



Theoretically-Informed Performance Measures for the National Domestic Violence Hotline

Summary Brief from National Domestic Violence Hotline Services Assessment Framework based on Theory Project

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Introduction

This brief describes efforts of the National Domestic Violence Hotline Services Assessment Framework based on Theory (SAF-T) project to develop and test theoretically-informed performance measures for The National Domestic Violence Hotline ([The Hotline](#)[®]). These performance measures can support The Hotline’s ongoing monitoring efforts and future evaluation of activities to connect hotline contactors to services that meet their needs.

In the sections that follow, we provide an overview of the SAF-T project and The Hotline. We then explain the importance of having a theoretical framework for brief crisis intervention services offered by The Hotline to guide the development of performance measures, and how this framework describes the work of The Hotline. Next, we describe the process for developing theoretically-informed performance measures, explain how we tested and refined a preliminary set of measures, and summarize The Hotline’s performance across seven final recommended measures. Finally, we describe how the recommended performance measures can facilitate ongoing monitoring and future evaluation of The Hotline services and how other hotlines can use these or similar theoretically-informed performance measures to monitor and evaluate their own work.

What is the SAF-T project?

The SAF-T project is a collaboration between the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) and the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) Program within the Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) at the Administration for Children and Families (ACF). ACF contracted with Westat to conduct this multi-phase project, which began with the development of a theoretical framework and an approach for future evaluation and ongoing performance measurement for the National Domestic Violence Hotline. This brief focuses on the work conducted by Westat and its subcontractor, the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health, during the first two phases of the project. The purpose of the first phase was to build a theoretical framework based on existing behavior change theory to inform the development of performance measures for The Hotline. The purpose of the second phase was to test and refine the performance measures for program assessment.

What is the National Domestic Violence Hotline?

The Hotline provides 24-hour, national, toll-free, and confidential advocacy services by phone, online chat, and text messaging. Its mission is to “answer the call to support and shift power back to those affected by relationship abuse.”¹ Funded with a \$1 million grant appropriated

¹ National Domestic Violence Hotline. (2018). *Vision, mission statement, and values*. Retrieved from <https://www.thehotline.org/about-the-hotline/mission/>

under the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, The Hotline answered its first call on February 21, 1996.² Through continued funding from the FVPSA Program, The Hotline offers brief crisis intervention, safety planning, emotional support, resources, and referrals to community programs. It informs and assists adult and youth survivors of relationship abuse, their family and household members, and others affected by violence to build healthy, safe, and supportive communities and families. Through its [loveisrespect](#) project, The Hotline provides youth and young adults with services focused on promoting healthy relationships and preventing patterns of abuse.

Why did The Hotline need a theoretical framework?

Historically, ACF assessed the performance of The Hotline in terms of response rate (i.e., number of calls/chats/texts answered out of the total number received) and average response time (i.e., number of seconds before a call/chat/text was answered).³ Given the high volume of contacts The Hotline receives each year, these are valuable measures. However, these measures do not provide any information on the quality or outcomes of services provided to contactors by The Hotline Advocates.⁴

Demonstrating outcomes of domestic violence programs, such as crisis intervention hotlines, poses significant challenges. To achieve desired outcomes, abuse victims/survivors require tailored responses to address their specific experiences and circumstances. Program evaluation and assessment are critical for understanding the outcomes of services and interventions as well as for making program adjustments. Additionally, comprehensive and relevant measures of performance must reflect program complexity. A program theory is necessary to explain how and why a program will produce desired outcomes.⁵ Yet, no existing theories of behavior change related to hotline use adequately explain how or why The Hotline can expect to achieve desired outcomes.

How does the theoretical framework describe the work of The Hotline?

We used a series of qualitative approaches to develop the theoretical framework. Activities included a review of published literature, interviews with Advocates, and a review of de-identified chat transcripts from The Hotline.⁶ These activities provided rich content for a four-step group concept mapping activity involving a diverse set of participants recruited from five stakeholder groups: (1) The Hotline staff, (2) The Hotline users, (3) service providers, (4) policy advocates, and (5) Federal staff. The concept mapping activities combined findings from the

² National Domestic Violence Hotline. (2018). *Our history: Domestic violence advocates*. Retrieved from <https://www.thehotline.org/about-the-hotline/history-domestic-violence-advocates-2/>

³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. (2019). *FY 2019 Justification of Estimates for Appropriations Committees*. Retrieved from https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/olab/acf_master_cj_acf_final_3_19_0.pdf

⁴ We use the term "Advocate" to describe staff from The Hotline who provide crisis intervention and other services to individuals who contact The Hotline via phone, online chat, or text.

