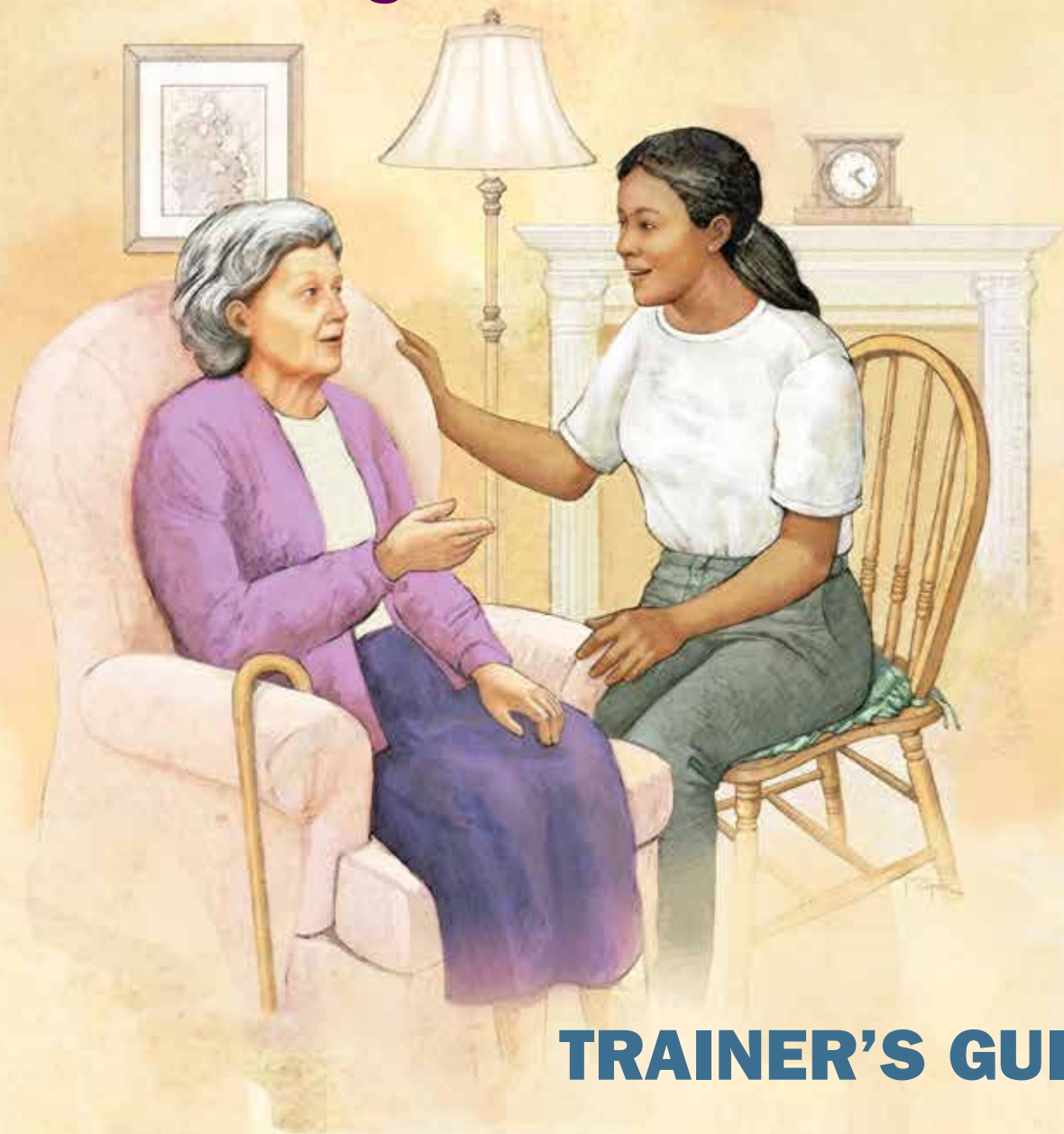


Caring for Yourself While Caring for Others

Module 3: Tips for Reducing Risks From Environmental Exposures When Providing Homecare



TRAINER'S GUIDE

Practical Tips for Homecare Workers

STAY SAFE AT WORK

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health



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NIOSH

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November 2014

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Module 3: Tips for Reducing Risks From Environmental Exposures When Providing Homecare

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this training, participants will be able to do the following:

- Identify common environmental risks homecare workers may be exposed to.
- Outline the potential impacts from environmental risks.
- Describe strategies and tools that can reduce risks.
- Follow positive problem-solving steps with clients.

