



## Supporting Undocumented and Immigrant Survivors: A Tip Sheet for Advocates

### INCREASED SUPPORT IS NEEDED BECAUSE...

Recent anti-immigrant sentiment, racist commentary, harassment and physical attacks have shaken our communities. Immigrants – especially undocumented people and people of color – may have intensified trauma exposure and urgent safety needs.

#### Undocumented and immigrant survivors of sexual and domestic violence are at heightened risk of:

- Isolation
- Threats to legal status
- Threats relating to unfamiliar laws or cultural dynamics
- Harassment by police or community members
- Detention and deportation
- Hesitance to access courts or law enforcement
- Loss of income if abusive partner is breadwinner and is detained/deported
- Trauma impacts on children if a parent or other family member is detained/deported
- Homicide

### ADVOCATES CAN HELP BY...

#### Using trauma-informed care

- Recognize and validate emotional impacts of increased targeting/violence
- Use simple grounding activities like breathing together, taking walks
- Provide information, but don't overwhelm
- Accompany to help navigate systems
- Support physical nourishment such as rest, movement, meals
- When safe to do so, encourage routine and promote continued engagement, instead of withdrawing or staying home

#### Using simple safety planning

- Plan for emotional AND logistical safety. Intense emotions are a normal response to harassment, stress and violence.
- Slow down
  - Build solidarity with safe allies
  - Explore and strengthen cultural roots
  - Think beyond the police
  - Support a vibrant vision of the future

#### Supporting safety planning with kids

- Assure it's not their fault
- Show there's a plan
- Let them know what to do
- Keep routines intact
- Support nutrition, exercise, and rest
- Tell family stories and histories of survival
- Connect with community through food and art

ADVOCATES TOO FEEL ADDED STRESS, FEAR AND PANIC, WITH HIGHER PARTICIPANT NUMBERS AND OVERWHELMING NEED FOR INCREASINGLY COMPLEX SUPPORT.

ADVOCATES MAY ALSO BE PERSONALLY CONNECTED TO IMPACTED PEOPLE.

## Planning tools

*Excellent tools, but processing this information can be triggering for survivors or advocates. Use care, be aware of context, set the process aside and come back to it as needed.*

**Family Preparedness Plan** (English, Spanish, Chinese – by Immigrant Legal Resource Center):

Good basic planning tool for individuals and families; some information is California specific.

<https://goo.gl/EUB69Q>

**Protect Your Family** (English and Spanish – by Oregon Law Center and Latino Network):

More focused on families with children; Oregon specific.

<https://goo.gl/ZZyvHC>

**Self-care in times of uncertainty** (National Latin@ Network).

<https://goo.gl/j7B1ob>

**Legal Assistance: Organizations and attorneys around Oregon and SW Washington** (Catholic Charities Oregon).

<https://goo.gl/4nATYD>

## Ways organizations can support advocates

Trauma affects the health of individuals and organizations. Programs should support not only undocumented/immigrant survivors but also advocates who may themselves be impacted by targeting and fear.

To create anti-oppressive environments:

- Acknowledge events, changes in policy, etc that increase stress and concern
- Recognize and validate emotional impacts (not just once, but continuously)
- Create opportunities to share about impacts
- Encourage employees to take time for professional development/training/research
- Reduce workload and simplify where possible
- Offer physical movement and other health activities – yoga, meditation, massage, etc
- Prevent burnout, increase wellness and resilience: encourage advocates to connect with peers using paid work time (through Coalition groups like Communities of Color Task Force, Queer Caucus, etc, and through local groups designed for fun or personal/professional development)

## Additional resources

Webinar recording:

“Supporting immigrant survivors and communities”

<https://goo.gl/MbtNUf>

Webpage: Immigrant and refugee survivors (with collected information from several sources)

<https://goo.gl/R1gqnC>

Oregon Immigration Resource (Created by CAUSA Oregon)

<https://goo.gl/JdXijX>

Northwest Immigrant Rights Project

<https://nwirp.org>

## Questions? Please...

Visit [ocadsv.org](http://ocadsv.org).

Contact El Programa Hispano Católico at (503) 231-4866.

Consider getting involved in OCADSV's Communities of Color Task Force and other work groups.

<https://goo.gl/xgQTfK>