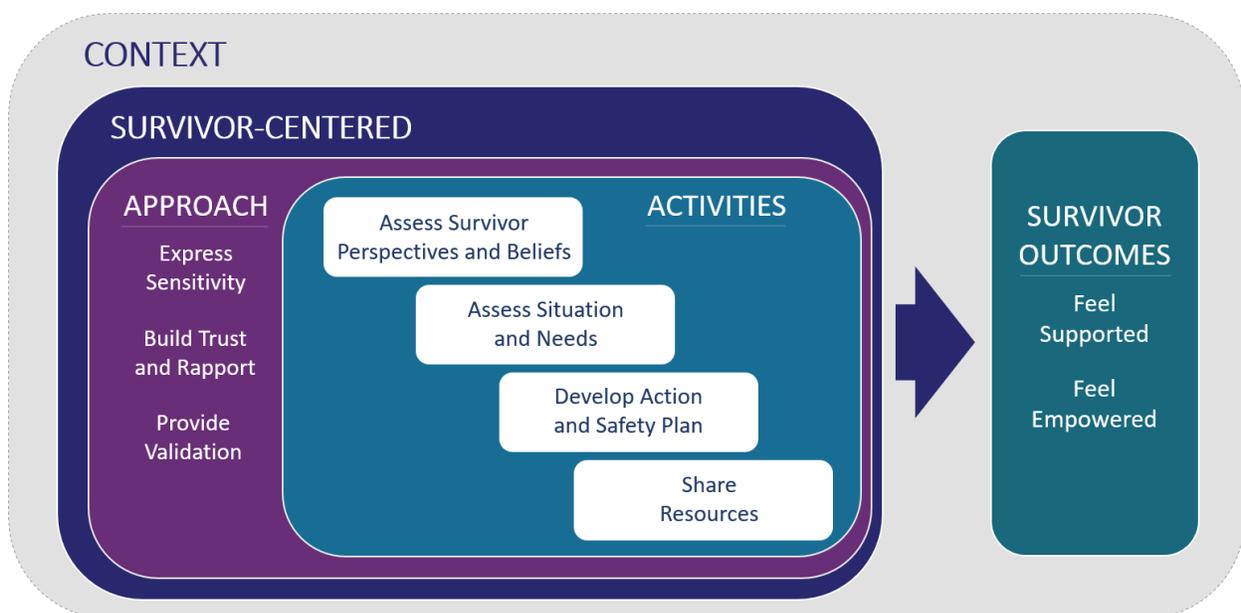
⁵ Hansen, S., Kanning, M., Lauer, R., Steinacker, J. M., & Schlicht, W. (2017). MAP-IT: A practical tool for planning complex behavior modification interventions. *Health Promotion and Practice, 18*(5), 696-705. doi:10.1177/1524839917710454

⁶ Chat transcripts include interactions via online chat and cell phone text.

literature review, Advocate interviews, and transcript review with stakeholder input. As a final step, we incorporated expert panel feedback to develop a survivor-centered framework.⁷

The survivor-centered framework (Figure 1) applies to those affected by relationship abuse who may benefit from brief crisis intervention provided by The Hotline. It focuses on survivor outcomes of feeling supported and empowered and on key constructs⁸ within two components: approach and activities. This survivor-centered framework prioritizes the needs and wishes of survivors and respects their readiness to make changes. It tailors the intervention approach and activities to the unique needs of each survivor to ensure they feel supported and empowered.

Figure 1. Survivor-centered framework for brief crisis intervention guiding the work of The Hotline



How did the theoretical framework inform the development of performance measures?

