

FULFILLING YOUR AMANAH

A Framework to Prevent Sexual Violence

(trust)

Too often, communities begin thinking about sexual violence prevention after an incident has occurred. This can leave many community members feeling unprepared or unequipped to create violence free, victim-centric spaces.

BUILDING VICTIM-CENTRIC SPACES

How you work toward prevention in your community can have a profound impact on an individual if they experience sexual violence. An organization that has trained first responders, trauma-informed policies, and mechanisms for timely accountability can have a lifelong impact on a victim's ability to heal, seek counseling and justice, and feel safe.

AMANAH PRINCIPLES

In addition to responding to individual victims with RAHMA, communities can work toward proactive prevention. This work can also prepare the community to respond to an allegation in a victim-centric manner should there ever be one. Finally, actively working toward prevention communicates a strong message: that this is a space that is safe for victims, and that no form of sexual violence—or the conditions that lead to it—will be tolerated. In Islam, Muslims believe that many of the responsibilities and blessings they are granted are an *amanah*, or trust, from God. For example, the earth has been given as an *amanah* and must be taken care of. Children are an *amanah* for their parents, and have certain rights that must be fulfilled. Similarly, those who are the most vulnerable in communities must be cared for with compassion, equity, and justice. In this vein, preventing sexual violence and responding to a disclosure of sexual assault, whether as an individual, and especially as a community or institution, is a great *amanah*.

On the other side of this card is a framework that you can follow using the acronym amanah, inspired by the Arabic word for trust, to help you build spaces that protect victims and work toward prevention of sexual violence.



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A

Acquire Knowledge

Sexual violence prevention begins with seeking knowledge. As such, the community or institution should seek knowledge on the following: Understanding the full scope of sexual violence, including definitions, laws regarding mandated reporting, why victims don't tell, the root causes of sexual violence, and the local resources and social services available.

M

Minimize Victim Blaming and Rape Culture

Victim blaming happens when the victim of a crime or any wrongful act is held entirely or partially responsible for the harm that occurred. Creating an environment free of victim blaming begins inside the organization. When a conversation begins to move in the direction of victim blaming, shift the conversation to focus on the harm that occurred.

A

Ally with Trained Professionals

Collaborate with local agencies and trained professionals who have trauma-informed expertise. Work together to co-create networks for referral and support systems to ensure that the institution is supported to handle disclosures.

N

Normalize Conversations on Sex and Sexual Violence

Open and honest dialogue about sex and sexual violence can replace shame and stigma and help provide individuals with the information and resources they need to identify when they are being abused or mistreated and how to seek help.

A

Assess Your Community for Inclusivity

Determine how inclusive your institution is: would those from marginalized communities feel safe reporting? For example, research shows that communities of color, children, undocumented individuals, differently abled individuals, and LGBTQIA+ people have a greater likelihood of not seeking help.

H

Handle Reporting Through Trauma-Informed Processes

Organizations should work to create structures and processes that reach communities with high likelihood of not reporting. This begins by understanding why victims don't report, and building systems that address some of those barriers.