



Working With Interpreters: Supporting Multilingual and Deaf Survivors of Sexual Assault in Campus Settings

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ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Describe the role of the interpreter
- Apply preparation and communication practices
- Identify warning signs when interpretation is not effective and respond appropriately

Presenter



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The Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence is a national resource center on domestic violence, sexual violence, and trafficking in Asian/Asian-American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities.



Interpretation Technical Assistance Resource Center

- Comprehensive TA Provider
- Language Assistance Planning Training
- Language Hub
- Monthly office hours
- Healing Across Languages (HAL)

Audience Question

Please answer the following poll question

Do you have any experience working with interpreters?

Audience Question

Please answer in the text chat

What was a challenge or success of working with an interpreter?

Why this Matters:

- Communication affects safety
- Understanding affects decisions
- Supports participation

Who is Involved?

- Survivor
- Interpreter
- Advocate/service provider

Who Is an Interpreter?

- Communication professional
- Follows standards and ethics
- Provides a specialized service

What Does an Interpreter Do?

Do:

- Interpret everything
- Preserve meaning

Do Not:

- Advise
- Add/remove
- Speak for others

Multiple Roles

- Survivor
- Providers
- Interpreters
- Technology
- Other interpreters

Bilingual Staff vs. Interpreter: Different Roles

Bilingual Service Provider:

- Provides services directly in another language
- Maintains their primary role (advocate, staff, etc.)
- May support communication within their role

Interpreter:

- Facilitates communication between people
- Interprets everything that is said
- Does not take on other roles

Proficiency vs. Fluency: What's the Difference?

Fluency

- Ability to speak a language comfortably
- Everyday conversation

Proficiency

- Ability to communicate accurately and completely
- Includes understanding tone, meaning, & context
- Includes specialized terminology

Using Bilingual Staff as Interpreters: What to Consider

- Role confusion
- Loss of accuracy
- Emotional and cognitive overload
- Conflict of interest
- Confidentiality concerns

Special Considerations in DV/SA Context

- Sensitive topics
- Trauma-related conversations
- Safety planning
- Legal processes
- Forensic exams & interviews

Interpreter Experience Matters

- Familiarity with DV/SA dynamics
- Understanding terminology
- Exposure to sensitive conversations

Audience Question

Please answer in the text chat

Who could you collaborate with to get interpretation needs met?

On campus?

In the surrounding community?

Factors That Impact Quality

- Accuracy
- Neutrality
- Confidentiality

Red Flags

- Short/long interpretation
- Side conversations
- Confusion

Organizational Role

- Organizations set standards
- Staff rely on those standards

Finding Interpreters

- Maintain list of qualified interpreters
- Use certified or qualified professionals
- Check credentials

Interpreter Services

- Used vetted vendors
- Understand qualifications
- Know the feedback process

Code of Conduct

- Accuracy
- Impartiality
- Confidentiality
- Boundaries

When Interpretation Is Needed

- When full understanding is required
- Even if some English is spoken

Where Interpretation Happens

- In-person
- Phone
- Video

Before the Interpretation

- Schedule time
- Pre-session
- Share context
- Check conflicts

Audience Question

Please answer in the text chat

What are some of the dos and don'ts of working with interpreters?

During the Interpretation


- Speak directly
- Use plain language
- Pause
- One sentence at a time

What NOT to Do

- Don't speak to interpreter
- Don't allow answering for victim
- Don't request explanations

Supporting the Survivor

- Explain interpreter role
- Set expectation

A woman with dark hair, wearing a black blazer over a light-colored top, stands at a podium with a microphone, speaking. To her right, a man with short hair, wearing a blue button-down shirt, is seated and looking towards her. The background is a red curtain.

Well, now, Mr. Muhammadi, we come to the incident itself: the sexual assault.

Addressing Problems

- Document
- Identify
- Report

Common Issues

- Inaccuracy
- Assumptions
- Confidentiality
- Role violations

Audience Question

Please answer the following poll questions

True or False?

True or False?

1. False - Interpretation and translation cannot be used interchangeably.
2. True - Interpreters communicate spoken messages.
3. True - Translation refers to written text.
4. False - Simultaneous interpretation happens while the speaker is talking.
5. True - Consecutive interpretation happens in short segments.

Key Takeaways

- Communication affects safety
- Your role shapes the outcome
- Interpretation is part of service delivery
- **PLANNING & PREPARATION MATTER!!!**

Questions?

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