

Safe Advocacy Events

For effective advocacy, the Brave recommends the following safe advocacy model to be followed for any event or engagement opportunity which includes the following:

Before the Event

Conduct a Risk Assessment.

For the event itself, all risks should be outlined to survivors. Some examples could be:

Risk that anonymity may not be able to be secured

Risk of retraumatization with the re-living of experience

Risk of possible emotional exhaustion due to the reliving of experience

Risk that outside parties could be dismissive of work

Coordinate and Communicate Travel and Accommodations

When coordinating an event, it's important to share all details regarding travel or accommodations as far in advance as possible. Provide space for questions and discussion.

Travel

Ensure that survivors feel comfortable with the flight and driving accommodations

Lodging

Vet prospective hotels using online reviews and known safe areas.

Uber and food vouchers

Survivors should have a clear outline of food and possible transportation vouchers.

If a survivor wants to book their own accommodations, make it clear what the budget is. Emphasize that safety is the top priority.

Agendas and Expectations around Participation

Make sure you have a clear plan regarding meetings and that survivors feel clear on what the ask or day will look like.

Agenda with times and locations where survivors are needed

Outline bathroom and food breaks

Recognize that all post-work gatherings are optional

Schedule time for a mental health pre-brief that goes over the services that will be offered to those attending.

Day of the Event

Establish an intervention team

Communicate to individuals that they can always opt out if needed.

Plan breaks

During events, provide safe spaces and time for processing emotions .

Secure a mental health professional

Have a licensed or trained mental health professional available at all times.

Schedule regular check-ins

See how everyone is feeling about the work and ensure they're comfortable.

After the Event

Hold a debrief session

De-briefing helps people process the emotions they feel and also allows for a better educational experience about an event or engagement. A successful debrief session normalizes the process of safely sharing feelings, thoughts, emotions.

Here are several questions you can cover in a debrief session.

What went well?
What should happen at future events?

What went poorly?
What should change for future events?

Did you feel safe and supported?

Did you experience overwhelm?

How can survivors be more empowered for future events?

Are there any ideas you would like to pursue for future events?

Provide access to care

Onsite Care

Provide a safe space and/or trained professional to help survivors decompress during the remainder of their time onsite.

Access to Self-Care Resources

Make sure that everyone who participates knows they have access to self-care resources and emergency hotlines.

Conduct participant check-ins

Contact all participants 3-5 days after the event to ensure they are feeling safe and supported. Share links to self-care resources and emergency hotlines.