

# Supervisor Reference

## Things to Explore

1. What's your role in this situation?
2. Identify the strengths in this home.
3. Identify the survivor's strengths and the child(ren)'s strengths.
4. Identify the survivor's sources of support.
5. What are ways to help the survivor with what she wants and needs?
6. Consider the barriers a survivor faces depending on her social status (i.e., immigration concerns, language barriers, and economic concerns, racial or ethnic discrimination, living with a disability).
7. Are you focusing on changing system practices, rather than making the survivor change?
8. Are you talking with a domestic violence or sexual assault advocate on the phone, in-person, and partnering to support the family?
9. Learn about what an advocate can do and the role of an advocate.
10. The criminal justice system response is a tool and not the answer (advocates can help explain the pros and cons of legal actions).

## Things to check in about

1. Is there frustration with the survivor because: even though you have a great connection with the kids, she is unpleasant, is in a scary situation, or has lots of problems? Be aware of blaming or feeling judgmental towards the survivor for the coercion or abuse; not the abuser.
2. You may have contact with the abuser in the home or see him in town. Be aware that you may feel angry or want to confront the person. Your reactions or actions could have consequences for the survivor and children when you are not around.
3. Are you struggling because you don't like the survivor's choices or decisions?
4. Are you gaining awareness of your own bias and past experiences, and how they may impact your interactions?
5. Working with survivors is complicated – remember that we help most when we support survivors' autonomy and decision-making, reduce isolation, and expand survivor's options.
6. Organizations and systems that you work with may be limited in their response and move slowly to change their practices.