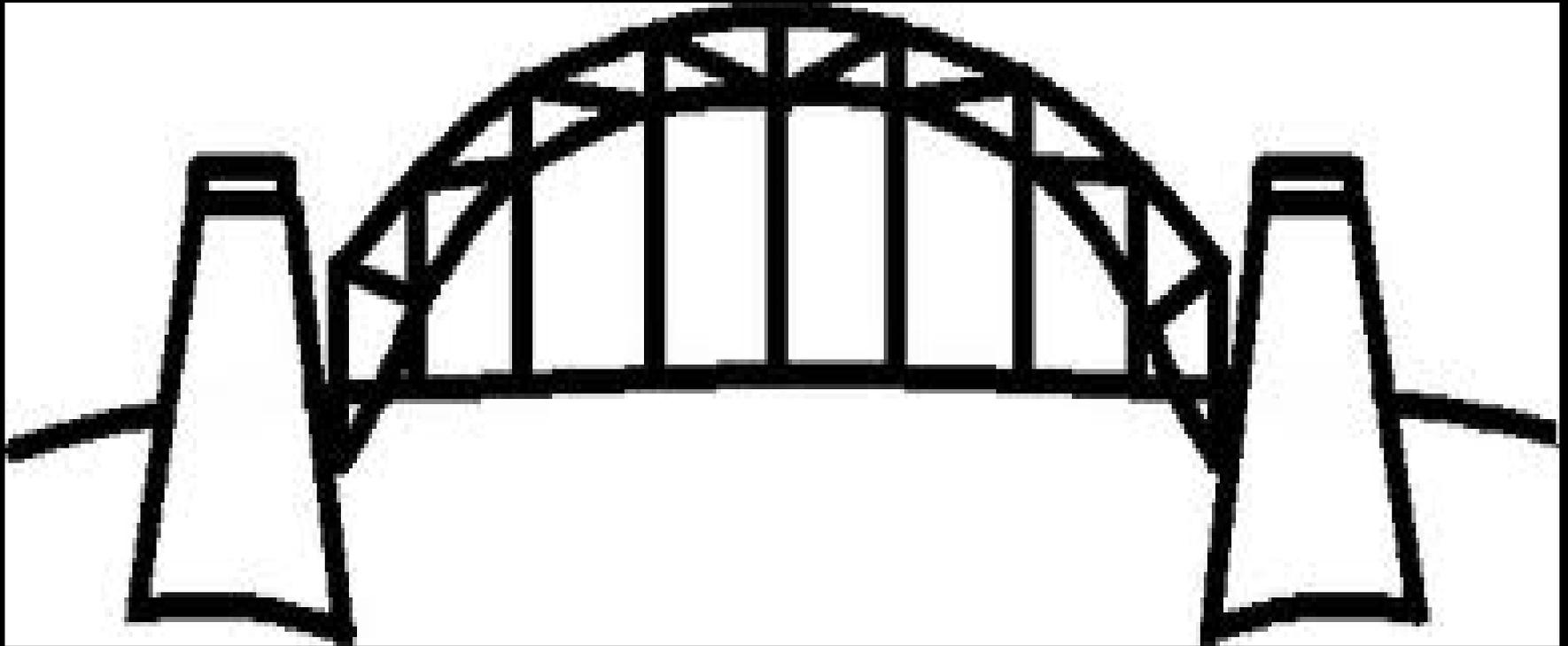
Equal opportunity

No "One Size Fits All"

Access and Functional Needs

- Do survivors with disabilities have access to your program? That is, can they access everything a person without a disability can access?
- Rather than labels/diagnoses think about the person you are speaking with. What, if anything, is needed for effective communication.

Adaptations/ Program Modifications



Person's Current Skills...

