

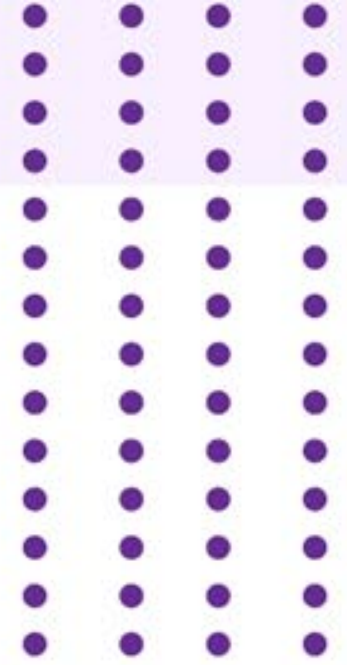


**Kaitlyn Eberhardt**  
*Prevention Strategist*

# **Empowerment-Based and Trauma-Informed Response to Survivors of Violence**



# DISCLAIMERS



Legal



Pronoun



Copyright

# WHO WE ARE

Texas Advocacy Project is a nonprofit organization providing **FREE** legal and social services to survivors of:

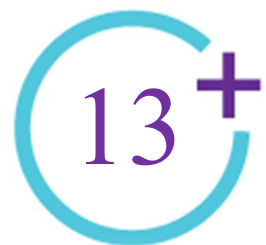
- Domestic & Dating Violence
- Sexual Assault
- Child Abuse
- Stalking
- Human Trafficking

We believe prevention efforts are fundamental to our mission of helping all Texans live free from abuse, and have an Advocacy & Outreach team dedicated to survivor services, outreach, and community education.

# WHO WE HELP



Provided free legal services to 4,765 primary survivors in power-based abuse cases



Supported clients from ages 13 to 84 years old



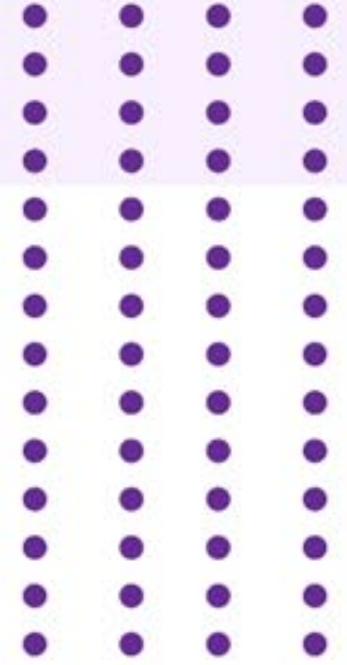
Served 10,502 clients and children across the state



Served survivors in 58% of all counties in Texas



# WHY WE HELP



## THE STATISTICS ARE STAGGERING

- 74% of all Texans will experience domestic violence or will know someone who has
- 1 in 10 children have seen one parent assault another
- 1 in 4 women will experience sexual violence
- U.S. economy loses \$8.3 billion annually due to domestic violence

# WHAT IS TRAUMA?

# WHAT IS TRAUMA?

“Trauma is an emotional response to a terrible event like an accident, rape or natural disaster.

Immediately after the event, shock and denial are typical. Longer term reactions include unpredictable emotions, flashbacks, strained relationships and even physical symptoms like headaches or nausea.”

<http://www.apa.org/topics/trauma/>

# WHAT CAUSES TRAUMA?

- Intimate Partner Violence
- Sexual Assault
- Shooting
- Combat
- Major Car Accident
- Child Abuse

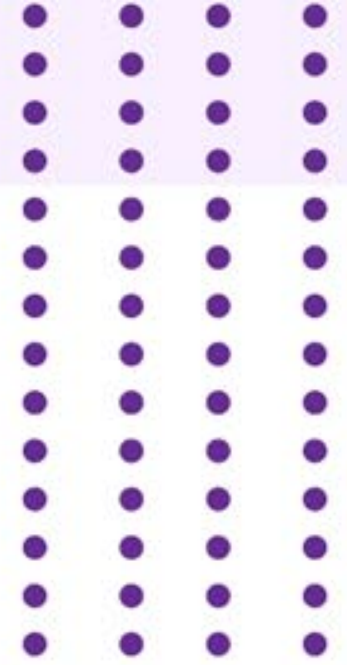


# WHAT CAUSES TRAUMA?

- Intimate Partner Violence
- Sexual Assault
- Shooting
- Combat
- Major Car Accident
- Child Abuse
- Natural Disaster
- Etc.