Workshop at a Glance

Activity	Time	Materials
1. Welcome, Introductions, and Identifying Environmental Risks in Homes	30 minutes	Easel, prepared flip chart pages, handouts, PowerPoint slides
2. Exploring the Health and Safety Impacts of Exposure Risks	30 minutes	Prepared flip chart page, handouts, markers
3. Tips and Tools for Reducing Your Exposure to Environmental Risks	40 minutes	Prepared flip chart pages, handouts, PowerPoint slides
4. Talking With Clients to Uphold Healthy and Safe Practices	20 minutes	Handout, PowerPoint slides
Total Time	2 hours	

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Preparing to Teach:

1. Review the trainer’s guide and background materials, and prepare to present.

Read background information, so you have extensive material to support your presentation. This workshop reflects and complements these sources:

Homecare Workers’ Handbook: *Caring for Yourself While Caring for Others*—We hope that you will share copies of this booklet, which is designed as a reference for workers in the field, and will reinforce the lessons in this training with all participants.

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2015-103/pdf/2015-103.pdf>

NIOSH Hazard Review: “Occupational Hazards and Home Health Care”—This gives extensive technical information for professionals and agencies, including information to guide agencies in their efforts to ensure safe and healthy practices.

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2010-125>

You may also want to read the following resources:

NIOSH Alert: “Preventing Occupational Respiratory Disease from Exposures Caused by Dampness in Office Buildings, Schools, and Other Nonindustrial Buildings,” DHHS (NIOSH) Publication No. 2013-102 (November 2012).

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2013-102/>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) *Citizen’s Guide to Pest Control and Pesticide Safety*.

http://www.epa.gov/oppead1/Publications/Cit_Guide/citguide.pdf

Home and Community Health Worker Handbook, British Columbia, Canada, Occupational Health and Safety Agency for Healthcare (OHSAH).

<http://www.phsa.ca/NR/rdonlyres/6C69D638-8587-4096-A8AA-7D2B0141C3B2/59614/HandbookHomeandCommunityHealthcareWorkersHandbook.pdf>

Safety Manual for Homecare Workers, Oregon Homecare Commission.

<http://apps.state.or.us/Forms/Served/de9062.pdf>

Instructions for conducting training are in the “Detailed Lesson Plan” in black.

Tips for Trainers are in shaded boxes.

Please note that the emphasis is on creating a positive, welcoming, and safe environment for dialogue. Focus on encouraging participation and affirming the contributions of participants to the discussion. Thank participants for their role as homecare workers and for their dedication.

A risk when teaching health and safety is to “blame the workers” for not upholding the safest practices. In fact, there are external pressures, circumstances, and environmental

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factors that can challenge them and undermine their health and safety. The goal of this course is to empower workers to identify the risks they may face on the job, determine if there are any needed tools or equipment, and engage their clients, agencies, and employers to work with them to address concerns and develop effective strategies for making changes.

As well as using these tips, think of personal examples related to each of the topics that will prompt discussion and model the contributions you hope to receive.

Suggested scripts are in **purple**. As you become more familiar with the workshop, feel free to use your own words to convey the key points.

Class size matters! Activities are designed for groups of 8–14 participants to best engage each individual. If you are presenting to larger groups, you will need to adapt some activities, and not all participants will be able to contribute to discussions. It will also lengthen the times needed for activities and modules.