ADAPTATIONS

...Participation in Targeted Activity

Making Adjustments for People's Skill Level



Independent
(needs no help)



Minimal
Assistance



Moderate
Assistance



Maximum
Assistance
(needs full support)



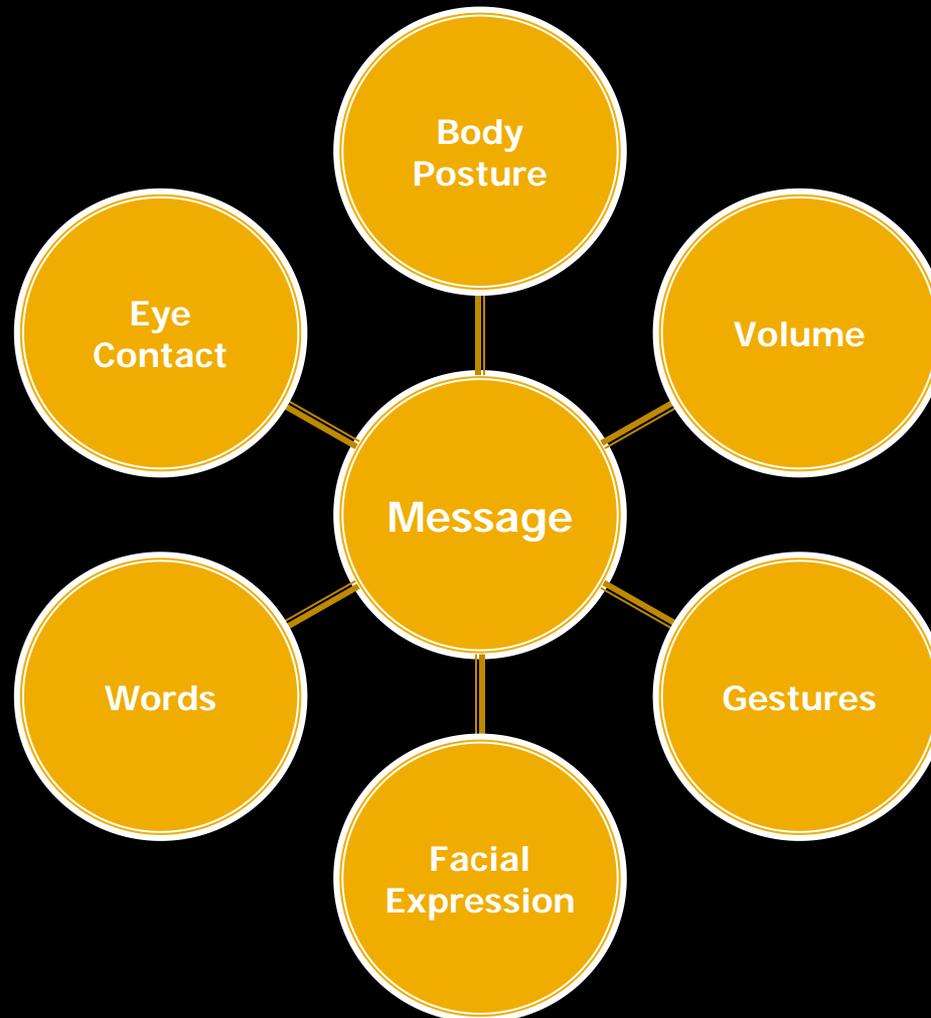
Adaptations

- Everyone has their own strengths and areas of needs.
- Everyone uses 'helping tools' or supports for SOME things.
- Asking for help isn't a weakness.
- Independence equals doing what you CAN do and asking for help with the rest.

What Tools Do You Use?

- Making a cake
 - Measuring cups
 - Recipe
 - Pre-make frosting
 - Buy cake
- Getting Around
 - Maps
 - GPS
 - Friends
- Studying for Tests
 - Study guide
 - Review notes
 - Lectures
 - Practice quizzes
 - Study hall
 - Make flashcards
 - Ask teacher/professor

Communication...More than Words



Why We Communicate

- To “**give** information to, or **receive** information from, another person.”
 - Expression and understanding
- To **share** an understanding of information and perspectives.