***TOO MUCH  
TOO SOON  
TOO FAST***

# UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA



Fight



Flight



Freeze



Fawn



TEXAS  
ADVOCACY  
PROJECT

# "NORMAL" FUNCTIONING RESPONSE

First, I did \_\_\_\_\_

Then, I did \_\_\_\_\_

After that, I did \_\_\_\_\_

Lastly, I did \_\_\_\_\_

# TRAUMA RESPONSE

I smelled \_\_\_\_\_

I felt \_\_\_\_\_

I heard \_\_\_\_\_

I tasted \_\_\_\_\_



# TONIC IMMOBILITY

- “Rape-induced paralysis”
- More likely to happen if victim has been previously assaulted
- Experienced by 1-25% of victims

# ECOLOGICAL VIEW OF TRAUMA



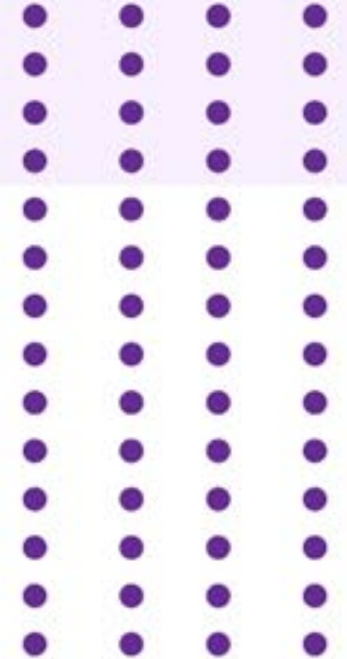
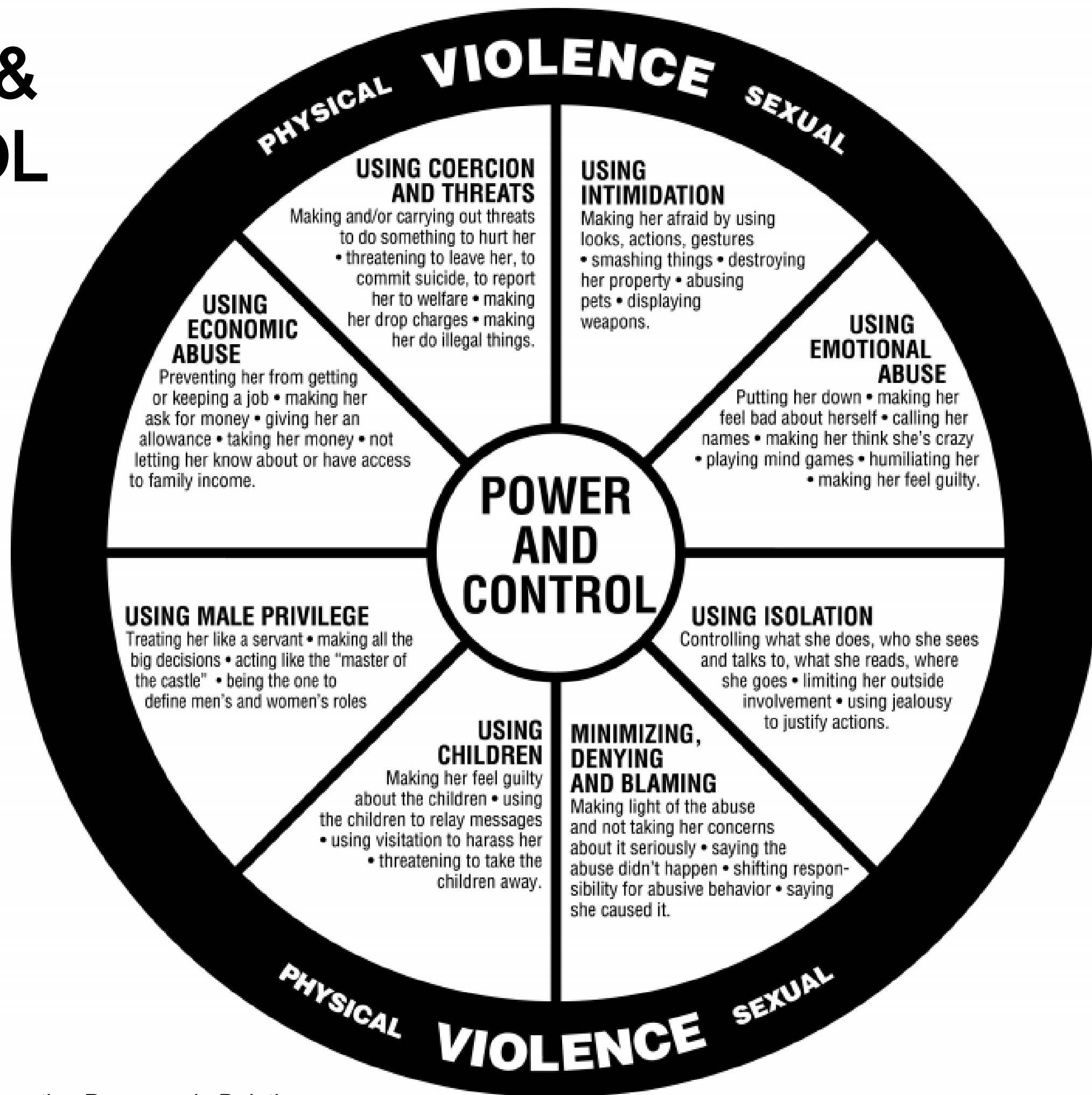
Source: Harvey, Mary. 1996. "An Ecological View of Psychological Trauma and Trauma Recovery." *Journal of Traumatic Stress* 9, no. 1: 3-23.