2. **Make sure your handouts (1 packet for every participant) are ready and placed at each seat before the workshop, and include an evaluation form.**

Distribute printed copies of the PowerPoint show at the end of the workshop. (It may be printed 2, 3, or 6 slides per page.)

3. **Prepare flip chart pages in advance:**

- Activity 1—Risks—list six risks on page 3 of handouts.
- Activity 2—Risks/Impacts—Bugs, Vermin/Pets.
- Activity 2—Risks/Impacts—Heat or Cold/Smoke.
- Activity 2—Risks/Impacts—Cleaning Agents/Mold or Mildew.

4. **Bring the following supplies:**

- A package of pens for participants.
- A flip chart easel and flip chart paper.
- Laptop computer, LCD projector, and screen.
- Markers.
- Painter's or masking tape.

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5. Make sure your room is ready:

- Set up chairs and tables in a square or U shape so all participants can see one another. Using round tables with four participants each is an alternative, but not as likely to encourage engaged attention to full-group discussions.
- Have space available for participants to set up chairs in two circles facing one another for Activity 3.
- Have refreshments ready if applicable.
- Arrange for the AV equipment and set up PowerPoint to title page before class.
- Set up the easel with the prepared flip chart pages at the front of the room.
- Unless you are using sticky flip chart pages, it's helpful to put some short pieces of tape along the easel to use during the training.

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Detailed Lesson Plan

Activity 1: Welcome, Introductions, and Identifying Environmental Risks in Homes

Materials: Easel, prepared flip chart pages, handouts, PowerPoint slides

Time required: 30 minutes

1. Welcome participants to the workshop (3 minutes).

Display the title slide of the PowerPoint, read the workshop title, and mention the host of the program. Introduce yourself, display slide 2 of the PowerPoint, and play the short video. Then review the purpose of the workshop as listed in the session goals on slide 3.

Say:

“Hello! This is the workshop *Caring for Yourself While Caring for Others—Tips for Reducing Risks from Environmental Exposures When Providing Homecare*. My name is _____.

“It’s a pleasure to be here with you and have the chance to discuss your health and safety as you provide care, support, and services to clients. We know that you do a great deal of hard work, and we want you to be as safe as possible and not be hurt or get sick because of environmental risks that may be in homes where you work.

“Our goals are on this slide. We want you to be able to:

- “Identify common environmental risks homecare workers may be exposed to.
- “Outline the potential impacts from environmental risks.
- “Describe strategies and tools that can reduce risks.
- “Follow positive problem-solving steps with clients to reduce risks.

Tips for Trainers:

Your approach to this introduction sets the tone for the entire workshop!

Speak warmly and enthusiastically to convey:

- Your belief that the information is important.
- Your real concern for workers’ well-being.
- Your belief that participants intend to do their jobs well while protecting the health and safety of their clients and themselves.
- Your confidence that they are open to learning.

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“While the session is designed for you as homecare workers, we believe this information can be important for clients also. We encourage you to share what you learn with them and/or with their families and other caregivers.

“Each of you has a packet of handouts with space for taking notes. Please do not look ahead in the packet. I’d appreciate you focus on the work we’re doing now. At the end of the workshop, I’ll also distribute copies of the slides we’ll be seeing, so you will have that information as well.

“Are there any questions before we move into our first activity?”

2. Set up pair activity (3 minutes).

Say:

“In other modules, we explore homecare workers’ risk of exposure to bloodborne and other infectious diseases and to muscle and skeletal risks, including fall risks from clutter in people’s homes. There are other exposure risks in clients’ homes, too. You may be exposed to a wide range of environmental risks. These are conditions that exist within the space of the home.

“We are going to have you split into pairs to give you a chance to introduce yourselves to one another and discuss how each of you prioritize the many common risks that are important to you. Page 3 of your handouts has a list of six potential hazards homecare workers might encounter that we are going to discuss today. We want you to rank them from 1–6, with ‘1’ being the risk that’s most important to you, and ‘6’ being the one that’s least important.

