



Section One: Foundations

Introduction

Section one reviews key foundational principles and concepts related to trauma-informed documentation and justice pathways for child survivors of sexual violence. This section addresses key topics such as consent, assent, dissent, and the evolving capacity of children. These concepts are crucial for ensuring survivor autonomy and must be reiterated across all stages of the documentation and justice pathway. The section also defines the key terms and concepts that are essential for trauma-informed and survivor-centered approaches to working with child survivors of sexual violence.

Section one provides partners with the foundational knowledge that will inform specific, practical approaches for obtaining quality evidence of sexual violence committed against children while respecting children's rights and voice, while focusing on addressing global gaps in justice and accountability for child survivors. As such, this section is a “jumping off” point for the other sections of the Child-Centered Documentation Toolkit. This section is particularly useful for actors who may not have worked with child survivors before or are less familiar with implementing processes aligned with trauma-informed and survivor-centered principles.

Section one has three objectives which contextualize these concepts within justice processes for child survivors of sexual violence.

- **Objective One:** *Define key concepts essential to implementing trauma-informed and survivor-centered documentation and justice process for child survivors.*
- **Objective Two:** *Introduce foundational principles for assessing children's consent, assent, and dissent with consideration to their evolving capacity.*
- **Objective Three:** *Provide an overview of key considerations for how documentation and justice processes can be adapted to support child survivors.*

Section one includes the following tools:

- I. Overview of the Toolkit**
- II. Foundational Principles for Applying the Concepts of Consent, Assent, Dissent and Evolving Individual Capacity to Ensure Trauma-informed Documentation, Justice, and Reparations Processes for Child Survivors of Sexual Violence**
- III. Evidence-Based Standards, Norms, and Good Practices for Trauma-Informed Engagement with Children in Justice Processes**

After Reviewing Section one

By completing this section, you will be able to define children's consent, assent, and dissent, better understand a child's evolving capacity and gain knowledge about other key concepts in the context of trauma-informed sexual violence response and survivor-centered evidence documentation.

You will also be able to connect the key concepts outlined to practical approaches and parameters for working with child survivors discussed in the other sections of the Child-Centered Documentation Toolkit; as well as make specific connections to their own work within their own contexts.

In this section:

- Definitions for key concepts found in the Child-Centered Documentation Toolkit, such as “child” and “informed consent”.
- Orientation for working with child survivors and considerations for obtaining their consent, assent, and dissent.
- Practical tips for assessing children’s ability to provide informed consent and assent based on evolving capacity.

Who should review this Section?

- The foundational information in this section is useful to all actors along the justice and documentation pathway, but this section is particularly important for those involved in processes that assess survivor consent, assent and dissent.