

# S-A-L-V-E Self-Check

Is your sexual health or prevention programming trauma-informed?

Check your:

<u>Structure</u>	Trauma-informed STRUCTURE helps you account for attendees who might have a trauma history before they have to ask for relief or modifications.	Start with easier activities that require less vulnerability at first, and build trust moving forward before diving too deep into intimate or vulnerable topics, or activities that require physical contact.
<u>Activities</u>	Trauma-informed ACTIVITIES help you spark the right discussions and illustrate important points without unnecessarily triggering trauma responses in attendees.	Avoid coercion and allow attendees to opt out of any activities they don't feel comfortable doing. Give instructions in advance of activities that attendees can opt-out of any activities they choose. Have a plan for less vulnerable alternatives. Remember pacing to allow space for emotional (possibly embodied) processing of challenging topics. Avoid over-intellectualizing.
<u>Language</u>	Thinking through trauma-informed LANGUAGE and words helps you avoid words that might commonly convey harmful messages about consent, power, gender, race, other identities, and sexual violence in general.	How can you avoid words that might be triggering while preserving clarity of language? Offer language to alert attendees to shifts in the topic, including content warnings and language about self-care.
<u>Validation</u>	VALIDATE that it is never a survivor's fault by avoiding inadvertent victim-blaming. Often when we emphasize tactics for "keeping yourself safe" from violence by being better at self-defense, setting boundaries, or avoiding risk, we unintentionally imply that it is survivors' fault if they are harmed.	Avoid "self-defense" framing. Does your framing emphasize prevention of primary <i>perpetration</i> of harm rather than just experiencing harm? (Examples: activities that practice <i>receiving</i> boundaries or reframe a spoken boundary as a gift.) Focus on evidence-based risk and protective factors.
<u>Experiences</u>	Be aware of your lived EXPERIENCE (positionality/privilege and identities) as well as the lived experiences of your students/attendees in order to minimize and account for ways your privilege might influence your teaching, framing, and relative truth.	Learn about racial justice, gender inclusivity, and sexual diversity. Do your own work around identity and positionality; unpack your own privilege. Then, if you get it wrong in practice, be willing to leave space for, listen to, and learn from attendees' experiences as well. Receive feedback and incorporate it into continued improvements toward equity and inclusivity.

Trauma-informed practices are the S-A-L-V-E that can smooth out the rough spots in your prevention education.

For training on implementing the SALVE self check, trauma-informed programming, community-based consent/sexuality education, or development of protocols to strengthen community responses to sexual violence, email [christy.croft@icloud.com](mailto:christy.croft@icloud.com).