Interviewing Presentation and Discussion
Meeting Minutes
10/21/2024

Attendees: Scott Risolute, Amanda L. Vasquez, Megan Alderden, Sara Block, Amirrah Abou-Youssef, Dominique Sheehama, Fawn Pettet, Jayden, Kim Wolgast, Lauren Callinan, Pat Davenport

Purpose: To have an open dialogue about what it means or how the processes used to conduct interviews with survivors, witnesses or other affected persons.

Materials Referenced: PowerPoint Interviewing Survivors DVFR.pptx

Guidebook

Pence article

Risan article

Discussion:

1. Interview Stages and Considerations
    a. Not all states do interviews (learned at conference)
    b. Pre-interview Considerations
        i. Making a list of all possible sources of information
        ii. Deciding who and how to reach out to survivors
            1. What hat is interviewer wearing (DV or RRT) – brings confidentiality into focus
        iii. Determining what information should be shared w/interviewee
        iv. Who and how many will conduct interview
        v. Prepping for the interview
            1. What is your protocol
                a. Types of preparation (information review, timeline, etc)
                    i. Information review
                    ii. Timeline
                    iii. Taking notes (how), recording
                b. How long will the interview be
                c. Zoom, in person, etc
                d. Balance between meeting needs of interviewee and the information you need to gather
                e. Flexibility
                f. Consider language (offender/perpetrator, etc)
    c. Following the Interview
        i. Provide next steps about information
            1. Resources
            2. Sharing information from interview, including how
            3. Expressing gratitude

4. How to provide a factual summary of information without any lens of interpretation

2. Guidebook
    a. Living document, updating as we learn from others and our own experiences
        i. Conference – we learned a better best practice of developing a timeline and reviewing information prior to conducting interviews – at least to some degree
    b. Pages 32-36 – information on Interviewing
        i. Considerations/Steps Before Conducting Interviews
        ii. Conducting the Interview
        iii. Sharing Out Information with the Team
3. Trauma Informed Practices
    a. Ten Principles from article by Pence, highlighted:
        i. 2nd Principle – focus of trauma informed practices should be on recovery – not really applicable to fatality review, but can look at as offering to be present and open, list of resources
        ii. 4th Principle – provide choices and control – provide space for them to share their stories in the way they want to share them (might be different than our goals)
        iii. X Principle – building trust (no shame or blame)
        iv. 8th Principle – minimizing re-traumatization – active listening, clear about what DVFR is intended to do and what it's not intended to do
    b. Review Risan article – to inform the interview process
4. Jaden – Kankakee 21st Circuit
    a. Furthest along, reviewed their interview process
5. Important Topics re: Interviewing – asking if anything missing from the list
    a. Documenting the interview
    b. Reporting out the interview
        i. Statute does contemplate that there will be sharing of information
    c. Confidentiality – getting a release of information to share? Which hat are you wearing?
    d. Guarding against bias
    e. Adding this information to the Guidebook
6. Meet again mid-Winter when more interviews have been conducted, try to touch base quarterly
7. Possibly come together in person