During the second phase of the project, we selected performance measures with the strongest conceptual fit between the theoretical framework factors and data elements from The Hotline’s existing data sources. This approach ensured at least one performance measure for each theoretical component and construct of the theoretical framework. To begin, we identified a

⁷ For more details about the survivor-centered framework and the development process, see [“A Theoretical and Stakeholder-Informed Assessment Framework for the National Domestic Violence Hotline.”](#) For more information about how we engaged stakeholders in the development of the theoretical framework, see [“Stakeholder Engagement and Participatory Approach to Develop an Assessment Framework for the National Domestic Violence Hotline.”](#)

⁸ Constructs are complex concepts or ideas formed from the synthesis of more simple concepts or ideas, as defined in VandenBos, G. R. (2015). *APA Dictionary of Psychology*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

set of preliminary performance measures. Figure 2 outlines the process we used to identify preliminary performance measures.⁹

Matched factors to existing data sources

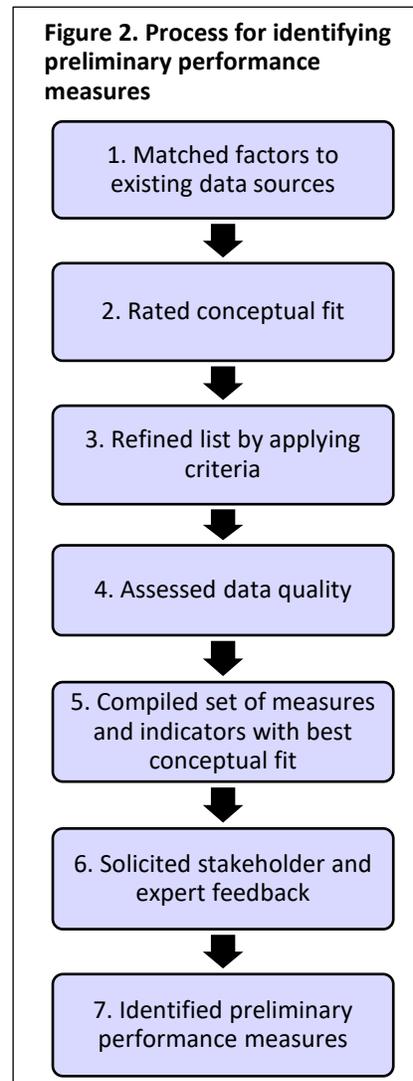
As Figure 2 illustrates, we began the process of identifying preliminary performance measures by matching theoretical framework factors to three existing data sources from The Hotline: (1) Salesforce database,¹⁰ (2) Quality Assurance (QA) forms¹¹ for assessing phone Advocate performance, and (3) QA forms for assessing digital Advocate performance. The Salesforce database included information specific to interactions with contactors, which Advocates complete during and after all interactions. Supervisors complete the QA forms during and after observations of Advocate interactions with contactors.

Initially, the task involved matching 49 key theoretical framework factors to existing data elements.¹² To ensure that we appropriately interpreted data elements, we shared the initial matching spreadsheet with The Hotline management staff for review. They provided feedback, which we incorporated into the spreadsheet.

Rated conceptual fit

As a next step, the project team independently rated the extent to which each theoretical factor was a good conceptual fit with the matched data elements. During an expert panel meeting in October 2018, we presented the results of the matching exercise and subsequent ratings and facilitated a discussion on conceptual fit. Following the meeting, three experts and one member of The Hotline management staff reviewed the data and formally rated the conceptual fit between each theoretical factor and the matched data element.

We reviewed individual ratings from our project team, The Hotline staff, and the experts to create an overall rating score. When raters agreed a match was not a good conceptual fit, the data element was dropped. Similarly, when raters agreed a match was a good conceptual fit,



⁹ For a more thorough discussion of the performance measure development process, see [“Theoretical Framework and Performance Measures for the National Domestic Violence Hotline: Report from the National Domestic Violence Hotline Services Assessment Framework Based on Theory \(SAF-T\) Project.”](#)

¹⁰ Salesforce is a management information system The Hotline uses to systematically record “demographic and situational” information about calls, instant messages, and texts received and details about advocacy services provided during each interaction.

¹¹ QA forms include four scoring categories for six key factors essential to effective interactions; there are separate forms for digital and phone interactions. The Hotline supervisors use specific scoring criteria to routinely assess Advocate performance and complete at least two QA forms per Advocate each month.

