

# Training Community Service Providers to Work with Survivors of Torture Tip Sheet

Background: Do not underestimate the difficulty in changing or modifying professional behavior through training. The adult learner has considerable investment in continuing to use existing methodologies and needs time and a very good reason to adapt or change. Google “adult learning principles in continuing education” for more information.

## Ideas for promoting organizational or individual change within the training context

Before:

1. Clarify expectations with a new agency receiving training what our optimum objective is—that they will identify through the training areas of practice they may want to change to better serve refugees who are torture or war trauma survivors (barriers to service, scheduling appointments, atmosphere, interview questions, etc.).
2. See if they have done some kind of needs assessment of what they want to improve or what the issues are in serving refugees that this training could address.
3. Negotiate who will attend the training in light of information on 1. and 2.

During:

1. Start with participants’ sense of what problems or improvements in services or contact with refugees they see (and how this training might help with solutions).
2. Have them identify possible barriers to useful services in their agency as an exercise.
3. Ask them to think of one or more things they might do differently or try to change in their agency as a result of the training.
4. Ask them to sign up on the mailing list if they would like to be notified of future trainings (email, profession, agency name)
5. Let them know about resources for more information or training, including [www.healtorture.org](http://www.healtorture.org).
6. Complete evaluations.

After:

1. Follow up call to contact about satisfaction, next steps.
2. Write follow up plan (if there is one)
3. Suggest to the training contact any changes the training participants identified (if appropriate).
4. Clarify the agency’s intent regarding serving torture survivors.
5. Follow up with the agency about any organizational changes made as a result of the training.

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<sup>1</sup> White was manager of a multi-disciplinary team of clinical trainers with a mission to train mainstream providers throughout the state of Minnesota on working effectively with torture survivors from 2000-2004.