“You and your partner may rank them differently, based on what you’ve experienced in homes, and that’s fine.

“Focus on prioritizing the risks on the list. If there are more risks that are important concerns to you, note them below. You will have up to 8 minutes to complete your introductions and prioritizing.”

Ask participants to count off from “1” to half the total number of participants. After half of the total participants have counted, have the second half begin counting at “1” until all have counted. If there is an odd number of participants, have the

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last person call out “1” and form a trio of those who called “1.” Ask participants to pair up with the person who called out the same number as they did, and work with them to introduce themselves to one another. Then they should come up with all the environmental risks they can think of. Remind them to use page 3 of their handouts to take notes. Allow a minute for the pairs to settle down.

3. Conduct pair activity (8 minutes).

Circulate among the pairs as they work, answering questions and providing help as necessary. At 5 minutes, ask all groups how they are doing. Give them up to 3 additional minutes as needed for them to complete their prioritizing. Give them a 1-minute warning, and ask them to wrap up and be ready to share their discussion.

4. Facilitate reports and discussion (15 minutes).

Ask for a pair to volunteer to introduce one another and then to share how they prioritized the list. Write their numbers on the prepared flip chart. Invite them to tell what their specific concerns are about the bugs, dogs, cats, or other items, and add notes to the chart. Ask other pairs to introduce one another, share their rankings and specific concerns, and add them to the flip chart.

Repeat this process until all pairs have reported. Highlight that different homecare workers will have different priorities because they have different experiences in the homes they visit. Invite reactions and comments about the list and the way the items were prioritized, and then discuss.

Invite pairs to speak of any risks not on the list. If they do mention topics covered in other workshops or that can't be addressed in this session, explain this and offer to share information outside of class as appropriate.



5. Wrap up this activity (1 minute).

Thank participants again for their great ideas about risks in homes. Explain that it's now time to look at the impacts these risks can have on workers.

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Activity 2: Exploring the Health and Safety Impacts of Exposure Risks

Materials: Prepared flip chart pages posted around room, markers

Time required: 30 minutes

1. Demonstrate large group activity (3 minutes).

Say:

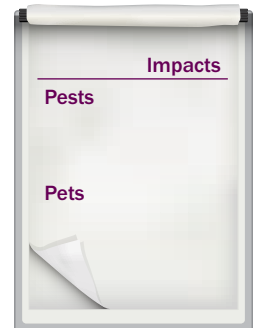
“We’re now going to explore the possible impacts of these risks to your health and safety. Let’s look at one example before you work on these on your own.”

As you move toward one of the prepared flip charts posted at three different spots in the room, explain that if one of the listed risks isn’t of concern to them, you would still like them to analyze it, because they might encounter the risk in the future.

Stand at the chosen chart and ask participants to think of potential health impacts of the first risk on the page. Write them in the column next to the risk and thank them for their ideas.

Tips for Trainers:

Prepare three flip charts, each with two risks in the order listed on page 5 of the handouts.



2. Give directions for activity (1 minute).

Explain that you would like them to continue this idea session by splitting up among the flip charts around the room as evenly as possible and filling in the flip chart pages. One person will need to volunteer to be the recorder of their work, and he or she can write all the potential health and safety impacts each of the risks might have as others offer ideas. Tell them that they will have 5 minutes to work on their risks on their flip chart pages, so they should try to think of at least one or two health and safety impacts for each risk. Check if participants have any questions, and then invite them to stand up and come to the pages. Hand out markers to recorders at each flip chart and ask them to begin.

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3. Conduct large group activity (15 minutes).

Circulate among the participants, offering assistance as needed. Give participants a 1-minute warning after 4 minutes, and then call time and gain their attention.

Ask participants to move in a clockwise direction to the next flip chart. Once there, they are to review what the last participants have written, and add any impacts they can think of that the first participants didn't write. Tell them they will have 3 minutes for this activity. Circulate to offer assistance, and call time when 3 minutes is up.