¹² Although the concept mapping yielded 106 theoretical factors, we limited our matching activity to the 49 factors rated as having high importance for empowerment and support.

the data element moved forward to the next phase of list refinement. If there was a lack of consensus on the quality of a match (e.g., raters disagreed or indicated uncertainty), the data element also moved forward to the next phase. Theoretical framework factors with no corresponding data element did not progress to the next phase.

Refined list by applying criteria

We then refined the list of data elements by eliminating from consideration those that were:

- Only available for one mode of interaction (i.e., phone or digital, but not both), and
- Matched to factors and constructs associated with both conceptually distinct components of the survivor-centered theoretical framework.¹³

The remaining 25 matched data elements represented 25 potential performance measures.

Assessed data quality

Next, we used a one-month sample of The Hotline data (August 2018) for a preliminary assessment of the quality of the proposed data elements. Our analysts examined frequencies to assess the extent of missing data and to identify outliers.

Overall, there were 33,448 contacts to The Hotline during August 2018. Of these, 28,722 (85.9%) were to The Hotline¹⁴ and 4,726 (14.1%) were to the loveisrespect project.¹⁵ We created a subset of data for victims/survivors¹⁶ only, which represented almost half (46.3%; n=15,475) of the total contacts for August 2018.¹⁷ We created a similar subset of data for the QA forms received. Over three-quarters (79.8%; n=95) of the phone QA forms in August 2018 involved a victim/survivor. Approximately three-quarters (76.6%; n=72) of the digital QA forms involved victims/survivors. Results of the preliminary analysis indicated a sufficient amount of data to conduct planned analyses.

Compiled set of measures and indicators with best conceptual fit

Based on the results of activities described above, we compiled a list of potential performance measures with the strongest conceptual fit between theoretical framework factor and data element, ensuring at least one performance measure for each theoretical component and construct of the theoretical framework. Then, we identified numeric indicators for each performance measure and developed corresponding research questions to guide the testing and refinement of the performance measures and indicators.

¹³ Since it is not clear what “compound” data elements were measuring and their use could be subject to multiple interpretations, we selected more clearly defined and conceptually distinct data elements associated with only one of the two framework components.

¹⁴ The 28,722 contacts to The Hotline included online chat (33.7%) and phone (66.3%) contacts.

¹⁵ The 4,726 contacts to loveisrespect included online chat (54.5%), phone (32%), and text (13.5%) contacts.

¹⁶ “Victim/survivor” includes individuals who have experienced intimate partner violence (IPV) and non-IPV (i.e., victims/survivors of abuse committed by individuals other than partners). Although not part our analyses, other types of contacts include batterers, family/friends of victim/survivor or batterer and other “helpers” (e.g., service providers), health relationship inquiries, feedback (e.g., someone contacting to provide praise or issue a complaint), off target (e.g., outside the scope of services), hang ups, pranks, and administrative (e.g., individuals seeking basic information or checking to confirm number works, wrong number, media contacts).

¹⁷ For these preliminary analyses, we included victims/survivors of IPV and non-IPV. Non-IPV victims/survivors represented only a small percentage of the sample.

Solicited stakeholder and expert feedback and identified preliminary performance measures

We convened an expert panel meeting in March 2019, and presented the results of the activities described in the preceding sections, along with our proposed design for the next phase of the project. We received feedback on the list of 25 potential performance measures, indicators, and research questions, which we then incorporated into the study design. During a guided discussion with the expert panel, we carefully reviewed the 25 potential performance measures and indicators. In agreement with expert panel recommendations, we selected at least one potential performance measure for each theoretical construct and dropped measures based on self-report data. Consequently, we reduced the list from 25 to 10 preliminary performance measures.¹⁸

How were final performance measures selected?

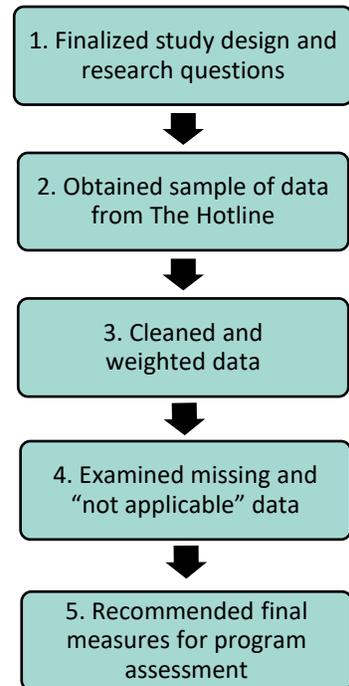
Once we identified the preliminary performance measures (see Figure 2, step 7), we finalized the study design and research questions (see Figure 3, step 1) to guide testing and refinement of the measures. Figure 3 outlines the process we used for selecting the final set of performance measures for program assessment.

