



General Tips

- Have easy access to the group – don't create barriers.
- There is no right way to conduct these groups. Be open to suggestions from participants.
- Be flexible. Think kitchen-table – have a topic in mind but be willing to change. Let members of the group own the group.
- Be willing to talk about issues the group wants to discuss, but don't pressure anyone to share if they are not ready.
- Remember, you may only see a group-member once or you may have the member for years. Be solution-based and friendly but make the most of your interaction because it may be the only one you get.
- Address safety concerns and provide safe space. Participants in the group need to feel safe to tell their story and benefit from being believed. Be sure to *listen* and validate each person's experience, strength and hope.
 - Make sure to note that everything discussed in the group is confidential and not to be shared outside of the group.
- Build on existing strengths. Don't focus on what is wrong with people. Focus on what has happened to them. Provide practical support. Help group participants identify safe coping mechanisms.

Sample Format for Groups

- Give Preliminary introductions and information
- Encourage members to listen to each other, offer support to one another, and to talk about themselves
- Help Members solve problems and offer help
- Close the session by summarizing, encouraging additional comments or questions, remind members of next meeting and give a final greeting