

# TIPS FOR DIRECT SERVICE PROVIDERS DURING COVID-19

As we face this challenging crisis, we are adapting and exploring techniques to continue effectively supporting survivors. The work you are doing is critical; here are some tips that may assist you as a provider.

## USING TECHNOLOGY

### PREPARING TO ENGAGE WITH SURVIVORS

- Test the software application or platform and experiment with different features.
- Test internet connection, audio and video by making practice calls. Check out free tutorials on YouTube.
- Choose an appropriate and comfortable place in your home for sessions. Be mindful of noise, potential interruptions, and your background.

### SUPPORTING YOUR CLIENT'S NEEDS

- Offer them all the communication platforms that are available to you and let them choose what is the safest and most comfortable for them each session.
- If possible, allow them to choose the date and time of the appointment.



## SAFETY AND PRIVACY CONSIDERATIONS

- Be conscious of limited privacy and confidentiality when using technology.
- Your client might be living with the person causing harm.
- Develop a code word or phrase, identify a safe room and safe times to talk, and erase search histories and text messages.
- Safety planning may look different; be creative and expect limitations. Some resources include [Anti-Violence Project](#) and [Sanctuary for Families](#).
- If calling is not safe, suggest text or live chat options, for example [Safe Horizon's SafeChat](#) or [Day One's text line for youth](#).

## ESTABLISHING TRUST

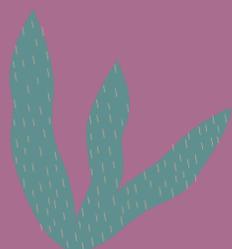
- Be honest about adapting to new technology. Bond over learning new things together.
- Alert them about any potential interruptions, practice patience and humor.
- Start with a grounding activity to bring attention to the body and the present.
- Be especially mindful of your verbal and non-verbal cues. Ask directly if and when you need verbal confirmation.
- Emphasize expressions that convey attentive listening, understanding, and empathy.



# PRACTICING ACCEPTANCE & WELLNESS

- The support you are providing is important and critical.
- Working remotely can be especially challenging, be patient with yourself.
- You are doing your best with limited resources.
- Ask for help if you're feeling overwhelmed or concerned.

## EMPOWER YOURSELF



- Use tools or platforms that help you work from home.
- Try to find a routine, for example get ready for work every morning like you are physically going to work.

## CREATE A CALM SPACE

- Choose a part of home that feels safe, comfortable, and productive to work.
- Keep things around that bring you comfort or joy.



## BE YOUR OWN ADVOCATE

- Maintain work/home boundaries, take breaks, keep a start/end schedule.
- Be realistic and patient with yourself about work that can be done from home.

## MAINTAIN CONNECTION



- Connect with people you trust and make you laugh. Find ways to engage over non-COVID and non-work related topics.
- Make time to have fun (e.g. virtual happy hours, dance parties, karaoke, game nights).
- Cultivate hobbies, learn new skills, do nice things for yourself!

## RESOURCES

### For Technology questions:

NNEDV's [Digital Services Toolkit](#)

### Safety Planning:

[Anti-Violence Project](#) and [Sanctuary for Families](#)

### For Survivors:

ENDGBV's [Resources for Survivors During COVID-19](#)



Mayor's Office to  
End Domestic and  
Gender-Based Violence