Finalized study design and research questions

Three overarching research questions guided the study design. Each of the overarching questions includes sub-questions that link to the major constructs in the final theoretical framework and are listed here:

1. To what extent are contactors engaged with **survivor-centered approaches** during interactions with The Hotline?
 - a. To what extent are contactors shown **sensitivity** during interactions with The Hotline?
 - b. To what extent are contactors engaged in a manner that facilitates **trust and rapport** during interactions with The Hotline?
 - c. To what extent are contactors provided with **validation and support** during interactions with The Hotline?

Figure 3. Process for selecting final performance measures



¹⁸ The 10 preliminary measures were as follows: Contactor was... (1) engaged using a kind and compassionate tone throughout chat/text/call; (2) provided acknowledgement for the impact of abuse endured or other hardships; (3) offered encouragement for their plan of action developed; (4) validated consistently and appropriately throughout chat/text/call; (5) helped to assess advantages, disadvantages, and potential risks of options; (6) assisted in thinking about next steps and possible timeline; (7) assessed for immediate safety; (8) assessed for lethality, including suicide; (9) provided assistance in creating a comprehensive customized safety plan; and (10) provided information, resources, and options.

2. To what extent are contactors engaged in **survivor-centered activities** during interactions with The Hotline?
 - a. To what extent are contactors’ **perspectives and beliefs assessed** during interactions with The Hotline?
 - b. To what extent are contactors’ **situation and needs assessed** during interactions with The Hotline?
 - c. To what extent are contactors encouraged and supported in the **development of a personalized action and safety plan** during interactions with The Hotline?
 - d. To what extent are contactors **provided with resources** during interactions with The Hotline?
3. To what extent are contactors engaged with **survivor-centered approaches** and engaged in **survivor-centered activities** during interactions with The Hotline?

Obtained sample of data from the hotline

To test and refine the 10 preliminary performance measures, we obtained three non-consecutive months of QA and Salesforce data (August 2018, October 2018, and February 2019) from The Hotline. Both phone and digital QA forms include 30 specific skills for assessment. While most of the skills listed on phone and digital QA forms are the same, a few are tailored to their respective modes of contact. Supervisors rate each observed skill based on a four-level scale, including *skills support needed, building, effective, and mastery*. The Salesforce database contains one record for each contact with The Hotline. During each interaction, Advocates enter data that include interaction date; Advocate identification (ID) number; contactor type (e.g., victim/survivor, family/friend, service provider), demographics, location, and needs; abuse type; and a summary of the conversation as well as additional information.

Cleaned and weighted data

We restricted data to victims/survivors and matched each Advocate ID number on QA forms to the corresponding Advocate ID in the Salesforce database by month and mode of contact (phone or digital). Any records associated with Advocate IDs that could not be matched between the two files were dropped from the analysis file. Table 1 summarizes QA forms data. After excluding the one non-matching record, there were 277 phone QA forms and 254 digital QA forms, for a total of 531 QA forms across the three months.

Table 1. Number of QA assessment forms for victim/survivor contacts to The Hotline, by month and mode of contact – August 2018, October 2018, and February 2019*

Month of contact	Number of QA forms		
	Phone	Digital	Combined
August 2018	100	74	174
October 2018	92	85	177
February 2019	85	95	180
Total – All months	277	254	531

* Excludes one QA form that did not have a corresponding Salesforce record.

Table 2 shows counts of Salesforce records received by month and mode of contact. Across all three months, there were 13,404 digital contacts and more than twice as many phone contacts (n=27,849), for a total of 41,253 contacts.

Table 2. Number of Salesforce records for victim/survivor contacts to The Hotline, by month and mode of contact – August 2018, October 2018, and February 2019*

Month of contact	Number of Salesforce records		
	Phone	Digital	Combined
August 2018	10,041	3,854	13,895
October 2018	9,346	4,725	14,071
February 2019	8,462	4,825	13,287
Total – All months	27,849	13,404	41,253

* Excludes 3,833 Salesforce records that did not have a corresponding QA form.