Adapted from:

National Joint Committee for the Commutative Needs of Persons with Severe Disabilities, 1992.

Why We Communicate

Types of Communicative Interactions

- Express needs and wants
 - Ask for directions, order food*
- Information transfer
 - Problem solve, personal stories, details*
- Social closeness
 - Content not as important as interaction*
 - Develop and maintain relationships*
 - Jokes*
- Social etiquette
 - Politeness (thank you, please, etc.)*

Meet Kathleen

- Kathleen is using what type of communicative interaction?
- How easy do you think a police officer could understand her?
- On a scale of 1 to 10 how well do you understand Kathleen. (1 – I can hardly understand her; 10 – I understood every word she said)

Inside and Outside Distractions



Environmental Conditions Affecting the Ability to Listen and Understand

- Lighting
- Noise (movement of materials; AC/Heating; others talking, traffic, tree limbs brushing against a window, noise from neighboring office)
- Movement/distractions (others talking, moving about)

Conditions Affecting Intelligibility: Who is Speaking – *Situational Stressors*

- Content of the interaction – fear; anxiety
- Context of the interaction - unfamiliar environment, people leads to fear; anxiety
- Form of communication – formal, Q&A versus conversational
- Complexity of linguistic INPUT – extra processing demand

Interview Preparation

Environment

A private, quite and comfortable space

No telephone, intercom, cell phone, Blackberry

No interruptions

Have tissues, bottle water, stress ball at arms' length within the room

Sit facing the person

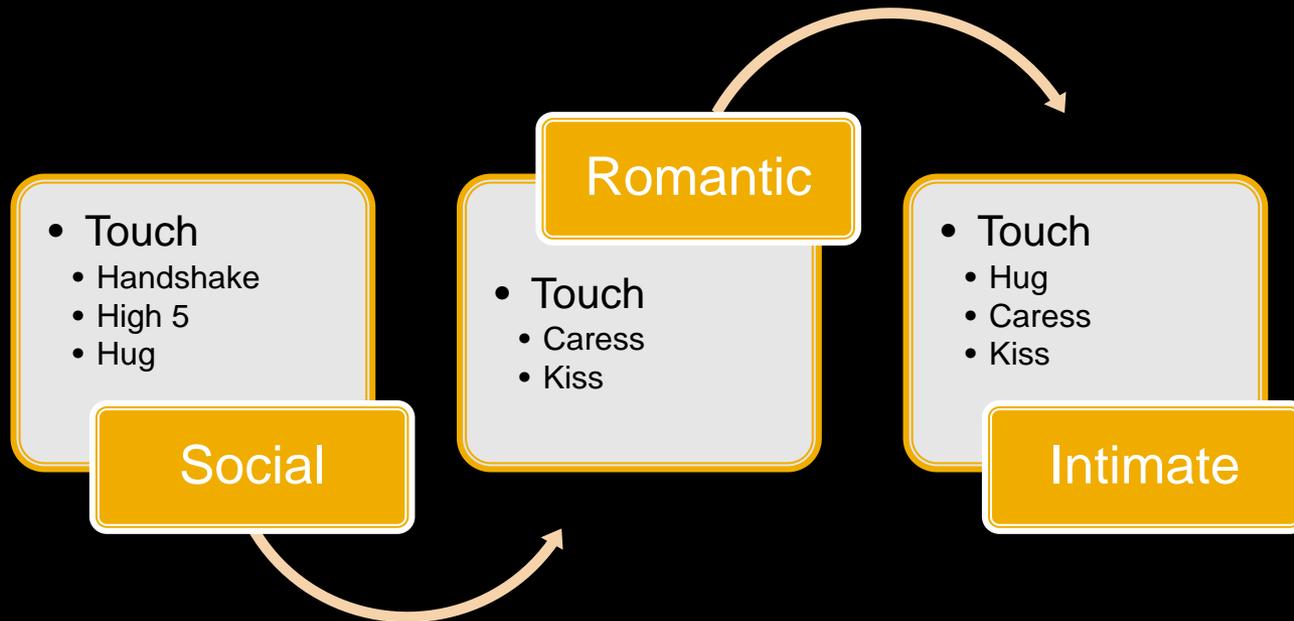
Personal Safety

It's not about changing words in a presentation, it's about understanding personal safety from a different perspective. It means re-thinking our conversations about:

- Touch
- Relationships
- Boundaries
- Words
- Ability to generalize information
- Rights and responsibilities