Repeat this process so the groups visit each of the flip charts. Shorten the time to 2 minutes as seems appropriate and time requires. When participants have had a minute to review the last of the flip charts, ask for a reporter to stay at each flip chart and for other participants to sit down. Invite those who are sitting to take notes on page 3 of their handouts. Explain that many of the risks are on page 3, and there is room to write additional ones along with their impacts if they would like to take notes.

4. Facilitate reports (10 minutes).

Ask for a volunteer to begin presenting the risks and impacts outlined on his or her flip chart page. After the presentation, add any points that may have been missed and clarify any ideas that may not have been clear or accurate. Invite questions and comments from participants and discuss as time allows.

5. Wrap up activity (1 minute).

Thank participants for their great contributions to this idea session. Introduce the next topic, which will focus on strategies homecare workers can use to protect themselves from the risks and potential impacts.

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Activity 3: Tips for Reducing Your Exposure to Environmental Risks

Materials: Prepared flip chart pages, handouts, PowerPoint slides

Time required: 40 minutes

1. Introduce activity (5 minutes).

Say:

“Now that we’ve identified the risks and their potential health and safety impacts, it’s time to explore strategies for how to minimize or eliminate the risks. For this, I’d like you to form three groups to come up with ideas for all of the strategies, tools, and tips you can think of to help minimize the risks. On page 4 of your handouts, there are two risks—the same ones you’ve just listed on the flip charts—assigned to each of three groups.”

Highlight which risks each group will be assigned. Ask for volunteers to serve in Group 1, and allow up to a third of the participants to join that group. If more people wish to join the group, ask for volunteers to agree to work in one of the other groups. Ask for volunteers for Group 2, and repeat the process. Invite the remainder of the participants to work on the risk assigned to Group 3.

Give directions, explaining that you would like each group to first discuss people’s specific concerns, such as which pests or pets they are worried about and why. Then, they can come up with as many potential strategies, tools, and tips they can think of that will help homecare workers stay healthy and safe despite the three risks they are assigned. Tell them they will have 10 minutes to work. Check if participants have any questions, and then invite them to form their groups and begin working.

2. Conduct small group activity (10 minutes).

Circulate among the participants, offering assistance as needed. Let participants know when 5 minutes have passed, and urge them to work on both of the risks. Give a 1-minute warning after 9 minutes and ask them to wrap up and prepare to present their ideas. Then call time, and gain the groups’ attention.

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3. Facilitate reports (23 minutes).

Ask for a volunteer from Group 1 to present the strategies and tips they have chosen for the first risk, “pests.” After the presentation, show slides 4 and 5. Highlight what they’ve already mentioned and add any points that haven’t been discussed for risks, as well as tips and tools. Invite questions and comments from participants and discuss as time allows.

Repeat the process for the remaining risks, each of which has its own two slides (one showing risks and health impacts and the other showing safety and health tips).

- Slides 6 and 7—Pets in the home.
- Slides 8 and 9—Extreme temperatures.
- Slides 10 and 11—Cleaning agents. As you present slide 10, ask participants to also turn to page 5 in their handouts, which has additional advice for safe use of cleaning agents, as well as recipes for making safe cleaners. Ensure that discussion covers this information as well as the material on slide.
- Slides 12 and 13—Cigarette and other smoke.
- Slides 14 and 15—Mold and mildew.

If the previous discussion identified additional risks, offer any advice you may have for each of the risks.

4. Wrap up the discussion (2 minutes).

Invite participants to share any thoughts and questions they may have about using the tips and tools to handle the risks that have been covered. Discuss as necessary. Explain that the next topic will help them prepare for conversations with clients that may be necessary to address concerns with environmental risks.

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Activity 4: Talking With Clients About Reducing Risks in the Home

Materials: Handouts, PowerPoint slides

Time required: 20 minutes

1. Introduce the importance—and challenge—of speaking with clients in positive ways to reduce environmental risks and uphold everyone’s health and safety (3 minutes).