As a result of discussions during the March expert panel meeting, we decided to use “contact” (i.e., individual calls, online chats, or texts) as the unit of analysis. However, the performance measures are not at the contact level. Rather, they are based on data elements or skills included in QA forms. Therefore, we developed weights to generalize QA form data elements to contacts. Since the Salesforce database exists at the contact level, we used counts from the Salesforce data to weight performance measures selected from QA forms. The multi-stage weighting process resulted in a weighted number of QA forms for victim/survivor contacts to The Hotline by month and mode of contact. As shown in Table 3, the analysis file included weighted totals of 29,455 phone QA forms and 15,431 digital QA forms, for a combined weighted total of 44,886 QA forms.

Table 3. Weighted number of QA assessment forms for victim/survivor contacts to The Hotline, by month and mode of contact – August 2018, October 2018, and February 2019

Month of contact	Number of QA forms (weighted)		
	Phone	Digital	Combined
August 2018	10,598	4,877	15,475
October 2018	9,692	5,508	15,200
February 2019	9,165	5,046	14,211
Total – All months	29,455	15,431	44,886

Note: Weights account for the 3,833 Salesforce records that did not have a corresponding QA form.

Examined missing and “not applicable” data

When we examined the 10 data elements identified as preliminary performance measures, we found that missing data was not a major issue. We then examined the frequency with which supervisors used the rating of “not applicable” for each of the data elements. According to The Hotline, supervisors often assign this rating when an Advocate does not have the opportunity to engage contactors in certain activities. For example, if a contactor disconnects soon after the Advocate assesses the situation, there may not be sufficient time to provide assistance in creating a comprehensive, customized safety plan. The frequency of not applicable ratings varied across performance measures and by mode of contact. Not applicable ratings ranged

from 0.0 percent to 19.3 percent for phone contacts and from 0.0 percent to 41.2 percent for digital contacts.

Recommended final performance measures for program assessment

As a final step, we reduced the preliminary list of 10 performance measures to a final list of seven. For ease of interpretation, we selected a single performance measure for each of seven constructs of the theoretical framework.¹⁹ For constructs for which more than one performance measure was originally mapped, we chose the most universal; that is, we selected the performance measure with the smallest percentage of “not applicable” ratings. All seven of the recommended performance measures can be applied to phone and digital contacts. Table 4 presents the final list of recommended performance measures by theoretical framework component, research question number, construct, and key indicator.

Table 4. Recommended performance measures for The Hotline, by theoretical framework component, research question number, construct, and key indicator

Theoretical framework component	Research question number	Construct	Performance measure	Key indicator
Approach	1a	(Express) Sensitivity	(1) Contactor was engaged using a kind and compassionate tone throughout chat/text/call	Percentage of Advocates assessed as effectively using a kind and compassionate tone throughout chat/text/call
	1b	(Build) Trust & Rapport	(2) Contactor was provided emotional support throughout chat/text/call	Percentage of Advocates assessed as effectively acknowledging impact of abuse endured or other hardships
	1c	(Provide) Validation & Support	(3) Contactor was validated consistently and appropriately throughout chat/text/call	Percentage of Advocates assessed as effectively validating survivor throughout chat/text/call consistently and appropriately
Activities	2a	(Assess) Survivor Perspectives & Beliefs	(4) Contactor was helped to assess advantages, disadvantages, and potential risks of options	Percentage of Advocates assessed as effectively helping to assess advantages, disadvantages, and potential risks of options
	2b	(Assess) Survivor Situation & Needs	(5) Contactor was assisted in thinking about next steps and possible timeline	Percentage of Advocates assessed as effectively assisting survivors in thinking about next steps and possible timeline
	2c	(Develop) Action & Safety Plan	(6) Contactor was assessed for immediate safety	Percentage of Advocates assessed as effectively assessing for immediate safety
	2d	(Share) Resources	(7) Contactor was provided information, resources, and options	Percentage of Advocates assessed as effectively providing information, resources, and options to survivor

¹⁹ We originally identified eight theoretical constructs, but later determined the eighth one (survivor centered) to be an overarching construct that comprises both components (i.e., approach and activities) and the associated constructs. Since all seven of the remaining constructs are also “survivor centered,” it was unnecessary for us to independently match existing data elements to this eighth construct.