Figure 3

# WHAT IS TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE?

- Emphasizes creating services and programs that are sensitive and directly responsive to the trauma that many survivors experience after a violent crime.
- Programs identify and limit potential triggers to reduce their-re traumatization and protect their mental and emotional health.
- Emphasizes choice, **EMPOWERMENT** and cultural competence.

# POWER & CONTROL WHEEL





# **EM***POWER***MENT**

- What words comes to mind when we talk about power?
- Have you ever felt powerful?

# EMPOWERING SURVIVORS



# EMPOWERING THE SURVIVOR

- The use of force, fraud, and coercion can make a victim feel stripped of their rights.
- Respect the autonomy of victims and promote their sense of control over the situation.
- Offer choices to the victims and get their permission for actions.
- Let the victim choose which resources or services they want and need and how they wish to access them.



# EMPOWERMENT MODEL WITH SURVIVORS

- Approach as individuals with unique lives
- Listen
- Meet the survivor where they are
- Ask questions
- Analyze risks
- Offer resources and information

# EMPOWERMENT ADVOCACY:

## *HOW DO WE ACHIEVE IT?*

- Respect confidentiality
- Believe & validate experiences
- Acknowledge injustice
- Respect autonomy
- Help plan for future safety
- Promote access to community services

# OFFER EDUCATION THAT WILL PROVIDE VALIDATION & REFLECTION

- Educate about basic neurobiology and trauma. This can be incredibly validating for clients and can give hope for recovery.
- Make sure to explain that our brains are meant to protect us, and they are NOT broken because of their survival mechanisms
- Ask if they are interested in learning more about the dynamics behind IPV. It helps to show how nuanced and coercive the process can be.
- Be open to other tools that survivors find most helpful. Example: DARVO
- Educate about the various forms of trauma treatment that do NOT require the client to lay on a couch and detail their trauma

# DISEMPOWERING INTERVENTIONS

- Forced into responding to abuse in ways that may have negative consequences for other parts of their lives.
- Offering the “best” choice.
- Not informed by the participation of survivors of violence.
- Judgment over survivor decisions.

# DISEMPOWERING STYLES

- Rescuer/DeGooder
- Aggressive Advocate
- Passive, Surrendering Advocate
- “Smile & Be Nice” Advocate



# EMPOWERMENT

- Multi-dimensional social process that helps people gain control over their own lives.
- Process that fosters power in people for use in their own lives, their communities and in their society, by acting on issues they define as important.
- Process similar to a path or journey, one that develops as we work through it.

# EMPOWERMENT THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA



badass\_henson

## NO MORE



- NO MORE *by standing*
- NO MORE *victim blaming*
- NO MORE *silence*
- NO MORE *violence*
- NO MORE *excuses*

NO MORE  
TOGETHER WE CAN END  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ASSAULT  
#1is2many  
#We'reGonnaFixThis

Number of original hashtagged posts:

**85,687**

#WhyIStayed across all media

**185,794**

#WhyILeft across all media

**63,883**

Non re-tweets:

**66,174**

"Non-influencers" using the hashtags

**75%**

Total number of original posts and retweets

**198,696**



# SAFETY PLANNING

# SAFETY, SAFETY, SAFETY!

- Survivors are experts at navigating their own safety.
- Not every situation will be easily solved.
- Sometimes staying is safer than leaving.
- Supporting choice keeps survivors connected.
- Consider personal safety and survivor safety and reassess on a continual basis.

