



# Supporting Survivors of SA in the Sex Trades

*This poster was designed by individuals with lived experience in the Sex Trades and as Social Work Advocates. It is by no means a catch all, but is intended to be a starting point for larger conversations and introspection.*

**Instead of...**

**"Have you ever been sexually assaulted?"**

**Try...**

"Has anyone ever pressured you to do sexual things that you did not want to do?"

**Especially in sex work, people may not describe their experiences as sexual assault, even if what they say makes them eligible for services. Letting people know you recognize the difference can help build trust.**

**Instead of...**

**"We can get you into housing"  
"We'll get you out of the industry"**

"This is something that the program usually offers to participants, is that something that you would be interested in?"

"it sounds like housing is a need and we can talk more about that process but I'll be honest- it does take time. What would make you feel safer tonight?"

**Survivors are always the expert on their experience. Unless they ask other wise, focus on the incident they are naming not the Sex Industry at large.**

**Instead of...**

**"Are you a sex worker?"  
"Are you in the sex trades?"  
"Are you being trafficked?"**

**Try.....**

- "Have you ever traded sex or sexual/intimate services in exchange for money, goods, or a place to stay? Its okay if you're not sure"
- If yes,
- "Has anyone else ever made you do these things when you didn't want to?"
- "Do you feel safe when you are working?"
- "Has anyone ever hurt you while you were working?"
- "Have you ever had money stolen from a client, or performed services you didn't get paid for?"
- "Do you ever worry that a client may be following you or looking for you?"
- "Does someone else keep your money for you?"
- *\*just because someone keeps their money for them does not mean it is a trafficker/exploiter! Making assumptions breaks trust. Ask more questions and be okay with not getting every answer.*

**Describe the services that a person may be eligible for. If they are a good fit for SA resources, explain to them what they may have access to by engaging in services. Sex workers may have very real distrust in systems. Be as transparent and realistic as possible in the capacities of the program. It is traumatizing to have something offered and then rescinded. This might also trigger trauma of traffickers or clients promising things to them that were not delivered. Language is important.**

*Source*

PDX Sex Workers Resource Project ([pdxswrp.org](http://pdxswrp.org))