How did The Hotline perform across the seven recommended performance measures?

After reducing the number of preliminary performance measures, we continued our analysis with the remaining seven measures. Results of our analysis of The Hotline data provide estimates for a specific period in time and may provide the basis for developing benchmarks for ongoing assessment. Table 5a shows the weighted percentage of victim/survivor phone contacts for each performance measure by theoretical component, research question number, construct, and effectiveness rating. The percentage of phone contacts rated as *effective* on each of the seven performance measures ranged from 90 percent for performance measure #4 (Contactor was helped to assess advantages, disadvantages, and potential risks of options) to 100 percent for performance measure #6 (Contactor was assessed for immediate safety). These findings suggest that The Hotline is performing effectively across all seven theoretically-informed performance measures for phone contacts.

Table 5a. Weighted percentage of victim/survivor phone contacts to The Hotline, by theoretical framework component, research question number, construct, performance measure, and effectiveness rating – August 2018, October 2018, and February 2019 (weighted N=29,455)

Theoretical framework component	Research question number	Construct	Performance measure	Effectiveness rating ¹ (weighted percentage)	
				Less than effective	Effective
Approach	1a	(Express) Sensitivity	(1) Contactor was engaged using a kind and compassionate tone throughout chat/text/call	2.0	98.0
	1b	(Build) Trust & Rapport	(2) Contactor was provided emotional support throughout chat/text/call	6.0	94.0
	1c	(Provide) Validation & Support	(3) Contactor was validated consistently and appropriately throughout chat/text/call	9.0	91.0
Activities	2a	(Assess) Survivor Perspectives & Beliefs	(4) Contactor was helped to assess advantages, disadvantages, and potential risks of options	10.0	90.0
	2b	(Assess) Survivor Situation & Needs	(5) Contactor was assisted in thinking about next steps and possible timeline	6.0	94.0
	2c	(Develop) Action & Safety Plan	(6) Contactor was assessed for immediate safety	0.0	100.0
	2d	(Share) Resources	(7) Contactor was provided information, resources, and options	5.0	95.0

¹ Excludes missing and “not applicable.”

Table 5b shows the weighted percentage of victim/survivor digital contacts for each performance measure by theoretical framework component, research question number, construct, and effectiveness rating. The percentage of digital contacts rated as *effective* on each of the seven performance measures ranged from 57.6 percent for performance measure #4 (Contactor was helped to assess advantages, disadvantages, and potential risks of options) to 98.3 percent for performance measure #6 (Contactor was assessed for immediate safety). These findings indicate that The Hotline is performing effectively during the majority of digital contacts, although there is variation across the seven performance measures.

Table 5b. Weighted percentage of victim/survivor digital contacts to The Hotline, by theoretical framework component, research question number, construct, performance measure, and effectiveness rating – August 2018, October 2018, and February 2019 (weighted N=15,431)

Theoretical framework component	Research question number	Construct	Performance measure	Effectiveness rating ¹ (weighted percentage)	
				Less than effective	Effective
Approach	1a	(Express) Sensitivity	(1) Contactor was engaged using a kind and compassionate tone throughout chat/text/call	12.0	88.0
	1b	(Build) Trust & Rapport	(2) Contactor was provided emotional support throughout chat/text/call	15.7	84.3
	1c	(Provide) Validation & Support	(3) Contactor was validated consistently and appropriately throughout chat/text/call	21.8	78.2
Activities	2a	(Assess) Survivor Perspectives & Beliefs	(4) Contactor was helped to assess advantages, disadvantages, and potential risks of options	42.4	57.6
	2b	(Assess) Survivor Situation & Needs	(5) Contactor was assisted in thinking about next steps and possible timeline	32.5	67.5
	2c	(Develop) Action & Safety Plan	(6) Contactor was assessed for immediate safety	1.7	98.3
	2d	(Share) Resources	(7) Contactor was provided information, resources, and options	16.2	83.8

¹ Excludes missing and *not applicable*.