Say:

“Talking with your clients in positive and constructive ways about environmental risks in the home is a key part of ensuring your own health and safety—and theirs. Yet, it can be challenging because your clients or family caregivers may resist making changes in habits or their homes, and they may be unwilling or unable to afford new tools and equipment, or to keep the heat or air conditioning on.

“It’s so important to bring up health and safety concerns as soon as possible—the longer you wait, the greater the risk of exposure, and the more everyone takes the conditions for granted and thinks the risks are acceptable.

“Why might homecare workers put off or be reluctant to speak up about these concerns?”

Invite responses to your question and discuss. If participants don’t mention these ideas, suggest them as part of the discussion:

- They may believe the client or family won’t be willing or able to change the conditions, so there’s no point in trying.
- They may be worried about getting into an argument.
- They might be worried they could be fired if they raise the issues.
- They may know what the problem is, but not the solution.
- They might not be sure what their bottom line is.

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2. Review effective approaches to problem solving with clients (14 minutes).

Display slide 16 and quickly review steps, telling the participants to raise concerns as soon as possible. Emphasize that this approach is designed to make it feel safer and more effective to have conversations with clients.

Ask a participant to give an example of an issue relating to one of the environmental risks in the home that were discussed, which they would like to discuss with a client. Explain that it will be used in class as an example for following the steps. Thank the volunteer for sharing his or her story. Invite participants to take notes on page 6 of their handout, which outlines the same steps that are on the slide.

- **Plan the discussion in advance.** Explain that it's good to think through all of their concerns, like the ones just mentioned above. How are they feeling about the issue? What response do they expect, and how will they respond to that? Invite the volunteer to answer these questions and others to add any thoughts they have, and discuss.
- **Be respectful—make a request, not a demand.** Invite the volunteer to share what his or her request would be, and support him or her in stating it in a respectful, clear, and as direct a way as necessary. Invite other participants to share their ideas or thoughts.
- **Use “I” statements.** Describe your health and safety concern, how it affects you, and what the impact might be on you and the client. Invite the volunteer to use “I” statements to explain why the issue is a concern and its impact on the client. Again, support the volunteer as needed and encourage others in the class to help out.
- **Listen.** See the issue from the client's point of view. Ask a new volunteer to play the role of the client and speak as the client might about his or her point of view. Invite volunteers to speak up as clients with differing perspectives. Check if participants think the responses are realistic, and discuss.
- **Consider several solutions beyond your first choice.** Explain that this is the place where coming up with ideas comes in. They've used idea sessions in the workshop, and the goal is to let everyone contribute their best ideas to solving a problem. Note that it's a great approach if you're not sure of how to resolve an issue you are raising. Even if you think you know the exact right answer, it may not be right for your client, and this step gives you a chance to explore options.

Have the original volunteer share the solutions she or he would like, and then ask others to think of other solutions clients might have. Then, have the group imagine what might be a negotiated decision. Note that, by talking and coming up with ideas with clients, they may come up with workable solutions that they didn't imagine beforehand.

- **Know your bottom line.** Ask the first volunteer what his or her bottom line is, and ask if the discussion helped to clarify it. Note that constructive and open dialogue

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with others helps us think things through more effectively for ourselves, gives us new information and perspectives, and shifts our thinking. That's why it's so important!

3. Wrap up the discussion (2 minutes).

Ask participants if they have any questions or thoughts about using the steps, and discuss. Note that the more they use the approach, the more confident and skillful they will become at addressing issues with clients and others. Explain that, while it can be challenging to advocate for their own health and safety, you hope they feel clear about the steps they can take, and you want to encourage them to use the model.

4. Conclude the workshop (1 minute).

Thank the participants for their great participation throughout the workshop and for their commitment to doing the best they can for their clients—while taking good care of themselves, too. Distribute copies of the slide show. Offer your hope that the session has been helpful to them, and wish them the best in their future work. Offer any more assistance you have available, and give details of any future sessions you plan to offer.