Friendships and Relationships Come in all Forms and will Change Over Time.

The meaning of touch also changes over time.



TOUCH IS OUR FIRST LANGUAGE

Before we can see an image, smell an odor, taste a flavor, or hear a sound, we experience others and ourselves through touch – it's our only reciprocal sense.

It is our only reciprocal sense – we can not touch another without being touched ourselves. (Hunter & Struve, 1998).

TOUCH, ETHNICITY, CULTURE

- The meaning of touch can only be understood in its cultural context

(Halbrook & Duplechin, 1994).

- People from different cultures were observed in casual conversation and the number of times they touched in one hour were counted

(Jourard, 1996)

- Puerto Rico – 180 times
- United States – 2 times
- Paris – 110 times
- London – 0 times

Concrete versus Abstract

What's a friend?

How long must you know someone before you are friends?

How do you distinguish between a boy friend and a boy who is a friend?

What's the difference between flirting and sexual harassment?

Public or Private?



Friendly, Doesn't Always Mean a Friend

Close
Friendship

Bonded
Friendship

Evolving
Friendship

Possible
Friendship

Acquaintance

Friendly
Greeting

Adapted from *Social Thinking Worksheets*
For Tweens and Teens by Michelle Garcia Winner





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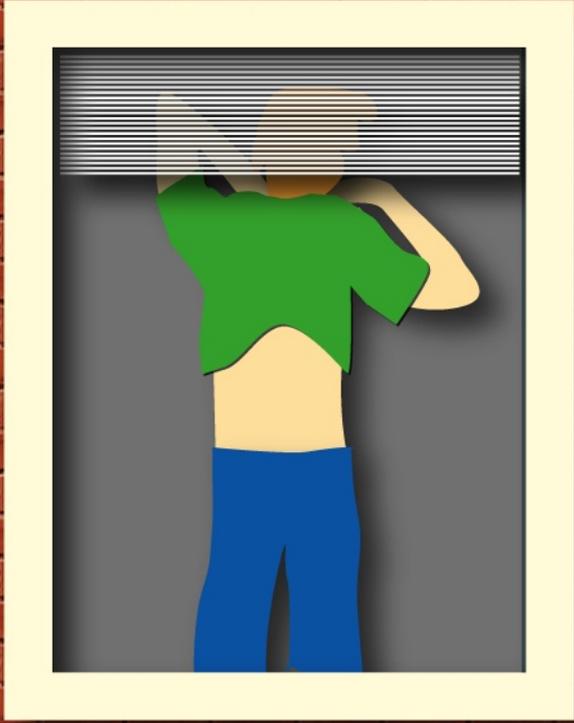
Friendly
Greeting



Communication Can Be Abstract

- Unfamiliar with the Word, Context, Experience or Communication Strategy
 - Is he strong?
 - Is it heavy?
 - Is he arriving?
 - Is he departing?
- What if the individual doesn't understand: heavy, strong, arriving, departing?
- Communication can be fleeting and context dependent





Language and Power



- People with power are permitted to touch those with less
- How much space a person “takes up” can indicate authority
- Posture, gesture, body movements, dress, and jewelry can indicate power

Questions



THANK YOU

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