When we aggregated performance measures by theoretical framework component, we found that 94.3 percent of phone contactors and 85.3 percent of digital contactors were effectively engaged with survivor-centered approaches (Table 6). In addition, 94.2 percent of phone contactors and 77.4 percent of digital contactors were effectively engaged in survivor-centered activities. When we examined the extent to which contactors were engaged with survivor-centered approaches and survivor-centered activities during interactions with The Hotline, we found that this combination occurred in 90.8 percent of phone contacts and 70.7 percent of digital contacts.

Table 6. Summary of weighted percentages of victim/survivor contacts to The Hotline, by theoretical framework component, research question number, majority effectiveness rating, and mode of contact – August 2018, October 2018, and February 2019 (weighted N=44,886)

Theoretical framework component	Research question number	Majority effectiveness rating (weighted percentage) ^{1,2}	
		Phone contact	Digital contact
Approach	To what extent are contactors engaged with survivor-centered approaches during interactions with The Hotline?	94.3	85.3
Activities	To what extent are contactors engaged in survivor-centered activities during interactions with The Hotline?	94.2	77.4
Approach <u>and</u> activities ³	To what extent are contactors engaged with survivor-centered approaches and engaged in survivor-centered activities during interactions with The Hotline?	90.8	70.7

¹ “Majority effectiveness rating” for each mode of contact includes all applicable performance measures. Applicability varies depending on the nature of each call.

² “Majority” indicates that the majority of performance measures within the contacts were rated *effective*. Majority is based on number of valid responses, excluding missing and “not applicable.”

³ The “approach and activities” row represents the overlap of applicable performance measures from both theoretical components. Contacts had to be rated as *effective* for the majority of performance measures in both the *approach* component and the *activities* component in order to be included in the “approach and activities” row.

In summary, we found that The Hotline is effectively implementing the survivor-centered theoretical framework, but that there is room for improvement, especially for services provided via online chat and text. The manner of communication is distinctly different for digital than for phone interactions. Without the verbal inflection and verbal cues that phone interactions can provide, it is likely to be more challenging to assess options, plan next steps, and maintain contactor engagement via chat and text.

How can these performance measures facilitate ongoing performance monitoring and future evaluation of The Hotline services?

The survivor-centered framework focuses on tailoring the approach and activities for each individual seeking assistance. It also illustrates the importance of employing both survivor-centered approaches and activities during brief crisis intervention, so survivors are more likely to feel supported and empowered. Since the seven recommended performance measures are mapped to the framework, each represents an important piece of what The Hotline aims to accomplish in order to achieve the intended outcomes for survivors.

Because these measures are based on data The Hotline is already collecting, they can be used to assess and monitor the quality of services on a routine basis. Using the results of ongoing assessment for comparison with established benchmarks, The Hotline can gauge whether services remain consistent with the theoretical framework and the model of crisis intervention it employs.²⁰ If results suggest that services are not meeting set standards, The Hotline can make adjustments to the program (e.g., enhance training and resources) to better serve the needs of contactors and increase the likelihood of achieving desired outcomes.

How can other hotlines use these or similar theoretically-informed performance measures?

The survivor-centered framework and the corresponding performance measures are consistent with best practices for brief crisis intervention and align with the crisis intervention model (CIM) used by The Hotline. Other hotlines implementing this or similar CIM models may find the recommended performance measures useful in assessing the quality of the services they provide. Therefore, hotlines may consider reviewing their own data collection efforts and QA systems to determine if these measures can be adapted to better align with their own model. If hotlines find that these measures align with their model, but data are lacking, the recommended performance measures and indicators may facilitate a more strategic approach to QA and data collection.

By creating or adopting theoretically-informed performance measures, hotlines can monitor quality on a routine basis and identify any gaps in services or areas of needed improvement. In addition to setting goals or benchmarks for comparison against ongoing performance monitoring results, hotlines may also consider using the recommended performance measures to compare their service delivery at the local level to that of The Hotline at a national level. Regardless of whether hotlines use the recommended performance measures or similar adaptations, ongoing assessment using theoretically-informed performance measures will allow hotlines to identify and address issues as they arise so they can better meet the needs of contactors.

²⁰ Roberts, A. R., & Ottens, A. J. (2005). The Seven-Stage Crisis Intervention Model: A road map to goal attainment, problem solving, and crisis resolution. *Brief Treatment & Crisis Intervention*, 5(4), 329-339.

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