# REACH OUT

Know where to get support

- Talk to a supportive coworker
- Talk to a supervisor

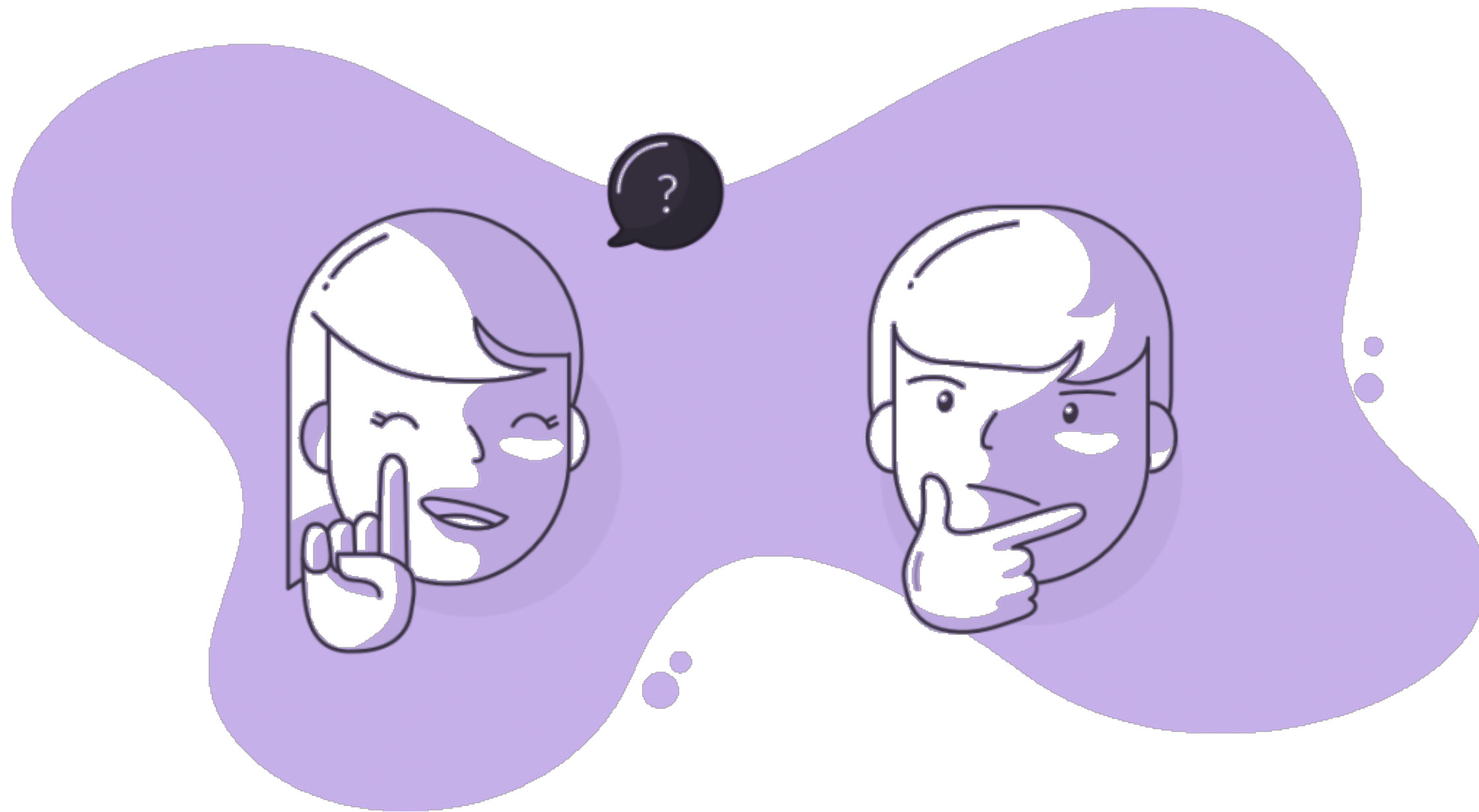
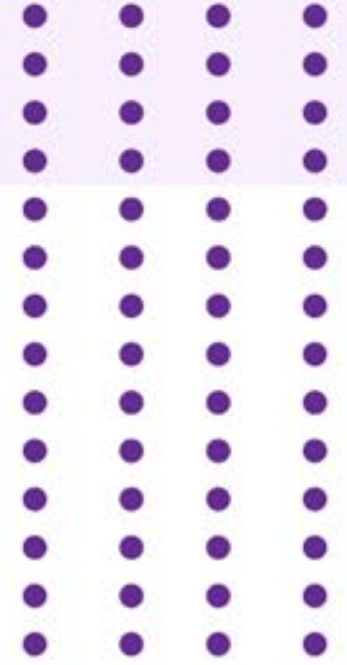
Know your own limits

- Get help when you need it

# CLOSING

While we cannot give people power and we cannot make them “empowered,” we can provide the opportunities, resources and support that they need to become involved themselves.

# QUESTIONS





**TEXAS  
ADVOCACY  
PROJECT**  
800.374.HOPE

**Kaitlyn Eberhardt**  
*Prevention Strategist*

[KEberhardt@TexasAdvocacyProject.org](mailto:KEberhardt@TexasAdvocacyProject.org)