

ADVOCATES:

DO:

- ◆ Advocate for the personal sovereignty and safety of women and their children, including provision of safe space and any resources necessary for women to regain control of her life.
- ◆ *Ask, listen to, believe* and respectfully act on what women state they need and want.
- ◆ Clearly and persistently send the message: violence is unacceptable, battering is a crime and never the fault of the woman who has been battered.
- ◆ Validate the individuality, experiences, decisions and strengths of women who have been battered.
- ◆ Act and treat women who are battered as relatives.
- ◆ Model courage and resistance in the face of oppression, intimidation and fear.
- ◆ Provide leadership ensuring women's safety is a priority in coordinated community responses that promote and enhance the spiritual and cultural traditions of the sacredness of women & children.
- ◆ Focus attention on the intent of safety and integrity of women & renewal of traditional life ways as guiding principles throughout systems dealing with violence against women.
- ◆ Provide expertise through the voices of women who are battered and their children on issues regarding violence against women within justice, law enforcement, social & medical systems.
- ◆ Ensure all women who have been battered/ sexually assaulted have 24-hour access to support, accurate information, crisis intervention and other advocacy.
- ◆ Educate personnel within systems about the most effective responses to violence regarding batterers, victims and at-risk family members, prioritizing victim safety and offender accountability.
- ◆ Be conscious of the educational role within all advocate activities.
- ◆ Remain accountable to the woman who has been battered/sexually assaulted including maintaining confidentiality.

DO NOT:

- ◆ Act without the expressed informed consent or participation of the woman who has been battered, or withhold or create barriers to safety & resources because we judged her "unworthy" in some way.
- ◆ Believe we should mind-read what she needs or wants, or assume we know better than she does.
- ◆ Minimize or blame her for the violence, collude/make excuses for the batterer's behavior, or treat the violence as a private or mental health issue.
- ◆ Treat all women the same, as incapable of making decisions, "sick" or incompetent.
- ◆ Label or act as if women who are battered are "cases," "those women," clients or patients.
- ◆ Get women to cooperate with other agencies or "follow rules" not honoring her safety or sovereignty.
- ◆ Allow task forces, meetings or initiatives to focus on the behavior of women, instead of accountability of offenders and of systems.
- ◆ Diverting attention to mental health or other issues not directly related to battering as violent crime, safety and Native women's sovereignty, or that reinforce external or internal oppression.
- ◆ Speak for or on behalf of battered women, unless they are not safe enough to do so themselves, or without their express, informed permission.
- ◆ Ignore or create barriers that prevent or limit access to safety or resources.
- ◆ Forget violence ends through social change that includes systems work focused on accountability for provision of safety and offender accountability.
- ◆ Dismiss the reality that conflicts and creation of working relationships are "teachable moments" for all involved, including advocates.
- ◆ Allow limited budgets, policy, funders or our "check signers" to compromise advocating for the safety and sovereignty of women who have been battered.